



# CHESTER



Photo Credit: Yankee Magazine, Ann Cristina Estrela, Tripadvisor, Town of Chester, Connecticut Public, Wilson Bros Garden

## Community Resilience Building Summary of Findings

APRIL 2026



# **Town of Chester, Connecticut**

## **Community Resilience Building**

### ***Summary of Findings***

#### **Overview**

The need for municipalities, regional planning organizations, academic institutions, corporations, states, and federal agencies to increase resilience to extreme weather events and a changing climate is strikingly evident amongst the communities across the state of Connecticut. Relatively recent events such as Super Storm Sandy, severe winter storms (2013 & 2015), COVID-19 pandemic, and Tropical Storm Isaias have reinforced this urgency and compelled leading communities like the Town of Chester to proactively collaborate on planning and mitigating risks. Ultimately, this type of leadership is to be commended because it will reduce the vulnerability and reinforce the strengths of people, infrastructure, and ecosystems and serve as a model for other communities in Connecticut, New England, and the nation.

Recently, the Town of Chester embarked on a Silver recertification with Sustainable CT (Bronze certified (2021); Silver certified (2023)). As part of that recertification, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Sustainable CT provided the Town with a community-driven process to assess current hazard and climate change impacts and to generate potential and prioritized solutions to improve resilience and sustainability. In April 2026, Chester's Core Team helped organize a Community Resilience Building process and workshop facilitated by TNC in partnership with Sustainable CT. The core directive of this effort was the engagement with and between community members to define strengths and vulnerabilities and the development of actions and priority resilience actions for the Town of Chester.

The Chester Community Resilience Building Workshop's central objectives were to:

- Define top local, natural, and climate-related hazards of concern.
- Identify existing and future strengths and vulnerabilities.
- Identify and prioritize actions for the Town.
- Identify opportunities to collaboratively advance actions to increase resilience alongside residents and organizations from across the Town, and beyond.

The Town of Chester employed an “anywhere at any scale”, community-driven process called Community Resilience Building (CRB) ([www.CommunityResilienceBuilding.org](http://www.CommunityResilienceBuilding.org)). The CRB’s tools, reports, other relevant planning documents, and local maps were integrated into the workshop process to provide both decision-support and visualization around shared issues and existing priorities across Chester. The Chester Plan of Conservation and Development (2019) and the Lower Connecticut River Valley Plan of Conservation and Development (2021), and the Lower Connecticut River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2021) were particularly instructive as references. Using the CRB process - rich with information, experience, and dialogue - the participants produced the findings presented in this summary report. This includes an overview of the top hazards, current concerns and challenges, existing strengths, and proposed actions to improve Chester’s resilience to hazards and climate change today, and in the future.

The summary of findings transcribed in this report, like any that concerns the evolving nature of risk assessment and associated action, is offered for comments, corrections and updates from workshop attendees and other stakeholders alike. The leadership displayed by the Town of Chester on community resilience building will benefit from the continuous participation of all those concerned.

## **Summary of Findings**

### **Top Hazards and Vulnerable Areas for the Community**

Prior to the CRB Workshop, the Chester Core Team identified the top hazards for the Town. The hazards of greatest concern included severe storms (resulting in power outages), flooding and extreme precipitation events, and extreme weather resulting in cold snaps and heat waves. Additional hazards highlighted by participants during the CRB Workshop included heavy wind events, drought, and hurricanes and tropical storms. These hazards have direct and increasing impacts on the infrastructure, environment, and residents of and visitors to Chester. These effects are seen within residential areas, natural areas (wetlands, rivers, forests, preserves), roads, bridges, businesses, farms, municipal facilities, churches, schools, social support services, arts and culture, and other critical infrastructure and community assets within Chester.

## **Current Concerns and Challenges Presented by Hazards**

The Town of Chester has several concerns and faces multiple challenges related to the impacts of natural hazards and climate change. In recent years, Chester has experienced a series of highly disruptive and damaging weather events including Superstorm Sandy (October 2012), large snowfall events winter 2015-2016 (84" cumulative), extreme wind events (October 2017), ice jams along Connecticut River (January 2018), Tropical Storm Isaias (August 2020), and other less impactful but more frequent events. Impacts from Sandy included rain-induced, inland flooding, tree damage and associated power outages to the majority of Town for over five days. In the fall of 2018, Chester experienced heavy rain resulting in flooding and water damage including a collapsed bridge on Liberty Street over Great Brook along with other structural, debris accumulation, and erosion along Great Brook. The magnitude and intensity of these events and others across Connecticut have increased awareness of natural hazards and climate change, while motivating communities such as Chester to proactively improve their resilience.

This recent series of extreme weather events highlights that the impacts from hazards are diverse. In Chester this included riverine flooding of critical infrastructure, roads, and low-lying areas; riverine flooding specific to Chester through the central business district through Town; localized flooding from stormwater runoff during intense storms and heavy precipitation events; and property damage and utility outages (lasting several days or more) from wind, snow, and ice. Longer periods of elevated heat, particularly in July and August, have raised concerns about vulnerable segments of the population, including elderly and/or disabled community members. The combination of these issues presents a challenge to preparedness and mitigation priorities and requires comprehensive, yet locally specific actions for the Town.

The workshop participants were generally in agreement that Chester is experiencing more intense and frequent storm events and heat waves. Additionally, there was a general concern about the increasing challenges of being prepared for the worst-case scenarios (e.g., major thunderstorms and hurricanes (Cat-3 or above)) particularly in the late summer and in the fall/winter months when more intense storms coincide with colder weather (i.e., snow/ice storms, Nor'easters, blizzards).

## ***Specific Categories of Concerns and Challenges***

As in any community, Chester is not uniformly vulnerable to hazards and climate change. Certain locations, assets, and populations have been and will be affected to a greater degree than others. Workshop participants identified the following items as their community's key areas of concern and challenges across several broad categories. Vulnerabilities and associated mitigation actions identified in the current Lower Connecticut River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2021) are provided in Appendix A for cross reference.

### **Municipal Functions, Operations, & Growth:**

- Most of the village district is in a flood zone which presents a large amount of economic and social risk for Chester. Village district represents the only commercial zone in Chester.
- Chester is not quite meeting affordable housing needs within the community resulting in tensions between creating more housing and increasing impervious surfaces along with high potential for greater flooding in the downtown area.
- Resistance amongst existing residents to allow multi-family dwelling to be built in Town that restricts the need to increase available and affordable housing stock.
- Limited amount of buildable land in Chester to accommodate new housing development.
- Declining and aging population in Chester, neighboring municipalities, and region.
- School enrollment numbers are declining due to the limited number of young families with children moving to Chester.
- Declining number of new volunteers to replenish the ranks of existing volunteers who are no longer able to participate due to aging ("aging out").
- Small and declining population of residents generating less tax revenue to cover the growing financial need to care for municipal services and infrastructure (i.e., dams, bridges, roads, etc.) ("shrinking taxbase").
- Decreases in available municipal budget for staff places ever greater dependence on volunteers to maintain services in Chester.
- Flooding of downtown area is becoming an issue of concern after 30-40 years of relatively little impacts.
- Concerns about the ageing of the schools and library in Chester and the costs of ongoing routine maintenance.
- Many residents that are ageing in place are experiencing affordability.

## ***Specific Categories of Concerns and Challenges (cont'd)***

- Old buildings in the village area and elsewhere across Town need renovations that are often difficult and expensive to do coupled with a fair degree of additional historic regulations to adhere to.

### **Emergency Management & Preparedness:**

- Ongoing need to identify and maintain a list of homebound residents who require assistance during and after emergencies due to medical needs.
- Limited access to internet in portions of Town with poor cell service, including portions of the downtown which has resulted in decreases in the effectiveness of alerts to residents through Everbridge communications system. In addition, residents in “dead zones” are unable to call for emergency services, when needed.
- Areas of low to non-existent cell service include areas from the Pattaconk Yacht Club to Main Street on the eastside of Town, westside of Town, and the Town Hall.
- Drought was raised as a growing hazard of concern for Chester and associated consequences of wildfires.
- Growing realization of the magnitude of impacts when the tidally influenced Connecticut River begins to rise above current flooding stages including inundation of properties along the current banks of the River.
- Emergency shelter at John Winthrop Middle School requires crossing a roadway over a stream that is subjected to flooding.
- Extreme drought conditions increase the danger of forest/brush fires (e.g., wildfire in Cockaponset State Forest neighboring Haddam (April 2025)).

### **Roads, Bridges, Road Networks, & Dams:**

- Hilly terrain and curvy roads present a challenge to make roadways safer for pedestrians and cyclists especially when the roadways are owned and managed by the state of Connecticut (“low number of sidewalks and limited walkability”).
- Intersection of Liberty and Deep Hollow Roads where Great Brook gets constricted has resulted in erosion of a steep slope that causes impacts to the roadway.
- Stone retaining walls in several locations at risk of failure due to erosion including one on North Main Street and one along 132 Main Street (formally the Apple Rehabilitation site).

## ***Specific Categories of Concerns and Challenges (cont'd)***

- Cedar Lake will overflow during significant precipitation events resulting in water coming over Route 148 in select locations.
- Concentration of storm drains at the beginning of Anna Sweeny Trail that is causing erosion. Pedestrian bridge will likely be installed over this drainage watercourse later this year.
- Large number of privately-owned dams. Some owners do not have the means to properly manage and repair their dams, which may pose a risk to downstream people and property.
- Concerns regarding the potential catastrophic failure of dams along streams and rivers that lead into the village area.
- Limited information on the potential impact from catastrophic dam failure from all the dams in Chester within the current Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan.

### **Stormwater, Waste Systems, & Drinking Water Supply:**

- Limited public water and sewer which create a constraint on development and concentrates risks due to flooding events. Flooding in the core downtown area can jeopardize drinking water supplies because majority of businesses and residences are reliant on wells.
- Large number of private septic systems located in relatively low-lying areas present a potential issue of contamination during major flooding events.
- Large number of residents rely on private drinking water wells which can become contaminated when the ground surface is flooded.
- Flooding occurs and threatens the Water Street Sewer Pump Station.

### **Watersheds, Wetlands, Rivers, Open Space, Forests, Agricultural Lands, & Trees:**

- Topography of Chester results in floodplains that are constricted in relatively tight valleys with rapid runoff of precipitation from adjoining hilly terrain.
- Concerns with aquatic invasive species including Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*) and Water Chestnut (*Trapa natans*) spreading rapidly into waterways across Chester.
- Aquatic invasive species in waterways of Chester and the surrounding areas alter ecosystems and reduce flood capacity provided by open and clear rivers, streams, and ponds.

## ***Specific Categories of Concerns and Challenges (cont'd)***

- Well established populations of the invasive plant species Japanese Knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) along waterways across Chester, along with several other invasive plant species.
- Heavily eroded drainage areas within North Quarter Park.
- Limited regulatory oversight of “backyard” farmers results in destruction of grassland habitat and runoff of animal waste into adjoining and downstream streams and brooks.
- Large amounts of dead trees and limbs that have fallen into streams and waterways, which can cause increases in localized flooding when obstructing the flow of water (“log jams”).
- Extreme drought conditions can present additional challenges to native tree species already dealing with the stress and impact of invasive insect species such as the Spongy Moth (*Lymantria dispar*), among others.



Credit: explorerCTshoreline



Credit: Wikipedia



Credit: CTvisits

## **Current Strengths and Assets**

Just as certain locations, facilities, and populations in Chester stand out as particularly vulnerable to the effects of hazards and climate change, other features are notable assets for Chester's resilience building. Workshop participants identified the following items as their community's key strengths and expressed interest in centering them as the core of future resilience building actions.

### **Municipal Functions, Operations, & Growth:**

- Clearly, the responsive and committed engagement exhibited by leadership, staff, and residents is a very appreciated strength within and across Chester. Ongoing collaboration between municipal staff, committee/commission/board volunteers, business community, faith-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, adjoining municipalities, Council of Government, and various state-wide organizations (i.e., Sustainable CT, The Nature Conservancy), among others, on priorities identified herein will help advance comprehensive, cost-effective, community resilience building actions.
- Chester is a relatively rural, small community sparsely settled with development dispersed across the town.
- Chester was built across a variety of hills with ponds, lakes, and streams in the valley that flow into the Connecticut River to the east. These natural resources result in a landscape with a tremendous assortment of recreational opportunities as well as being historically important for manufacturing via water driven mills over a century or more ago.
- Attractive downtown area that draws tourists and helps fuel the local economy.
- Great deal of cooperation and coordination between different community-based groups and municipal departments in Chester.
- Strong group of committed and supportive volunteers in Chester that show up and contribute their time on community improvement projects such as clean ups which have included the local cemetery, along roadways, and in natural areas across the Town. Volunteers often work closely in partnership with municipal staff.
- Strong relationships with surrounding communities and the region with cooperation and sharing of resources during times of need.
- Chester residents have easy access to nature via trail networks and ample open space.

## **Current Strengths and Assets (cont'd)**

- After-school program at Chester Elementary, run by the Parks & Recreation Department Director, works together with Valley Regional High School, The Chester Historical Society, and several other groups, to provide fun and diverse educational experiences for participating children, including historic stamps and collections, letter writing between older and younger students, among others.
- Participation in a housing study funded through the Connecticut Department of Housing to assess how Chester can meet the Town's housing needs in the immediate and long-term time periods.
- YMCA Camp is an asset for Chester with examples such as being open during Covid 19 to provide a safe place for children while parents had to work as well as keeping them on track academically.
- Strong communications from town leadership to residents on a routine basis.
- Connectedness and inter-dependence of the "Tri-Town" areas (Chester, Essex, Deep River) is a considerable strength that lends itself to providing a regional approach to resource sharing and supportive services.

### **Emergency Management & Preparedness:**

- Experienced and robust emergency response team complete with participation by key municipal staff including Emergency Management Director, Fire Chief, Resident State Trooper, District Health Department, Fire Marshal, Public Works Director, School Superintendent, and First Selectman.
- Town has become more proactive about getting out alerts about incoming storms as well as information about preparedness and availability of services to residents such as where to go for shelter during power outages.
- Chester's emergency and regular communications platform, through Everbridge, is called Chester ALERT. Chester ALERT was initiated in March 2025 and is well utilized on a regular basis for Tuesday "First Selectman Weekly Reports" and Thursday "Townwide Events & Happenings". The First Selectman's Office sends Chester ALERT Public messages as needed, including in preparation for significant storms, road closures, power outages, and other immediately important information for residents.

## **Current Strengths and Assets (cont'd)**

- Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) was updated in 2025 by the Emergency Management Director and Team.
- Chester has an updated emergency evacuation plan (circa 2025) coupled with updated evacuation route signs along roadways to assist residents.
- Health Department collaborates directly with the Emergency Management Team on all emergency responses to help ensure food and water are safe for consumption after storm events and assists with updates to mass dispensing plans of resources to the public in need.
- Health Department staff know everyone by name that they need to speak with before, during, and after crises as well as who they need to collaborate with to ensure resources get to those in need quickly.
- Connections between residents create a strong sense of community where neighbors look out for and help their neighbors. The winter of 2025-2026 really reinforced both the need for community connections but also the helpful responses of residents (“everyone makes sure everyone is doing okay”).
- Ad Hoc Citizens’ Liaison Council is working on strengthening neighbor-to-neighbor program which will include formalizing a check-in process for those in need. Pilot program is under development and is scheduled for roll-out in the fall of 2026.
- Fire Department and the two ambulance crews are considerable strengths within the community.
- Town Hall and the Elementary School have not flooded despite having lower lying access roads.
- Fire House is located on high ground and operates as a heating and cooling station plus as the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for Chester with an alternative EOC location in the Town Hall.
- John Winthrop Middle School in Deep River serves as the main sheltering facility for Chester residents during emergency situations.
- Critical cooling centers have had Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) compliance walk-throughs and secured certification.

## **Current Strengths and Assets (cont'd)**

- Regional Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT) that can provide support during routine and major events.
- One of the five municipally owned dams in Chester has an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) to guide responses in the event of catastrophic failure of the dam including a list of downstream homeowners and fallout plan, which has been informed by a recent table-top simulation drill.
- New snow removal/plowing contractor onboard that is very well organized and can remove snow as needed on a 24/7 basis with successful responses during recent winter storm events.
- Emergency animal services and kennels (cats, dogs, etc.) that are available during major events.
- Collaborative training and knowledge sharing between Fire Department, Police Department, and Department of Public Works.
- Solid framework in place to manage major events (i.e., Superstorm Sandy, Covid 19, etc.) (“Chester is not working from scratch and can build off previous collaborations”).
- Concerns about the reoccurrence frequency and duration of drought conditions in central Connecticut and the impacts it is having on people, agriculture, and natural ecosystems.

### **Roads, Bridges, Road Networks, & Dams:**

- Department of Public Works able to manage roadways and associated transportation infrastructure across Chester’s hilly terrain and topography.
- Recent inventory of dams, bridges, and roadways have been used to create an infrastructure maintenance plan.
- All three bridges on North Main Street were replaced after collapsing during the 1982 storms with box culverts which are no longer subject to scour and future collapse during high water events.
- Recent resiliency planning study, in partnership with Deep River and Essex, to help identify infrastructure-related projects that can help improve resiliency in Chester.

## **Current Strengths and Assets (cont'd)**

- Town secured a Community Connectivity Grant Program (CCGP) grant of \$477,010 to pay for the West Main Street Sidewalk Improvement Project. The West Main Street sidewalk needs repairs and brought into compliance with ADA rules.
- Town secured a Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant for \$796,000 for Chester's Three Bridge Project including David Road bridge over Pataconk Brook, Sypher Road bridge/culvert over Burr Brook, and Straits Road bridge (and dam area) over Upper Jennings Pond Spillway.

### **Stormwater, Waste Systems, & Drinking Water Supply:**

- Chester has a relatively low amount of impervious surface, limited development, and a large amount of open space.

### **Watersheds, Wetlands, Rivers, Open Space, Forests, Agricultural Lands, & Trees:**

- Large amounts of forested lands with intact wetlands and waterways, that help to mitigate flooding and absorb precipitation.
- Thirty-eight percent of the Town is open space largely covered by the Cockaponset State Forest and Connecticut Water Company property, which together provide many ecosystem benefits such as infiltration and cleansing of precipitation before entering the ground water as well as serving as heat sinks and habitat for native plant and wildlife species.
- Large "rip rap" boulders placed by the Army Corps of Engineers along Great Brook where it joins Pataconk Brook (behind Norma Terris Theatre) has helped to stabilize the stream bank and prevent erosion.
- Ongoing and strategic maintenance of trees across Chester with Eversource on a 4-year maintenance cycle. This maintenance cycle has helped to reduce power outages and has opened opportunities for residents to install solar panels on their homes. Eversource has offered up replacement trees for areas where trees were removed to increase public safety and integrity of power systems during storms.
- Three new trees were planted over the last couple of years at the North Quarter Park.

## **Current Strengths and Assets (cont'd)**

- Cedar Lake has been an invaluable recreational asset where many residents learned to swim as children as well as a place to help keep community members cool and safe during hot summer months and heat waves.
- The Chester Cedar Lake Watershed Commission has taken progressive action to prevent establishment of Hydrilla in Cedar Lake by installing silt curtains from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) boat launch. The DEEP Boating Division is newly requiring buoys to be added to the silt curtains in accordance with their public safety rules. Chester is the first municipality in the state to have these silt curtains installed.
- Chester is deeply engaged in helping to remove aquatic invasive species from waterways in Town.



Credit: World Atlas



Credit: John Tabacca



Credit: Zillow

## **Recommendations to Improve Resilience**

A common theme among workshop participants was the need to continue community-based planning efforts focused on developing adaptive measures to reinforce Chester's strengths and reduce vulnerability to extreme weather, climate change and other common concerns raised. To that end, the workshop participants helped to identify several priority topics requiring more immediate and/or ongoing attention including:

- **Long-term vision and growth** (i.e. sustainable growth, volunteerism, conservation & recreation, affordable housing, population growth, regionalization);
- **Infrastructure improvements** (i.e. roads/bridges/dams/road crossings, green stormwater infrastructure/management systems);
- **Quality of life improvements** (i.e. parks and recreation, open space & accessibility, sustainability, health & safety, economic prosperity, housing, education, regionalization);
- **Emergency management** (i.e. communications, outreach, education, continuation of services, business recovery, evacuation, vulnerable populations).

In direct response, the Community Resilience Building workshop participants developed the following actions and identified, but not ranked, them as priority or as additional actions. Mitigation actions from the Chester Municipal Hazard Mitigation Plan Annex (2021) are provided in Appendix A for cross reference with actions presented herein. Maps provided during the CRB Workshop, gathered from the Chester Plan of Conservation and Development (2019), Lower Connecticut River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2021), and Lower Connecticut River Valley Plan of Conservation and Development (2021), are provided in Appendix B.

## **Priority Actions**

- Complete inventory of bridges and culverts across the municipal roadway system with an emphasis on improving habitat connectivity to increase the natural ability of environment to help minimize flooding. Look to ensure that residents understand and hopefully appreciate the investments and foster a willingness to fund additional upgrades of aging roadway infrastructure priorities.

## Priority Actions (cont'd)

- Continue infrastructure improvement program on an annual and ongoing basis with a regular, well-thought-out approach (“keep up the good work and don’t get behind”).
- Build on solid track record of securing grants to meet the Town’s infrastructure repair, replacement, and maintenance needs.
- Work with state of Connecticut to see what kind of resources are available to help private dam owners keep up with maintenance or seek reduction in liability through dam removal (“lack of maintenance of privately-owned dams is risky to the public at large”). Consider the options of hosting an informational meeting with private dam owners to share resources and discuss individual and collective risk to the community associated with less than satisfactory dam maintenance.
- Increase education and awareness related to downstream flood hazards associated with catastrophic dam failure of privately-owned dams by developing and releasing on public websites the extent of flooding of property from dam failures. Current maps available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) do not show flood risks from individual dam failures.
- Conduct outreach to adjoining municipalities to see what approaches and strategies are being used to compel private dam owners to maintain or remove their respective dams to help reduce risks to downstream residents and business owners.
- Host a forum for open discussions on existing and future housing needs amongst leadership, staff, community-based groups, and residents. Look to build on dialogue to facilitate meaningful steps forward that are responsive to expressed needs within the identified constraints.
- Educate residents about the importance of maintaining adequate riparian buffers and work to modify behaviors such as mowing lawns and removing trees and shrubs right down to the edge of rivers, streams, and brooks in Chester.

## Priority Actions (cont'd)

- Work to improve cell service across the entirety of Chester.
- Monitor Cedar Lake water quality and proactively address management needs without delay (i.e., aquatic invasives, eutrophication, etc.).
- Monitor and encourage the prevention and control of both aquatic and terrestrial invasive species.
- Continue to support and advance the establishment of long-term, multi-purpose trails for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Identify to what extent Chester participates in and contributes to the regional Citizen Emergency Response Team (CERT). Assess whether there are additional opportunities for Chester residents to get involved with the regional CERT.
- Increase the options for multi-disciplinary training in emergency management and pedestrian safety that extends invitations to town residents and commission members in hopes increasing awareness across Chester as well help to increase the volunteer base.
- Advance the neighborhood-based program championed by the Ad Hoc Citizens Liaison Council and incorporate lessons learned from the “Map Your Neighborhood” precedent from the state of Washington.
- Continue to educate residents, or their responsible other(s), who have serious illness or have a life-threatening situation to obtain a Medical Certification with Eversource to be a priority for electricity and/or gas restoration during outages.
- Continue to educate pedestrians and cyclists on road safety best practices and work to implement recommendations in the Town’s March 2023 Road Safety Audit report. Chester has started a Chester Vision Zero initiative, with the goal to reduce risk of serious injury and death due to traffic-related accidents.

## Additional Actions

- Work to create opportunities for more abundant and diverse housing options (i.e., zoning density and type of housing, more rental units, increase number of starter homes, etc.) in Chester to help reduce an aging demographic and cost of living as well as improving the overall tax base.
- Initiate a public forum in hopes of educated residents on affordable housing definitions and requirements along with an open discussion around the current diversity of housing types and future needs to foster a growing community.
- Explore the needs for resources to sustainability support the growth of the municipality's population over the next few decades.
- Assess the impacts to new development and redevelopment from future sea level rise, flood stage increases, and changes in depth to seasonal groundwater prior to permitting.
- Codify Low Impact Development (LID) in Chester's zoning regulations. Stormwater regulations exist but more LID regulations can be incorporated to help increase resilience and sustainability of development.
- Enforce zoning regulations and wetland reviews on areas with backyard farms and animal waste runoff as it relates to setbacks and minimum acreage requirements.
- Engage with neighboring municipalities (i.e., Deep River and Essex in particular) regarding priority actions generated during Community Resilience Building workshops in hopes of fostering more regional approaches and projects over time.
- Enhance flood mitigation planning for critical infrastructure in the downtown, for sewer pump station, and 20 Water Street in hopes of limiting costly impacts of flooding, improving safety to residents, and maintaining reliability and continuity of service.
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## Additional Actions (cont'd)

- Identify and clear areas along waterways that tend to clog due to concentrations of large wood debris in the rivers and streams (“log jams”) to help prevent flooding of adjoining roadways and property.
- Monitor Jennings Pond water quality and proactively address issues of eutrophication on an ongoing basis (“there are high levels of phosphorus in the Pond”).
- Define and advance strategies and initiatives to improve ageing dam infrastructure (over 30 dams (5 municipal-owned, 1 state-owned, and the remainder privately-owned)) including having conversations with private dam owners and ensuring there are contingency and management plans in place to reduce the threat and deal with catastrophic dam failures and the potential for downstream impacts to people and property.
- Despite the potentially exorbitant cost, explore the option of acquiring unmanaged or mismanaged privately owned dams via eminent domain to protect downstream people and property.
- Secure all propane tanks in the downtown area within the flood zone to prevent them from floating around as they are buoyant.
- Add Empowered Data as a second source of available data to ensure Chester has all those with special needs identified during an emergency as a secondary check on the primary list.
- Continue pen pal program between seniors in Chester and elementary school classrooms.
- Look to expand an already declining volunteer base in Chester.
- Expand outreach and education to residents regarding explanations of hazard and emergency management signage (i.e., road closure, detour, etc.). Build on annual email to residents with explanations of signage meanings and risk for not adhering to signage.

## Additional Actions (cont'd)

- Continue to support the Vision Zero Taskforce that works on improving options for bicycle use in Chester.
- Actively pursue and secure additional open space preservation by the municipality and local land trust across Chester.
- Increase education and outreach related to invasive species including training on how to identify and safely remove invasive plant and insect species in Chester.
- Explore further and support a cost-sharing program (50-50) with the Army Corps of Engineers to remove the aquatic invasive species Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*).
- Look to ensure trees planted in the vicinity of power lines are selected to minimize future impacts to power lines. This may require providing educational opportunities to homeowners as well as regulations that identify appropriate tree species and planting distances.
- Increase monitoring and public awareness about diseases related to changes in climate (i.e., ticks, mosquitoes, etc.).
- Continue to discuss the potential implications of forest fire impacts on Chester as droughts become longer and more intense over time.



Credit: Chester Land Trust



Credit: John Tabacca



Credit: World Atlas

## **CRB Workshop Participants: Department/Organization**

Town of Chester – Office of the First Selectman  
Town of Chester – Selectman Office  
Town of Chester – Board of Education  
Town of Chester – Office of the Zoning Enforcement Officer  
Town of Chester – Parks and Recreation Department  
Town of Chester – Public Works Department  
Town of Chester – Fire Department  
Town of Chester – Emergency Management Department  
Town of Chester – Conservation Commission  
Town of Chester – Harbor Management Committee  
Town of Chester – Planning and Zoning Commission  
Chester Land Trust  
Chester Cemetery Association  
Connecticut River Area Health District  
Tri-Town Youth Services Bureau  
Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce  
Connecticut Water  
Nathan L. Jacobson & Associates, Inc.  
Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments

## **Chester Core CRB Project Team**

Cynthia Lignar, First Selectman, Town of Chester

Lisa Wahle – Chair, Town of Chester Conservation Commission

## **Online CRB Workshop Facilitation Team**

The Nature Conservancy – Adam Whelchel, Ph.D. (Lead Facilitator)

The Nature Conservancy – Drew Goldsman (Small Group Facilitator)

Sustainable CT – Torin Radicioni (Small Group Facilitator)

Sustainable CT – Summer Mitchell (Scribe)

Sustainable CT – Katie Meder (Scribe)

Sustainable CT – Lilly Adamo (Scribe)

## **Recommended Citation**

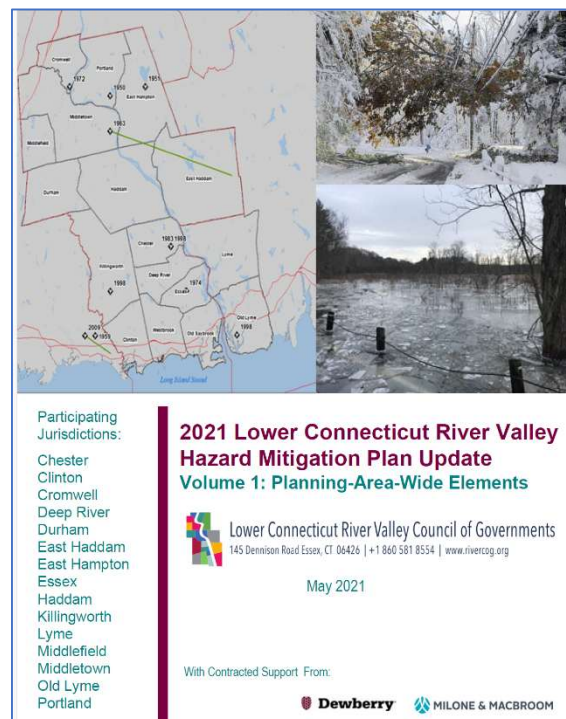
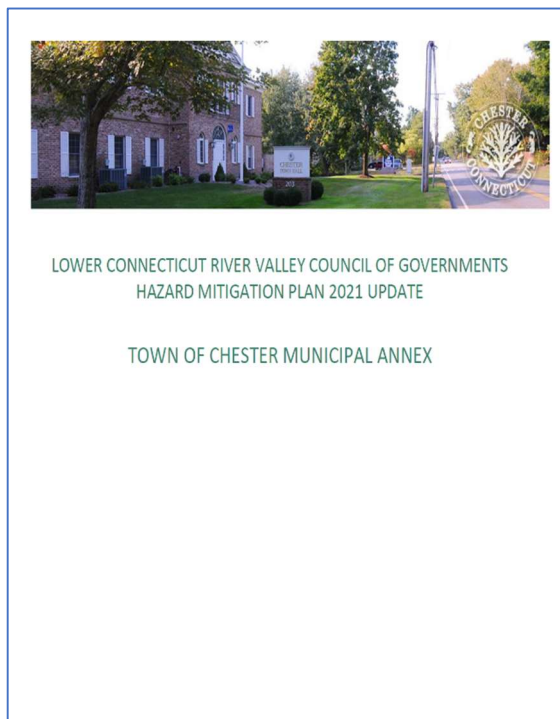
Town of Chester Online Community Resilience Building Workshop - Summary of Findings Report. (2026). Community Resilience Building Program. The Nature Conservancy and Sustainable CT. Chester, Connecticut.

## **Acknowledgements**

Special thanks to the Town leadership, staff, and community members for their willingness to embrace the process in hopes of a more resilient future for Chester. This online Community Resilience Building Workshop was made possible in large part through the dedicated contribution of the facilitation team members listed above who skillfully conducted the Chester Community Resilience Building workshop in close partnership with the Town's Core CRB Project Team.

# Appendix A

## Chester Mitigation Action Plan and Actions\*



**\*Gathered from Chester's Municipal Annex within the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2021).**

KEY: SW= Severe Weather, TW = Tornado/Wind, ET = Extreme Temperatures, WS=Winter Storm, F = Flood, TI = Tree Damage and Invasive Species, WF = Wild Fire, D = Drought, E = Earthquake, CC = Climate Change

Table 5-3. Chester Hazard Mitigation Strategies and Prioritization.

| Activity # | Goal/Objective | Activity Description                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Lead Agency | Est. Cost*        | Potential Funding Sources | Timeframe for Completion | Hazard (s) Addressed | Weighted STAPLEE Criteria |             |                   |                |                        |                     |                   |                |               |            |                  |               |                       |                    | Total STAPLEE Score/Priority |
|------------|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
|            |                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |             |                   |                           |                          |                      | Social Benefit            | Social Cost | Technical Benefit | Technical Cost | Administrative Benefit | Administrative Cost | Political Benefit | Political Cost | Legal Benefit | Legal Cost | Economic Benefit | Economic Cost | Environmental Benefit | Environmental Cost |                              |
| 1          | 2-1            | Conduct a study to assess the extent to which the dredging of impoundments in Chester is feasible, would increase the floodwater storage capacity of the impoundments, and would reduce flood risks for the community. | DPW, ConCom | \$10,000-\$25,000 | OB Grant                  | 7/2023 – 6/2024          | F, CC                | 0                         | 0           | 1                 | 1              | 0                      | 0                   | 0                 | 0              | 0             | 0          | 0                | 0             | 1                     | 1                  | 6/H                          |

| Activity # | Goal/Objective | Activity Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Lead Agency | Est. Cost*        | Potential Funding Sources | Timeframe for Completion | Hazard (s) Addressed | Weighted STAPLEE Criteria |             |                   |                |                        |                     |                   |                |               |            |                  |               |                       |                    | Total STAPLEE Score/Priority |
|------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
|            |                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |             |                   |                           |                          |                      | Social Benefit            | Social Cost | Technical Benefit | Technical Cost | Administrative Benefit | Administrative Cost | Political Benefit | Political Cost | Legal Benefit | Legal Cost | Economic Benefit | Economic Cost | Environmental Benefit | Environmental Cost |                              |
| 2          | 3-1            | Work with an organization such as Trout Unlimited, American Rivers, the Connecticut River Conservancy, CT DEEP to identify dams in Town that may benefit from removal and approach their owners to offer facilitation of that removal. | DPW, ConCom | \$10,000-\$25,000 | OB Staff Time             | 7/2022 – 6/2024          | F                    | 0                         | 0           | 1                 | 0              | 1                      | 1                   | 0                 | 0              | 1             | 0          | 0                | 0             | 0                     | 0                  | 5/H                          |
| 3          | 2-1            | Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of dams in Chester to guide risk mitigation actions and grant applications moving forward                                                                                                     | DPW         | \$10,000-\$25,000 | OB Grant                  | 7/2022 – 6/2024          | F                    | 0                         | 0           | 1                 | 0              | 1                      | 1                   | 0                 | 0              | 1             | 0          | 0                | 0             | 0                     | 0                  | 5/H                          |

| Activity # | Goal/Objective | Activity Description                                                                                                                                                                                               | Lead Agency      | Est. Cost*   | Potential Funding Sources | Timeframe for Completion | Hazard (s) Addressed | Weighted STAPLEE Criteria |             |                   |                |                        |                     |                   |                |               |            |                  |               |                       |                    |   |     | Total STAPLEE Score/Priority |
|------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---|-----|------------------------------|
|            |                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                  |              |                           |                          |                      | Social Benefit            | Social Cost | Technical Benefit | Technical Cost | Administrative Benefit | Administrative Cost | Political Benefit | Political Cost | Legal Benefit | Legal Cost | Economic Benefit | Economic Cost | Environmental Benefit | Environmental Cost |   |     |                              |
| 4          | 1-1            | Increase the “look back” period for the definition of “Substantial Damage” in the Chester zoning regulations so that cumulative damages to flood-prone properties will trigger requirements for mitigative action. | P&Z              | \$0-\$1,000  | OB Staff Time             | 7/2021 – 6/2023          | F                    | 1                         | 0           | 0                 | 0              | 0                      | 0                   | 0                 | 0              | 0             | 1          | 0                | 1             | 0                     | 0                  | 0 | 4/M |                              |
| 5          | 1-1            | Institute a program to incentivize landlords to invest in risk-reduction measures that will benefit their commercial or residential tenants (for example, permit fees for mitigation measures could be waived).    | Select Board P&Z | \$0-\$10,000 | OB Staff Time             | 7/2021 – 6/2023          | SW, TW, WS, F, E     | 0                         | 0           | 1                 | 0              | 1                      | 0                   | 0                 | 0              | 0             | 1          | 0                | 1             | 0                     | 0                  | 0 | 6/M |                              |

| Activity # | Goal/Objective | Activity Description                                                                                                                                         | Lead Agency | Est. Cost*         | Potential Funding Sources | Timeframe for Completion | Hazard (s) Addressed | Weighted STAPLEE Criteria |             |                   |                |                        |                     |                   |                |               |            |                  |               |                       |                    | Total STAPLEE Score/Priority |
|------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
|            |                |                                                                                                                                                              |             |                    |                           |                          |                      | Social Benefit            | Social Cost | Technical Benefit | Technical Cost | Administrative Benefit | Administrative Cost | Political Benefit | Political Cost | Legal Benefit | Legal Cost | Economic Benefit | Economic Cost | Environmental Benefit | Environmental Cost |                              |
| 6          | 1-1            | Complete a Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant application to elevate Dock Road.                                                                        | DPW         | \$50,000-\$100,000 | Grant HMA                 | 7/2021 – 6/2024          | F, CC                | 0                         | 0           | 0                 | 1              | 0                      | 1                   | 0                 | 0              | 0             | 0          | 1                | 1             | 0                     | 1                  | 8/H                          |
| 7          | 2-1            | Install an underground water tank in the Cedar Lake area to provide firefighting water.                                                                      | DPW, FD     | \$20,000-\$50,000  | OB Grant                  | 7/2021 – 6/2023          | WF, D                | 1                         | 0           | 0                 | 0              | 0                      | 0                   | 1                 | 0              | 0             | 0          | 1                | 1             | 1                     | 0                  | 7/H                          |
| 8          | 2-1            | Conduct a study to identify needs and alternatives with regard to wildland firefighting capabilities at the Inspiration lane commercial and industrial park. | FD          | \$1,000-\$5,000    | OB                        | 7/2023 – 6/2025          | WF                   | 1                         | 0           | 0                 | 0              | 1                      | 1                   | 0                 | 0              | 0             | 0          | 0                | 0             | 0                     | 0                  | 3/L                          |

| Activity # | Goal/Objective | Activity Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Lead Agency      | Est. Cost*         | Potential Funding Sources | Timeframe for Completion | Hazard (s) Addressed | Weighted STAPLEE Criteria |             |                   |                |                        |                     |                   |                |               |            |                  |               |                       |                    | Total STAPLEE Score/Priority |
|------------|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
|            |                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                  |                    |                           |                          |                      | Social Benefit            | Social Cost | Technical Benefit | Technical Cost | Administrative Benefit | Administrative Cost | Political Benefit | Political Cost | Legal Benefit | Legal Cost | Economic Benefit | Economic Cost | Environmental Benefit | Environmental Cost |                              |
| 9          | 1-1            | Require all facilities housing large populations of higher-risk individuals (such as nursing and independent living institutions) to submit a natural hazard response plan to the Town. Assign a department to review and approve these plans. | EMD              | \$1,000 - \$5,000  | OB Staff Time             | 7/2021 – 6/2023          | SW, TW, WS, F        | 1                         | 1           | 0                 | 0              | 1                      | 1                   | 0                 | 0              | 0             | 0          | 0                | 0             | 0                     | 0                  | 4/H                          |
| 10         | 2-1            | Complete restoration and stabilization of Chester Creek at North Main and High Street                                                                                                                                                          | ConCom, DPW, P&Z | \$25,000- \$50,000 | Grant HMA                 | 7/2022 – 6/2023          | F                    | 1                         | 0           | 1                 | 1              | 0                      | 0                   | 1                 | 1              | 0             | 0          | 1                | 1             | 0                     | 0                  | 11/H                         |

| Activity # | Goal/Objective | Activity Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Lead Agency      | Est. Cost*          | Potential Funding Sources | Timeframe for Completion | Hazard (s) Addressed | Weighted STAPLEE Criteria |             |                   |                |                        |                     |                   |                |               |            |                  |               |                       |                    | Total STAPLEE Score/Priority |
|------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
|            |                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                  |                     |                           |                          |                      | Social Benefit            | Social Cost | Technical Benefit | Technical Cost | Administrative Benefit | Administrative Cost | Political Benefit | Political Cost | Legal Benefit | Legal Cost | Economic Benefit | Economic Cost | Environmental Benefit | Environmental Cost |                              |
| 11         | 2-1            | Conduct an alternatives analysis to identify measures for restoring natural flows and stabilizing banks of Chester Creek at Deep Hollow and Liberty Road. Include CT DEEP, USACE, and other stakeholders in the process as appropriate. | ConCom, DPW, P&Z | \$20,000 - \$25,000 | OB Grant                  | 7/2021 – 6/2024          | F                    | 1                         | 0           | 1                 | 1              | 0                      | 0                   | 1                 | 0              | 0             | 0          | 1                | 1             | 0                     | 0                  | 10/H                         |
| 12         | 2-1            | Develop a prioritized list of undersized culverts to be replaced with larger structures to facilitate passage of debris and rubble.                                                                                                     | DPW              | \$5,000- \$10,000   | OB                        | 7/2021 – 6/2022          | F                    | 1                         | 0           | 1                 | 0              | 0                      | 0                   | 1                 | 0              | 0             | 0          | 1                | 0             | 0                     | 0                  | 6/H                          |

| Activity # | Goal/Objective | Activity Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Lead Agency   | Est. Cost*        | Potential Funding Sources | Timeframe for Completion | Hazard (s) Addressed | Weighted STAPLEE Criteria |             |                   |                |                        |                     |                   |                |               |            |                  |               |                       |                    | Total STAPLEE Score/Priority |
|------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
|            |                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |               |                   |                           |                          |                      | Social Benefit            | Social Cost | Technical Benefit | Technical Cost | Administrative Benefit | Administrative Cost | Political Benefit | Political Cost | Legal Benefit | Legal Cost | Economic Benefit | Economic Cost | Environmental Benefit | Environmental Cost |                              |
| 13         | 2-1            | Replace priority undersized culverts with larger structures to facilitate passage of debris and rubble. At the time of development of this hazard mitigation plan, the Town had identified six culverts restricted by rocks and rubble. | DPW           | \$25,000-\$50,000 | Grant HMA                 | 7/2022 – 6/2025          | F                    | 1                         | 0           | 1                 | 1              | 0                      | 0                   | 1                 | 0              | 0             | 0          | 1                | 1             | 0                     | 0                  | 10/H                         |
| 14         | 3-1            | Work with local businesses and the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce to explore options for reducing risks to businesses in Chester. This may include assisting businesses to develop business continuity plans.                     | P&Z, EMD, EDC | \$0-\$1,000       | OB                        | 7/2022 – 6/2025          | SW, WS, TW, F, CC    | 1                         | 1           | 0                 | 0              | 1                      | 1                   | 0                 | 0              | 0             | 0          | 0                | 0             | 0                     | 0                  | 4/M                          |

| Activity # | Goal/Objective | Activity Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Lead Agency            | Est. Cost*      | Potential Funding Sources | Timeframe for Completion | Hazard (s) Addressed | Weighted STAPLEE Criteria |             |                   |                |                        |                     |                   |                |               |            |                  |               |                       |                    | Total STAPLEE Score/Priority |
|------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
|            |                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                        |                 |                           |                          |                      | Social Benefit            | Social Cost | Technical Benefit | Technical Cost | Administrative Benefit | Administrative Cost | Political Benefit | Political Cost | Legal Benefit | Legal Cost | Economic Benefit | Economic Cost | Environmental Benefit | Environmental Cost |                              |
| 15         | 3-1            | Provide guidance to local businesses on hazard and risk mitigation options accessible to them.                                                                                                                                                                                                      | P&Z, EMD, EDC          | \$0-\$1,000     | OB                        | 7/2023 – 6/2025          | SW, WS, TW, F, CC    | 1                         | 1           | 0                 | 0              | 1                      | 1                   | 0                 | 0              | 0             | 0          | 0                | 0             | 0                     | 0                  | 4/M                          |
| 16         | 3-1            | Conduct a direct outreach campaign to owners of Repetitive Loss and Severe Repetitive Loss properties informing them of mitigation options including elevation, relocation, and acquisition. Include information about funding and technical assistance from municipal, state, and federal sources. | Select Board, P&Z, EMD | \$1,000-\$5,000 | OB Grant HMA              | 7/2021 – 6/2025          | F                    | 1                         | 1           | 0                 | 0              | 1                      | 1                   | 0                 | 0              | 0             | 0          | 1                | 0             | 0                     | 0                  | 6/H                          |

|    |     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                   |                     |           |                 |                                     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |     |
|----|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 17 | 3-1 | Develop a written annual schedule for natural hazard public education and outreach efforts through the Town website, social media outlets, mailers, in-person outlets, neighborhood associations, and other media, to ensure consistent and long-term public education programs. Education should include information on sheltering locations, private property owner mitigation action options, techniques for homeowner self-inspection, hazard insurance, and geographic distributions of natural hazard risk zones in Town. | Select Board, EMD | \$5,000 - \$10,000  | OB        | 7/2021 – 6/2023 | SW, TW, ET, WS, F, TI, WF, D, E, CC | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4/M |
| 18 | 2-1 | Upgrade or install generators at critical facilities in need of emergency power, including future municipal buildings.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | EMD, DPW          | \$50,000- \$100,000 | Grant HMA | 7/2021 – 6/2025 | SW, TW, WS, F                       | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 7/H |

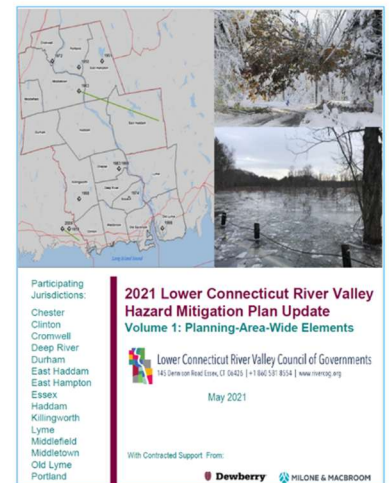
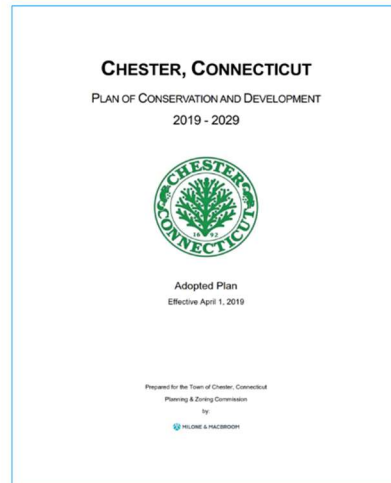
| Activity # | Goal/Objective | Activity Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Lead Agency | Est. Cost*           | Potential Funding Sources | Timeframe for Completion | Hazard (s) Addressed                 | Weighted STAPLEE Criteria |             |                   |                |                        |                     |                   |                |               |            |                  |               |                       |                    | Total STAPLEE Score/Priority |
|------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
|            |                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |             |                      |                           |                          |                                      | Social Benefit            | Social Cost | Technical Benefit | Technical Cost | Administrative Benefit | Administrative Cost | Political Benefit | Political Cost | Legal Benefit | Legal Cost | Economic Benefit | Economic Cost | Environmental Benefit | Environmental Cost |                              |
| 19         | 2-1            | Install a generator for back-up power at the Public Works Garage.                                                                                                                                                                                                         | DPW         | \$50,000 - \$100,000 | Grant HMA                 | 7/2022 – 6/2023          | SW, TW, WS, F                        | 1                         | 0           | 0                 | 0              | 0                      | 0                   | 1                 | 1              | 0             | 0          | 1                | 1             | 0                     | 0                  | 7/H                          |
| 20         | 3-1            | Conduct a campaign to inform Chester residents that are elderly, disabled, non-English speakers, or have other functional needs, about the Town's protocols for hazard alerts and communication. Work with these populations to identify needs and gaps in the protocols. | SS, PH      | \$0 - \$1,000        | OB                        | 7/2021 – 6/2022          | SW, TW, ET, WS, F, TI, WVF, D, E, CC | 1                         | 0           | 0                 | 0              | 1                      | 1                   | 0                 | 0              | 0             | 0          | 0                | 0             | 0                     | 0                  | 3/L                          |

| Activity # | Goal/Objective | Activity Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Lead Agency  | Est. Cost* | Potential Funding Sources | Timeframe for Completion | Hazard (s) Addressed | Weighted STAPLEE Criteria |             |                   |                |                        |                     |                   |                |               |            |                  |               |                       |                    | Total STAPLEE Score/Priority |
|------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
|            |                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |              |            |                           |                          |                      | Social Benefit            | Social Cost | Technical Benefit | Technical Cost | Administrative Benefit | Administrative Cost | Political Benefit | Political Cost | Legal Benefit | Legal Cost | Economic Benefit | Economic Cost | Environmental Benefit | Environmental Cost |                              |
| 21         | 2-1            | Paper Records Preservation – Convert all paper records maintained by the municipality to electronic format, consistent with State recommendations, to ensure their survival. Establish protocols for practice going forward                                  | Select Board | \$5,000    | OB                        | 2025                     | All                  | 0                         | 0           | 1                 | -1             | 1                      | -1                  | 0                 | 0              | 1             | -1         | 0                | 0             | 0                     | 0                  | 2/L                          |
| 22         | 1-1            | Drought Study and Water Conservation – Conduct town-wide study of ground and surface water capacity as it relates to planning for droughts. Develop recommendations for future land use to include recharge and site design to encourage water conservation. | ConCom       | \$25,000   | OB, USDA Grant            | 2025                     | DR                   | 1                         | 0           | 1                 | -1             | 0                      | 0                   | 0                 | 0              | 0             | -1         | 0                | 0             | 1                     | 0                  | 3/L                          |

| Activity #                    | Goal/Objective                                                                                                                     | Activity Description                                                                                                                                                                      | Lead Agency | Est. Cost*                        | Potential Funding Sources                                                                                                   | Timeframe for Completion | Hazard (s) Addressed | Weighted STAPLEE Criteria |             |                   |                |                        |                     |                   |                |               |            |                  |               |                       |                    | Total STAPLEE Score/Priority |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
|                               |                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                           |             |                                   |                                                                                                                             |                          |                      | Social Benefit            | Social Cost | Technical Benefit | Technical Cost | Administrative Benefit | Administrative Cost | Political Benefit | Political Cost | Legal Benefit | Legal Cost | Economic Benefit | Economic Cost | Environmental Benefit | Environmental Cost |                              |
| 23                            | 1-1                                                                                                                                | Structural Reports – Continue to require structural engineering reports for expansion or alteration of buildings within the V-Zone. Evaluate benefits of doing same in other flood zones. | P&Z         | Staff Time                        | OB                                                                                                                          | 20221-2025               | FL                   | 1                         | 0           | 1                 | 0              | 0                      | 0                   | 0                 | 0              | 1             | 0          | 1                | 0             | 0                     | 0                  | 5/M                          |
| EDC<br>SS<br>PH<br>DPW<br>EMD | Economic Development Commission<br>Social Services<br>Public Health<br>Department of Public Works<br>Emergency Management Director |                                                                                                                                                                                           |             | P&Z<br>BOE<br>ConCom<br>OB<br>HMA | Planning & Zoning<br>Board of Education<br>Conservation Commission<br>Operating Budget<br>FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance |                          |                      |                           |             |                   |                |                        |                     |                   |                |               |            |                  |               |                       |                    |                              |

# Appendix B

## Chester Map Resource Packet\* Used During Workshop



**\*Gathered from Chester Plan of Conservation and Development (2019), the Lower Connecticut River Valley Plan of Conservation and Development (2021), and the Lower Connecticut River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2021).**



*Lower Connecticut River Valley Region*

Lower Connecticut River  
Valley COG Natural  
Hazard Mitigation Plan

Location Map  
Chester

LEGEND

 Municipalities

DESCRIPTION

Location of Municipalities within the  
RiverCOG.

Data Sources:

RiverCOG GIS: County and Town  
Boundaries

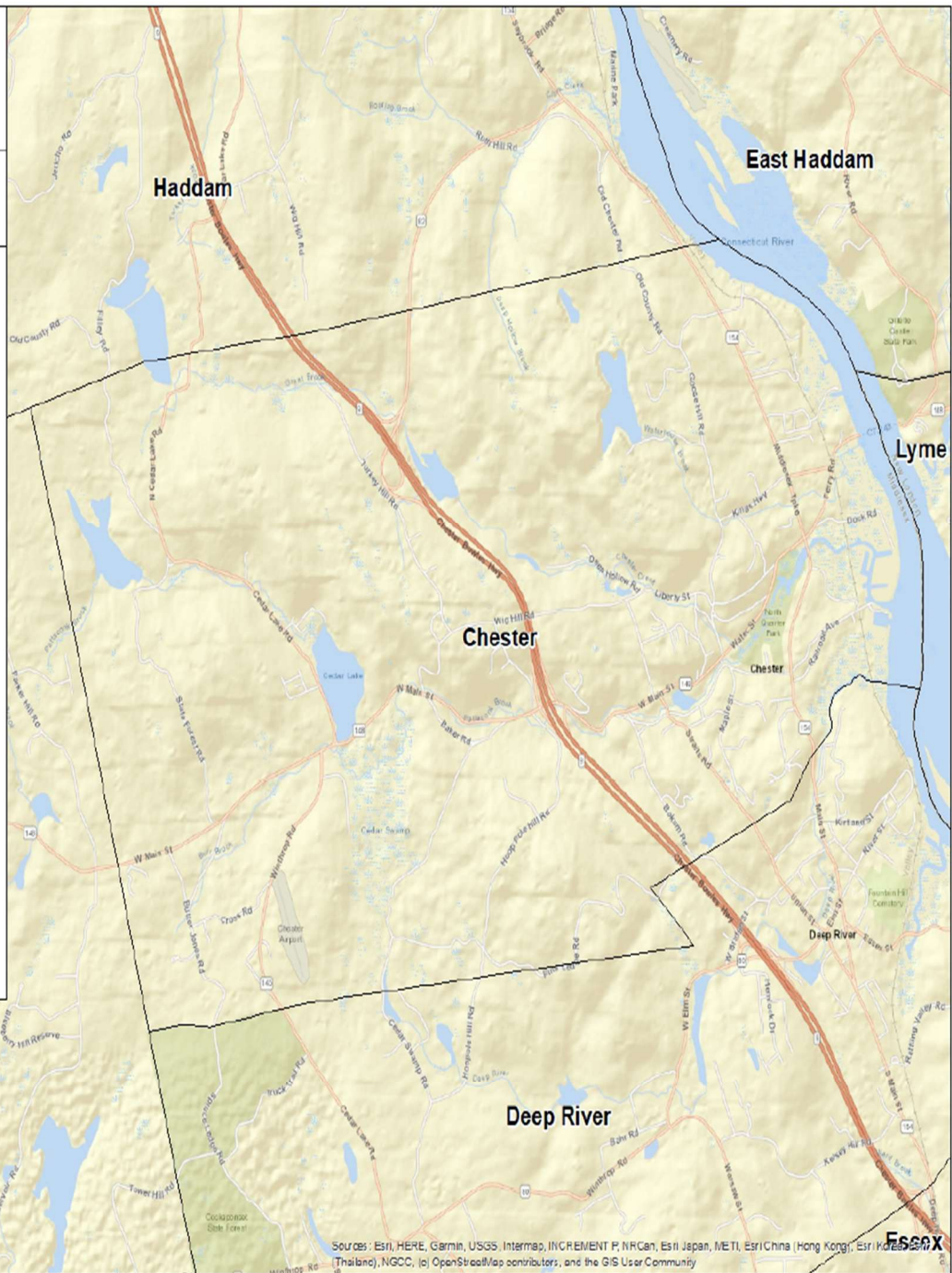
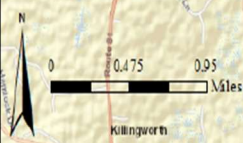
Projection

Connecticut State Plane 1983



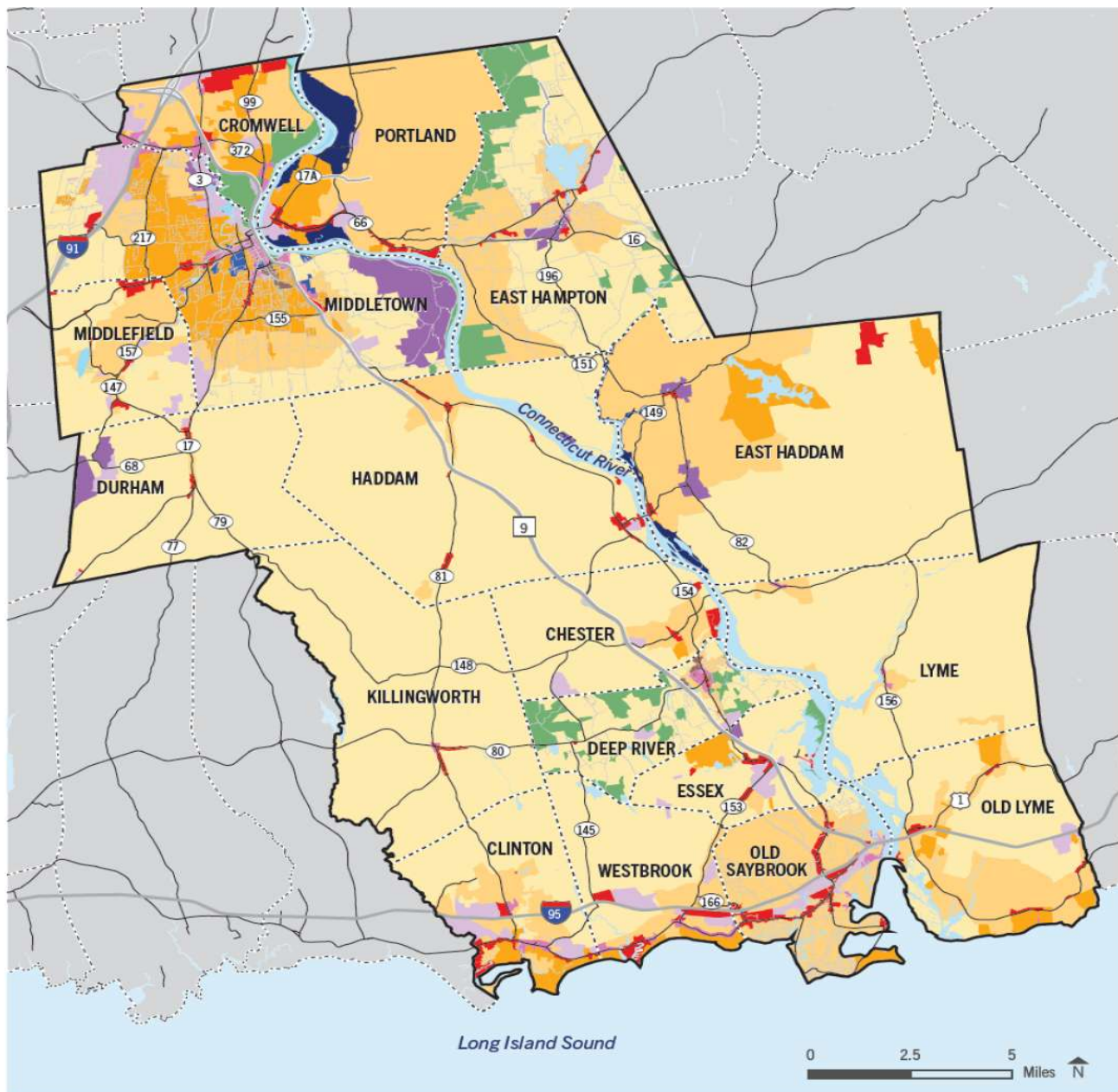
**DISCLAIMER:** The purpose of the data shown is for risk  
assessment and planning purposes only and should not be  
used for more detailed evaluation.

**NOTE:** This map relates to the 2020 Update of the Lower  
Connecticut River Valley COG Natural Hazard Mitigation  
Plan.



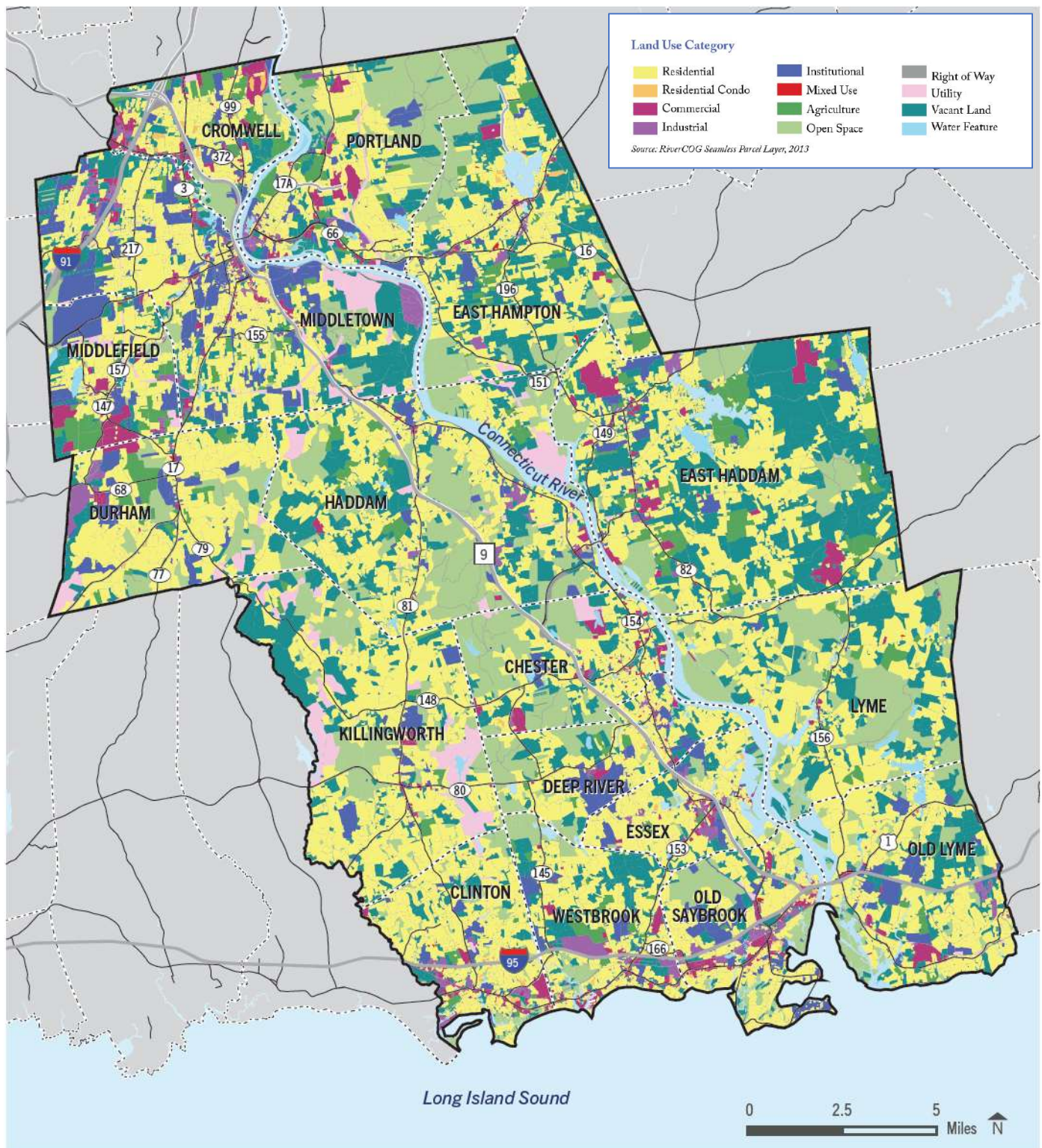
Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Figure 2-1. Chester Location.



Generalized Zoning Map Source: Compiled Municipal Zoning Maps





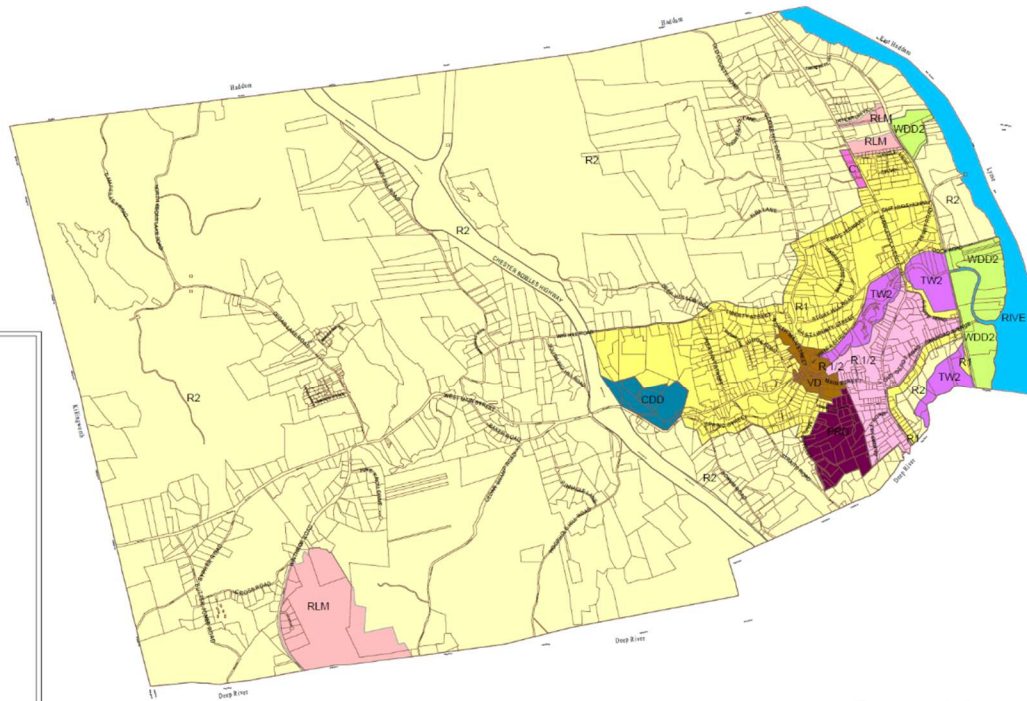
2013 Generalized Land Use Map\*

\*This map is a generalized land use map for the purpose of comparing land use across the Region. It is not intended to replace local land use maps which may be more accurate than this map.

# TOWN OF CHESTER ZONING MAP

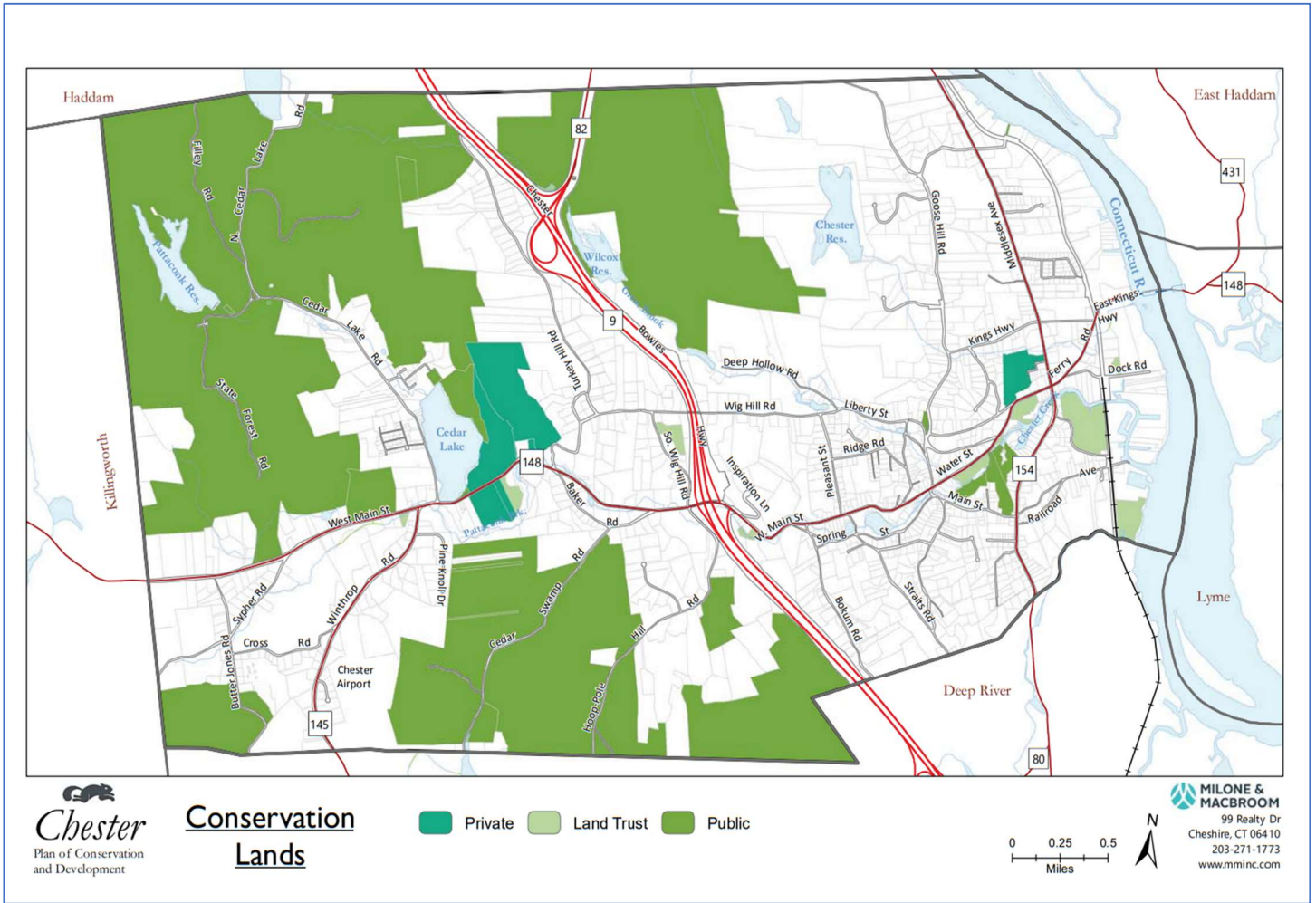


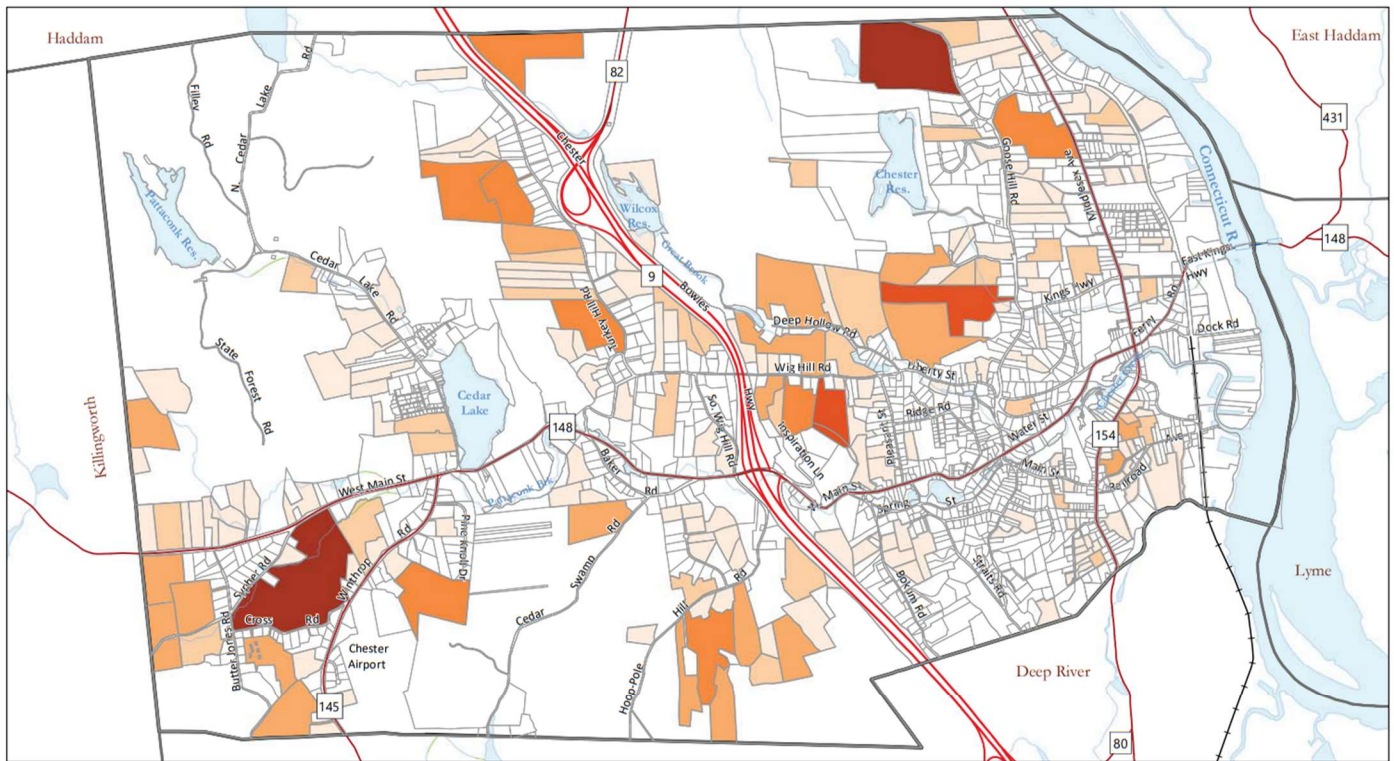
| Legend                                                                                             |               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:blue;"></span>        | C             |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:orange;"></span>      | CDD           |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:green;"></span>       | PRD           |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:purple;"></span>      | R 1/2         |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:yellow;"></span>      | R1            |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightyellow;"></span> | R2            |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightblue;"></span>   | RIVER         |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightcoral;"></span>  | RLM           |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightpink;"></span>   | TW2           |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightgreen;"></span>  | VD            |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color:lightblue;"></span>   | WDD2          |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; border:1px solid black;"></span>       | Property Line |



0 1,900 3,800 7,600 11,400 Feet

Map prepared by Town of Chester Land Use Office.  
Map is for planning purposes only and contains  
no authoritative positional information. Map sources  
include Town of Chester internal GIS data and CAI.  
Map dated 8/29/22

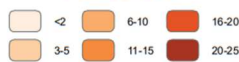




**Chester**  
Plan of Conservation  
and Development

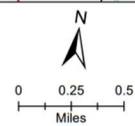
**Density & Location of  
Potential New  
Dwelling Units (DUs)**

**Potential DU's**

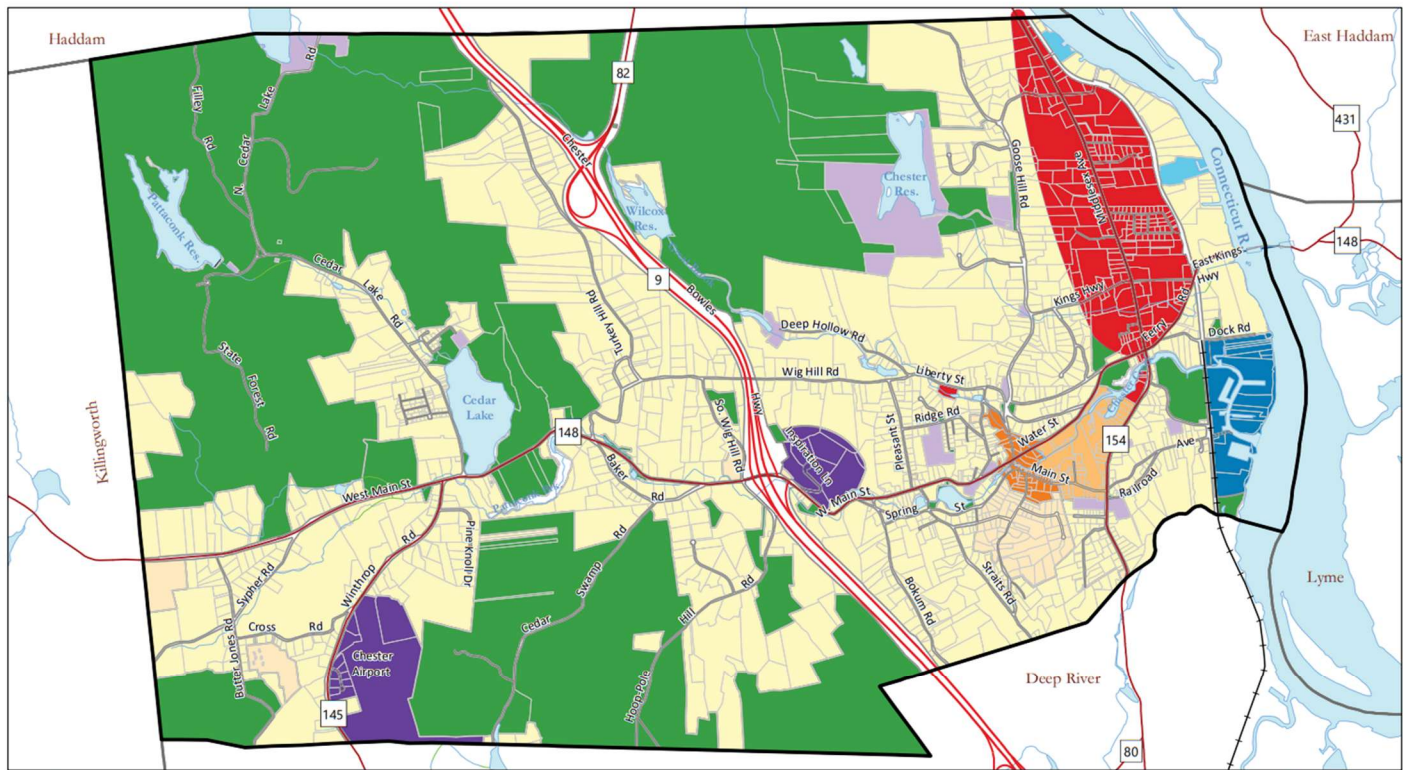


| Zoning | Res. Potential - Vacant                   |                                |
|--------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|        | Buildable<br>Residentially<br>Zoned Acres | Potential<br>Dwelling<br>Units |
| R-1/2  | 2                                         | 4                              |
| R-1    | 30                                        | 24                             |
| R-2    | 590                                       | 257                            |

| Zoning | Res. Potential - Under Dev.               |                                |
|--------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
|        | Buildable<br>Residentially<br>Zoned Acres | Potential<br>Dwelling<br>Units |
| R-1/2  | 44                                        | 48                             |
| R-1    | 100                                       | 52                             |
| R-2    | 638                                       | 219                            |



**MILONE & MACBROOM**  
99 Realty Dr  
Cheshire, CT 06410  
203-271-1773  
www.mminc.com



**Chester**  
Plan of Conservation  
and Development

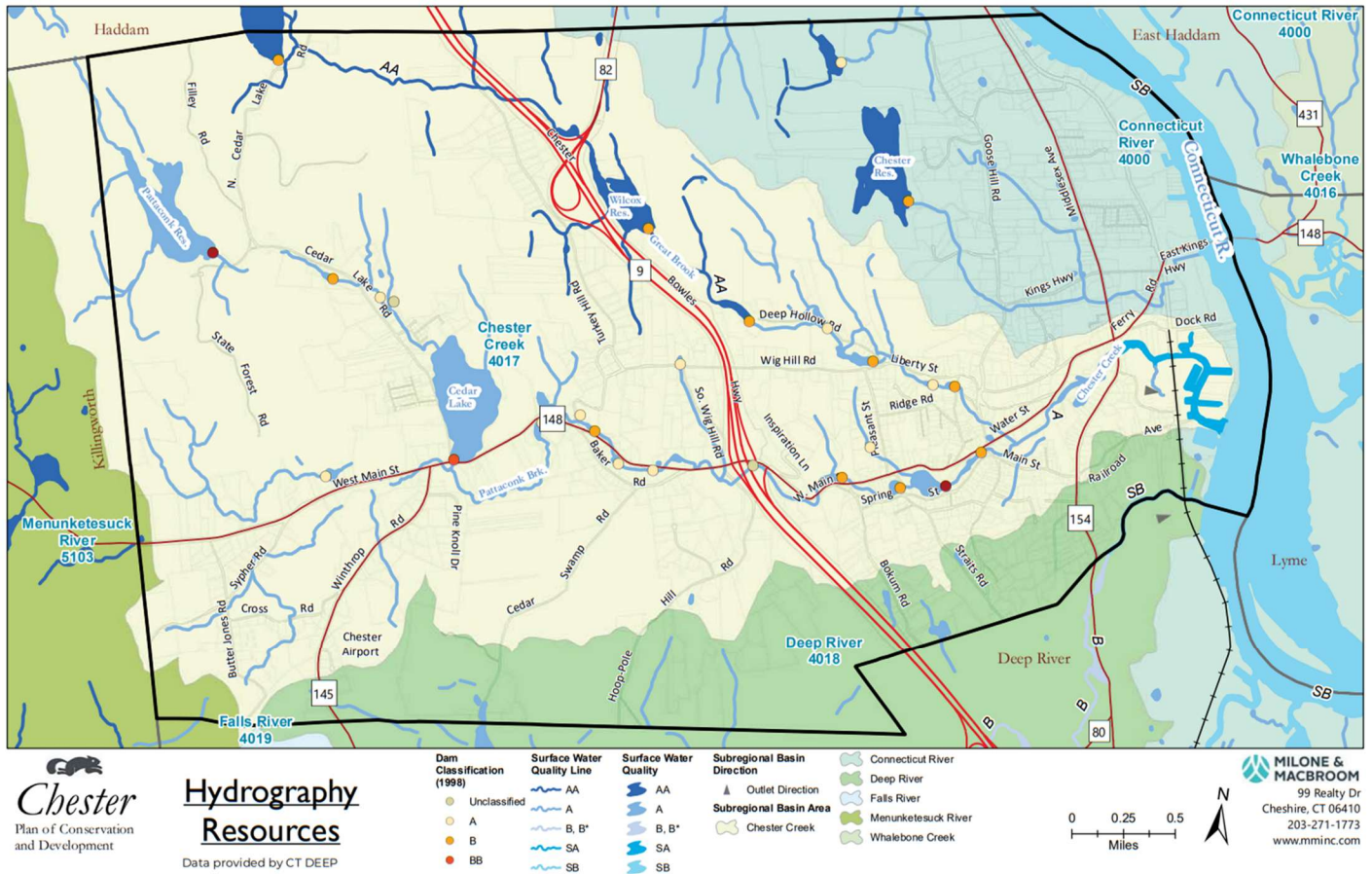
## Future Land Use

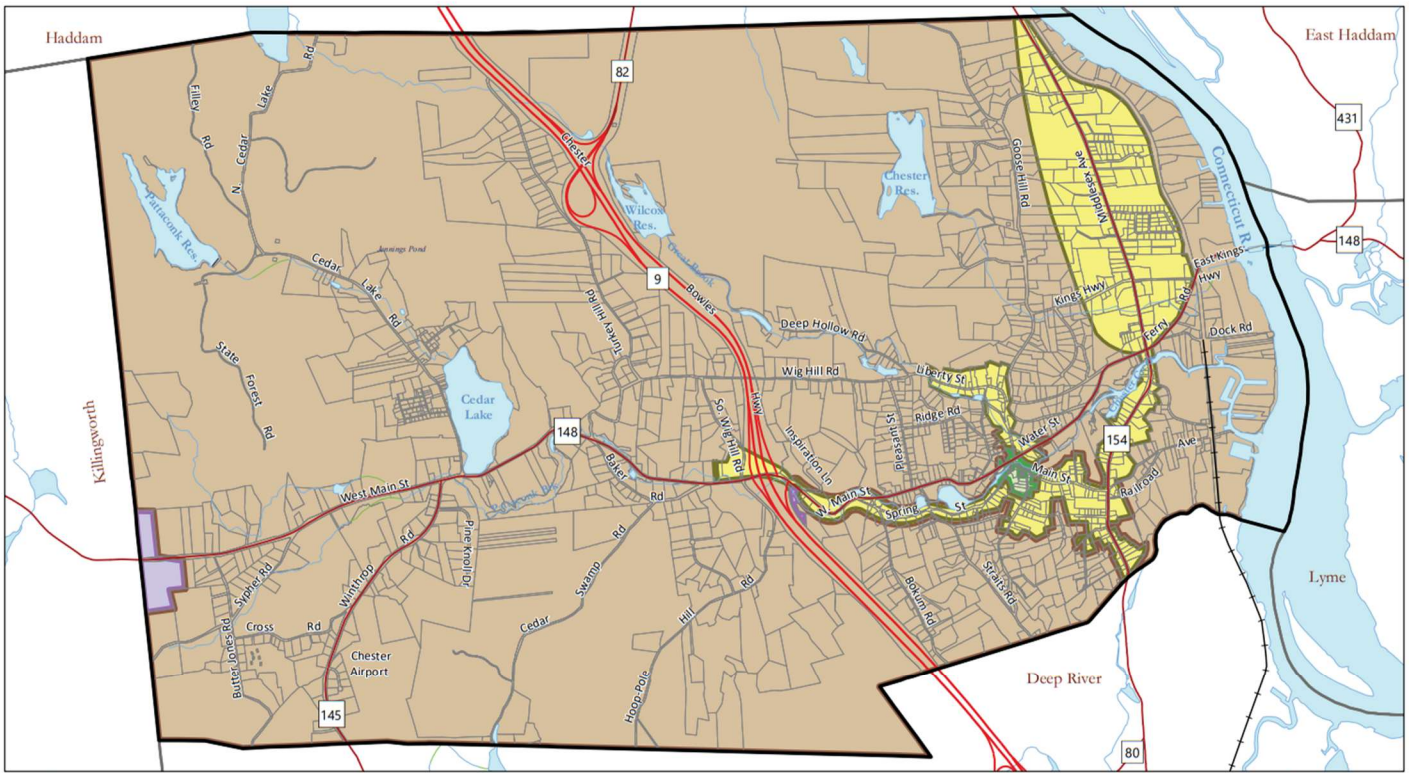
- |                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Low Density Residential    | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: lightblue; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Riverfront Development Area | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: orange; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Village District                  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: green; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Open Space |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: orange; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Medium Density Residential | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: red; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Priority Development Overlay      | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: orange; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Potential Village Expansion       |                                                                                                                                      |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: blue; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Marine Commercial            | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: purple; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Industrial Development         | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: lightpurple; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Public & Private Institution |                                                                                                                                      |
- Parcel Boundary Date: 2016  
Land Use Data: 11/30/2017

0 0.25 0.5  
Miles



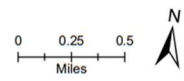
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**Chester Sewer Plan**  
Plan of Conservation  
and Development

- Existing Sewer Service Area
- Potential Service Area
- On Site Disposal
- Sewer Avoidance Area



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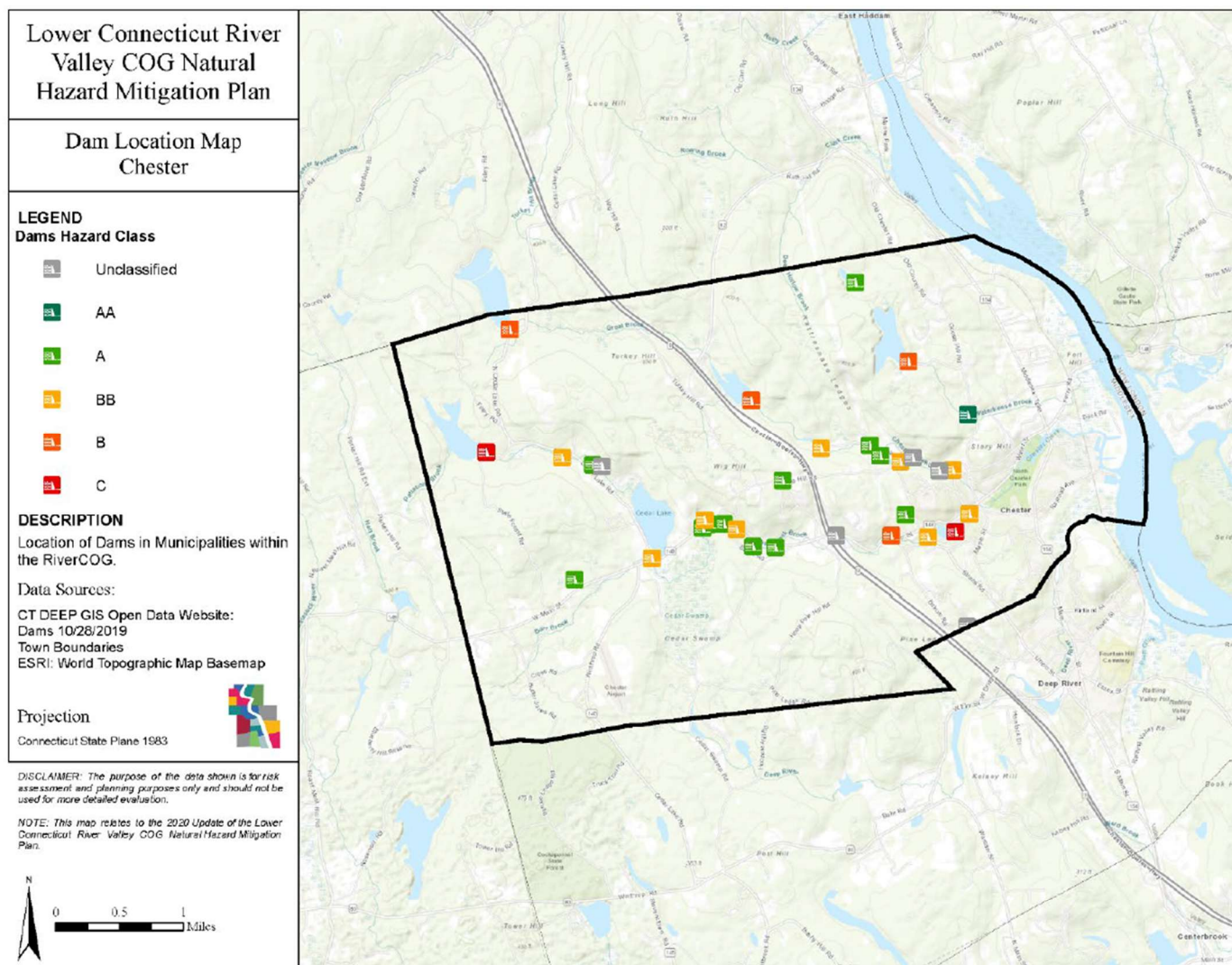
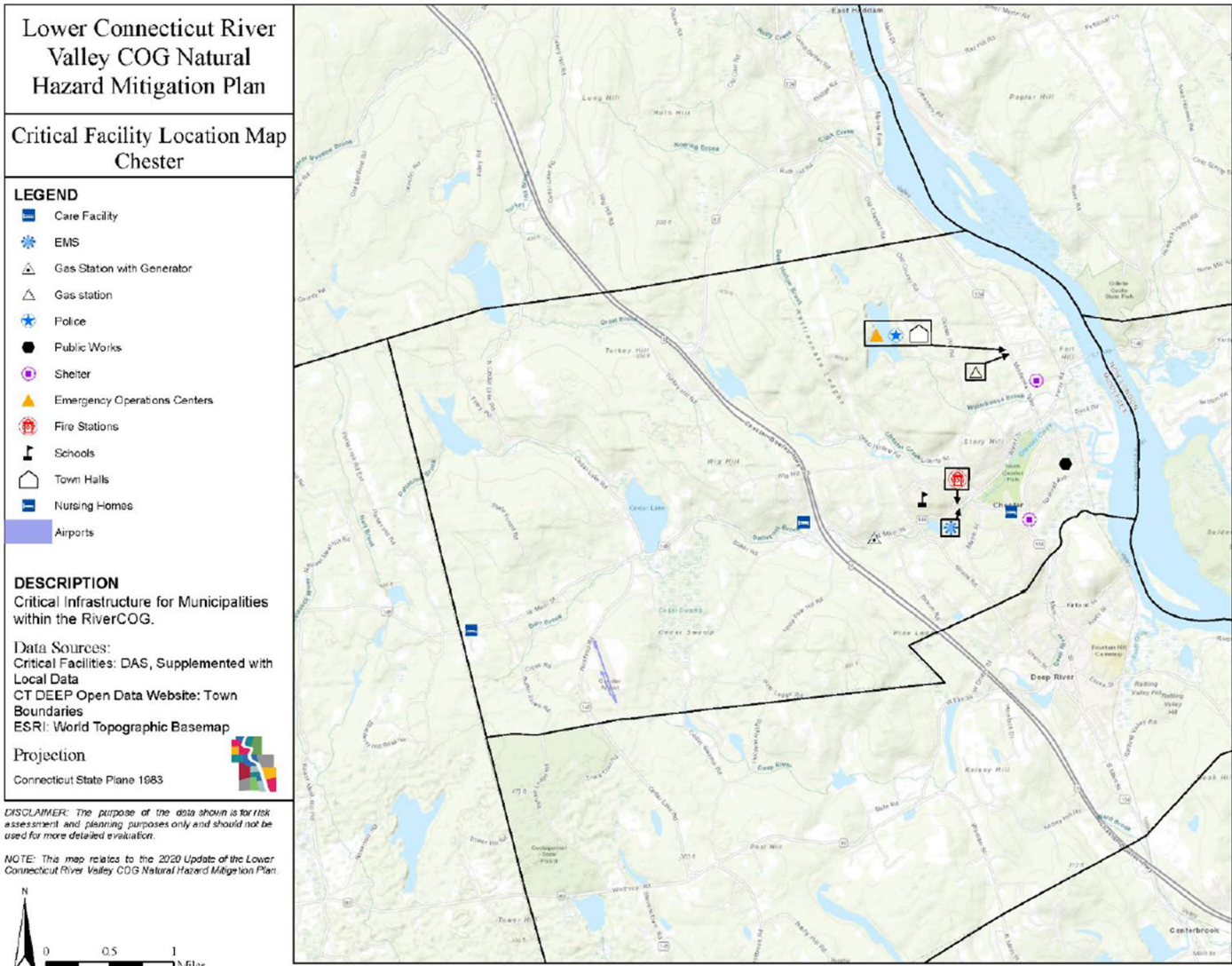


Figure 2-4 shows the location of all dams within Chester. Moderate, Significant and high hazard-class dams are presented in Table 2-1. A full list of dams is provided in Appendix B.



**Figure 4-1. Location of Critical Facilities in Chester.**

\*The three mapped care facilities were not listed by the town as critical facilities but are included in a state dataset of critical facilities.



[www.CommunityResilienceBuilding.org](http://www.CommunityResilienceBuilding.org)