



West Hartford



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Community Resilience Building Workshop

Summary of Findings

June 2021



Town of West Hartford, Connecticut

Community Resilience Building Workshop

Summary of Findings

Overview

The need for municipalities, regional planning organizations, 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. Recent events such as Tropical Storm Irene and Super Storm Sandy have reinforced this urgency and compelled leading communities like the Town of West Hartford 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 West Hartford embarked on certification with Sustainable CT. As part of that certification, The Nature Conservancy and Sustainable CT provided the Town with a voluntary process to conduct an assessment of climate change impacts and generate potential and prioritized solutions. In May 2021, a municipal-based core team organized a Community Resilience Building Workshop facilitated by the Nature Conservancy 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 priority resilience actions for the Town of West Hartford.

The West Hartford 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 West Hartford benefited from a unique “anywhere at any scale”, community-driven process called Community Resilience Building (CRB) (www.CommunityResilienceBuilding.org). The CRB’s tools, 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 West Hartford. The West Hartford Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Municipal Annex (2019) and Plan of Conservation and Development (2020) were particularly instructive. Using the CRB process, rich with information, experience, and dialogue, the participants produced the findings presented in this summary report including an overview of the top hazards, current concerns and challenges, existing strengths, and proposed actions to improve resilience to hazards and climate change today and in the future.

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

Summary of Findings

Top Hazards and Vulnerable Areas for the Community

Prior to the CRB Workshop, the West Hartford Core Project Team identified the top hazards for the Town. The hazards of greatest concern included hurricanes and tropical storms, flooding (riverine, urban runoff), and severe winter storms (ice, wind, snow). Additional hazards mentioned and discussed during the workshop included more intense and longer duration heat waves and droughts. These hazards have direct and increasing impacts on the infrastructure, residents, and environment including neighborhoods, natural areas (rivers, wetlands, parks), roads, bridges, businesses and commerce, municipal facilities, school system, civic events, churches, social support services and other critical infrastructure and community assets.

Top Hazards and Areas of Concern for the Community

Top Hazards

- Hurricanes and Tropical Storms
- Flooding - Riverine & Urban Runoff
- Severe Winter Storms (Ice, Wind, Snow)
- Heat Waves & Droughts

Areas of Concern in West Hartford* - Several categories and locations were identified as being particularly vulnerable by workshop participants including:

Infrastructure: Combined Sewer Overflow System, High School (back-up power source), Stormwater Management/Drainage System (outdated, inadequate for current and future volumes), Impervious Cover (asphalt parking lots), Electrical Power Grid (overhead poles and lines), Older Housing Stock (South Main Street, Farmington Avenue, New Britain Avenue), Major Town Facilities (27 used daily - 7 with back-up power), School System (16 schools - only 1 with back-up power), Fire Stations (outdated), High Hazard Dams and Reservoirs (managed by MDC), Drinking Water Supply System, King Phillip Middle School, Faxon Library, Multi-Family Dwellings, Senior Housing Facilities (northend - Bishops Corner), Montclair and Fox Meadow area (along Trout Brook), Emergency Operations Center.

Ecosystems/Waterways: Trees (dead and standing near power lines, drought, pests & pathogens), Trout Brook, Park System, MDC Reservoir System, Forest Lands, Wetlands, Park River Watershed, Meadow, Piper, Rockledge, and Tumbledown Brooks, North Branch Park River, Kennedy Brook, Kane Brook.

Roads, Bridges, and Road Network: Traffic Lights & Controls, Sidewalk Network, Trout Brook Road, Plowed Snow Storage Locations, Mountain Road, New Britain/Elmwood Area, Fern Street Bridge.

Vulnerable Populations: Low/Moderate Income Families (particularly in southeast - Hillcrest Area), Disabled and Special Needs Residents, Elderly, Non-English Speaking Residents, HUD Entitled Communities.

*Information from workshop participants augmented via review of the Town of West Hartford's NHMP Municipal Annex (2019) and Plan of Conservation and Development (2020). ***See Appendix A for full list of mitigation/adaptation actions from the Town of West Hartford's NHMP Municipal Annex.***

Current Concerns and Challenges Presented by Hazards

The Town of West Hartford has several concerns and faces multiple challenges related to the impacts of natural hazards and climate change. In recent years, West Hartford has experienced a series of highly disruptive and damaging weather events including March 2010 floods, Tropical Storm Irene (August 2011), Storm Alfred (October 2011), Super Storm Sandy (October 2012), winter Nor'easter Nemo (February 2013), and other less impactful but more frequent events. Impacts from Irene included rain-induced, inland flooding and wind damage. Sandy caused some wind and tree damage across portions of West Hartford. Storms Alfred and Nemo respectively dropped several feet of snow on the Town knocking out power and isolating residents and neighborhoods due to road closures. 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 West Hartford to proactively and comprehensively improve their resilience.

This series of extreme weather events highlights that the impacts from hazards are diverse: ranging from riverine flooding of critical infrastructure, bridges, roads, and low-lying areas; localized flooding from stormwater runoff during intense storms and heavy precipitation events; property damage from trees, 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, disabled, and/or underserved residents. The combination of these issues presents a challenge to preparedness and mitigation priorities and requires comprehensive, yet tailored actions for particular locations and/or areas across the Town of West Hartford.

The workshop participants were generally in agreement that West Hartford 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 (i.e. major disasters, storms, major hurricanes (Cat-3 or above)) throughout the year, but particularly in the fall/winter months due to more intense snow and ice storms coupled with colder weather. The impact of the current Covid-19 pandemic was raised several times by workshop participants.



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Specific Categories of Concerns and Challenges

As in any community, West Hartford is not uniformly vulnerable to hazards and climate change, and certain locations, assets, and populations have 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 three broad categories - Infrastructure, Societal, and Environmental.

Infrastructure Concerns and Challenges

Roads, Bridges, and Road Networks:

- Power outages resulting in loss of traffic lights and controls—particularly Trout Brook Road.

Emergency Management and Preparedness:

- Communication issues in certain cases due to language barrier, accessibility to communication devices and platforms, and families that need to charge mobile devices to receive emergency updates.
- Outdated regional sheltering plan.
- Cellular phone coverage gaps in western part of Town.
- Need for improvements on emergency preparations and planning for a more diverse array of major events, current and future.
- Residents in need of emergency preparedness and shelter in place training.
- Communications lag from the electric utility (Eversource) to Town leadership/staff between identifying the extent of power outages and when power will be restored.

Stormwater Management:

- North-central sector subjected to street and basement flooding due to inability of stormwater management system to convey adequate volumes during peak events.
- Combined sewer overflow system currently in many portions of Town.
- Increasing concerns regarding localized flooding from runoff due to antiquated stormwater management systems that were installed in the mid to latter part of the last century.

Housing/Buildings/Facilities:

- Limited affordable/accessible housing options for workers (essential, retail, etc.), young families, and community volunteers.
- Limited diversity and availability of housing to attract a more diverse demographic amongst residents.
- Aging building infrastructure results in facilities not uniformly meeting standards as shelters.
- Fire stations deficiencies including not being designed for modern, larger fire trucks (i.e. door width, height, and occupancy issues).

Specific Categories of Concerns and Challenges (cont'd)

Societal Concerns and Challenges

Vulnerable Populations:

- Implications to certain residents (i.e. elderly, low income residents) from winter storms and heatwaves.
- Power outages are a concern for individual dependent on electric medical devices such as oxygen.

Development:

- Aging housing stock in certain areas of Town including on South Main Street, Farmington Avenue, and New Britain Avenue that require maintenance or improvements to accommodate amenities such as air conditioning and space to attract young professionals and families.

Businesses:

- Business community is vulnerable to natural disasters and major events.

Community Services:

- Food insecurity amongst residents which is magnified during emergency situations.
- Lack of coordinated responses and connections with ethnic groups in Town which creates obstacles to communications, care, and amenities provided.
- Twenty-seven major town facilities used daily with only seven with back-up power generators installed.
- Sixteen schools in Town with only one with back-up power generators installed.

Environmental Concerns and Challenges

Trees and Forests:

- Increasing impacts on tree health from pests and pathogens resulting in a number of dead and damaged trees posing risks to power lines and blocking roads during emergencies.

Open Space, Watersheds, and Waterways:

- Maintaining connected vegetated stream course and waterways.
- Future flooding projections due to precipitation event of longer duration and higher intensity will present a challenge in rivers, streams, brooks, and wetland systems experiencing issues, currently (i.e. Trout Brook, North Branch - Park River).
- Flooding near Kennedy Brook and Kane Brook in West Hartford and Hartford.

Current Strengths and Assets

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

- Clearly, the responsive and committed engagement exhibited by leaderships, staff, and residents is a very appreciated strength within and across West Hartford. Ongoing collaboration between municipal staff, committee/commission, volunteers, business community, faith-based organizations, NGOs, adjoining municipalities, Capital Region Council of Governments, and various state-level organizations, among others, on priorities identified herein will help advance comprehensive, cost-effective, community resilience building actions.
- The Town has highly experienced staff with access to adequate resources for most emergency situations. The coordination amongst various departments including leadership, Public Works, Police, Fire, and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) as well as adjoining Towns was cited as a highly valued community strength.
- The relatively high amount of open space (20%), parks, and associated recreational coupled with a relatively, concentrated populations increases quality of life for residents.
- Highly efficient road network with access in and out of Town in all directions (north-south; east-west).
- Strong tradition of volunteerism with deep partnerships in place between municipality, residents, and non-profits.
- Only municipality amongst the thirty-eight in the region that is enrolled in FEMA's Community Rating System.
- Integration of capital improvement projects between municipal leads and Board of Education which allows for a full analysis of facilities and infrastructure as a single comprehensive portfolio.
- Consistent and informative internal communications system between multiple departments (i.e. Fire, Police, Public Works, Leadership, etc.) with unified command center that help to coordinate response during major events.

Current Strengths and Assets (cont'd)

- The Town is increasingly preparing for climate change given the concern about current impacts from hazards and the threat of escalation—particularly from storms, flooding, and wind.
- Road network largely arrayed in a grid pattern which helps to easily divert traffic via detours during events with little additional congestion.
- Fire Stations strategically located around Town and on arterial streets which helps with the excellent response times by full time, paid staff.
- Active and resourceful staff that are quick to mobilize in response to issues in a collaborative cross-department fashion.
- High-capacity stormwater management asset within the Trout Brook system during intense, high-precipitation, storm events.
- Growth mindset within and across departments geared towards improving service effectiveness and efficiencies.
- Town actively working on MS4 permit, which is leading to increased resilience.
- Maintenance of a diverse communication network that utilizes multiple platforms (text messages, emails, phone calls, etc.) to share information on routine basis as well as before, during, and after major events.
- Routine and systematic assessment of road (224+ miles - many with sidewalks) and stormwater management system condition as a way to prioritize maintain and improvement needs and schedules.
- Currently building out bicycle routes/lanes to encourage multi-modal, local transportation options for residents.
- Tree expert on staff within the Department of Public Works.
- Tremendous support and participation from community members who want to help and stay engaged during emergencies.
- Community Emergency Response Team in place with over 70 volunteers trained and ready to respond.
- Town celebrates and supports a socially diverse population as a strength of the community.
- Productive relationship between Town leadership and business community.

Current Strengths and Assets (cont'd)

- Recent transformation of a vacant grocery store into a functional mass-vaccination center speaks to the resiliency and ability of town leadership to act quickly and effectively to changing circumstances.
- Pandemic responses by emergency management and social services staff have elevated the respect and support for these services amongst residents.
- Presence of multiple food banks to help service those residents in need.
- Redundancy in fiber optic cable network with up to twelve strands per building to help accommodate future growth and increase localize resiliency (i.e. back-up strands).
- Emphasis on increasing the amount of fiber optic cable helps to maintain residential phone, cable, and internet access during and after major events.
- Data center in Town that can be shared with others as a revenue generator.
- Large number of “pocket” or small neighborhood parks along with larger parks such as Elizabeth Park disbursed across Town resulting in ready access for most residents (80% within 10 minute walk) as well as accessible bathrooms and highly responsive park maintenance staff.
- Strong relationships with adjoining Towns that are maintained through routine planning and preparedness dialogue and activities.
- Large number of trails for outdoor recreation on MDC property.
- Hillcrest Area Neighborhood Outreach Center (HANOC) provides centralized location for community collaboration between school and Town resulting in greater connections between residents and available services.
- Routine investments in maintaining infrastructure such as school improvements, preparing and managing the Pandemic, and tree clearance to help reduce impacts of power outages.
- Integration of Red Cross into all parts of response, recovery, and planning in Town for major disasters.
- Long-term care facilities identified in the state disaster plan and mutual aid agreements that enable rapid exchange of information.

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 reduce West Hartford's vulnerability to extreme weather, climate change and other common concerns raised. To that end, the workshop participants reached agreement on several priority topics requiring more immediate and/or ongoing attention including:

- **Long-term vision and growth** (i.e. development/redevelopment, municipal buildings, conservation, transportation, commerce, diverse demographics, volunteerism);
- **Infrastructure improvements** (i.e. stormwater management systems, impervious cover, electrical power grid, renewable energy infrastructure and systems);
- **Quality of life improvements** (i.e. housing, sustainability, green infrastructure, food security, connectivity, Low Impact Development (LID), open space/recreation);
- **Emergency management** (i.e. communications, outreach, education, continuation of services, business recovery, sheltering, vulnerable populations).

In direct response, the workshop participants developed the following priority and other action list. Mitigation/adaptation actions from the West Hartford NHMP Municipal Annex (2019) are provided in Appendix A for cross reference. In addition, actions previously identified in the West Hartford Plan of Conservation and Development (2020) were reviewed for consistency with input from workshop participants.

Priority Actions

- Conduct an expansion of the current emergency planning and preparedness activities to include identification of resources needed to implement actions, integration of needs of vulnerable populations, and enhanced communication plans that incorporate vulnerable populations and accessibility (i.e. translation, digital access, isolated individuals, etc.).
- Look to install LID and green stormwater infrastructure projects on municipal property to reduce localized runoff and to serve as a model for businesses and private property owners looking to increase opportunities for onsite storage and infiltration (i.e. rain gardens, bioswales, etc.).

Priority Actions (cont'd)

- Establish an authorizing ordinance or regulation that requires LID stormwater infrastructure in any new development or redevelopment to increase onsite management of runoff.
- Find ways to incentivize use of renewal energy by increasing production of solar and geothermal energy sources at the local level and advancing EV supportive infrastructure at any new development or redevelopment anywhere in Town.
- Conduct all current and future road upgrade and maintenance projects to avoid combined sewer overflow systems.
- Develop and operationalize a long-term strategic building investment strategy for consolidating and eliminating or repurpose the twenty-seven municipal buildings to reduce overall costs and foster innovation/alternative use.
- Continue to build out the Town's stormwater infrastructure including a specific focus on reducing impervious cover and the use of green stormwater infrastructure, where feasible.
- Explore further options to utilize, in an ecologically friendly and responsible manner, Trout Brook as a stormwater management asset which may include conducting habitat and flood storage enhancement projects.
- Establish a short-term subcommittee to look at all local plans through the lens of resilience and sustainability including plans involving natural hazard mitigation, facilities, health care, affordable housing, energy, bike facilities, and transportation capital improvement efforts, among others.
- Implement sustainability initiatives in Town Parks and public spaces that incorporate updated stormwater regulations and low impact development practices.



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Priority Actions (cont'd)

- Seek out ways to increase the resiliency of the power grid through various actions including hardening of the grid in critical junctures or vulnerable sections, prioritize and install renewal energy options, and explore feasibility of installing micro-grid(s) in key administrative (i.e. Town Hall and Police Department) and commercial areas.
- Look to increase the diversity and amount of renewable energy installations to help increase the resilience of the Town's power sources.
- Conduct a community wellness assessment and educate residents on risks from hazards and climate change.
- Advance engineering study to reduce flooding near Kennedy Brook and Kane Brook.

Other Actions

- Consider constructing a fueling center/station for municipal vehicles to be used primarily during emergency situations.
- Replace Fern Street Bridge over Trout Brook to improve egress and access during major events.
- Continue to build up a contact database for all business owners in Town in hopes of increasing communications, support, and continuity of services after major events.
- Seek to ensure historic and culturally significant properties owners are educated on retrofit options to increase the resilience and longevity of structures and associated grounds.
- Increase the capacity of staff and volunteers by providing incident command and sheltering facility management training on a routine basis, where appropriate.
- Create a review process to ensure all updates to current plans (NHMP, POCD, CDBG, ECD, etc.) are linked, coordinated, and acted upon in an additive and complimentary manner.
- Develop multi-lingual and cultural communication materials regarding health care access and social services available for residents.
- Incorporate LID guidelines and practices into zoning and subdivision regulations.
- Complete final drainage study for waterways and systems with a goal of eliminating the requirement for flood insurance.

Other Actions (cont'd)

- Continue support for outdoor recreation by increasing access to safe trails and public water resources to help increase the overall health and well-being of residents.
- Need an invitation by Town leadership to MDC to help encourage them to play a more active and larger role in the community.
- Advance program to provide more locally produced, plant-based, food options across the school system.
- Conduct outreach to local businesses to educate on safeguards to prevent chemical spills during natural disasters.
- Increase the number, access, and distribution of community gardens in Town.
- Increase outreach to landlords to help weatherize and winterize rental properties and promote energy efficient appliances.
- Identify ways to improve pet sheltering options for residents during emergency situations.
- Conduct a gasoline to electric lawn equipment campaign coupled with educational outreach regarding lawn care (i.e. pesticides and fertilizer use, irrigation, composting, pollinator encouragement, species diversity, drought resistance, etc.).
- Continue to monitor the safety and integrity of bridges in Town.
- Explore options and cost of curbside organic/food waste pick up service.
- Increase shade tree canopy at all schools – particularly on playgrounds and outside areas used by student and teachers - across the system.
- Explore the impact of mandated unit based pricing for trash disposal.
- Conduct additional stream bank stabilization and culvert replacement projects along Trout Brook (refer to North Branch Trout Brook study).
- Develop arrangement to better utilize vacant lots (especially in downtown) to increase park space and help reduce runoff.
- Look to build a culture of preparedness amongst residents through routine and broadly available educational outreach via a trained volunteer network.
- Convert the Trout Brook trail to a pervious type to increase infiltration and to serve as a model for low impact development practices in Town.

Other Actions (cont'd)

- Conduct a comprehensive urban tree inventory and condition study.
- Strengthen relationships with faith-based organizations to ensure minority and vulnerable populations (such as elderly living independently) are reaching and educating those in need on resources and services available through the Town departments.
- Continue to assist with the separation of combined sewer overflow systems as well as reduce the percentage of impervious surfaces and installation of green storm-water infrastructure.
- Install permanent back-up power source at High School and other common places of refuge/shelter across Town including Town Hall.
- Assess and install battery power as a back-up to power traffic lights and controls at critical intersections as a work around during period of power outages – particularly Trout Brook Road.
- Look to support and expand food home delivery by convening partners currently involved to help reduce the impact and extent of food insecurity issues in Town.
- Explore with local and regional social services and health departments and organizations to identify ways to assist individuals living alone and in need of more affordable transportation to and from medical appointments and procedures.
- Identify grant and other funding opportunities to support more regional planning to enhance programs that promote self and neighborhood-based resilience.
- Continue to find ways to support the activities of the Community Emergency Response Team and maintain a strong flow of volunteers.
- Update the local emergency operations plan including improvements to current terms, updates on an annual basis, and routine report outs to Town leadership to ensure readiness.
- Reduce the community contributions to overall quantity of organic waste to help limit the cost of handling and processing paid for by the Town.
- Educate community members with online resources and course on various services such as GIS information/maps on trash systems, polling sites, and evacuation routes, among others.

Other Actions (cont'd)

- Modify or change codes and ordinances to incentivize grocery stores and gas stations to secure and install back-up generators to maintain power and improve continuity during disasters.
- Conduct a broader community outreach effort through social media, focus groups, and surveys to identify what the leading priorities are for residents based on demographics and needs.
- Establish an urban forestry program in Town that provides vision/direction to urban tree canopy management and other tree/forestry related issues and opportunities.
- Identify ways to reduce pressure on Fire and Police Department staff as it relates to responding to and dealing with issues of homelessness, mental health, and/or addiction in the community.
- Explore possibilities of repurposing Elmwood Community Center into a public safety complex focused on the surrounding neighborhoods and areas (back-up power generator already installed).
- In response to the passage of new state legislation (HB 6441), look to establish a stormwater authority to help fund improve stormwater management projects and operations plans outside of typical municipal budgets.
- Commit to more proactive open space acquisition with a focus on purchasing and restoring flood-prone properties to help increase flood storage as well as public amenities, where appropriate.
- Look to expand the responsibility of the existing CERT Team to include routine outreach to vulnerable populations to help strengthen the social safety net in Town.
- Work with appropriate transportation companies to ensure current public transit options and routes are serving those neighborhoods in greatest need of mobility in advance of and during major crisis (i.e. altering routes, number of buses, etc.).
- Look to reduce cellular connectivity gap in western part of Town by working to resolve the location of a cell tower on MDC or Town-owned lands.
- Increase to 100% of residents living within a 10-minute walk to a park and/or public amenity (currently, 80%).

CRB Workshop Participants: Department/Organization

Town of West Hartford - Office of the Mayor*

Town of West Hartford - Town Manager's Office

Town of West Hartford - Department of Public Works

Town of West Hartford - Fire Department

Town of West Hartford - Department of Social Services

Town of West Hartford - Department of Planning and Zoning

Town of West Hartford - Department of Plant and Facilities Services

Town of West Hartford - Police Department

Town of West Hartford - Emergency Response

Town of West Hartford - Department of Leisure Services

Town of West Hartford - Library

Town of West Hartford - Engineering Department

Town of West Hartford - Department of Financial Services

Town of West Hartford - Department of Information Technology

Town of West Hartford - Department of Economic Development

Town of West Hartford - Department of Public Relations

Town of West Hartford - Community Emergency Response Team

Town of West Hartford - Clean Energy Commission

Town of West Hartford - Human Rights Commission

Town of West Hartford - Plan & Zoning/Inland Wetlands & Watercourse Agency

Town of West Hartford - Conservation and Environment Commission

Town of West Hartford - Advisory Commission for Persons with Disabilities

Town of West Hartford - Hunger Action Team

West Hartford Housing Authority

West Hartford Chamber of Commerce

Bloomfield-West Hartford Health District

Capital Region Council of Governments

Red Cross

* invited but unable to attend.

West Hartford Core Project Team

Catherine Diviney - Energy Specialist, Town of West Hartford/WHPS

Matt Hart - Town Manager, Town of West Hartford

Duane Martin, Town Engineer, Town of West Hartford

Todd Dumais, Town Planner, Town of West Hartford

Robert McCue, Deputy Director, Emergency Management, Town of West Hartford

Online CRB Workshop Facilitation Team

The Nature Conservancy - Adam Whelchel (Lead Facilitator)

Sustainable CT - Jessica LeClair (Small Group Facilitator)

The Nature Conservancy - Drew Goldsman (Small Group Facilitator)

The Nature Conservancy - Holly Drinkuth (Small Group Facilitator)

The Nature Conservancy - Diana Nguyen (Scribe)

Sustainable CT - Torin Radicioni (Scribe)

The Nature Conservancy - Joey Wraithwall (Scribe, IT Support)

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Appendix A

Town of West Hartford Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Municipal Annex (2019)

Mitigation Strategies and Actions from Previous HMP & Updated Mitigation Strategies and Actions

Mitigation Strategies and Actions from Previous HMP

Table 34-11: Status of Previous Mitigation Strategies and Actions, West Hartford

Action #	Action	Notes	Status
GOAL: MINIMIZE LOSS OF LIFE AND PROPERTY FROM NATURAL HAZARDS			
Objective 1: Continue to implement Repetitive Flood Loss Plan.			
1.1	Reduce risk to flood-prone structures.	Town consistently implements the Repetitive Flood Loss Plan's action plan. The Town periodically ensures that repetitive flood loss property owners have adequate information for retro-fitting flood-prone structures and holds regular meetings with residents to provide technical advice on flood protection and flood preparedness. In addition, the Town has a stormwater management program that includes repair and replacement of storm sewers as part of street reconstruction or resurfacing projects. Storm sewers are also replaced or improved as a result of flooding complaints or roadway failures. Considerable progress, but the action is too broad to measure.	Capability
GOAL: MINIMIZE LOSS TO CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND REDUCE LOSS OF LIFE, PROPERTY AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES AS A RESULT OF NATURAL DISASTERS.			
Objective 2: Improve the ability of town to provide emergency sheltering for at least 6,000 residents.			
2.1	Install generators at all primary and tertiary shelters and designated alternate care sites.	Generators can be quickly connected at Elmwood Community Center and the two high schools (all shelters) and the Town Hall. DPW and PD both have fixed-in-place generators (the EOC and backup EOC). Additional generators may be needed.	Carry Forward with Revisions
2.2	Increase sheltering supplies (cots, water, food, etc.).	Progress has been made in partnership with the American Red Cross. Carry Forward to Completion.	Carry Forward
2.3	Ensure and supply transportation access to emergency shelters.	Progress has not been made on this action due to lack of resources.	Carry Forward
2.4	Ensure ability of the town to safely shelter in place, and when necessary, evacuate residents and visitors.	Progress has not been made on this action due to lack of resources.	Carry Forward
2.5	Establish pet sheltering alternatives.	Progress has not been made on this action due to lack of resources.	Carry Forward
Objective 3: Reinforce, renovate and upgrade existing critical town facilities and support facilities.			
3.1	Implement needed improvements to the Emergency Operations Center to withstand high wind and other natural and manmade disasters.	Progress has not been made on this action due to lack of resources.	Carry Forward
3.2	Upgrade and enhance operational equipment in Emergency Operations Center including radio communications, satellite communications and visual display media.	This action has been completed	Completed

Action #	Action	Notes	Status
3.3	Identify and establish a secondary Emergency Operations Center.	Public Works is the backup EOC with an emergency generator.	Completed
3.4	Work with local fuel stations to ensure adequate emergency generating equipment for emergency response vehicles.	Town wishes to construct a municipal fueling facility so they don't have to rely on private facilities.	Drop
Objective 4: Increase training for hazard response to town employees, volunteers and emergency services personnel.			
4.1	Provide Incident Command training to all personnel for position and function.	Progress has not been made on this action due to lack of resources.	Carry Forward
4.2	Provide shelter management training to all personnel for position and function.	Progress has not been made on this action due to lack of resources.	Carry Forward
4.3	Provide specific incident action plan development training to positions and functions of EOC representatives.	Progress has not been made on this action due to lack of resources.	Carry Forward

Updated Mitigation Strategies and Actions (2019)

Action #1

Develop a prioritized list of emergency generator acquisition, upgrade, or maintenance needs.

Goal	7. Improve the emergency response capabilities of the region and its communities
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	01/2019 - 12/2019
Priority	High

Action #2

Incorporate Low Impact Development requirements into the Subdivision and Zoning Regulations.

Goal	2. Ensure Municipal Codes and Regulations support hazard mitigation
Category	Prevention
Lead	Planning
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	01/2019 - 12/2019
Priority	High

Action #3

Establish pet sheltering alternatives.

Goal	7. Improve the emergency response capabilities of the region and its communities
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / Grants
Timeframe	01/2019 - 12/2020
Priority	High

Action #4

Increase the ability of residents and visitors to safely shelter in place and when necessary, evacuate to safer locations, through education, trainings, and warnings.

Goal	7. Improve the emergency response capabilities of the region and its communities
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / Grants / DEMHS
Timeframe	01/2019 - 12/2020
Priority	High

Action #5

Improve transportation access for residents and visitors to emergency shelters.

Goal	7. Improve the emergency response capabilities of the region and its communities
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / Grants / DEMHS
Timeframe	01/2019 - 12/2020
Priority	High

Action #6

Determine sheltering supplies needs and increase supplies if needed (cots, water, food, etc.).

Goal	7. Improve the emergency response capabilities of the region and its communities
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	\$25,000 - \$50,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / Grants / DEMHS
Timeframe	07/2020 - 06/2021
Priority	High

Action #7**Complete the North Branch Trout Brook flood study.**

Goal	3. Improve institutional awareness and understanding of natural hazard impacts and mitigation within municipal governments and other decision-making bodies
Category	Prevention
Lead	Public Works
Cost	\$50,000 - \$100,000
Funding	Grants
Timeframe	07/2021 - 06/2022
Priority	High

Action #8**Implement needed improvements to the Emergency Operations Center to withstand high wind and other natural and manmade disasters.**

Goal	1. Minimize the impact of natural hazards on physical buildings and infrastructure
Category	Property Protection
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	More than \$100,000
Funding	Grants / DEMHS
Timeframe	07/2022 - 06/2023
Priority	High

Action #9**Conduct outreach to local small businesses with the aim of preventing the accidental release and pollution from chemicals stored and used at their facilities during or following natural hazard events.**

Goal	6. Improve public outreach, education, and warning systems
Category	Education & Awareness
Lead	Planning, in coordination with DEEP
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Materials & Resources Provided by CT DEEP
Timeframe	01/2019 - 12/2019
Priority	Medium

Action #10

Define a set of actions to be taken by the Town to increase its Community Rating System rating by at least one tier.

Goal	9. Minimize the economic impact of hazard damages
Category	Prevention
Lead	Planning
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	01/2020 - 12/2020
Priority	Medium

Action #11

Coordinate with NEMO and CRCOG to share resources and gain technical support for hazard mitigation actions involving stormwater management and public outreach, which have parallel benefits related to MS4 stormwater permit compliance.

Goal	1. Minimize the impact of natural hazards on physical buildings and infrastructure
Category	Prevention
Lead	Public Works
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	01/2020 - 12/2020
Priority	Medium

Action #12

Participate in EMI courses or the seminars and annual conference held by the Connecticut Association of Flood Managers.

Goal	3. Improve institutional awareness and understanding of natural hazard impacts and mitigation within municipal governments and other decision-making bodies
Category	Education & Awareness
Lead	Planning
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	07/2019 - 06/2024
Priority	Medium

Action #13

Work with MDC to identify potential hazard mitigation actions for MDC facilities, and list those actions in the next HMP Update.

Goal	5. Improve the resilience of local and regional utilities and infrastructure using strategies including adaptation, hardening, and creating redundancies.
Category	Property Protection
Lead	Public Works
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / DEMHS
Timeframe	07/2020 - 06/2022
Priority	Medium

Action #14

Develop a list of local resources, including non-profits, volunteers, and gas-stations and grocery stores with emergency generators, to distribute to residents prior to forecast hazard events.

Goal	7. Improve the emergency response capabilities of the region and its communities
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	07/2020 - 06/2022
Priority	Medium

Action #15

Provide specific incident action plan development training to positions and functions of EOC representatives.

Goal	7. Improve the emergency response capabilities of the region and its communities
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / Grants / DEMHS
Timeframe	07/2020 - 06/2022
Priority	Medium

Action #16**Provide Incident Command training to all personnel for position and function.**

Goal	7. Improve the emergency response capabilities of the region and its communities
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / Grants / DEMHS
Timeframe	01/2020 - 12/2022
Priority	Medium

Action #17**Provide shelter management training to all personnel for position and function.**

Goal	7. Improve the emergency response capabilities of the region and its communities
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / Grants / DEMHS
Timeframe	01/2020 - 12/2022
Priority	Medium

Action #18**Explore feasibility and cost/benefit balance of developing a microgrid for the Town Hall and Police Department.**

Goal	5. Improve the resilience of local and regional utilities and infrastructure using strategies including adaptation, hardening, and creating redundancies.
Category	Prevention
Lead	Public Works
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / Grants / CT DEEP
Timeframe	01/2020 - 12/2022
Priority	Medium

Action #19**Construct a new fueling facility for municipal vehicles.**

Goal	7. Improve the emergency response capabilities of the region and its communities
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Public Works
Cost	More than \$100,000
Funding	Grants
Timeframe	07/2022 - 06/2024
Priority	Medium

Action #20

Contact the owners of Repetitive Loss Properties and nearby properties at risk to inquire about mitigation undertaken and suggest options for mitigating flooding in those areas. This should be accomplished with a letter directly mailed to each property owner.

Goal	1. Minimize the impact of natural hazards on physical buildings and infrastructure
Category	Property Protection
Lead	Planning
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / DEMHS
Timeframe	07/2021 - 06/2022
Priority	Low

Action #21

Coordinate with CT SHPO to conduct outreach to historic property owners to educate them on methods of retrofitting their properties to be more hazard-resilient while maintaining historic character.

Goal	8. Ensure community character and social equity are addressed in mitigation activities
Category	Education & Awareness
Lead	Planning, in coordination with SHPO
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	SHPO
Timeframe	01/2021 - 12/2022
Priority	Low

Action #22

Make progress with the hazard mitigation goals associated with SustainableCT certified actions.

Goal	4. Increase the use of natural, “green,” or “soft” hazard mitigation measures, such as open space preservation and green infrastructure.
Category	Natural Resources Protection
Lead	Planning
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	07/2021 - 06/2022
Priority	Low

Action #23

Work with CT DEEP to complete a formal validation of the Repetitive Loss Property list and update the mitigation status of each listed property.

Goal	1. Minimize the impact of natural hazards on physical buildings and infrastructure
Category	Property Protection
Lead	Planning
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / CT DEEP / DEMHS
Timeframe	07/2021 - 06/2023
Priority	Low

Action #24

Coordinate with CT SHPO to conduct historic resource surveys, focusing on areas within natural hazard risk zones (such as flood or wildfire hazard zones and areas near steep slopes), to support identification of vulnerable historic properties and preparation of resiliency plans across the state. This action leverages existing resources and best practices for protection of historic and cultural resources through an ongoing statewide initiative by CT SHPO.

Goal	8. Ensure community character and social equity are addressed in mitigation activities
Category	Property Protection
Lead	Planning, in coordination with SHPO
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	SHPO
Timeframe	07/2021 - 06/2023
Priority	Low

Action #25

Send property owners along streams a mailer with information about ordinances against, and dangers of, dumping and placing obstructions into streams.

Goal	6. Improve public outreach, education, and warning systems
Category	Education & Awareness
Lead	Planning
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	01/2021 - 12/2023
Priority	Low

Action #26

Perform a Repetitive Loss Area Analysis (RLAA).

Goal	3. Improve institutional awareness and understanding of natural hazard impacts and mitigation within municipal governments and other decision-making bodies
Category	Prevention
Lead	Planning
Cost	\$50,000 - \$100,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / Grants / DEMHS
Timeframe	07/2023 - 06/2024
Priority	Low

Action #27

Replace undersized and/or degraded culverts on Trout Brook.

Goal	1. Minimize the impact of natural hazards on physical buildings and infrastructure
Category	Structural Projects
Lead	Public Works
Cost	More than \$100,000
Funding	Grants
Timeframe	07/2023 - 06/2024
Priority	Low

Action #28**Stabilize unstable streambanks along Trout Brook.**

Goal	1. Minimize the impact of natural hazards on physical buildings and infrastructure
Category	Structural Projects
Lead	Public Works
Cost	More than \$100,000
Funding	Grants
Timeframe	07/2023 - 06/2024
Priority	Low

Action #29**Replace the Fern Street Bridge over Trout Brook to ensure continued operation during future emergency events.**

Goal	1. Minimize the impact of natural hazards on physical buildings and infrastructure
Category	Structural Projects
Lead	Public Works
Cost	More than \$100,000
Funding	Grants
Timeframe	07/2023 - 06/2024
Priority	Low

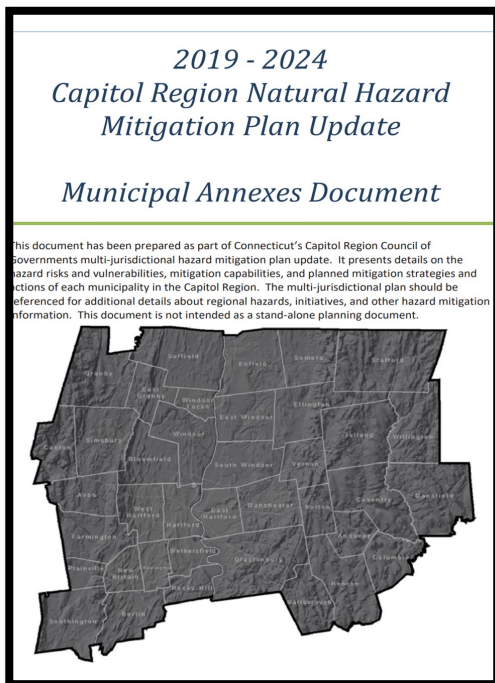
Appendix B

West Hartford

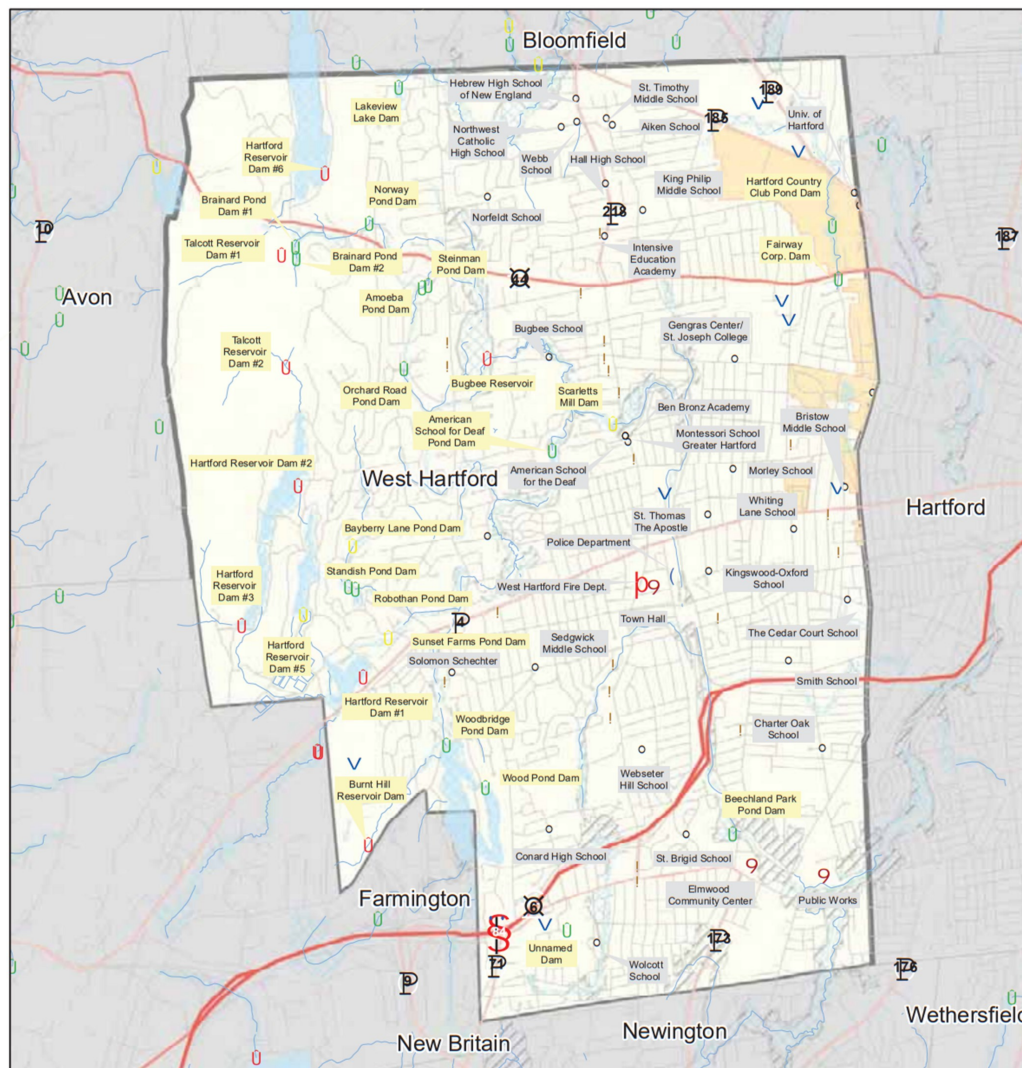
Map Resource Packet*

Used During

Workshop



***Gathered from West Hartford Mitigation Plan Municipal Annex (2019) & Plan of Conservation & Development (2020)**



Capitol Region Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Update

West Hartford, Connecticut

Flood Plains, Dams & Critical Facilities

Critical Facilities

- Fire Station
- Police Station
- School
- Healthcare Facility
- State Facility
- Town Facility
- Waste Water Facility
- Emergency Center
- NRHP Buildings/Sites

Dam Hazard Class

- BB, A, AA OR Unclassified
- Class B - Significant Hazard
- Class C - High Hazard

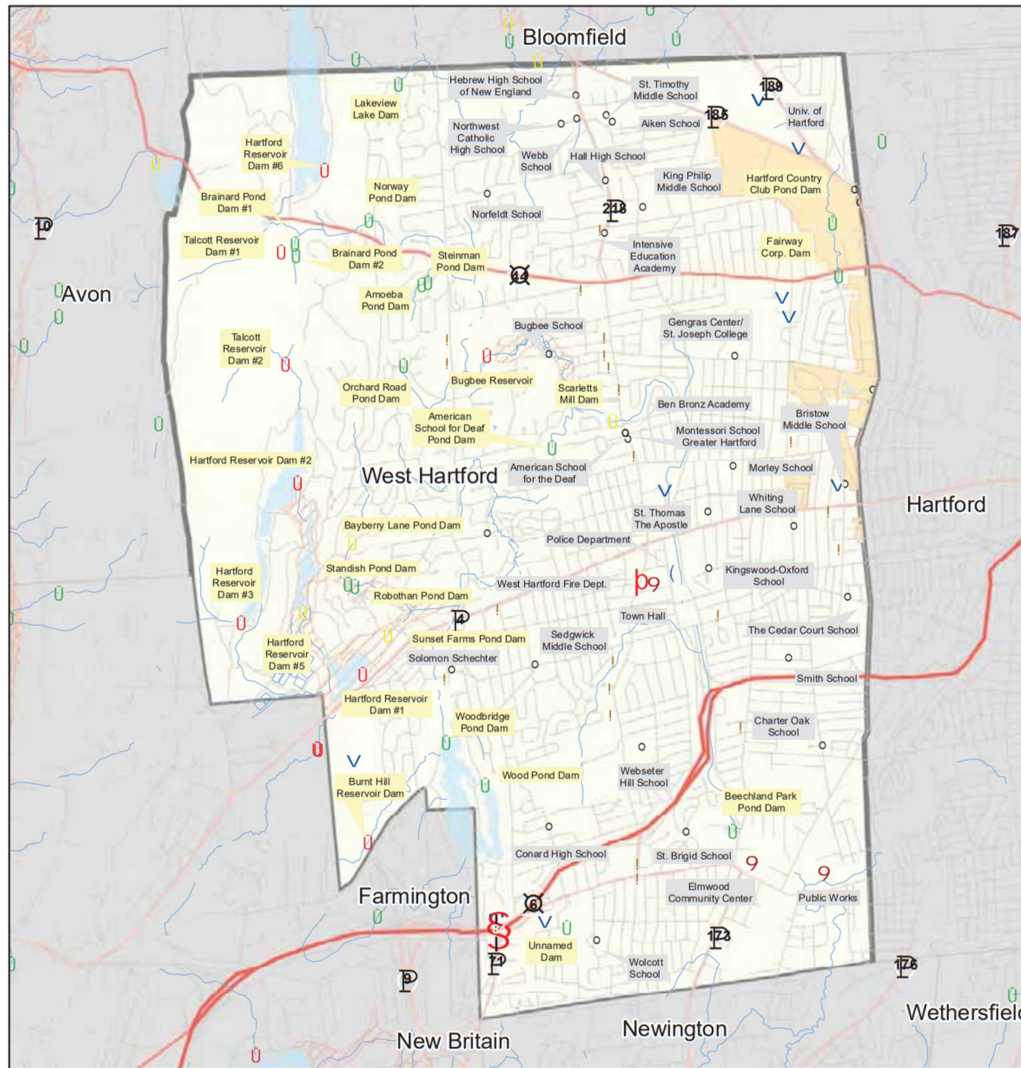
FEMA Flood Hazard Area

- 100 Year Flood Zone
- 500 Year Flood Zone
- NRHP Districts/Areas

Data Sources: FEMA, National Register of Historic Places, CT DEEP, CRCOG, ESRI



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Capitol Region Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Update

West Hartford, Connecticut

Dam Breach Inundation Area & Critical Facilities

Critical Facilities

- P Fire Station
- P Police Station
- o School
- V Healthcare Facility
- | State Facility
- 9 Town Facility
- . Waste Water Facility
- [Emergency Center
- ! NRHP Buildings/Sites

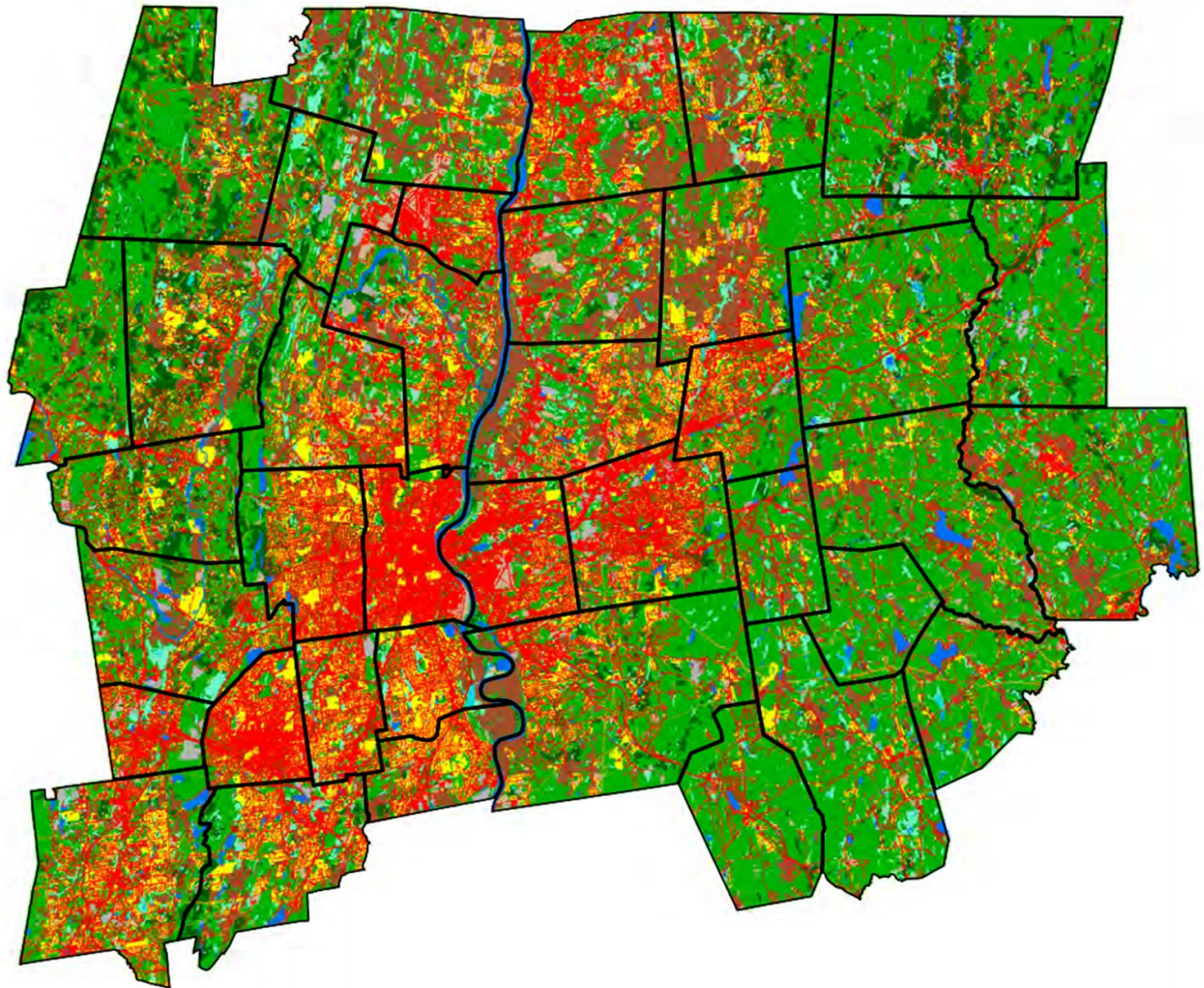
Dam Hazard Class

- U BB, A, AA OR Unclassified
- U Class B - Significant Hazard
- U Class C - High Hazard
- Dam Breach Inundation Areas
- NRHP Districts/Areas

Data Sources: FEMA, National Register of Historic Places, CT DEEP, CROG, ESRI

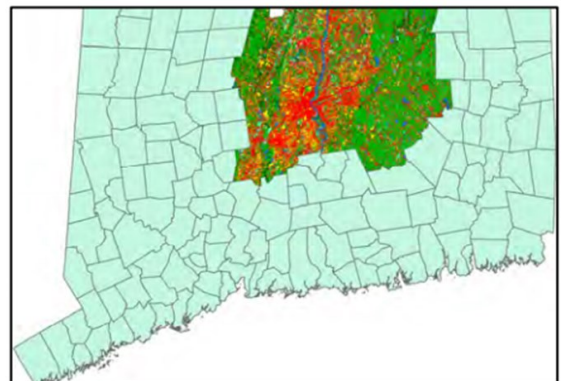


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LEGEND

 Agriculture	 Non-forested Wetland
 Barren Land	 Other Grasses
 Coniferous Forest	 Tidal Wetland
 Deciduous Forest	 Turf & Grass
 Developed	 Utility ROWs
 Forested Wetland	 Water



SOURCE(S):
UConn CLEAR

Map 2: Land Cover

LOCATION:

Capitol Region, CT



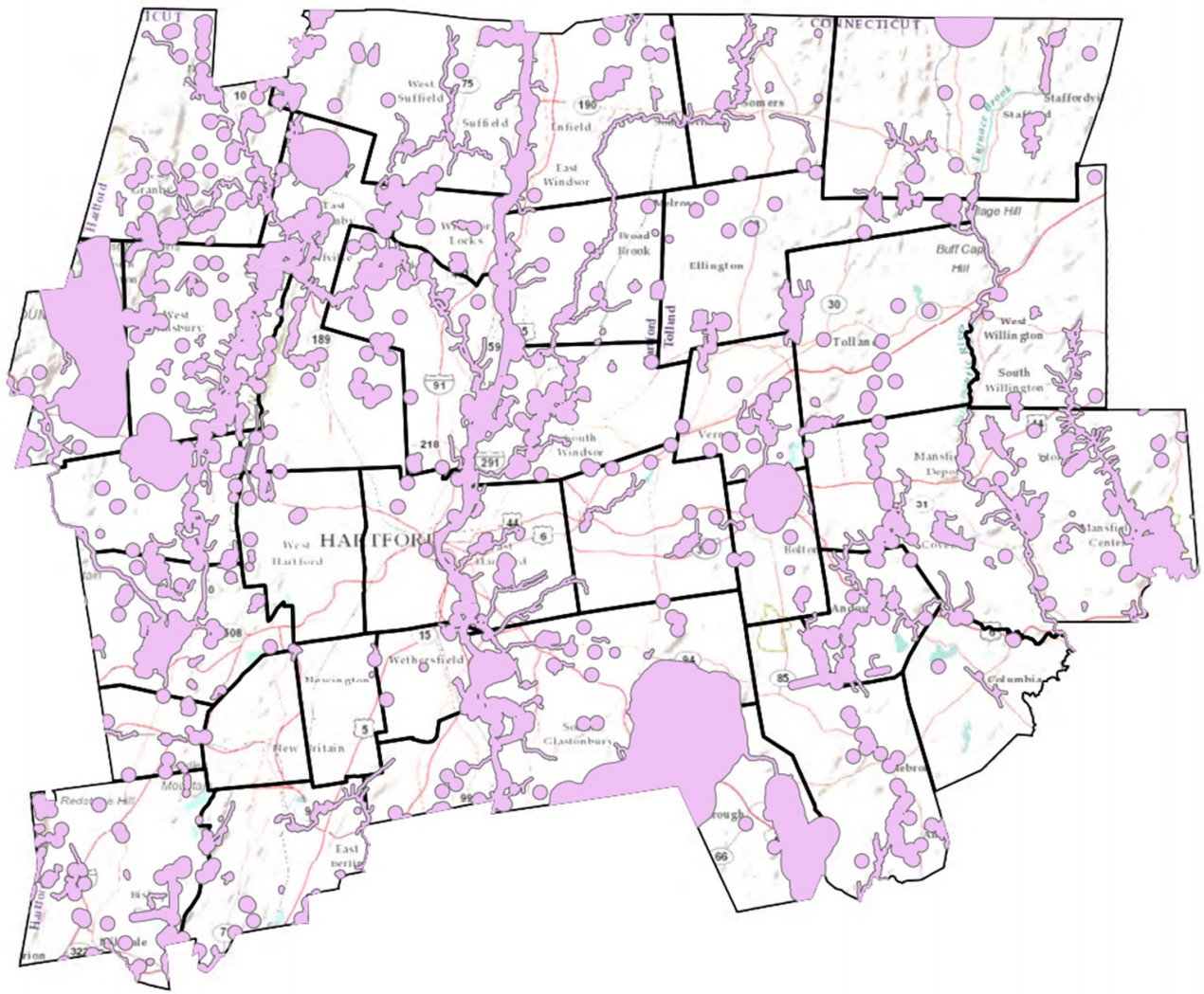
Capitol Region Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Update

MXD: Y:\2020-16\Maps\Map 2_Land Cover_.mxd

Map By: MER
MMIW: 2020-16
Original: 10/11/2017
Revision: 10/11/2017
Scale: 1 inch = 30,000 feet

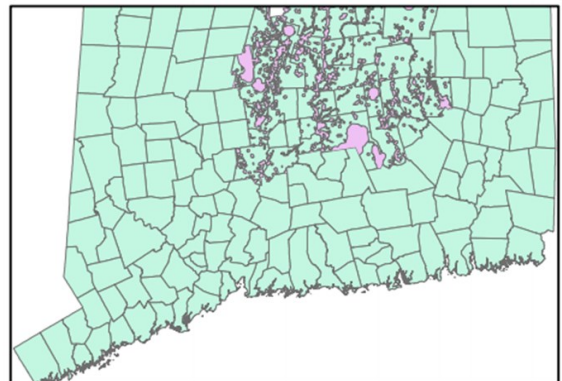


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LEGEND

Natural Diversity Database Areas



SOURCE(S):
CT DEEP

**Map 4: Locations of Potential Endangered and Threatened
Species in the Capitol Region**

LOCATION:
Capitol Region, CT

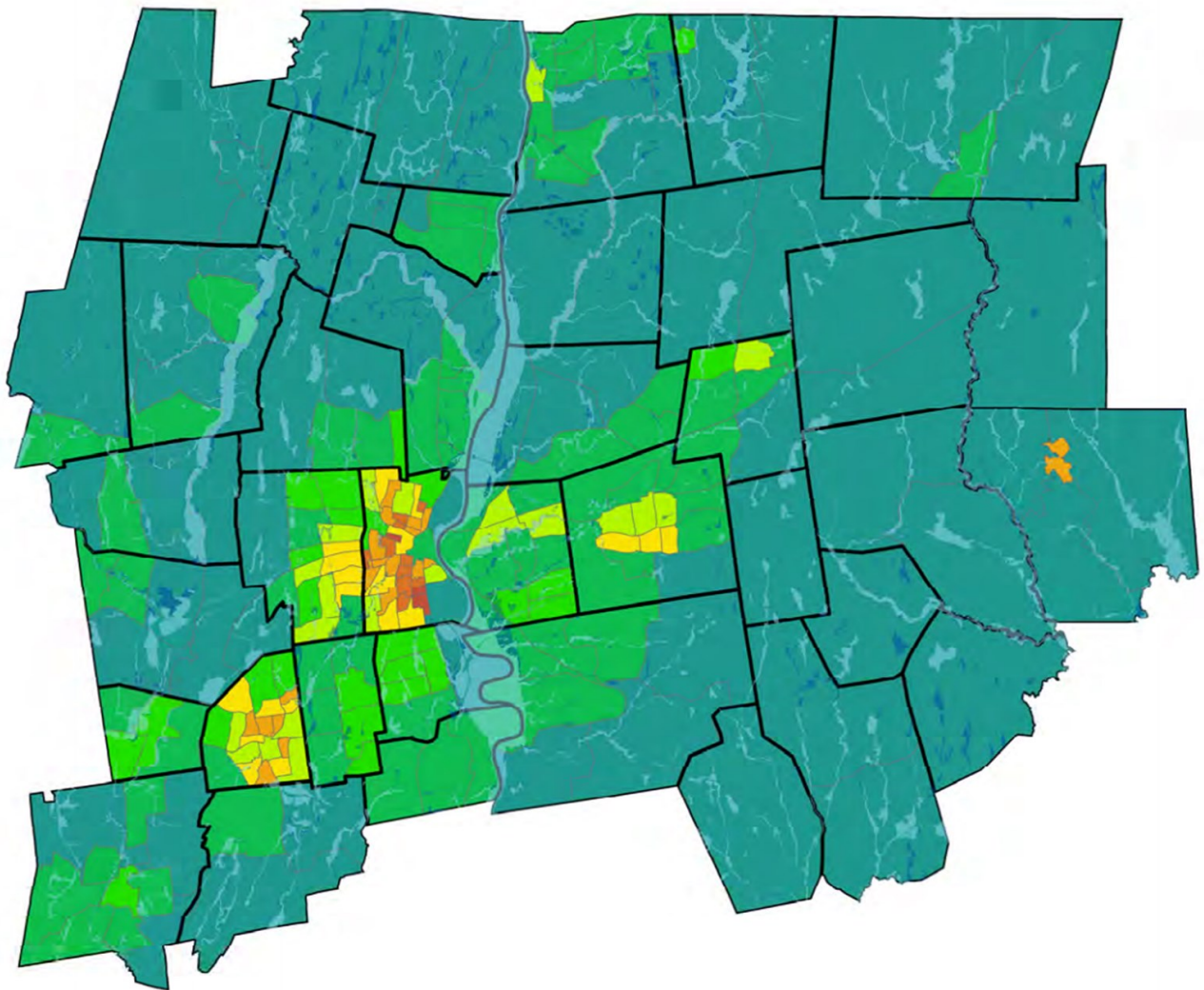


**Capitol Region Natural Hazards
Mitigation Plan Update**

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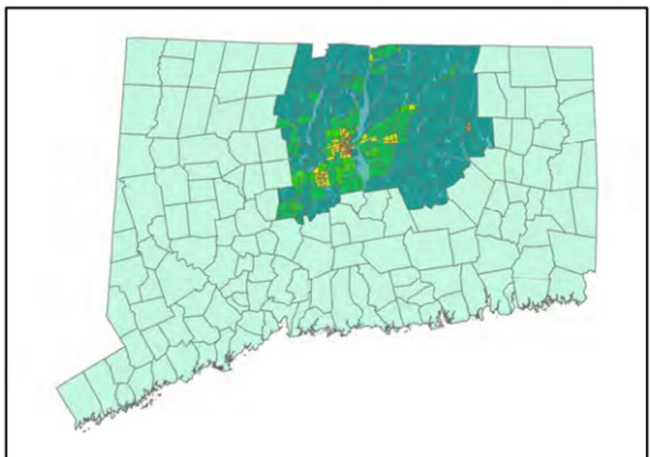
Map By: MER
MMIH: 2020-16
Original: 10/11/2017
Revision: 10/11/2017
Scale: 1 inch = 30,000 feet

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LEGEND

Population Density	FEMA Flood Zone
Greater than 20,000	100 Year Flood Zone
15,000 to 20,000	500 Year Flood Zone
9,000 to 15,000	
6,000 to 9,000	
4,000 to 6,000	
2,500 to 4,000	
1,000 to 2,500	
Less than 1,000	



SOURCE(S):
US Census

Map 6: Population Density and Flood Zones

LOCATION:

Capitol Region, CT



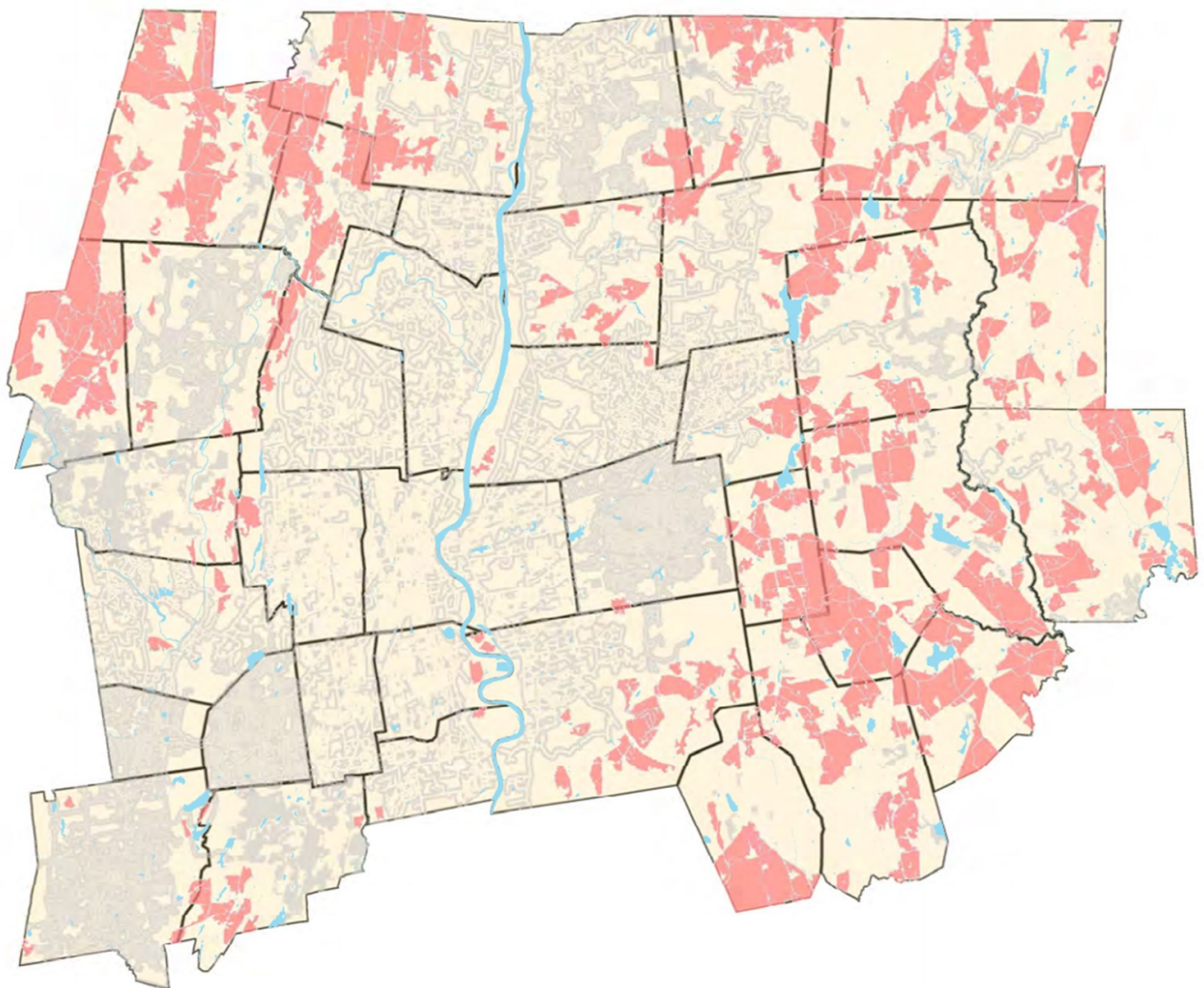
Capitol Region Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Update

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Map By: MER
MMI#: 2020-16
Original: 10/11/2017
Revision: 7/25/2018
Scale: 1 inch = 30,000 feet

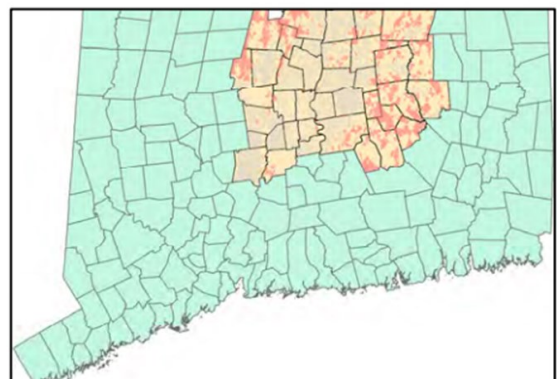


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LEGEND

- High Wildfire Risk Area
- Low Wildfire Risk Area
- Rivers & Lakes
- PWS Distribution Systems



SOURCE(S):
Connecticut DEEP

Map 10: Wildfire Risk Areas

LOCATION:

Capitol Region, CT



Capitol Region Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Update

MXD: Y:\2020-16\Maps\Map_10_Wildfire_Risk_Areas.mxd

Map By: VLB
MMH#: 2020-16
Original: 7/25/2018
Revision: 7/26/2018
Scale: 1 inch = 30,000 feet

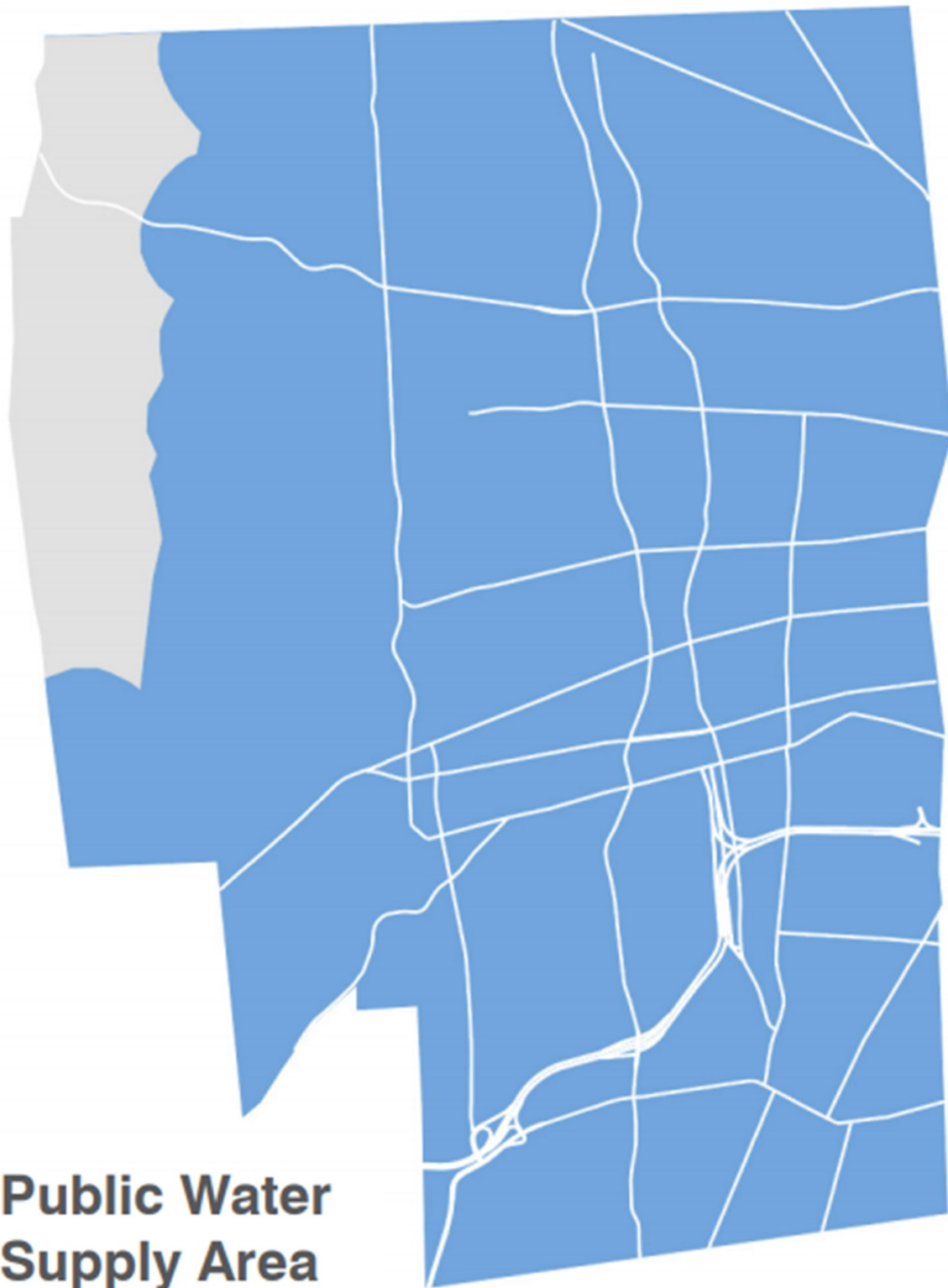


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Source: Town of West Hartford

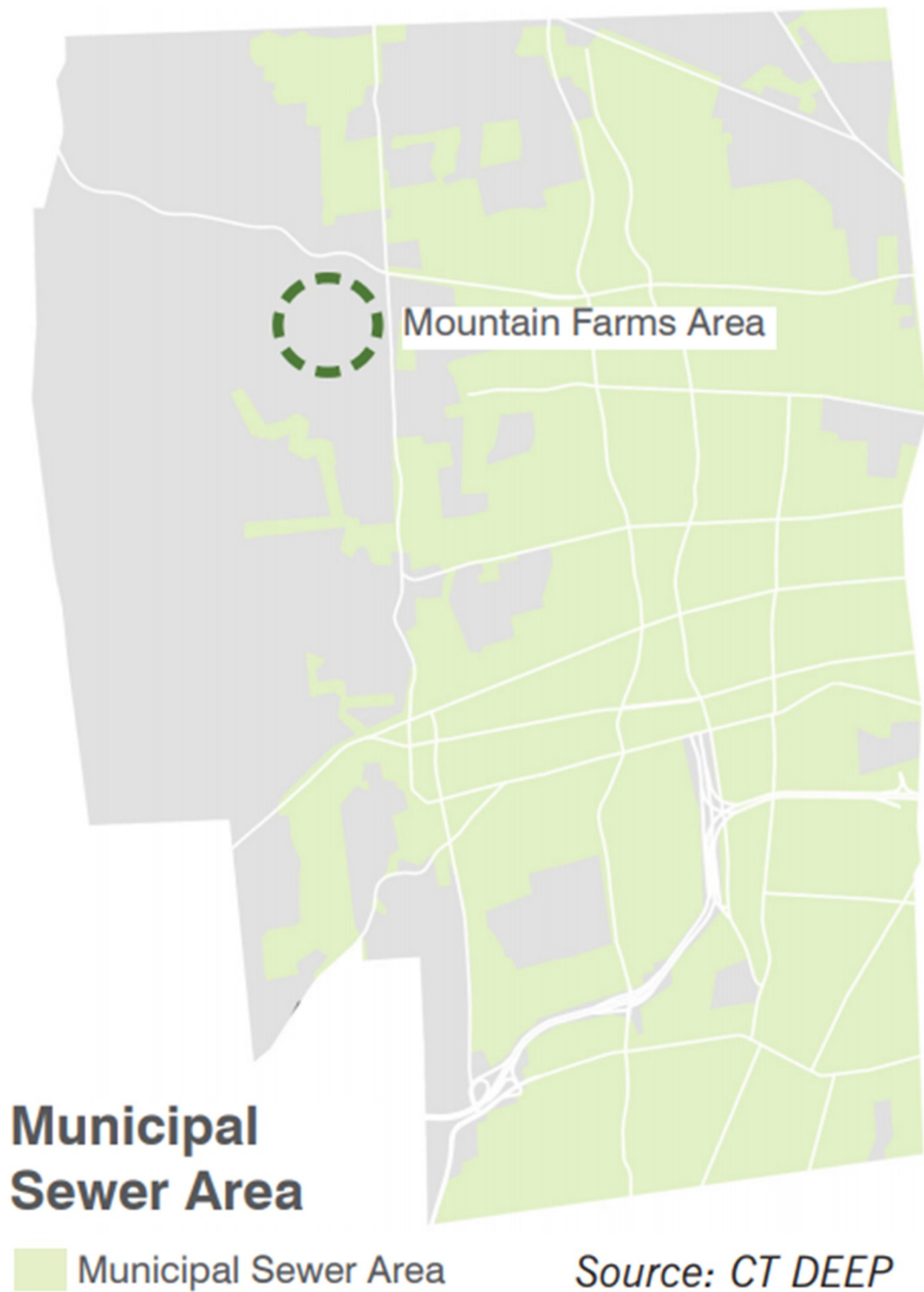
West Hartford Plan of Conservation and Development

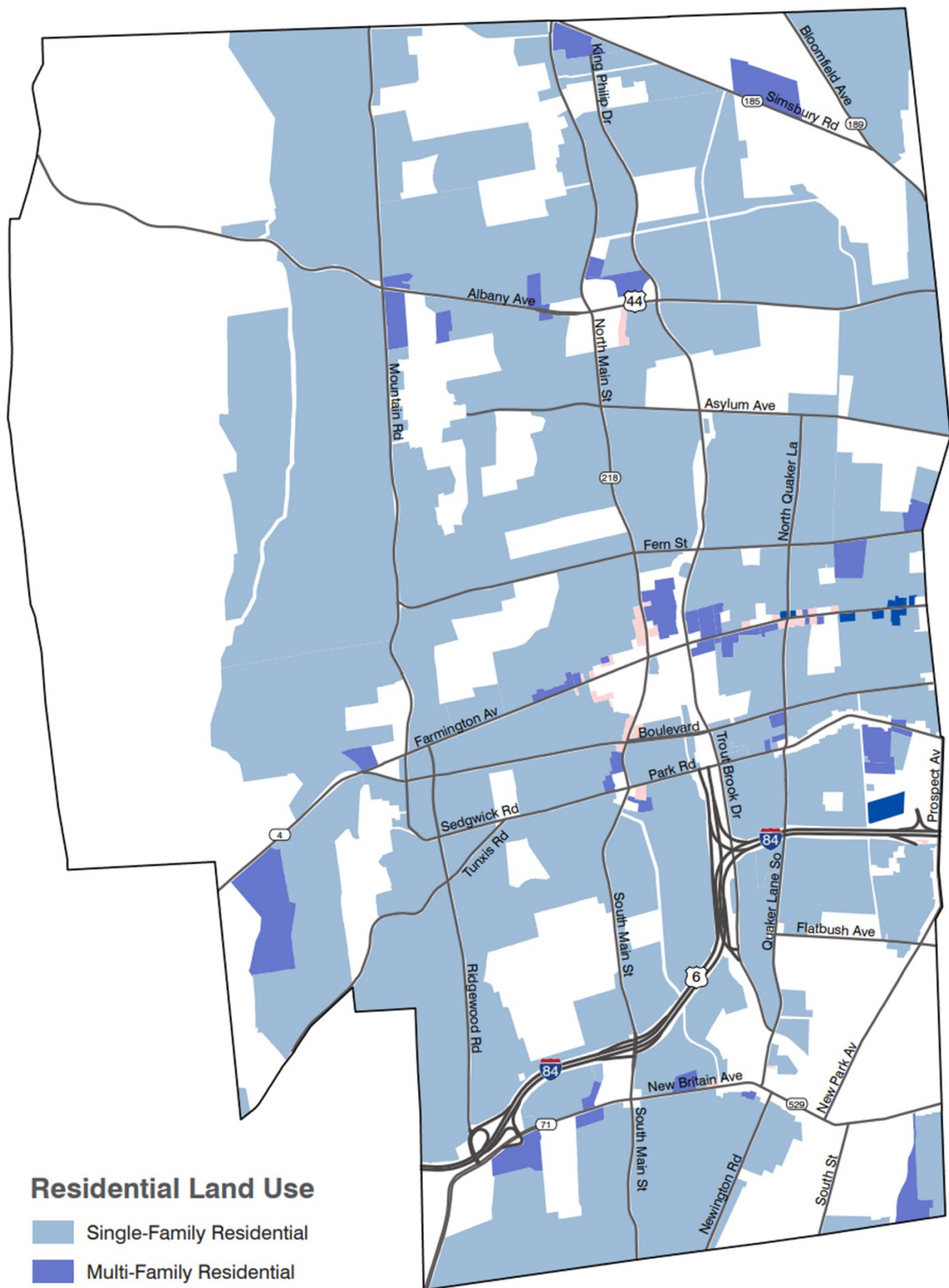


Public Water Supply Area

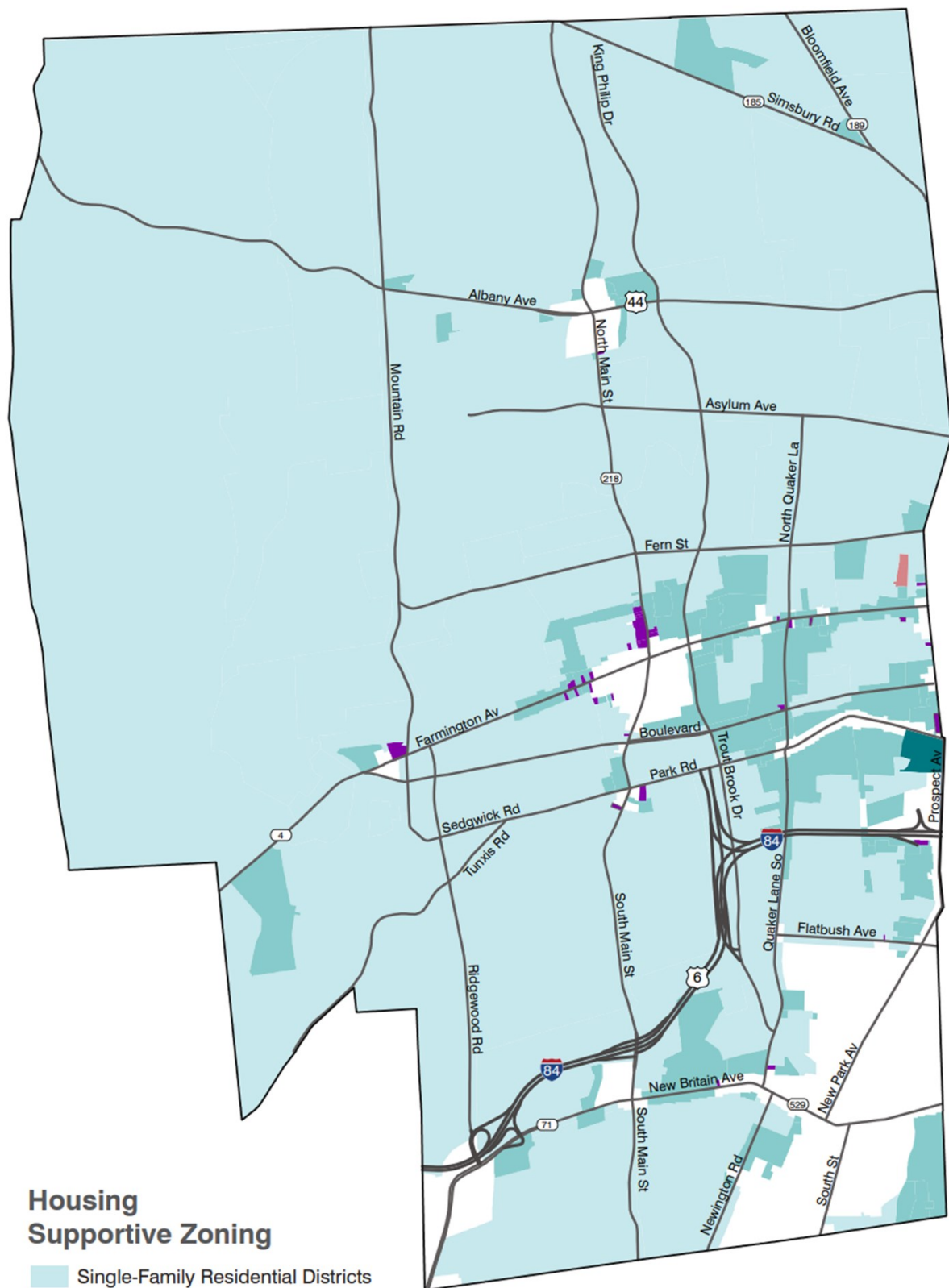
■ Public Water Supply Area

Source: Connecticut Department of Public Health





Source: Town of West Hartford

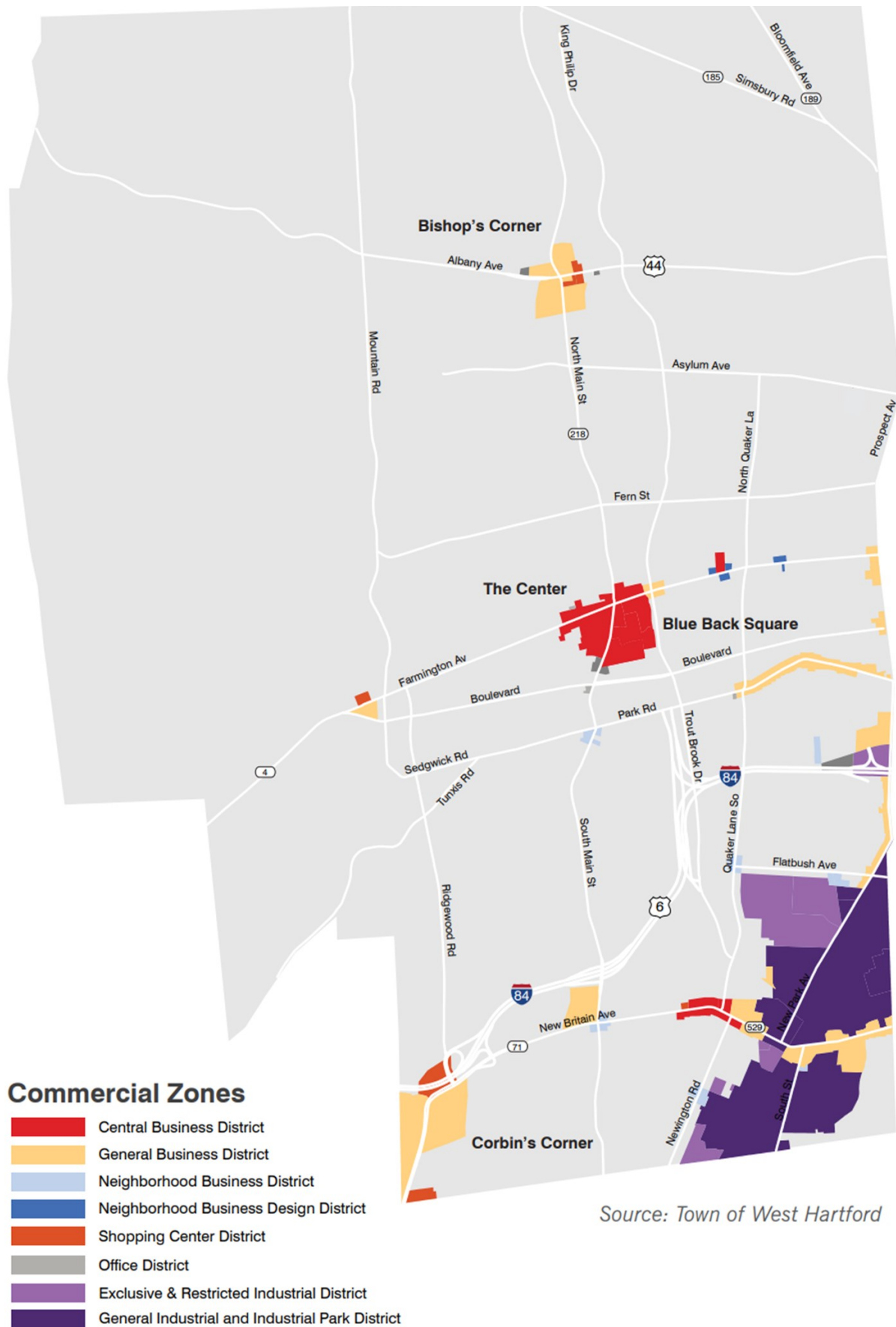


Housing Supportive Zoning

- Single-Family Residential Districts
- Multi-Family Residential Districts
- Multi-Family, Multi-Story Residential Districts
- Residential Institutional Districts
- Residential Office Districts

Source: Town of West Hartford

West Hartford Plan of Conservation and Development

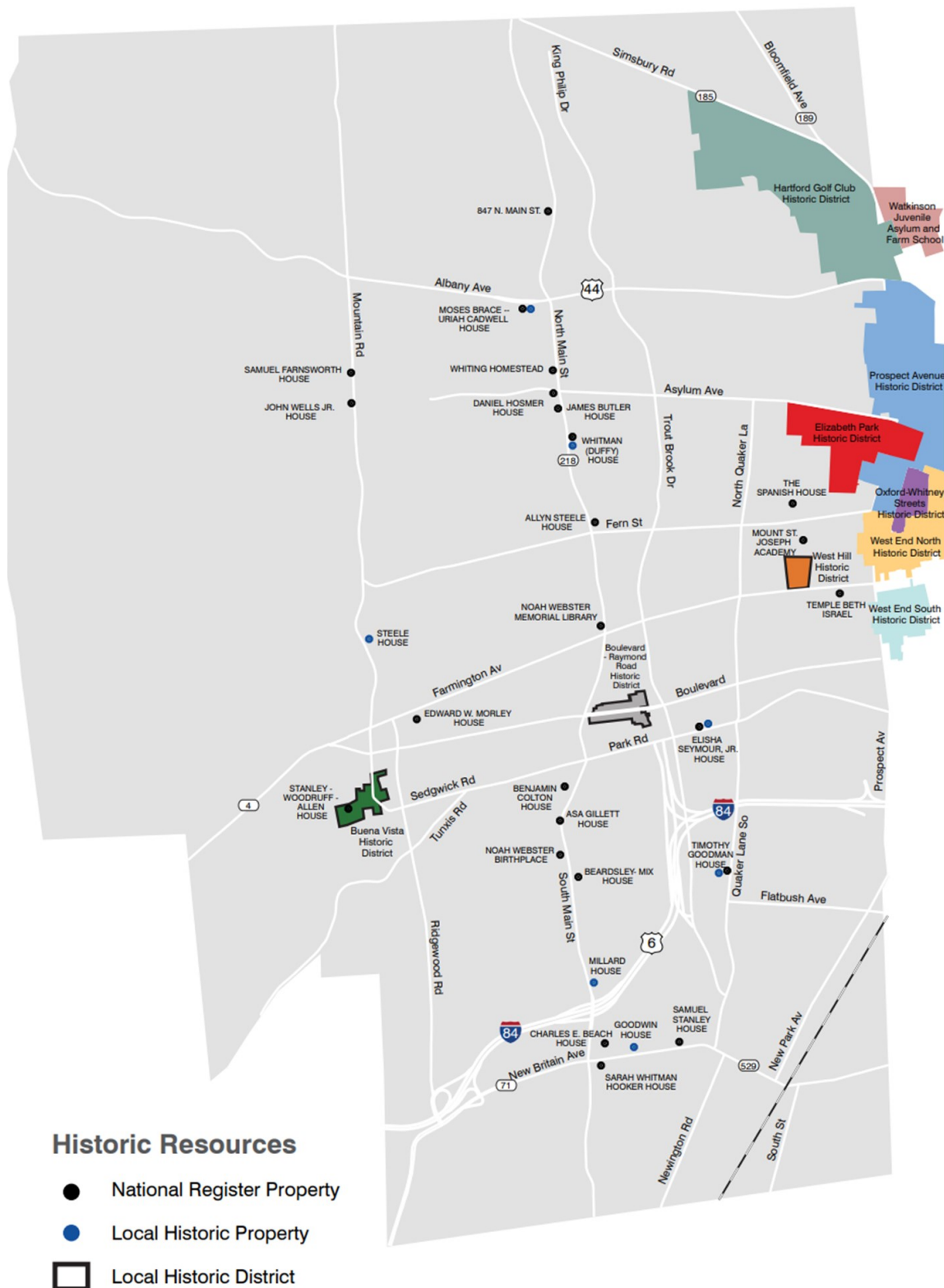


West Hartford Plan of Conservation and Development

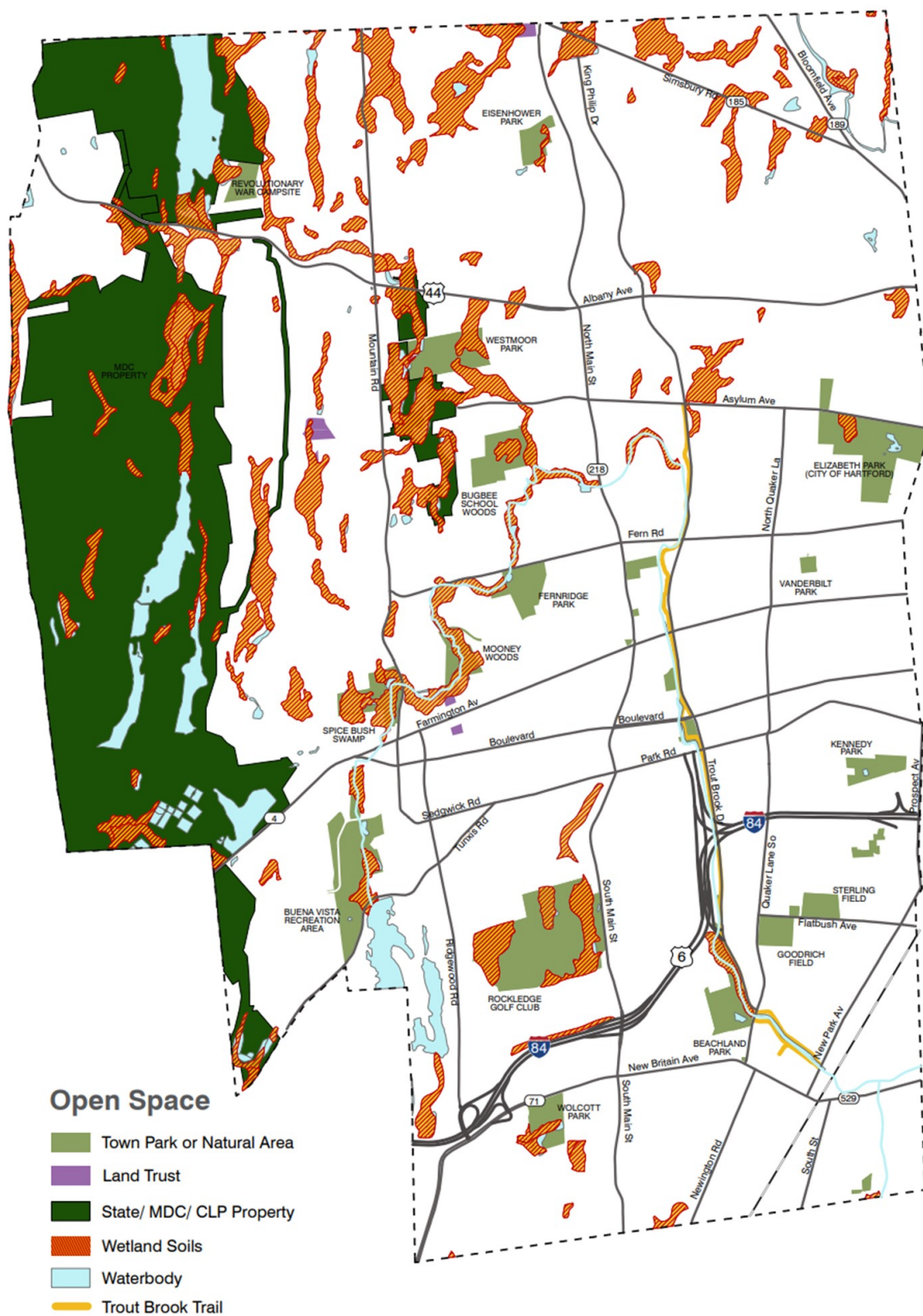


Source: Town of West Hartford,
CT Transit

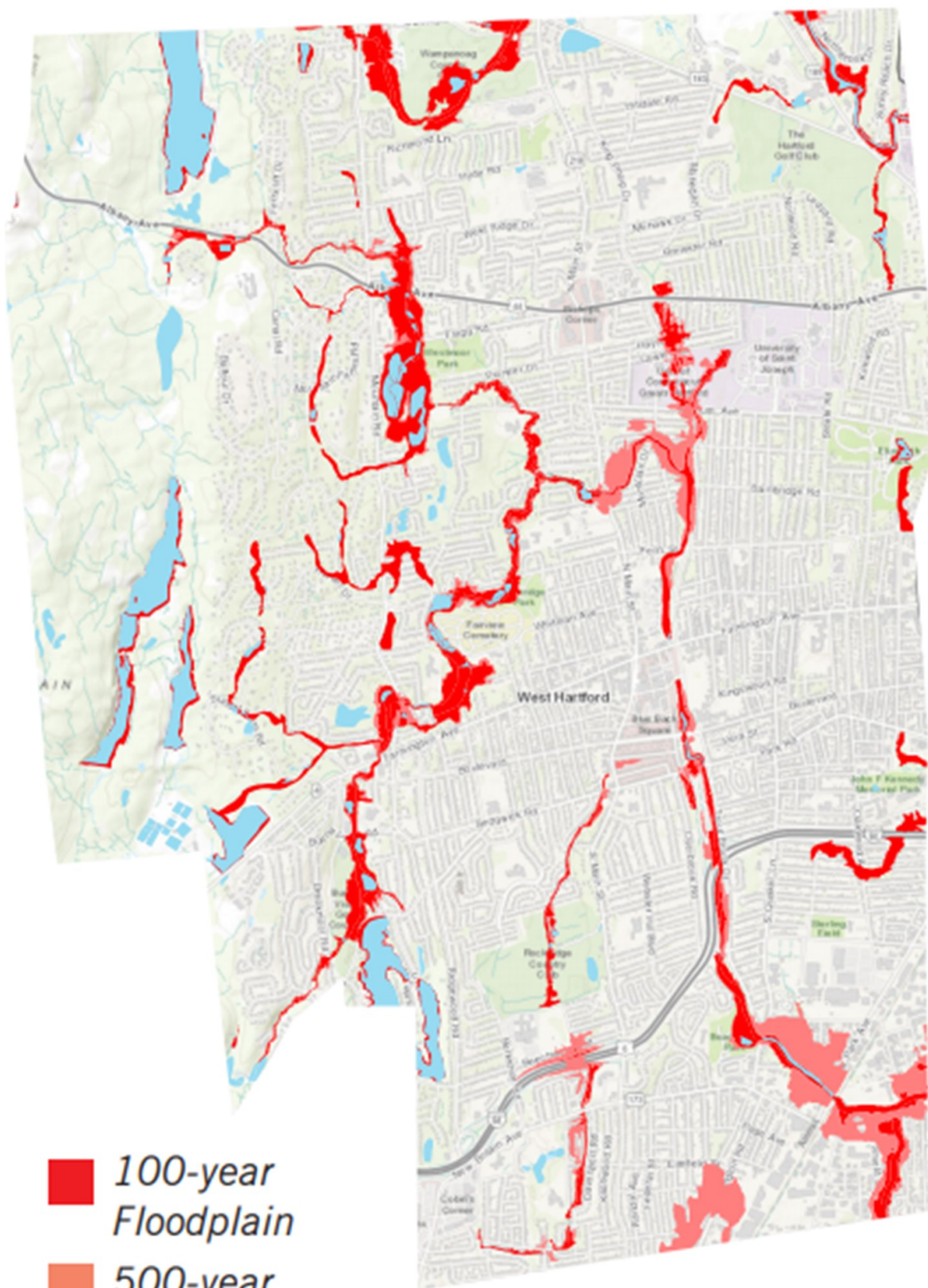
West Hartford Plan of Conservation and Development



West Hartford Plan of Conservation and Development

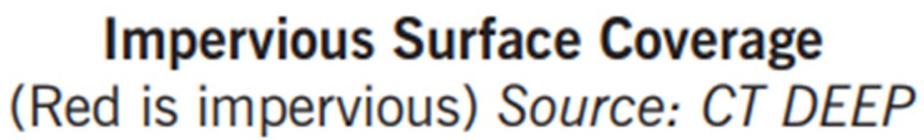


West Hartford Plan of Conservation and Development



FEMA Flood Areas

Source: FEMA



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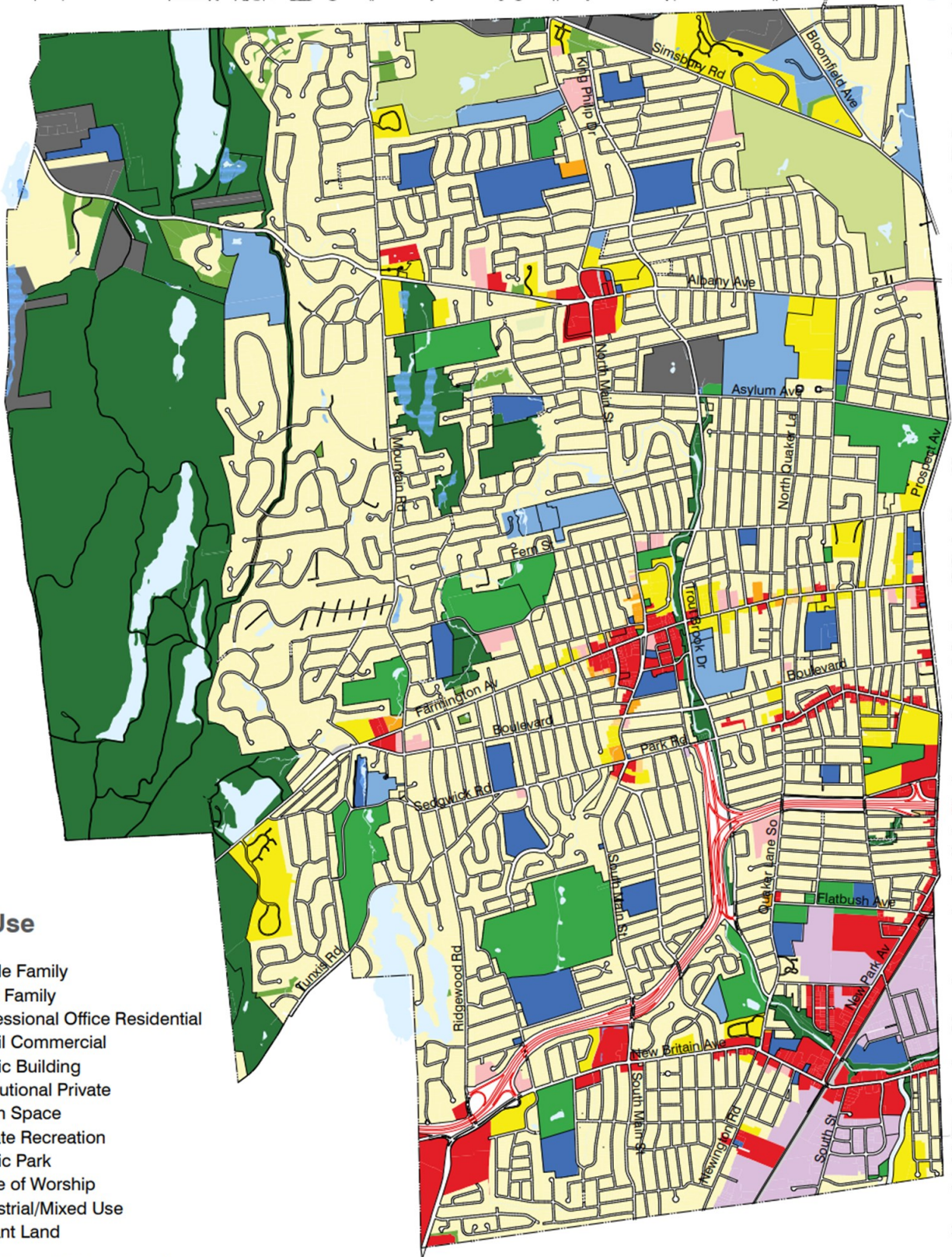
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Land Use

- Single Family
- Multi Family
- Professional Office Residential
- Retail Commercial
- Public Building
- Institutional Private
- Open Space
- Private Recreation
- Public Park
- Place of Worship
- Industrial/Mixed Use
- Vacant Land

Source: Town of West Hartford





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