

# West Upton Center Visioning Project



# Tonight's Agenda

- Project Overview
- Working Group process
- Introductions
- Presentation: Physical Characteristics of the Study Area
- Breakout Groups: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Opportunities
- Final thoughts

# Project Overview

## Purpose

Develop a long-term plan for West Upton Center to guide its future.

## Funding

Economic Development Committee - EOHLC Chapter 268 of the Acts of 2022 Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund Earmark

## Timeline

Final Reports and Posters to be submitted in April 2026

## Basemap

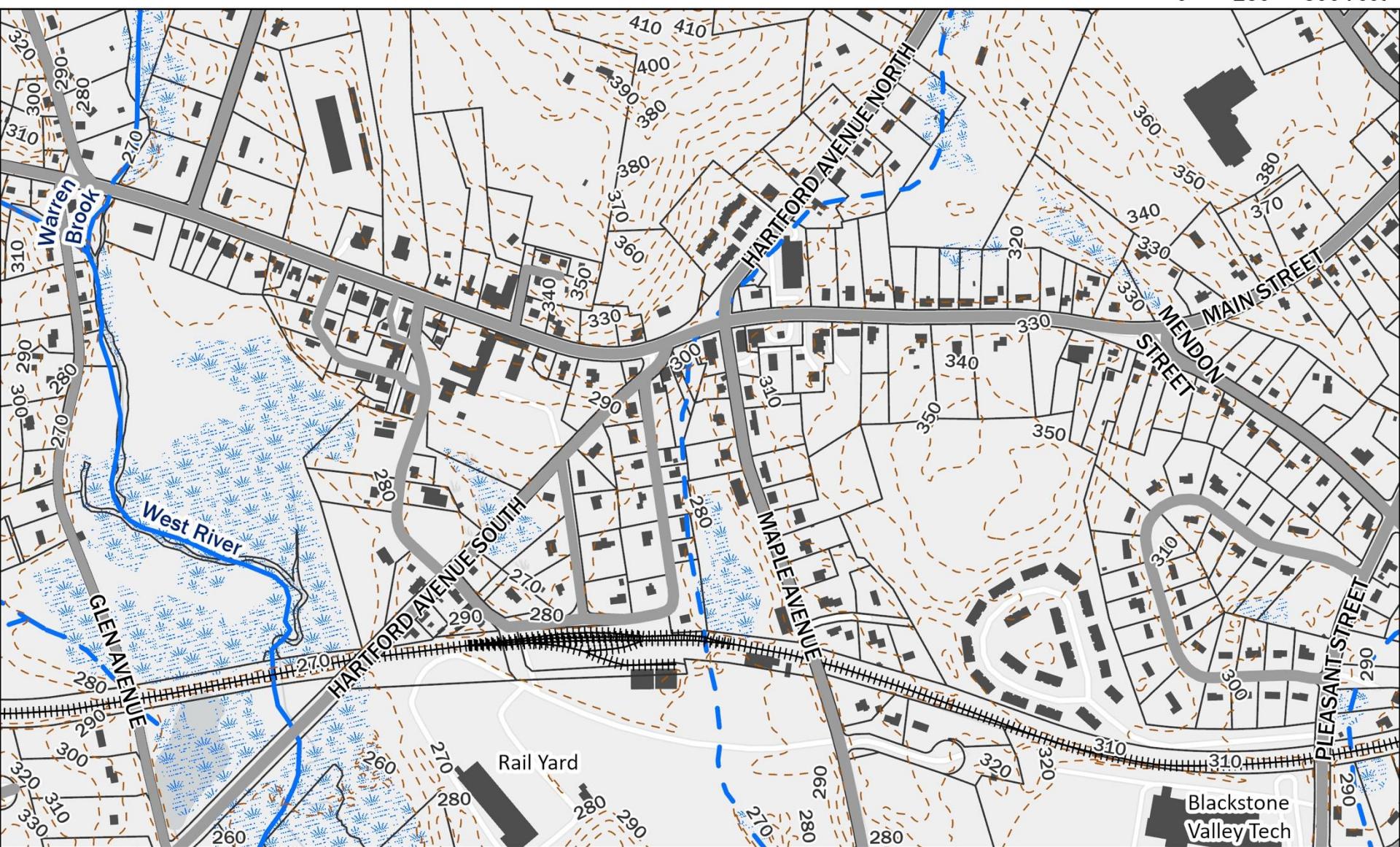
10-Foot Contours

Stream

Intermittent Stream



0 250 500 Feet



## Approach: Same as Used for Upton Town Center Masterplan

## Document Facts; Assess Challenges & Opportunities



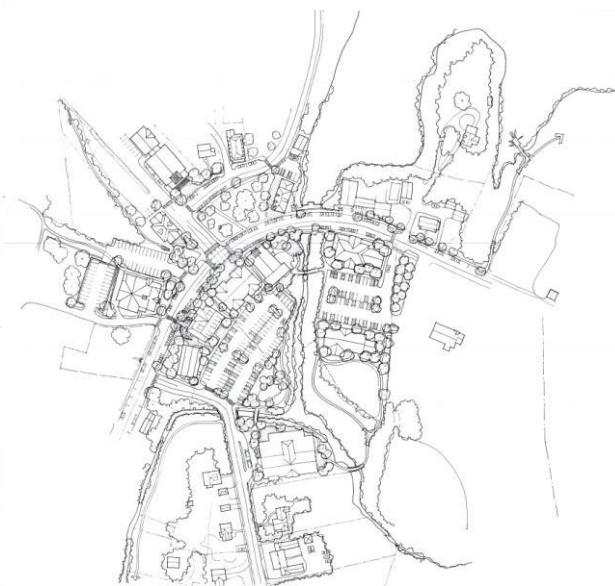
# Approach: Same as Used for Upton Town Center Masterplan

## Gather Input from Public—Working Group, Design Workshop



# Approach: Same as Used for Upton Town Center Masterplan

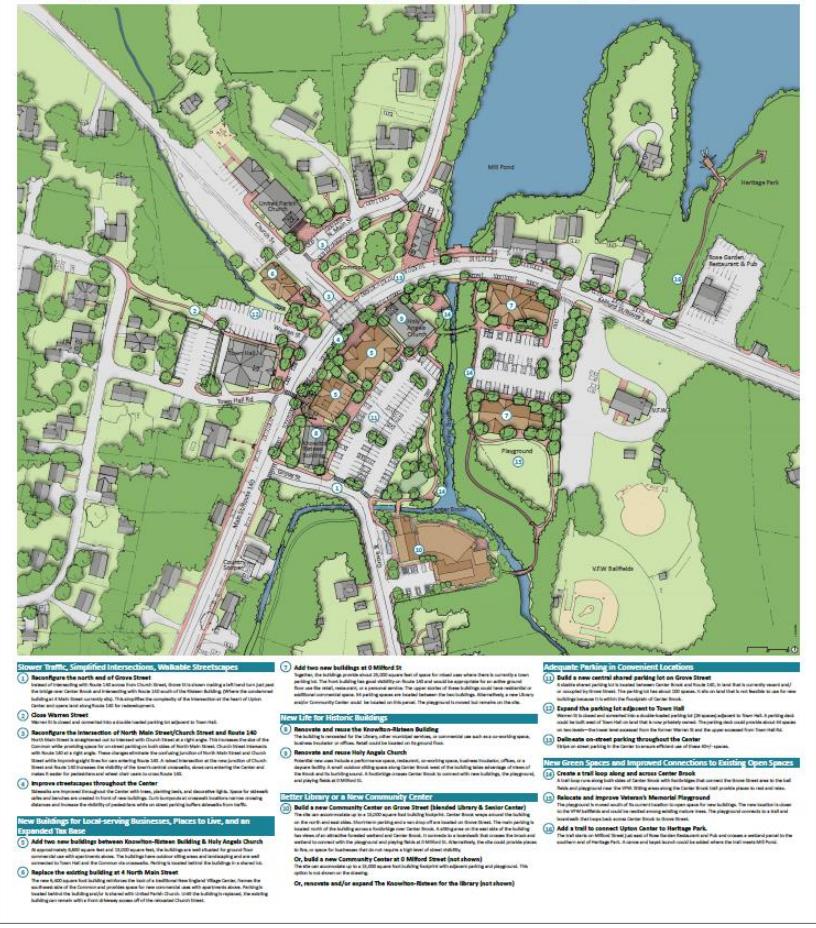
## Test and Refine Alternative Scenarios



## Approach: Same as Used for Upton Town Center Masterplan

# Final Masterplan Development

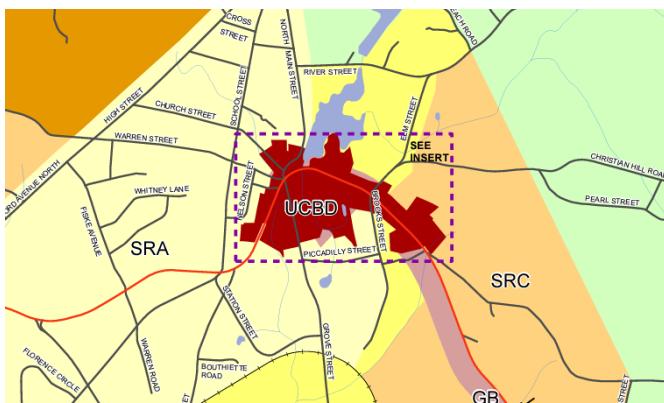
# Imagine Upton—A Vision for Revitalizing Upton Center



# Approach: Same as Used for Upton Town Center Masterplan

## Results

Adopted Upton Center Zoning District -2019



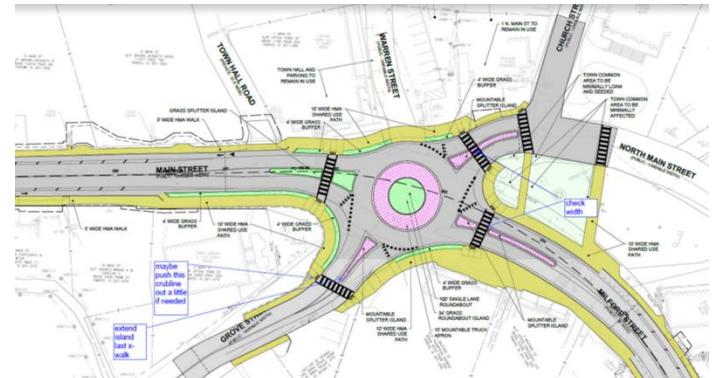
Structural Eval. and RFP for Holy Angels Church -2019-2020



Feasibility Study for Library/Senior Center -2019



Intersection & Sidewalk Improvements – 2026



# Approach: Same as Used for Upton Town Center Masterplan

## Results

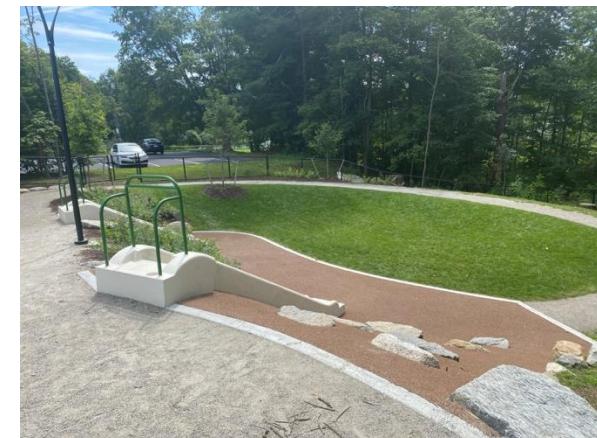


Upton Community Center

Playground Review - Upton Veterans Memorial in Upton, MA

Our new favorite place to play!!

By Krystina Tessler, Publisher, Mackid Franklin - Grafton - Blackstone Valley E  
August 16, 2023



# Working Group Process

# Role of the Working Group

- Represent various constituencies in Upton
- Bring personal experience, expertise, and diverse perspectives to group discussions
- Evaluate information
- Help develop and test ideas
- Engage in deliberation
- Support public outreach
- Advise Dodson & Flinker



# Consensus-Building Process



1. **Convening Stakeholders** who represent all those potentially affected by the project and the various interests at play in the social and political life of the community.
2. A **Shared Fact-Finding Process** that involves the stakeholders in vetting the maps, data and analyses about the study area and determining whether the information is accurate, complete and trustworthy.
3. Discussion of **Shared Community Values and Vision** for their community and the study area.
4. **Shared exploration of alternatives**, where all reasonable ideas are brought forward and tested against the community's vision and values.
5. **Deliberation and decision making**, where stakeholders participate in refining proposals and looking objectively at how best to balance competing goals of the town and the needs of various residents, landowners, businesses, and institutions.

# Working Group Process

May	<b>Kick-off Meeting</b>	Oct.	<b>Working Group #3: Vision &amp; Values, Alternatives</b>
June	<b>Working Group #1: Shared Fact-Finding, SWOT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intro to Working Group</li><li>• Review information about the study area and project context</li><li>• Discuss strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review ideas from public workshop</li><li>• Discuss alternatives and identify preferred plan</li></ul>
July	<b>Working Group #2: Shared Fact-Finding, Issues &amp; Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to review information about study area</li><li>• Discuss key problems and opportunities</li><li>• Plan for public workshop</li></ul>	Jan.	<b>Working Group #4: Deliberation &amp; Decision-Making</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review revised master plan</li><li>• Discuss implementation strategies</li></ul>
		Feb.	<b>Working Group #5: Final Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review final report and discuss implementation</li></ul>

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**Other Community Input**      **September: Public Visioning Workshop**  
**Jan-Feb: Focus Groups**  
**April: Final Public Forum**

# Proposed WG Ground Rules



- Ask questions instead of making assumptions
  - Share your views and explain why you hold them
- 



- Critique ideas, not people
  - Work toward shared understanding
- 



- Make sure everyone has a chance to speak
  - Listen closely to others
- 



- Commit to attending as many meetings as possible
- Give meetings your full attention

# Introductions

# Example Stakeholder Groups

- Residents in the district (diversity of demographic groups):
  - Long-term residents
  - Newer residents
  - Renters
  - Seniors
  - Young adults
  - Families with children
  - Affordable housing residents
  - People with disabilities
- Town Board and Committee members
  - Planning Board
  - Conservation Commission
  - Select Board
  - Historical Commission
  - Open Space Committee
  - Community Preservation Committee
  - Recreation Commission
  - Housing Authority (or other housing advocate)
  - Finance Committee
  - School Committee/School officials/teachers
- Developers or builders with an interest in W. Upton
- Planners, architects, designers, who live in Upton
- Business owners and employees
- Customers of businesses in the area
- Landowners
- Town Departments:
  - Public Works
  - Fire
  - Police
- Non-profits, service organizations, community leaders, advocates, community organizers, etc. from the district or the town at large
- Real estate agents (commercial and residential)

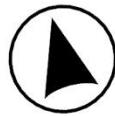
# Physical Characteristics

## Basemap with 2023 Ortho Photo

Parcels  
Stream

Intermittent Stream  
Wetlands

0 250 500 Feet

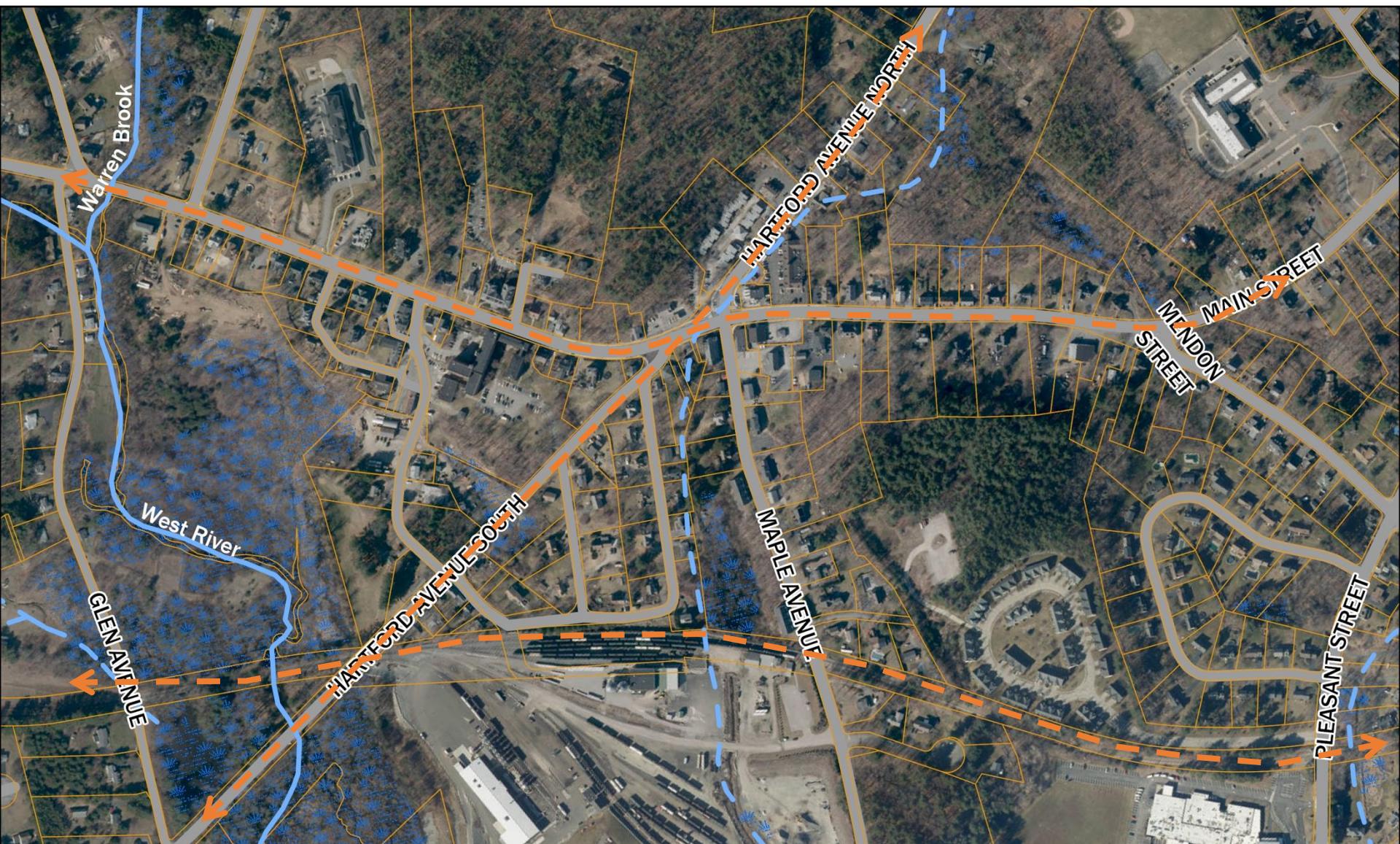


## Basemap with 2023 Ortho Photo

Parcels  
Stream

Intermittent Stream  
Wetlands

0 250 500 Feet



## Land Use

Town Owned Land

Structures

Land Use by Parcel

1 Unit Residential

2-3 Units Residential

4-8 Units Residential

>8 Units Residential

Open Space

Retail and Services

Manufacturing

School

Vacant

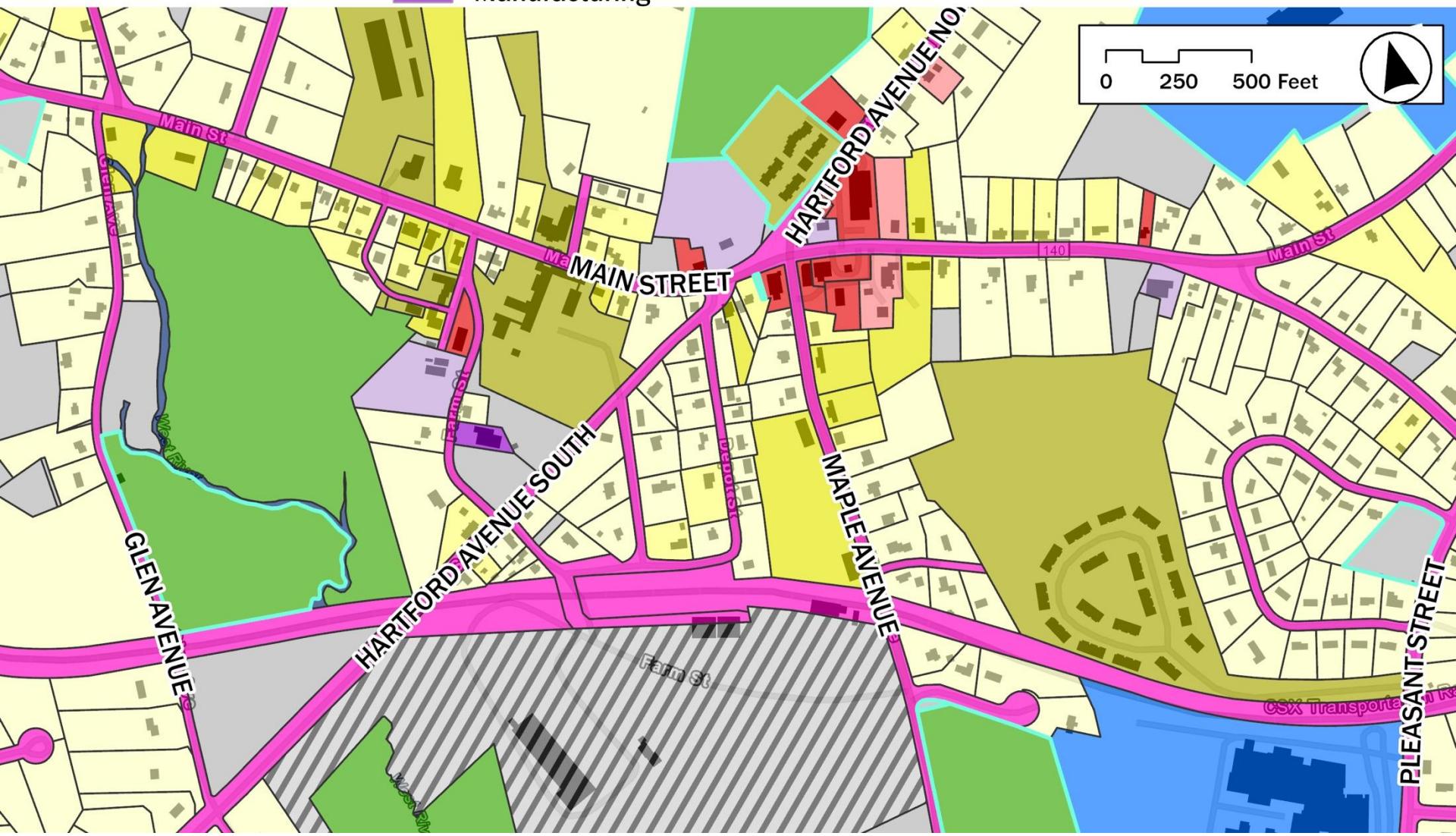
Automotive Services/  
Gas

General Office

Water

Rail Yard

Right-of-Way



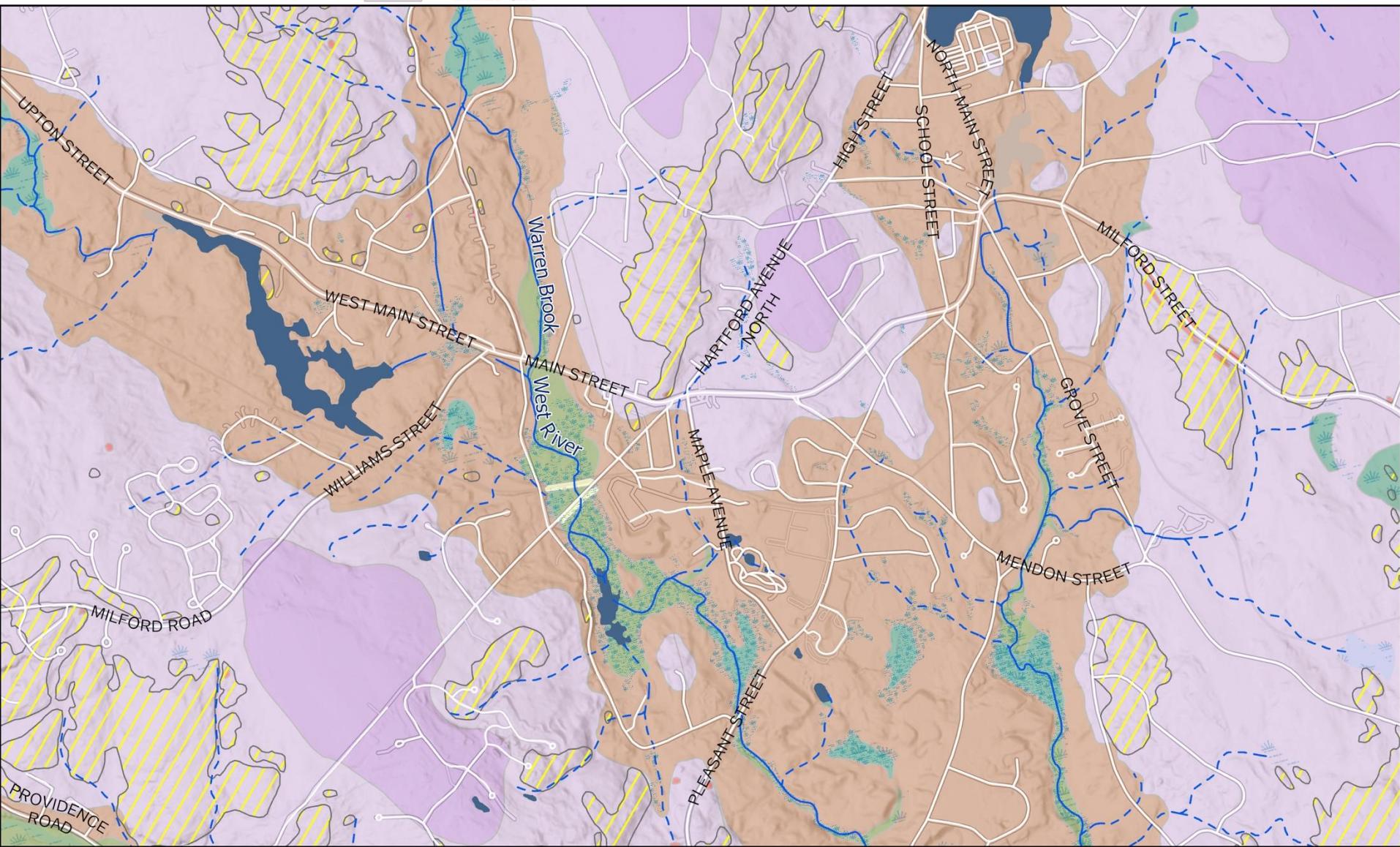
## Surficial Geology

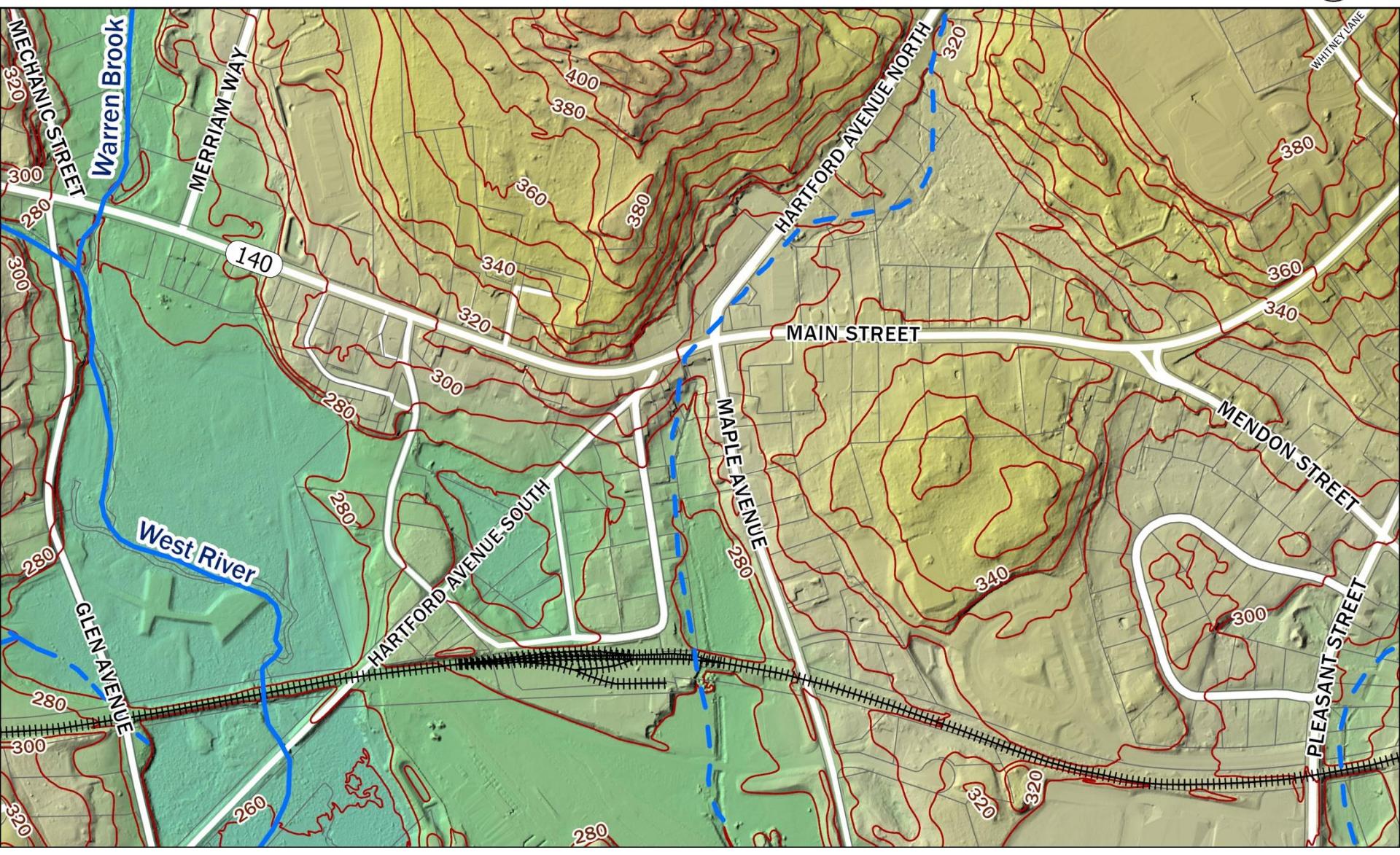
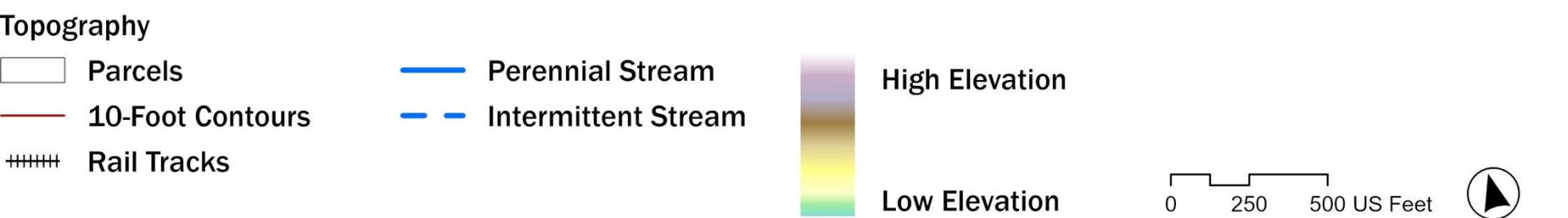
Artificial fill  
Flood-plain alluvium  
Bedrock outcrops

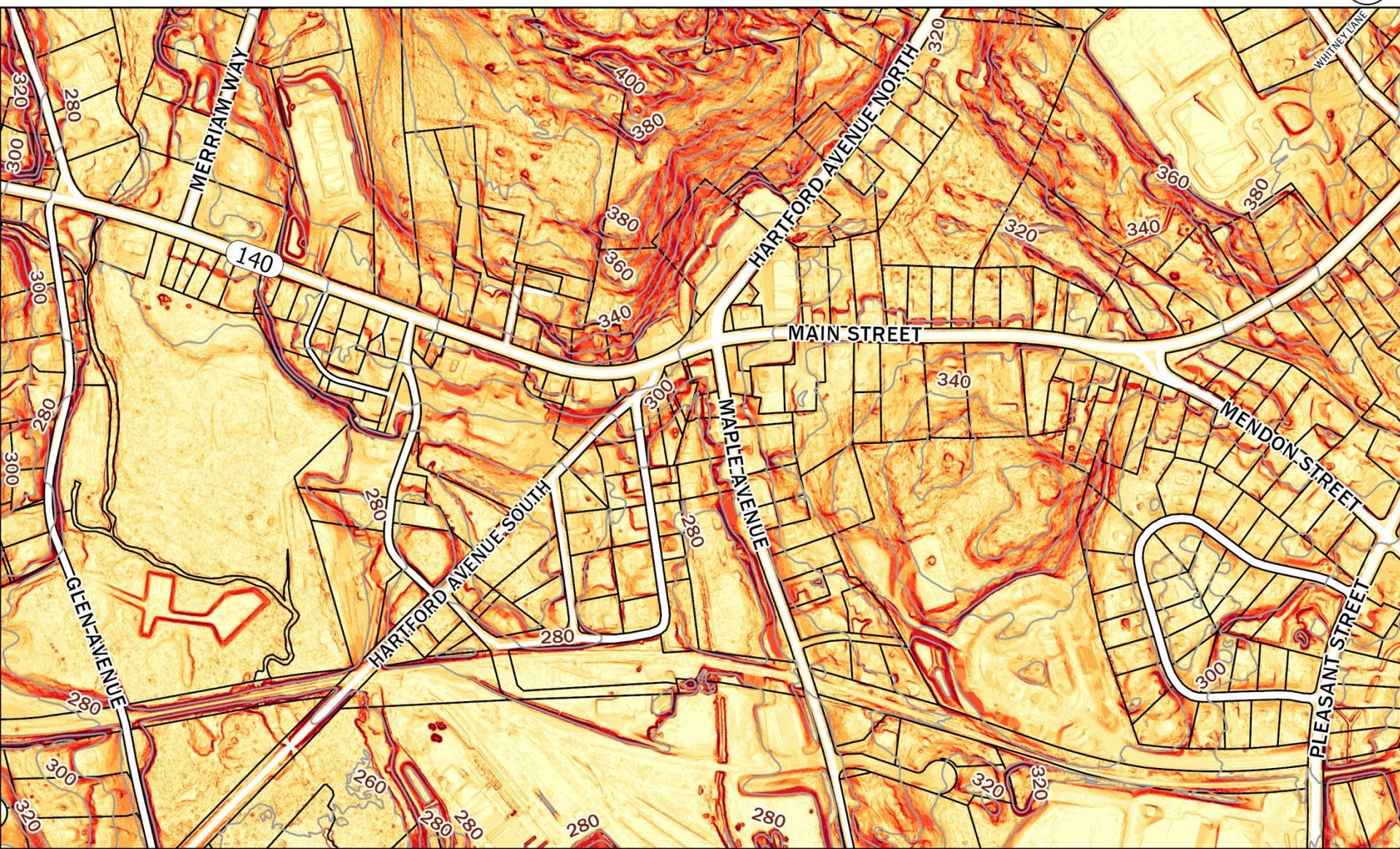
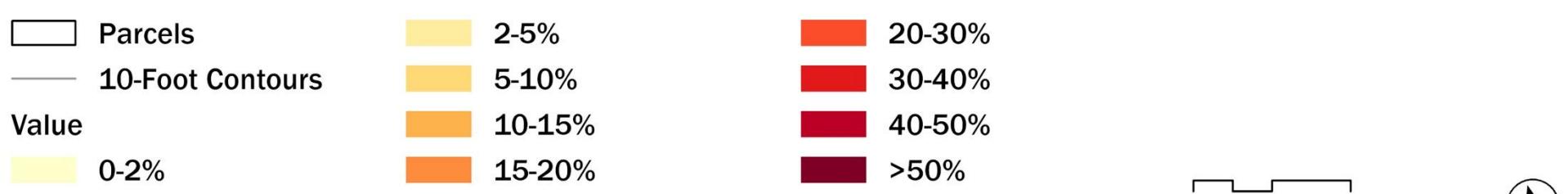
Glacial stratified  
deposits, coarse  
Swamp deposits  
Thin till

Thick till  
Abundant Outcrop  
or Shallow Bedrock

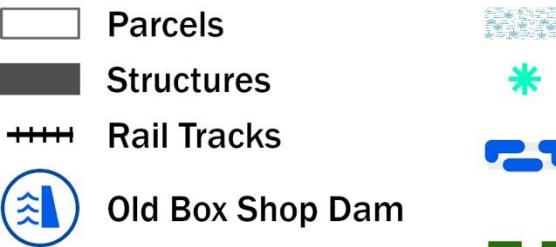
0 1,000 2,000 Feet







## Water Resources



Wetlands



Wellhead (4)



Zone I Wellhead Protection Area



Zone II Wellhead Protection Area

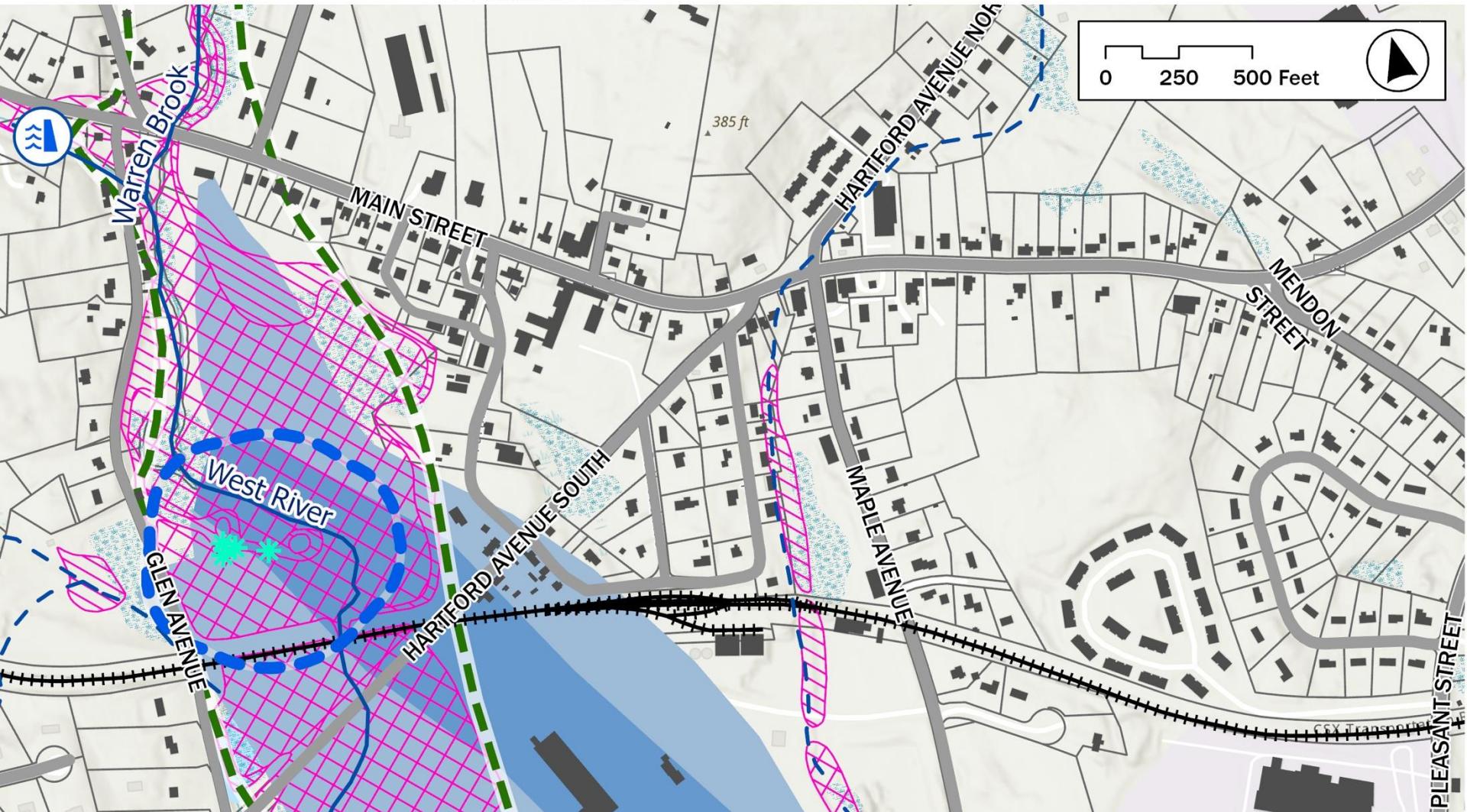
### Aquifers by Yield

- >300 Gallon Per Minute Yield
- 100-300 Gallon Per Minute Yield

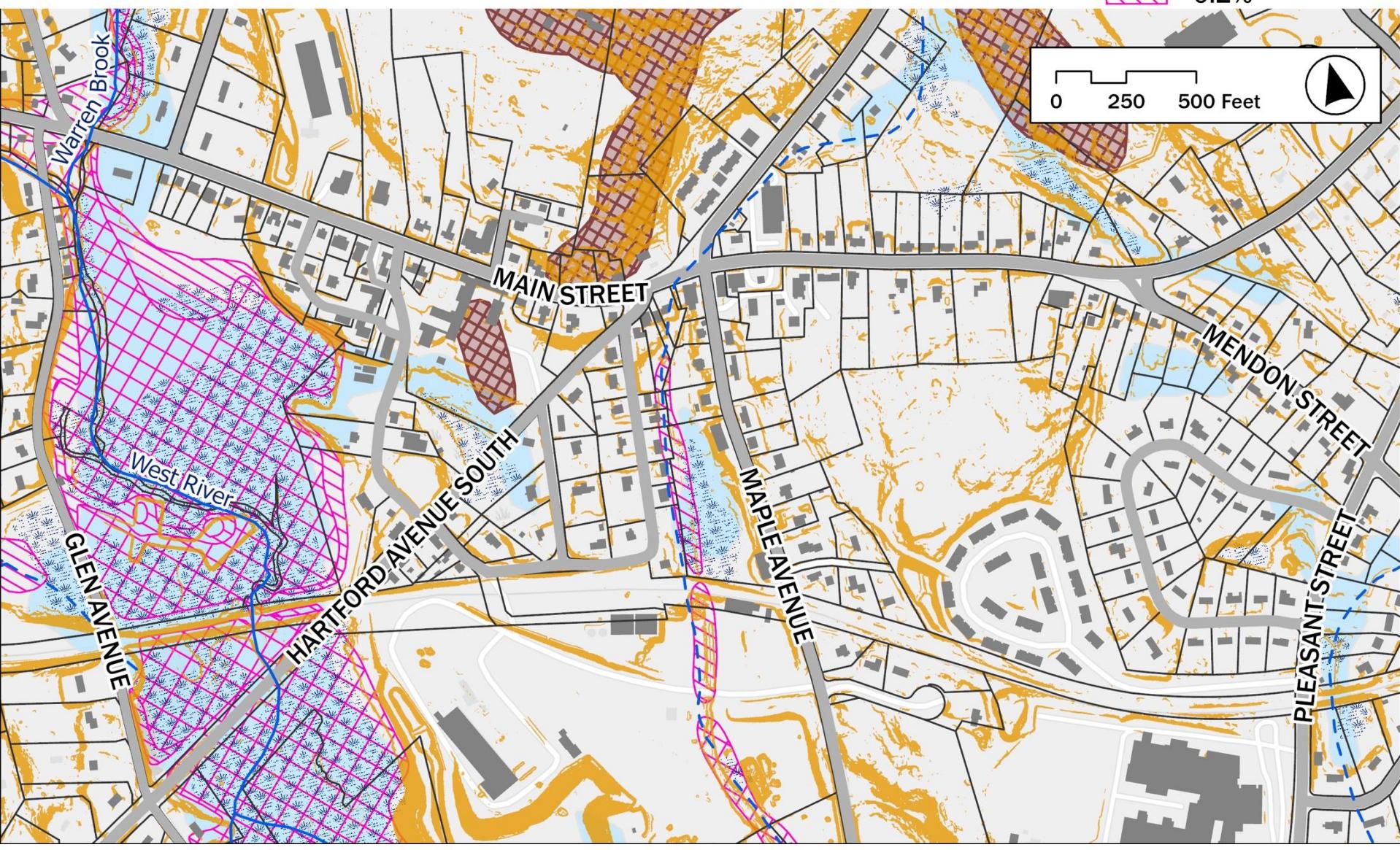
- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream

### FEMA Flood Zone

- Annual Flood Probability
  - 1%
  - 0.2%



# Physical Barriers to Development



## Open Space by Use and Level of Protection

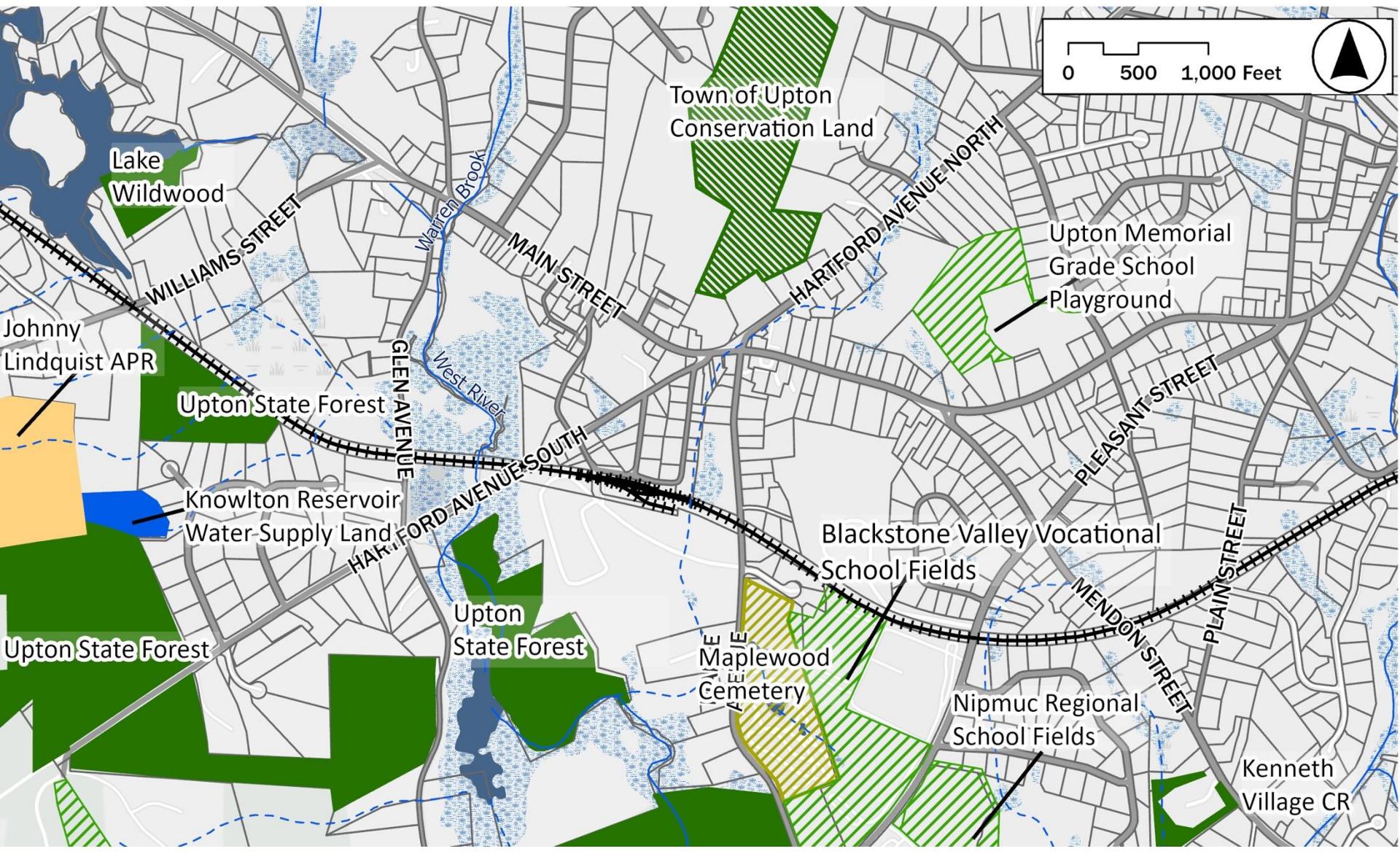
Agriculture,  
Permanent  
Conservation,  
Permanent

Conservation,  
Limited  
Historical/  
Cultural, Limited

Recreation,  
Limited  
Water Supply,  
Permanent

Open Water  
Wetlands  
Rail Tracks

Parcels  
Stream  
Intermittent  
Stream



# BioMap and Protected Open Space

- ++++ Rail Tracks
- Parcels
- Streams
- Potential Vernal Pool

## NHESP/TNC BioMap3 Statewide Components



Aquatic Core Habitat

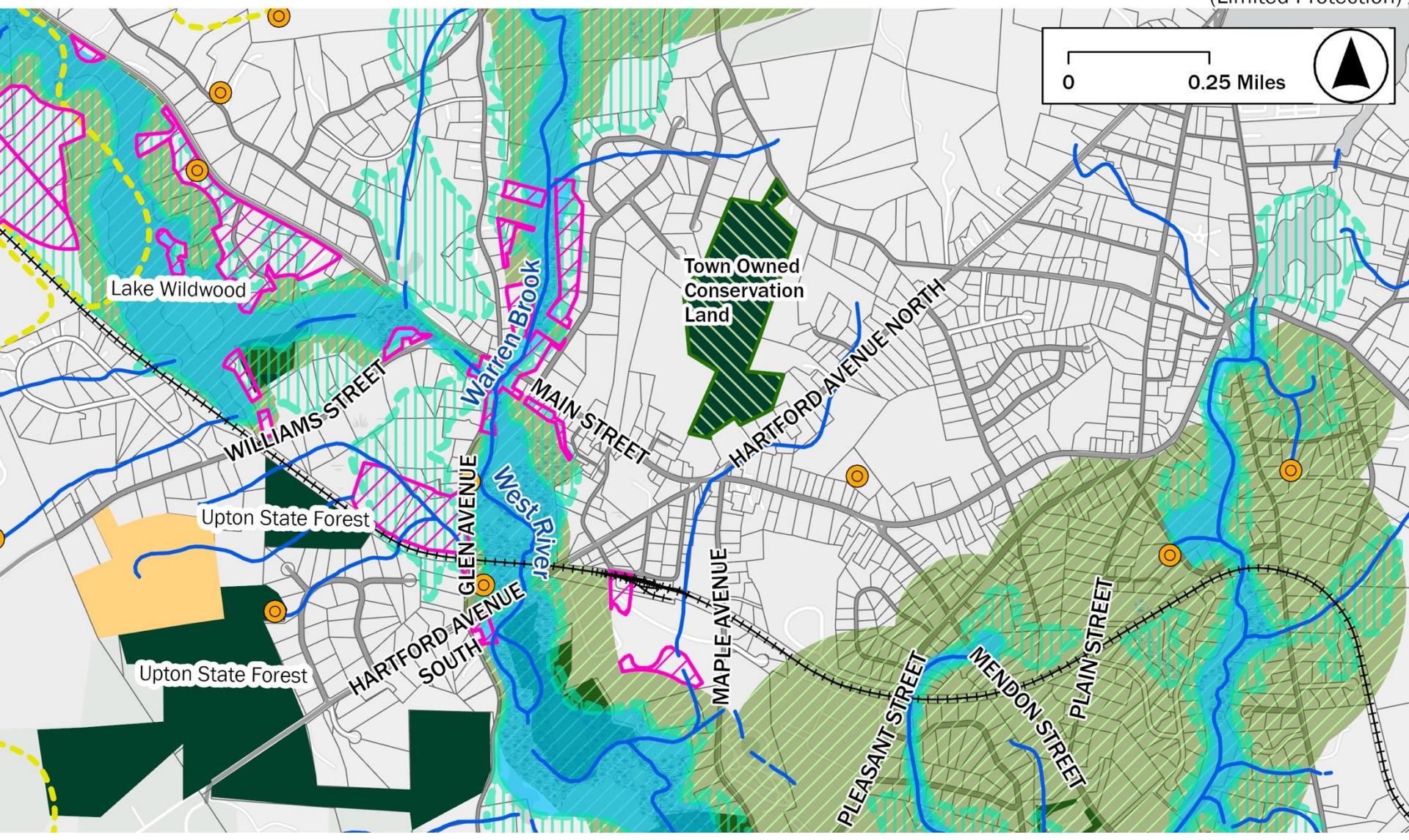
Aquatic Buffer-Critical Natural Landscape  
Wetland Core Habitat

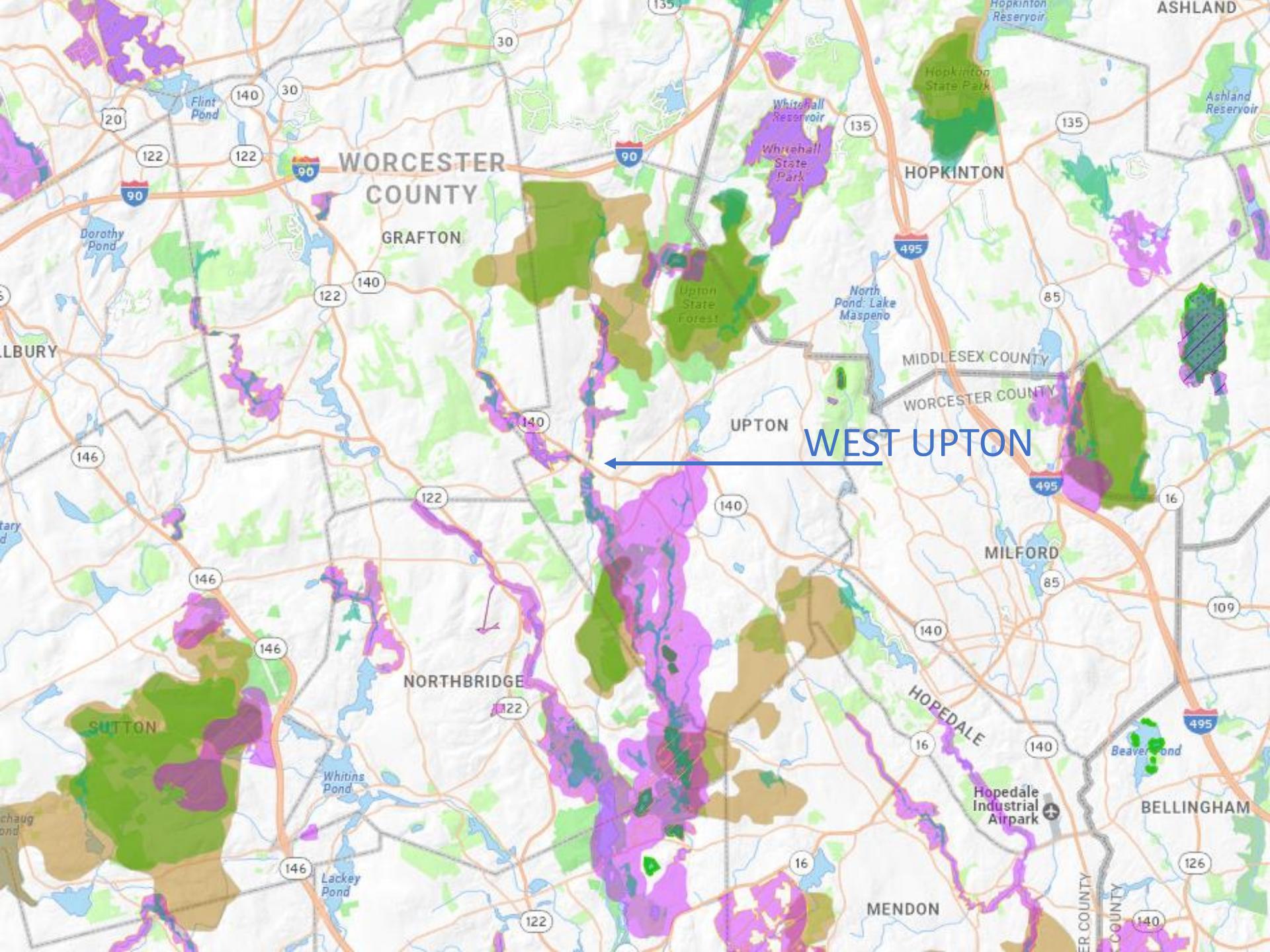
Rare Species Core Habitat

Local Landscapes  
Protected Open Space  
Conservation  
Agriculture  
Conservation  
(Limited Protection)

## BioMap 3 Local Components

Local Rare Species





# BioMap and Protected Open Space

- ++++ Rail Tracks
- Parcels
- Streams
- Potential Vernal Pool

## NHESP/TNC BioMap3 Statewide Components



Aquatic Core Habitat

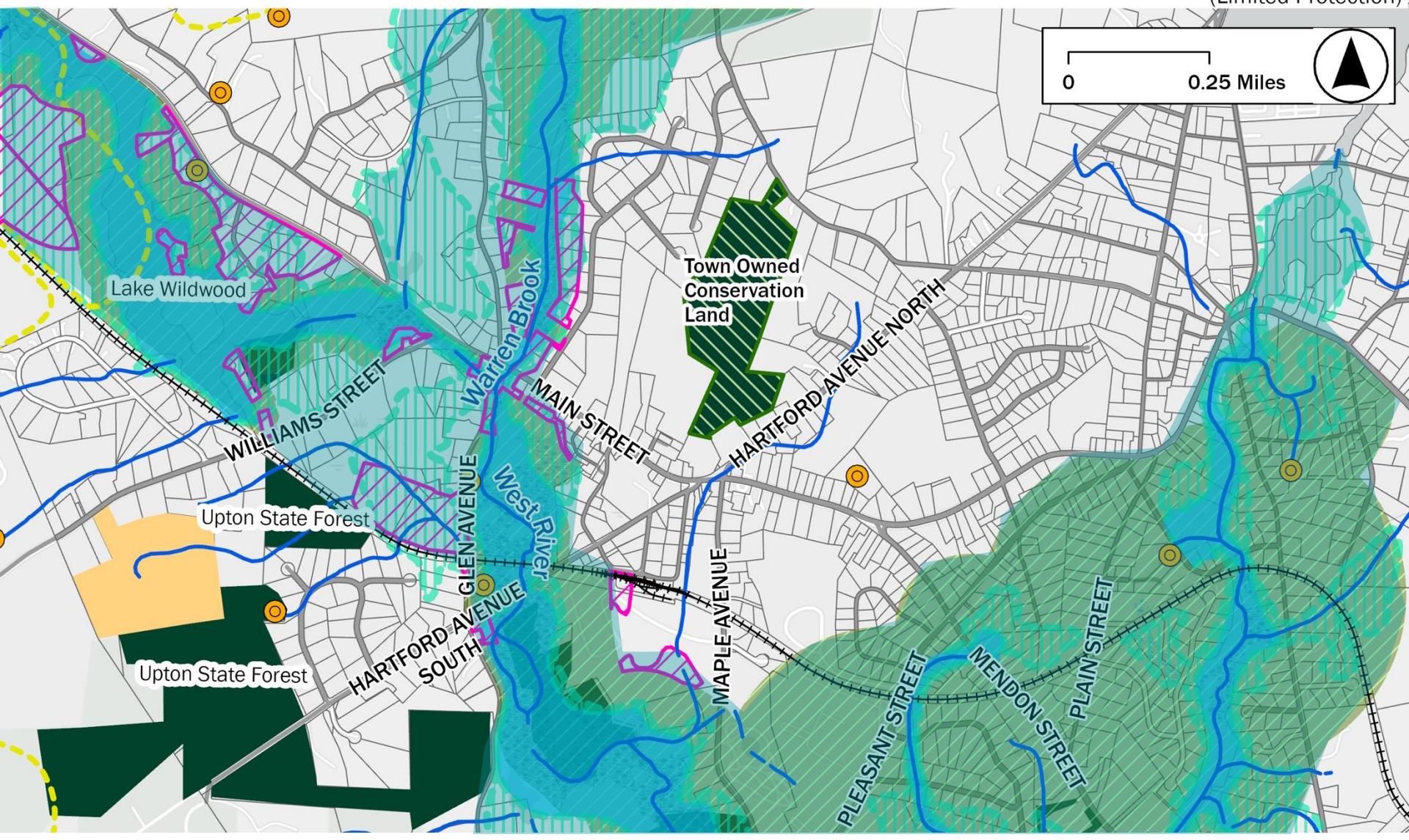
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Rare Species Core Habitat

Local Landscapes  
Protected Open Space  
Conservation  
Agriculture  
Conservation  
(Limited Protection)

## BioMap 3 Local Components

Local Rare Species



## Traffic Volumes

Average Annual  
Daily Trips

5,000-6,000  
6,000-7,000  
7,000-8,000

8,000-9,000  
9,000-10,000  
>10,000

<5,000

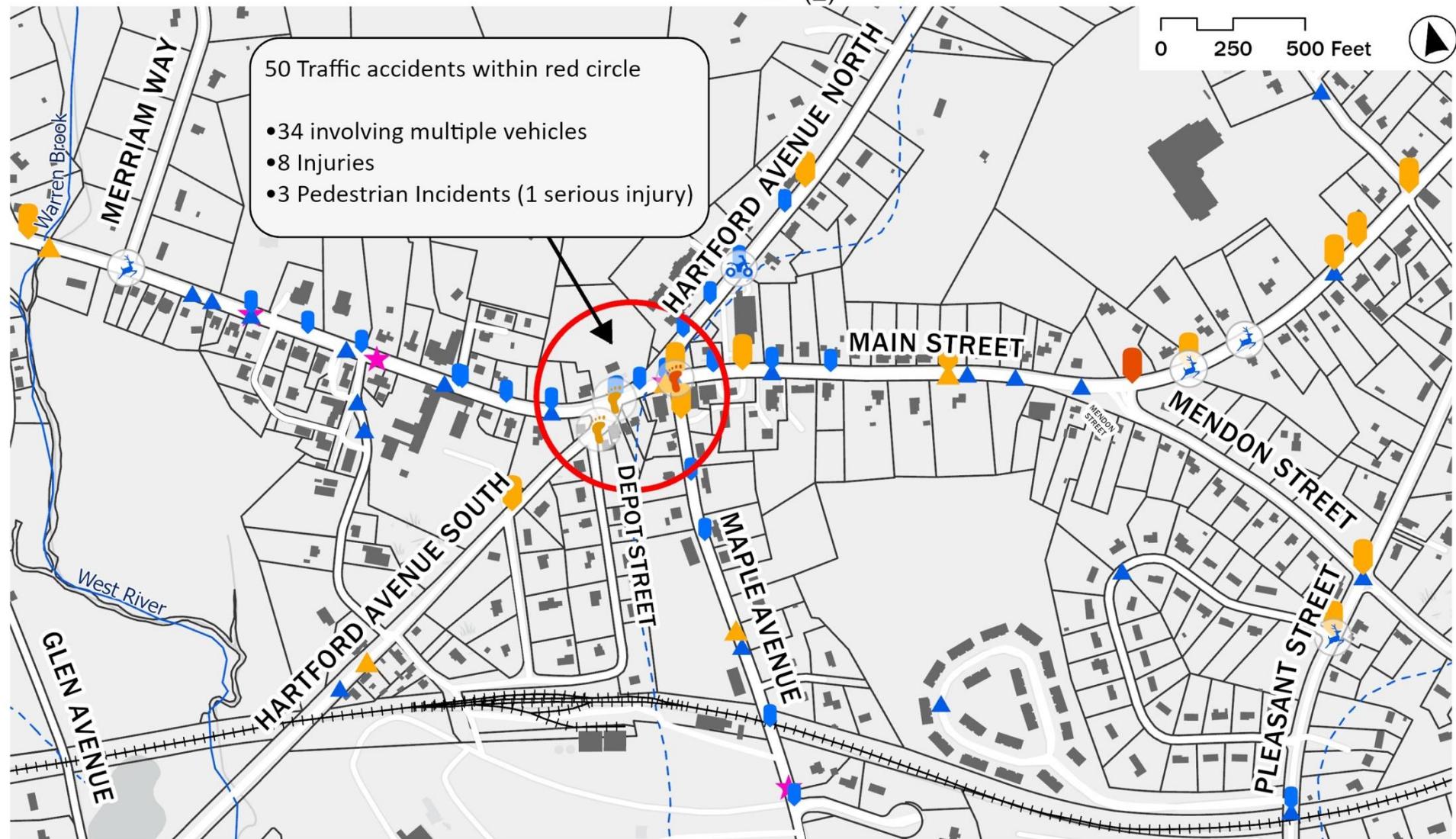
Open Space  
Structures  
Parcels

0 330 660 Feet



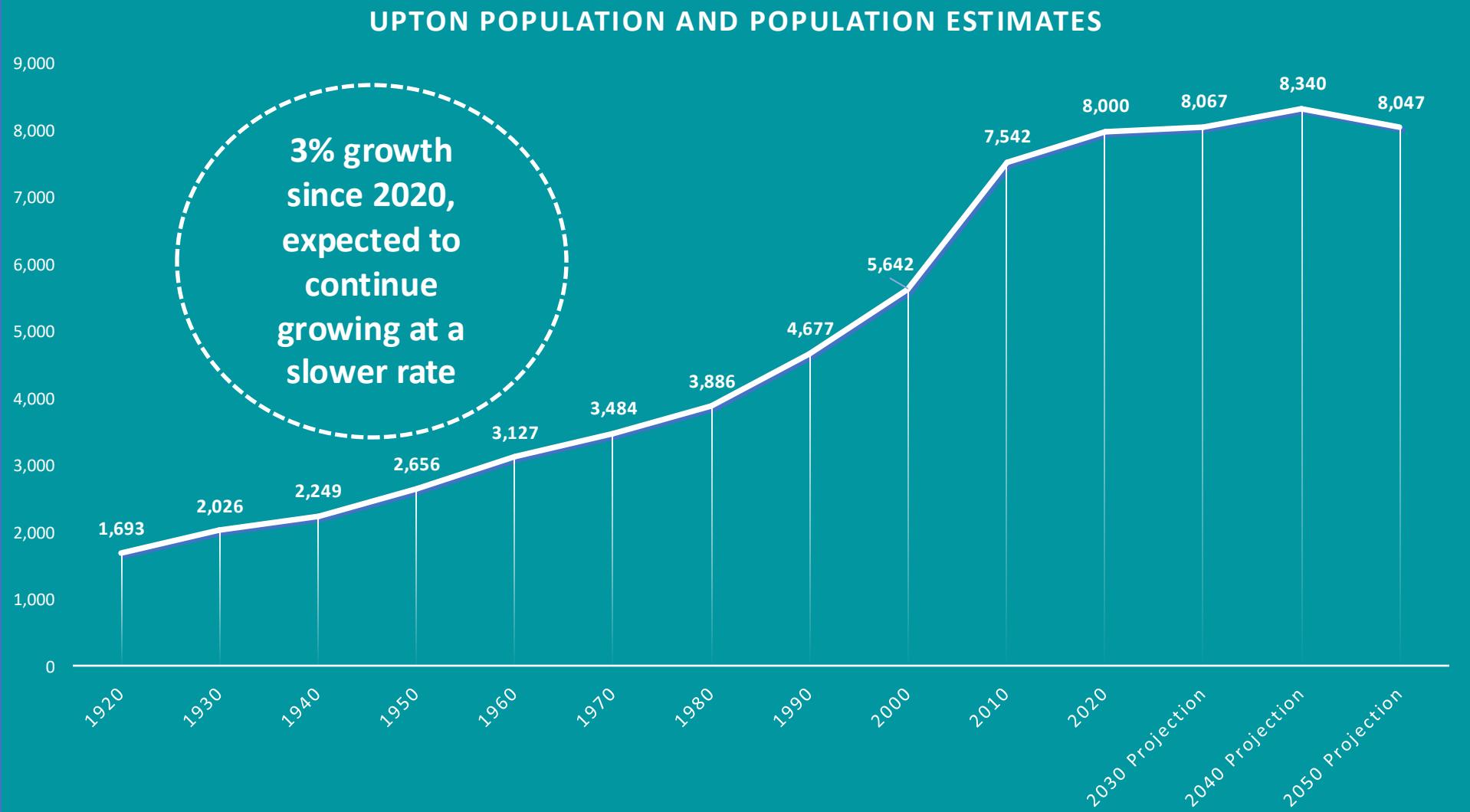
## Crash Locations 2019-2024

- Single Vehicle - No Injury (33)
- Single Vehicle - Minor Injury (6)
- Multiple Vehicles - No Injury (82)
- Multiple Vehicles- Minor Injury (23)
- Multiple Vehicles - Serious Injury (1)
- Cyclist - No Injury (1)
- Pedestrian - Minor Injury (2)
- Pedestrian-Serious Injury (1)
- Animal - No Injury (7)
- Unknown/Other (5)



# People and Economy

# Upton's Population



Source: US Census, UMass Donahue Institute

Note: 1930-2010 data is from Decennial Census

2030 – 2050 Projections are from UMass Donahue Institute

# Upton's Population

Census Population Change

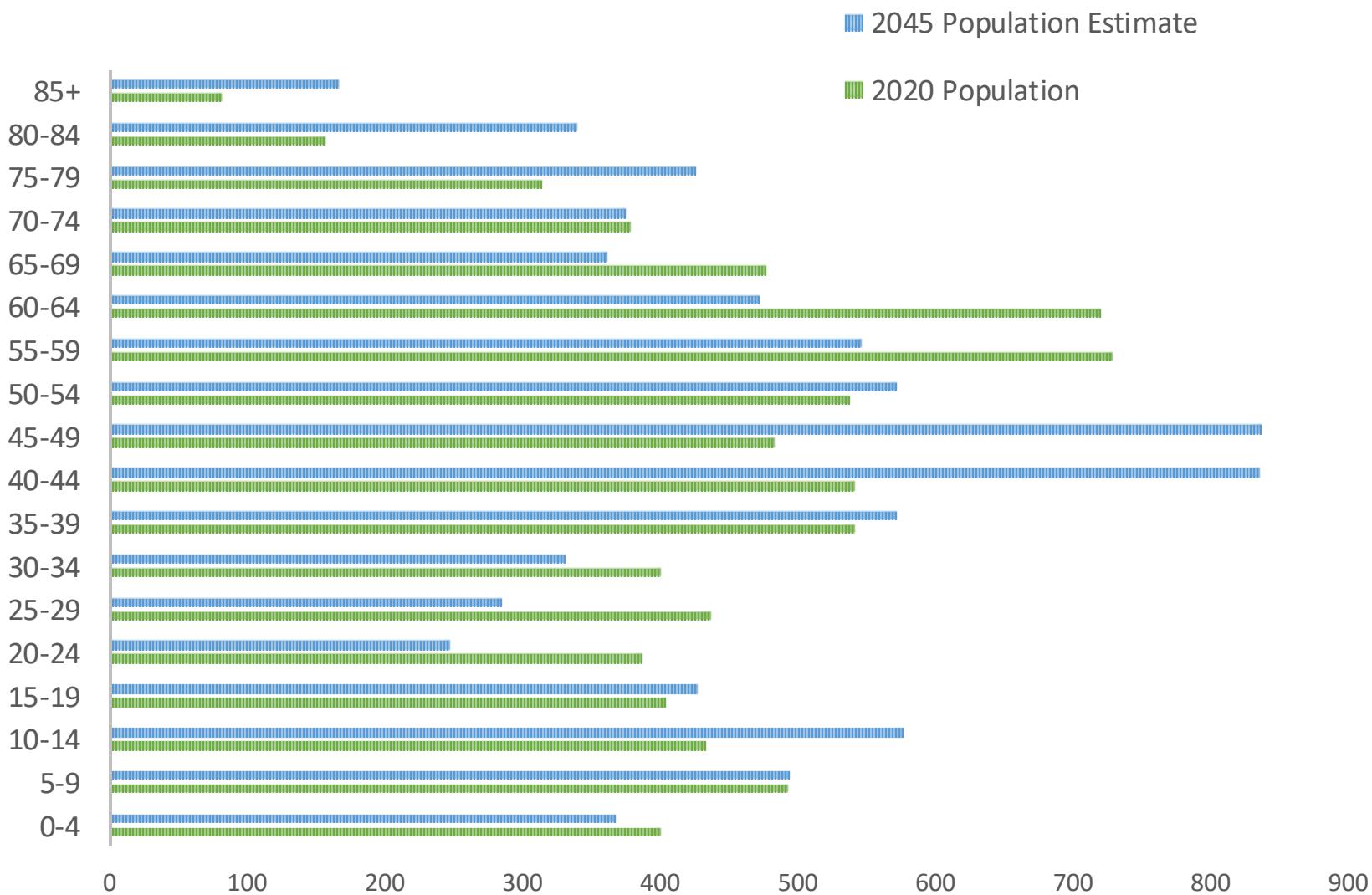


Source: Us Census (Decennial Census)

Source: US Census via CMRPC

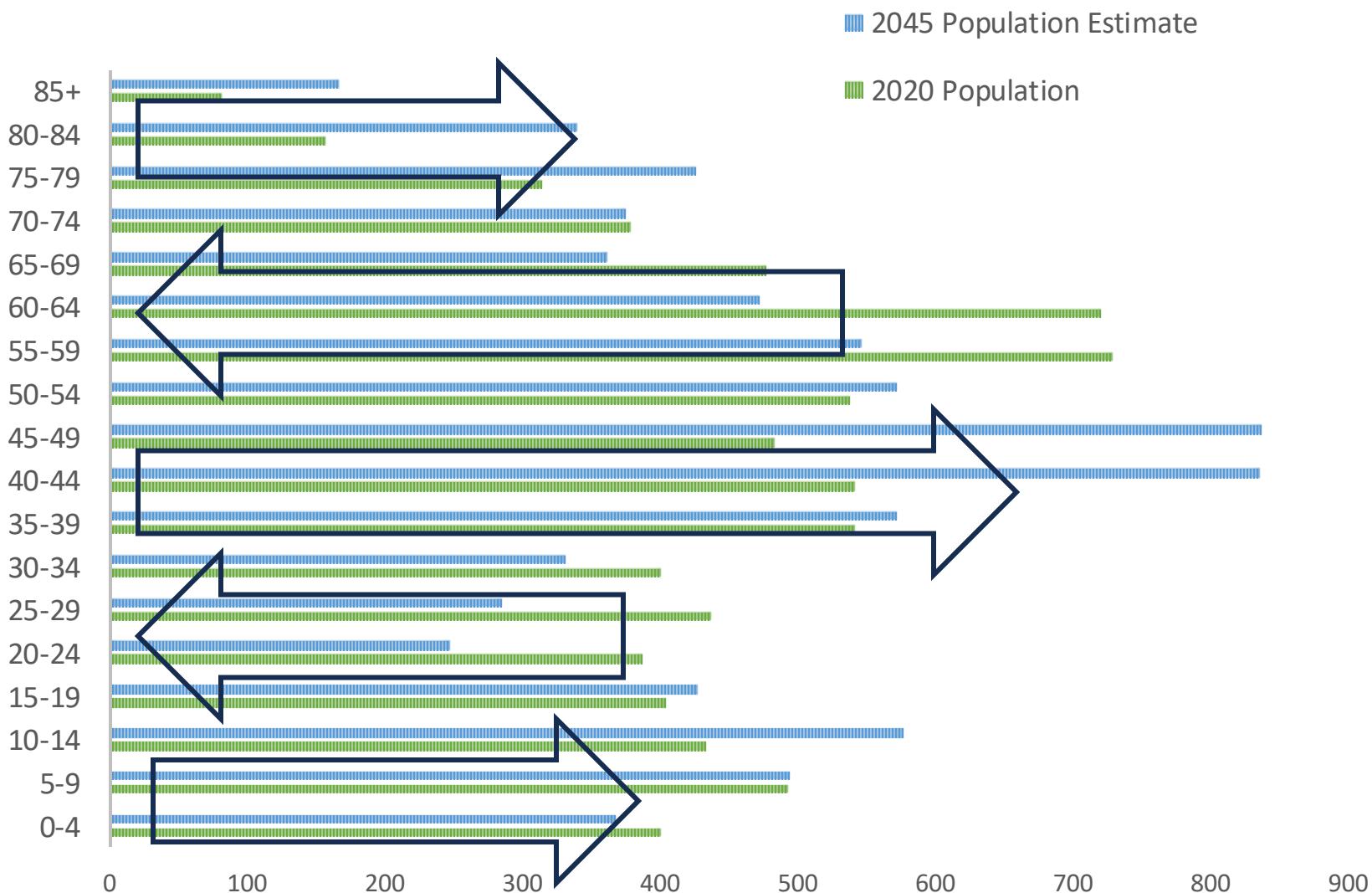
# Upton's Population

## UPTON POPULATION PROJECTIONS



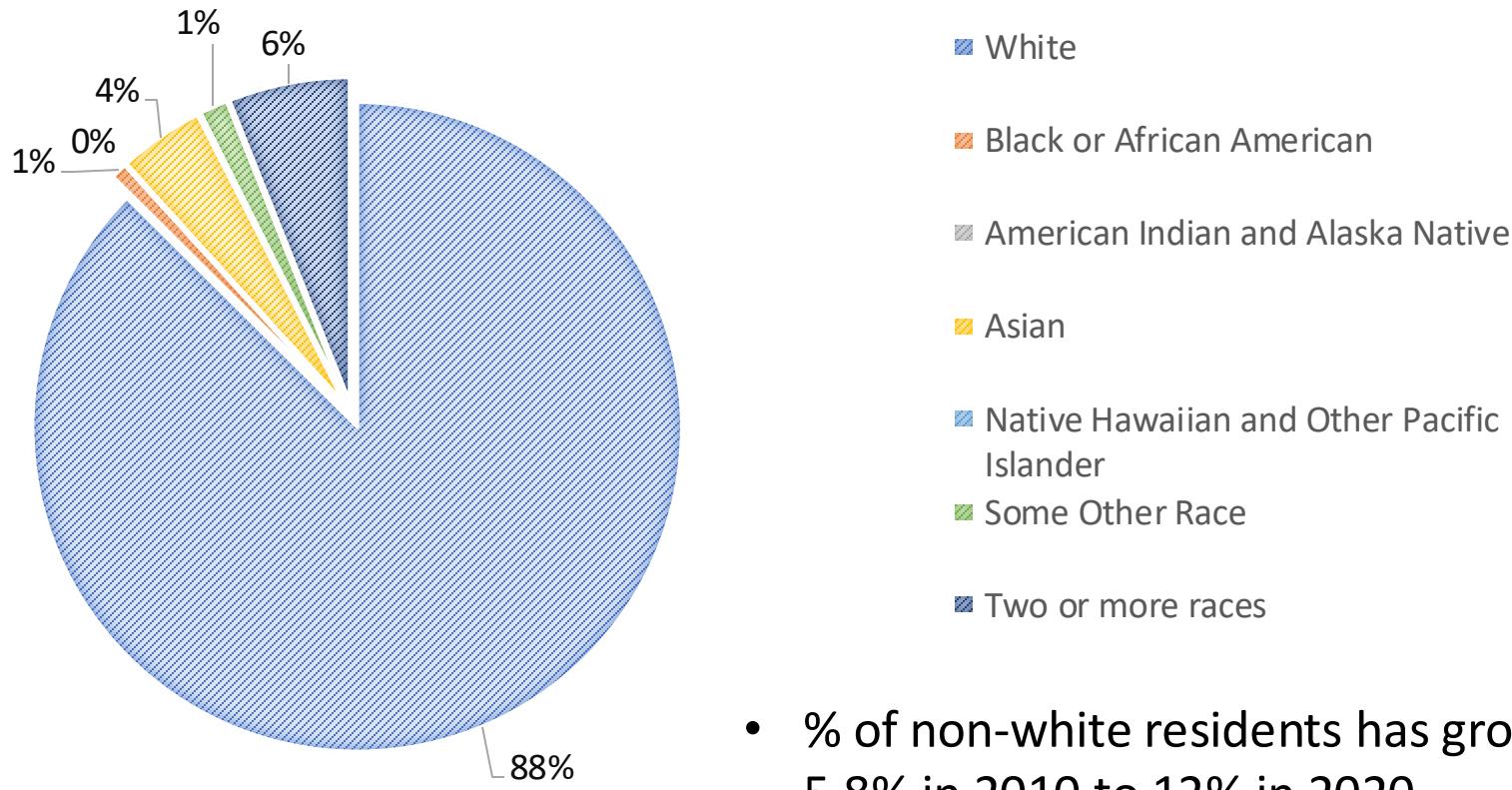
# Upton's Population

## UPTON POPULATION PROJECTIONS



# Upton's Population

## RACE - UPTON



- % of non-white residents has grown from 5.8% in 2010 to 12% in 2020
- 88% white in Upton compared to 73% white in Worcester County

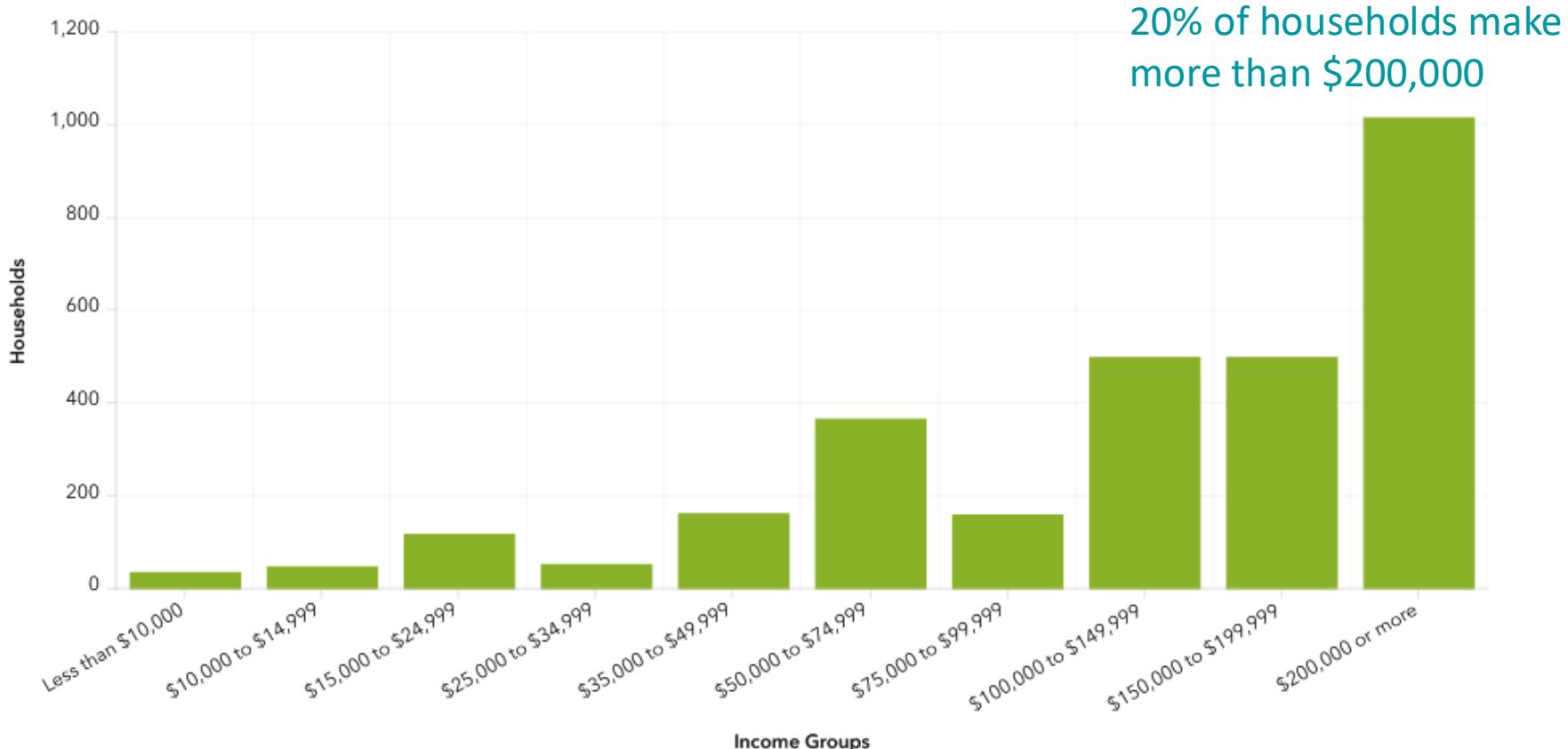
# Income and Employment

**\$155,952**

**Estimated Mean Household Income**

Worcester County: \$94,099

Massachusetts: \$99,858



# Income and Employment

**3.1%** +/- 3.4

Estimated percentage of people whose income is below the poverty line

Compared to 10.9% for Worcester County, and 10.4% statewide

**5.6%** +/- 3.3

Estimated unemployment rate

State average: 4.6%

## **Top industries that Upton residents work in:**

- Health care and social assistance (587)
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (524)
- Educational services (486)

Source: Job Counts by NAICS Industry Sector, 2022, All Workers (Census OnTheMap)

## **Top industries located in Upton:**

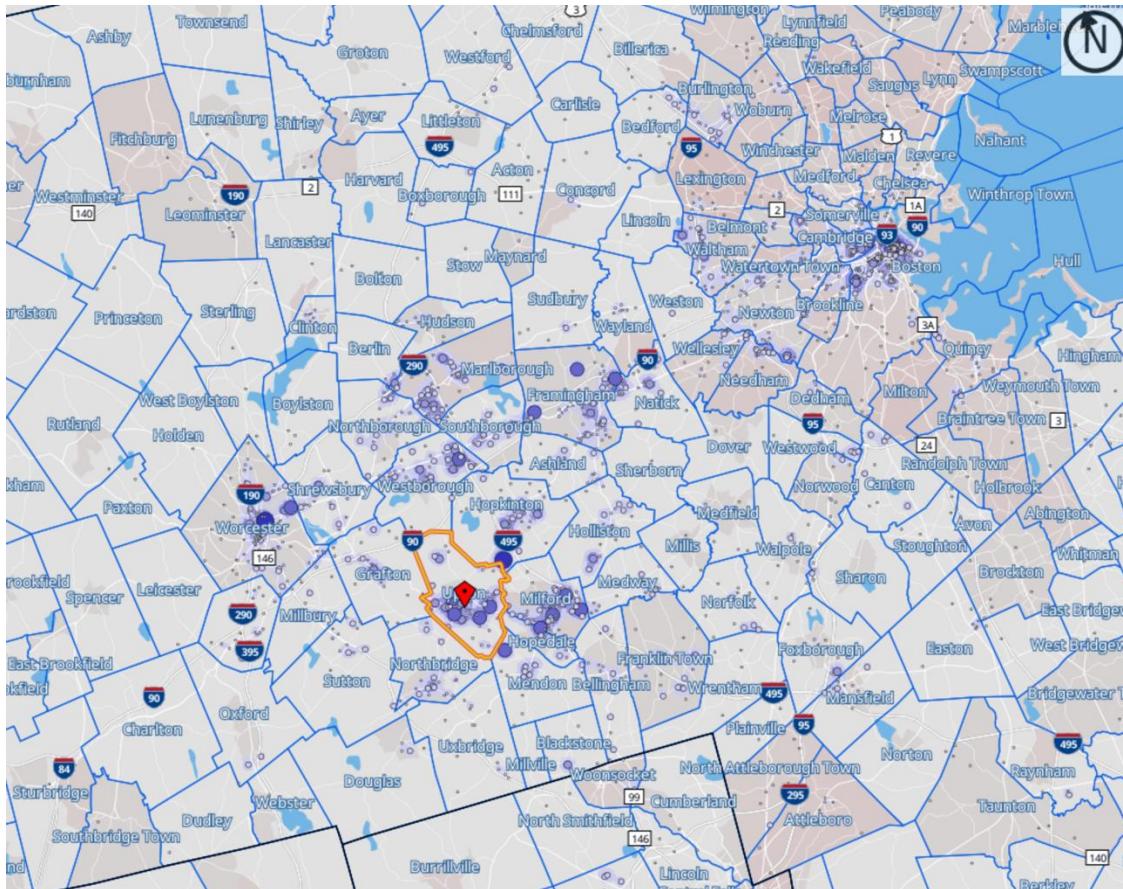
- Education and Health Services (451)
- Construction (172)
- Trade, Transportation and Utilities (161)

Source: 2023, MA Dept of Economic Research, Annual Average Employment and Wages All Published Industries by town all ownership

# 37.9 minutes

## Average Travel Time to Work

Worcester County: 30.8 minutes  
+8 minutes since 2000

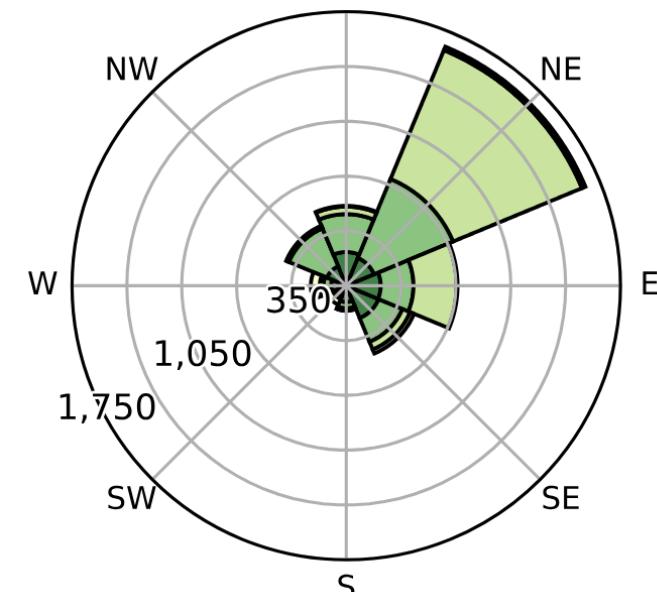


2022	
Count	Share
4,272	100.0%
1,268	29.7%
1,521	35.6%
1,314	30.8%
169	4.0%

**Total All Jobs**

- Less than 10 miles
- 10 to 24 miles
- 25 to 50 miles
- Greater than 50 miles

Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2022  
All Workers  
N



Source: Census On the Map

# Top 10 Employers

Company name	Address	City	Number of employees
Blackstone Valley Vocational	Pleasant St	Upton	100-249
Nipmuc Regional High School	Pleasant St	Upton	100-249
Memorial Elementary School	Main St	Upton	50-99
Dunkin'	Hartford Ave	Upton	20-49
George J Summers Trucking Co	Church St	Upton	20-49
Hopedale Cardiology LLP	Milford St	Upton	20-49
Red Barn Coffee Roasters	Walker Dr	Upton	20-49
Upton Fire-Ems	Church St	Upton	20-49
Upton Police Dept	School St	Upton	20-49
Ww Contracting Corp	Wood St	Upton	20-49

# Small Business Employment

“Upton has issued 321 business licenses, indicating that the town’s economy is dominated by small businesses and organizations.

[...] an estimated 172 of Upton businesses are home based.”

Source: 2021 Economic Development Strategy

25%

Upton households that are cost-burdened by housing  
(pay more than 30% of their income towards housing  
costs)

Source: 2023 ACS: Mortgage status and selected monthly owner costs in Upton, Table: B25087

6.4%

Subsidized Housing Inventory

*Upton does not qualify for exemption from  
comprehensive permitting allowed by MGL 40B*

Source: 2023 Housing Production Plan

**\$13.15**/\$1000

FY25 Tax Rate

State average: \$14.34

- Primary source is levied taxes.
- 94.58% of Upton's tax levy is from Residential and Open Spaces.\*

\* Source: Division of Local Services Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DLS), Tax Levy by Class: Data current as of 04/04/2019, cited in 2021 Economic Development Strategy

# Breakout Groups

# Upton Center Visioning Project

**Dodson & Flinker**

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