

Kensington Center



Public Meeting #1 10.27.16

Transit-Oriented Development, Town of Berlin, CT

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0.5 Miles

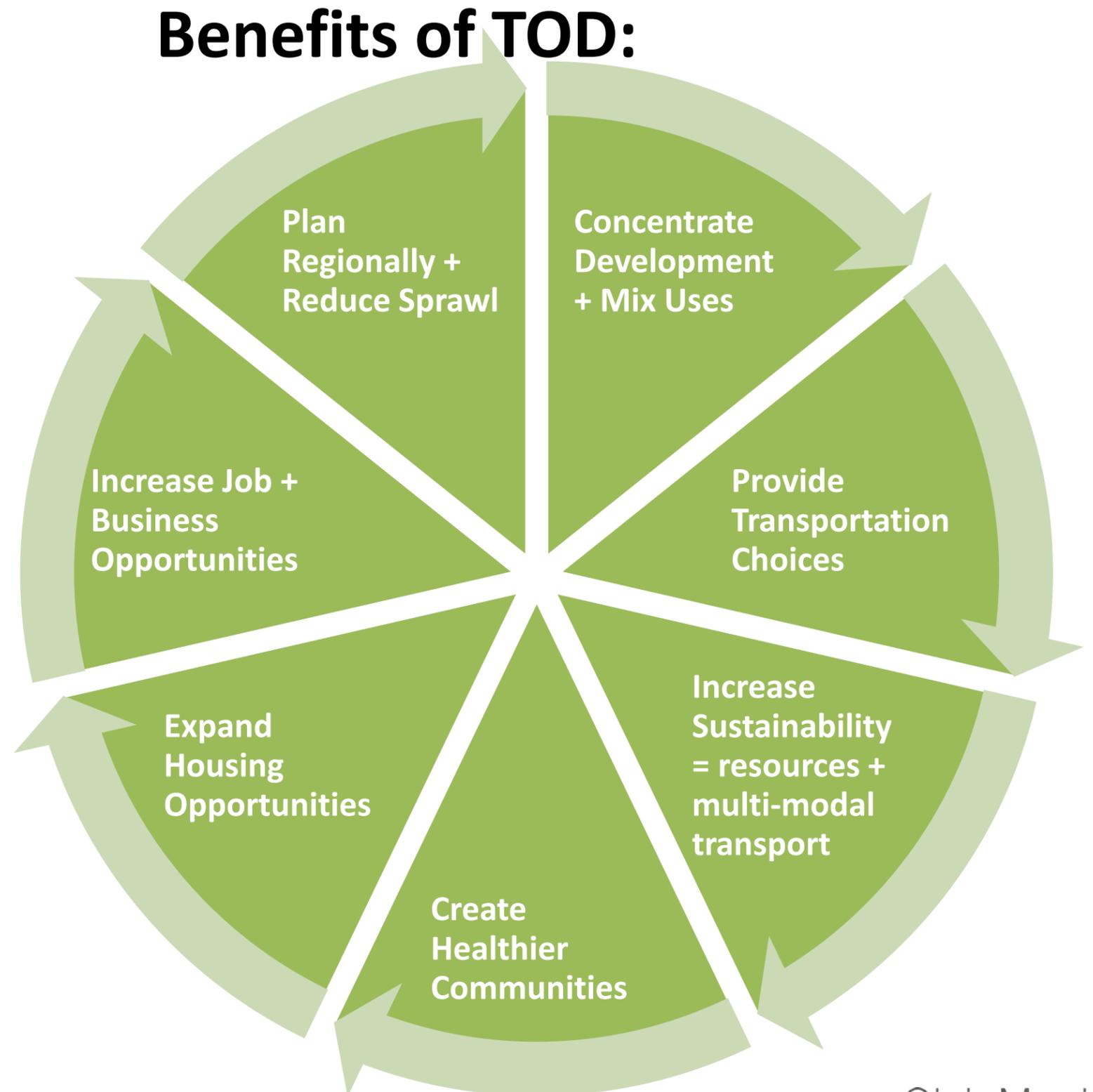
CivicMoxie[®]
experts in place

What is Transit-Oriented Development...

Definition:

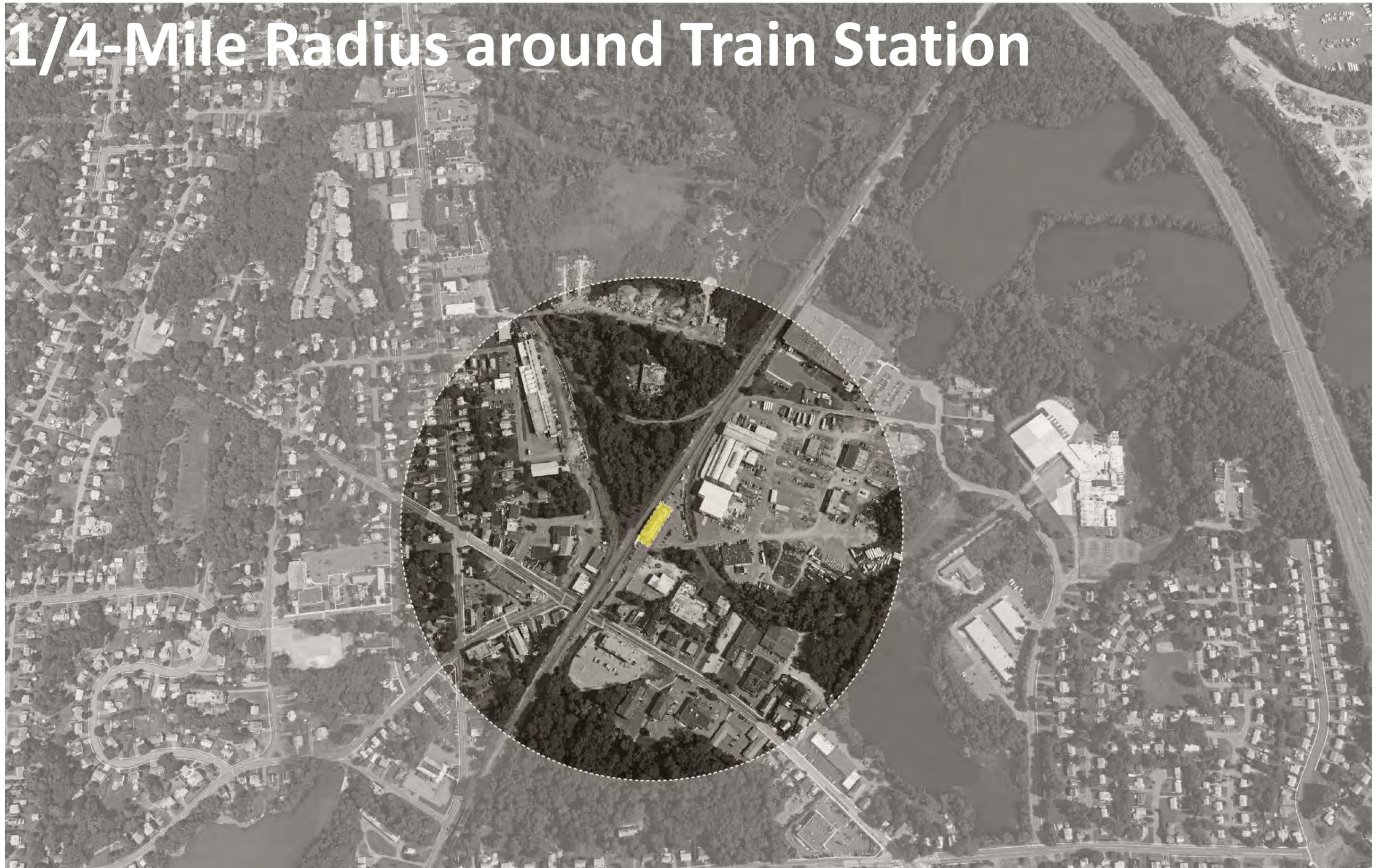
Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) = is an approach to development that focuses land uses around a transit station or within a transit corridor. Typically, it is characterized by:

- A mix of uses
- Moderate to high concentration
- Pedestrian orientation/connectivity
- Transportation choices
- Reduced parking
- High quality design



Source: http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/mod-tod.html

1/4-Mile Radius around Train Station



Goals for the Kensington Center TOD Plan

Create a vibrant Kensington Center that takes full advantage of its location at the train station by:

- **Improving and encouraging connectivity between the train station with the surrounding neighborhoods;**
- **Increasing sustainability – better use of existing infrastructure while preserving natural resources;**
- **Create healthier communities – for walking, biking, etc;**
- **Expand housing opportunities;**
- **Increase job opportunities and support existing + new businesses**

...through Town policies, zoning, new development, and programming.

CivicMoxie Core Team



Susan Silberberg
CivicMoxie

Susan, the Founder of CivicMoxie, is an internationally known city planner, urban designer, architect, author and educator. She has two decades of experience working with municipalities, non-profits, and developers.



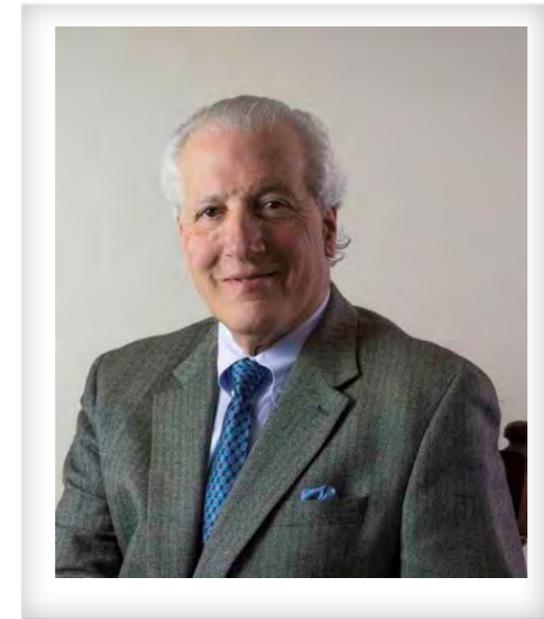
Val Ferro
Good Earth Advisors

Val has nearly 30 years of municipal planning experience, including significant Berlin experience. Many of her projects have led to developer engagement and additional public funding.



Heidi Hajna
Freeman Companies

Heidi heads the planning and landscape architecture division of Freeman Companies and is a professional landscape architect with over 30 years of Connecticut experience including work in Berlin.



Tom Corso
AMS Consulting

Tom has three decades of experience in all phases of private and public sector redevelopment. He excels at public-private partnerships and moving projects forward by creative collaboration. His experience in municipal government as well as in the private sector informs all his work.

Planning AND Doing in Berlin...



Town of Berlin
Plan of Conservation
& Development Plan
adopted

Adoption of proposed
Zoning Amendments

Developer
selected for 889
Farmington Ave

Additional Streetscape &
Sidewalk Improvement plans
& construction

2013

2014

2015

2016

2017

Start of Façade & Landscape
Improvement Program

Depot Crossing
completion

Deming Park
Renovation complete

903-913 Farmington Ave
Police Station proposal

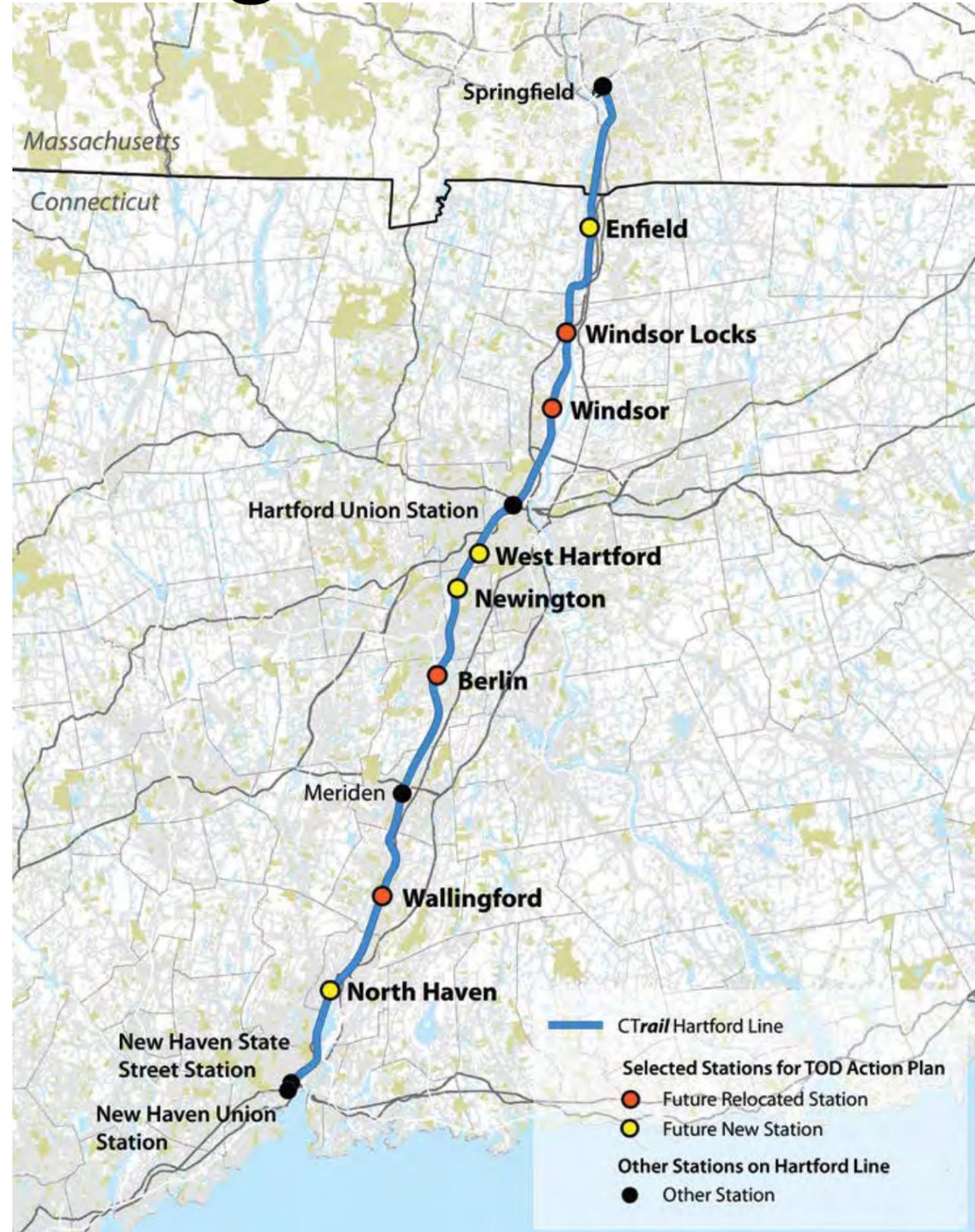
Start of Berlin Train Station
Reconstruction

APA Building Assessment

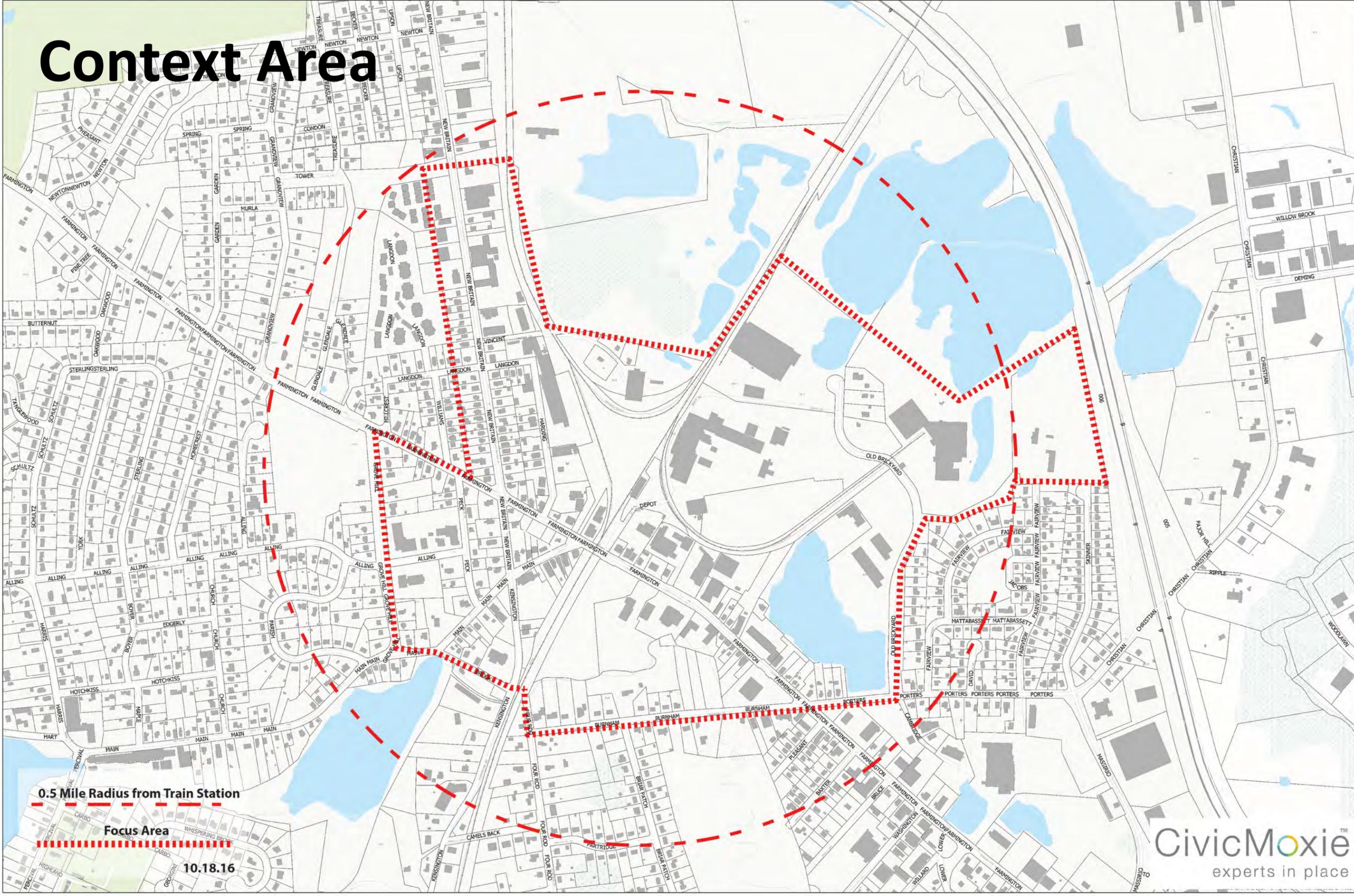
Kensington Center in Larger Regional TOD Context

Hartford Line TOD Action Plan

- CTDOT-led effort collaborating with municipalities to advance TOD initiatives
- Funded through FTA (Pilot Program for TOD Planning) and CTDOT
- Preliminary recommendations from Town of Berlin TOD Plan will inform the scope and recommendations of the Hartford Line TOD Action Plan
- Effort to be completed in Spring 2017 and will focus on actionable strategies to advance TOD in the Town of Berlin



Context Area

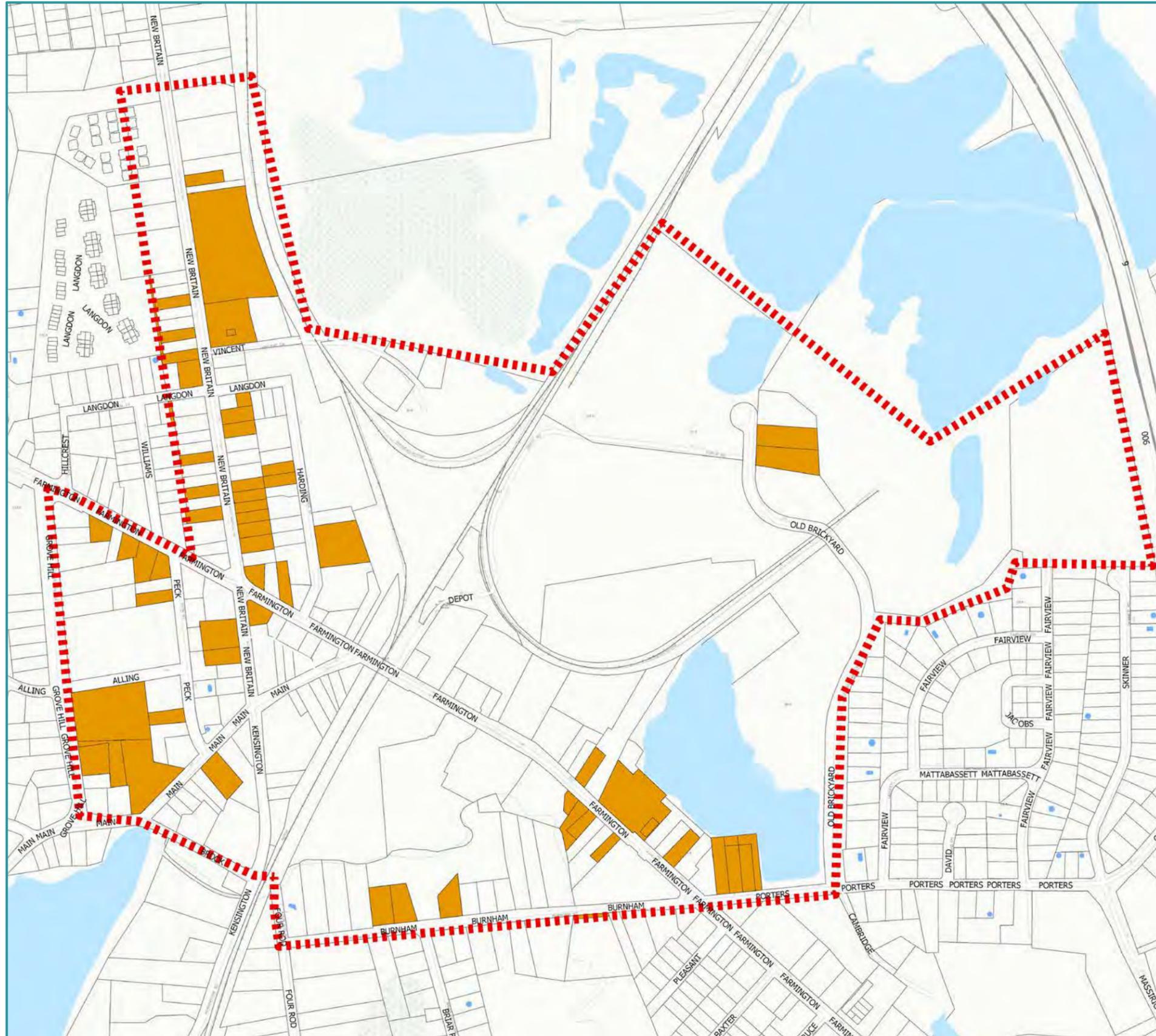


0.5 Mile Radius from Train Station

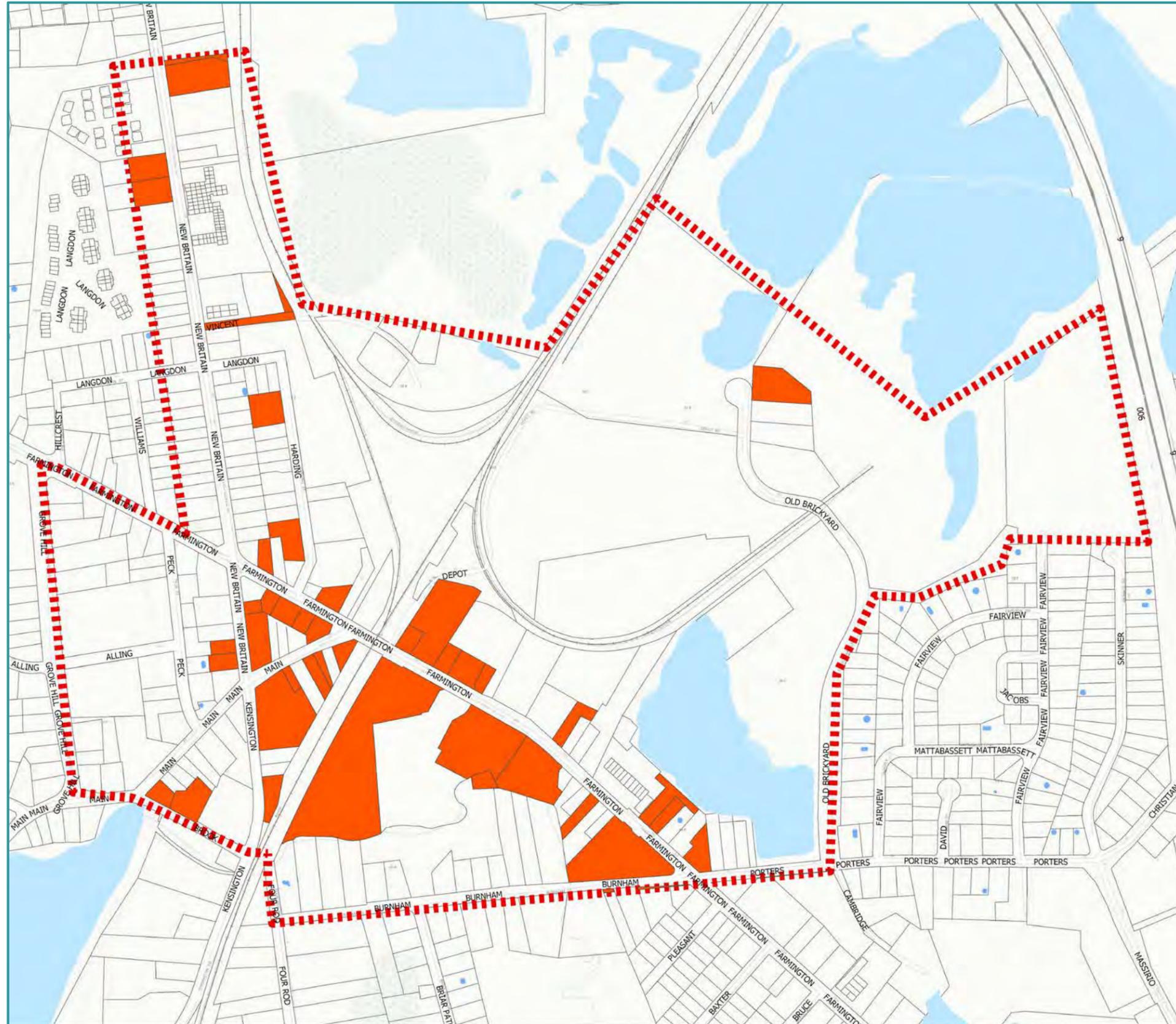
Focus Area

10.18.16

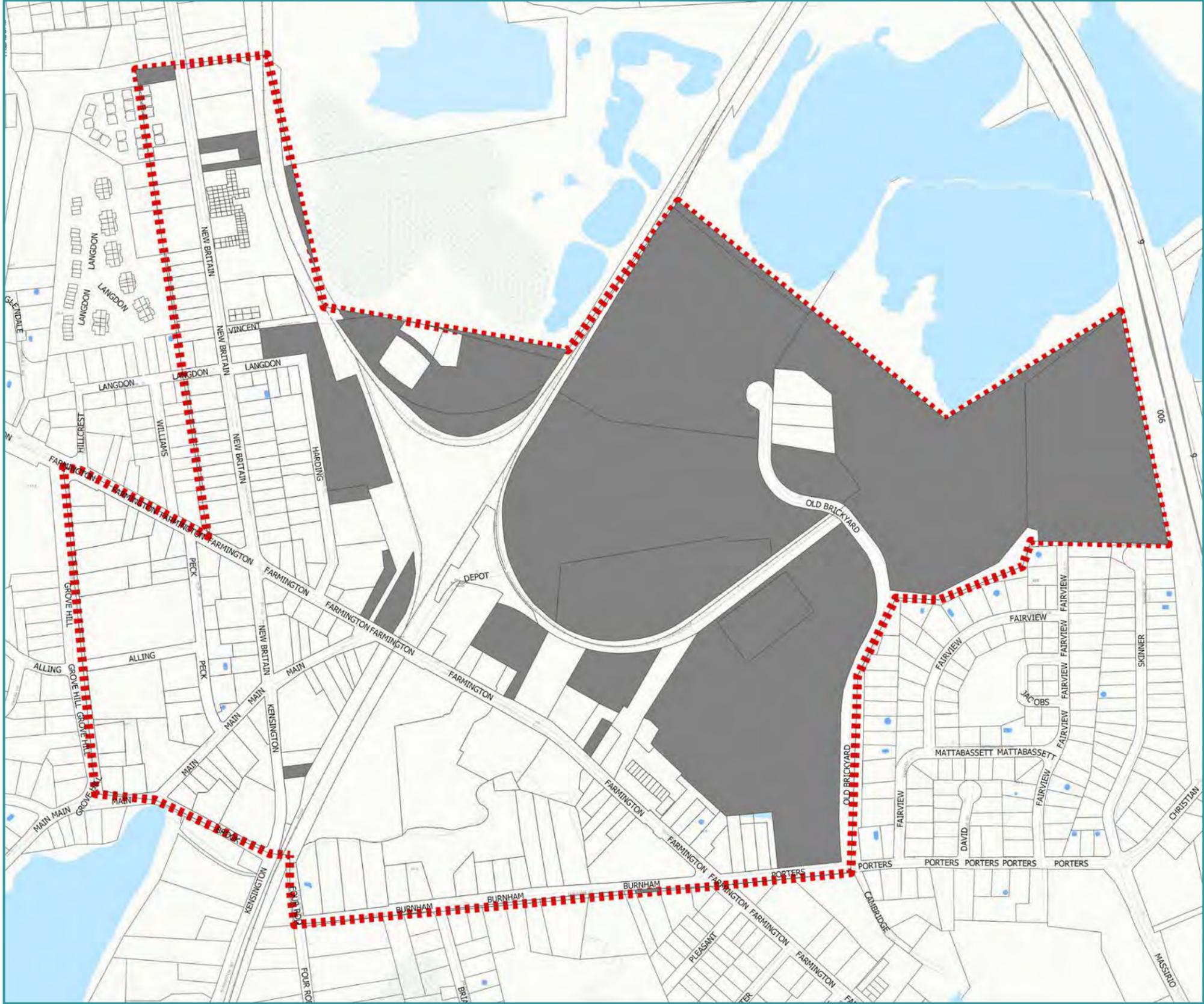
Existing Land Uses – Residential



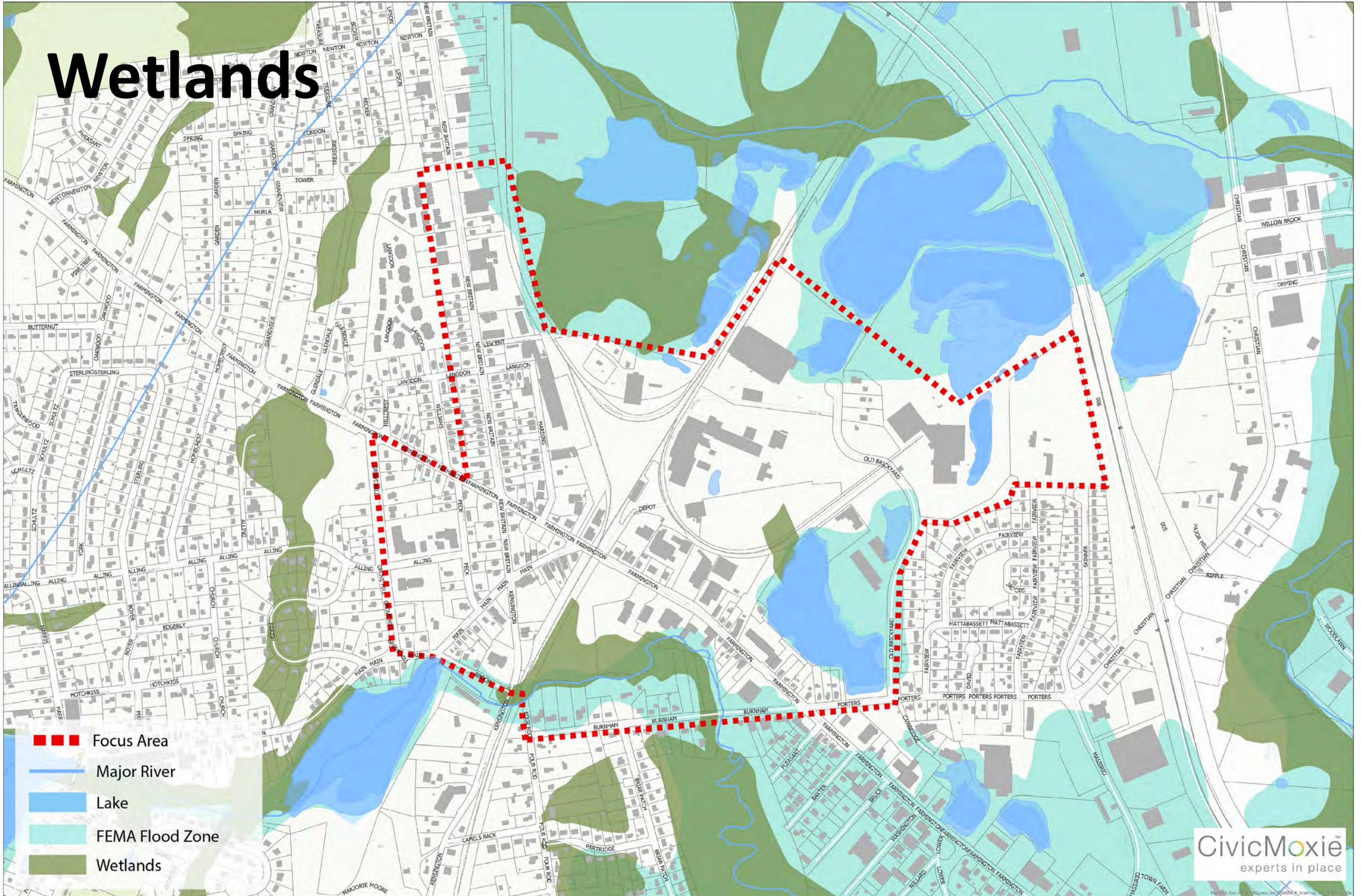
Existing Land Uses – Commercial



Existing Land Uses – Industrial

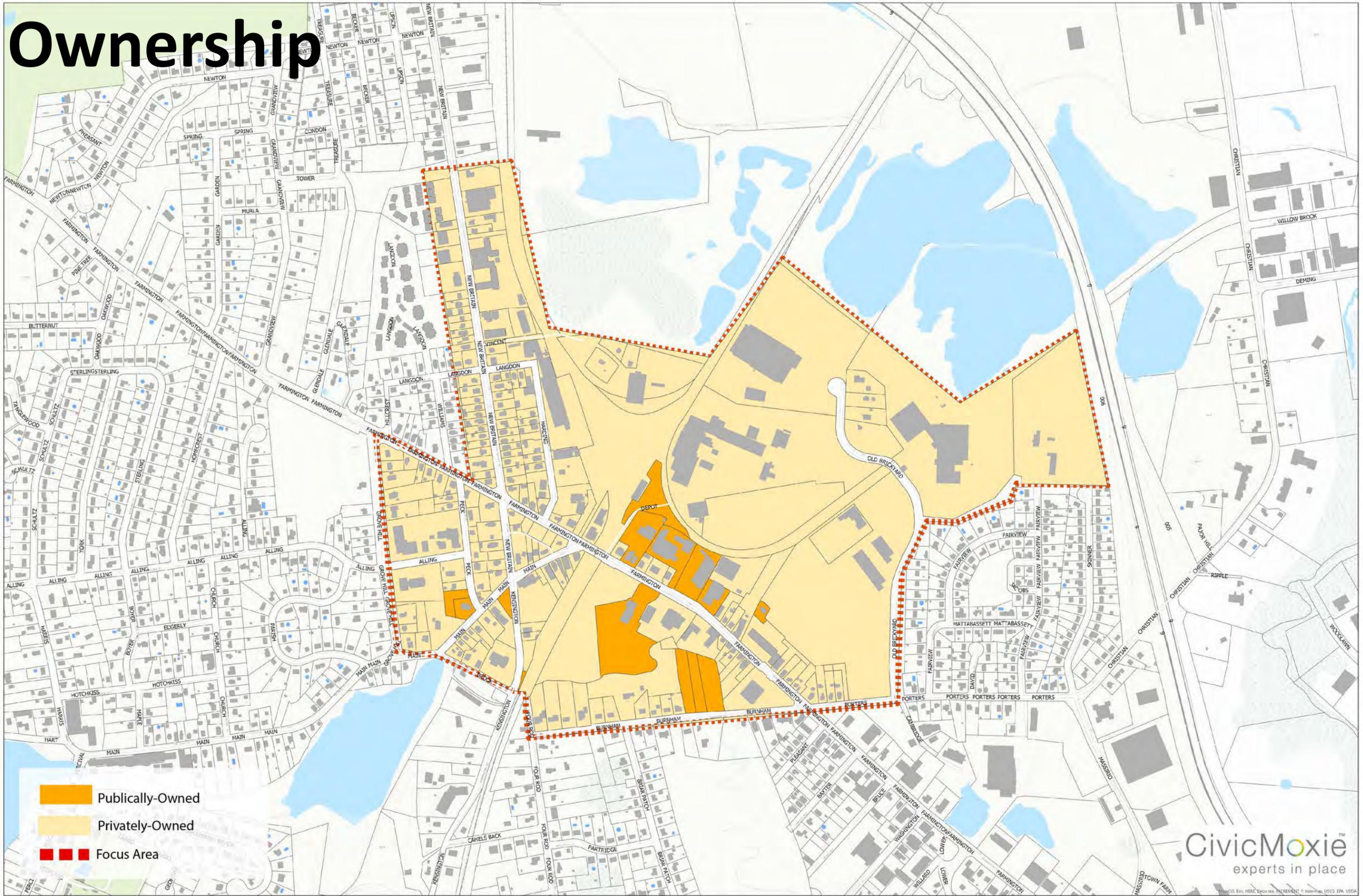


Wetlands



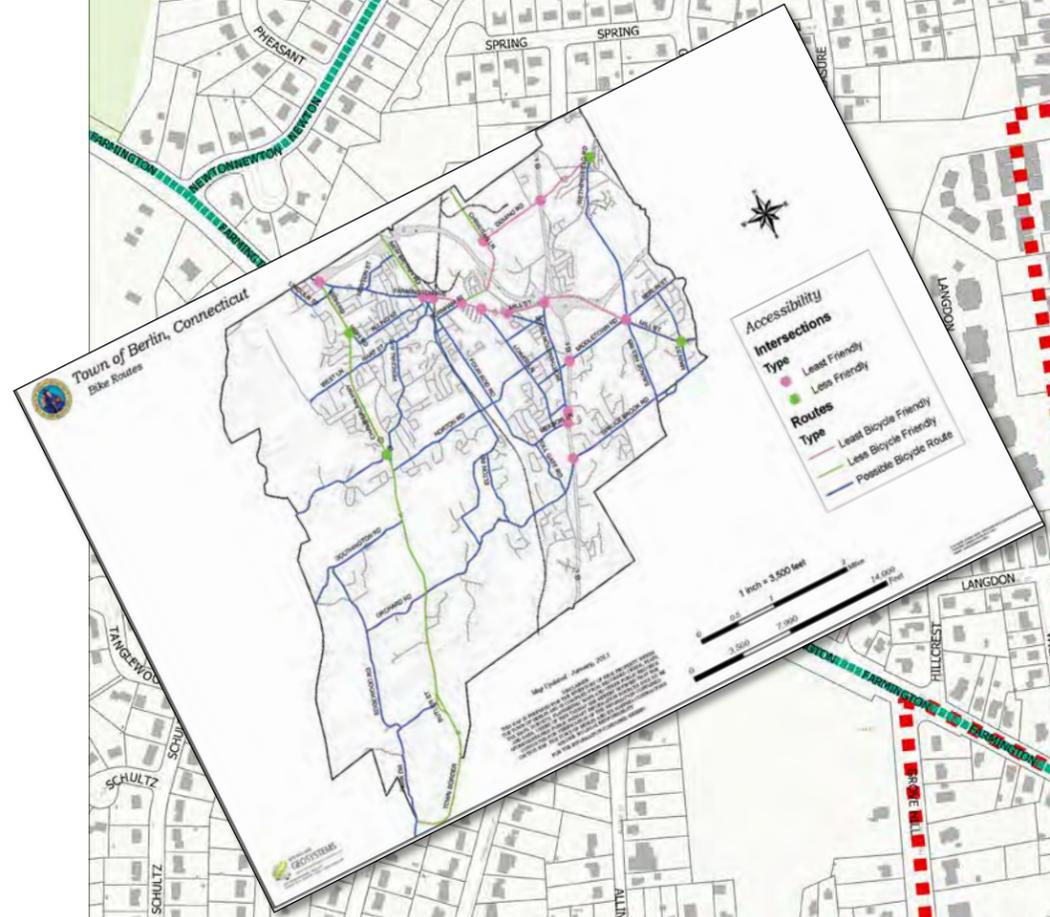
- Focus Area
- Major River
- Lake
- FEMA Flood Zone
- Wetlands

Ownership

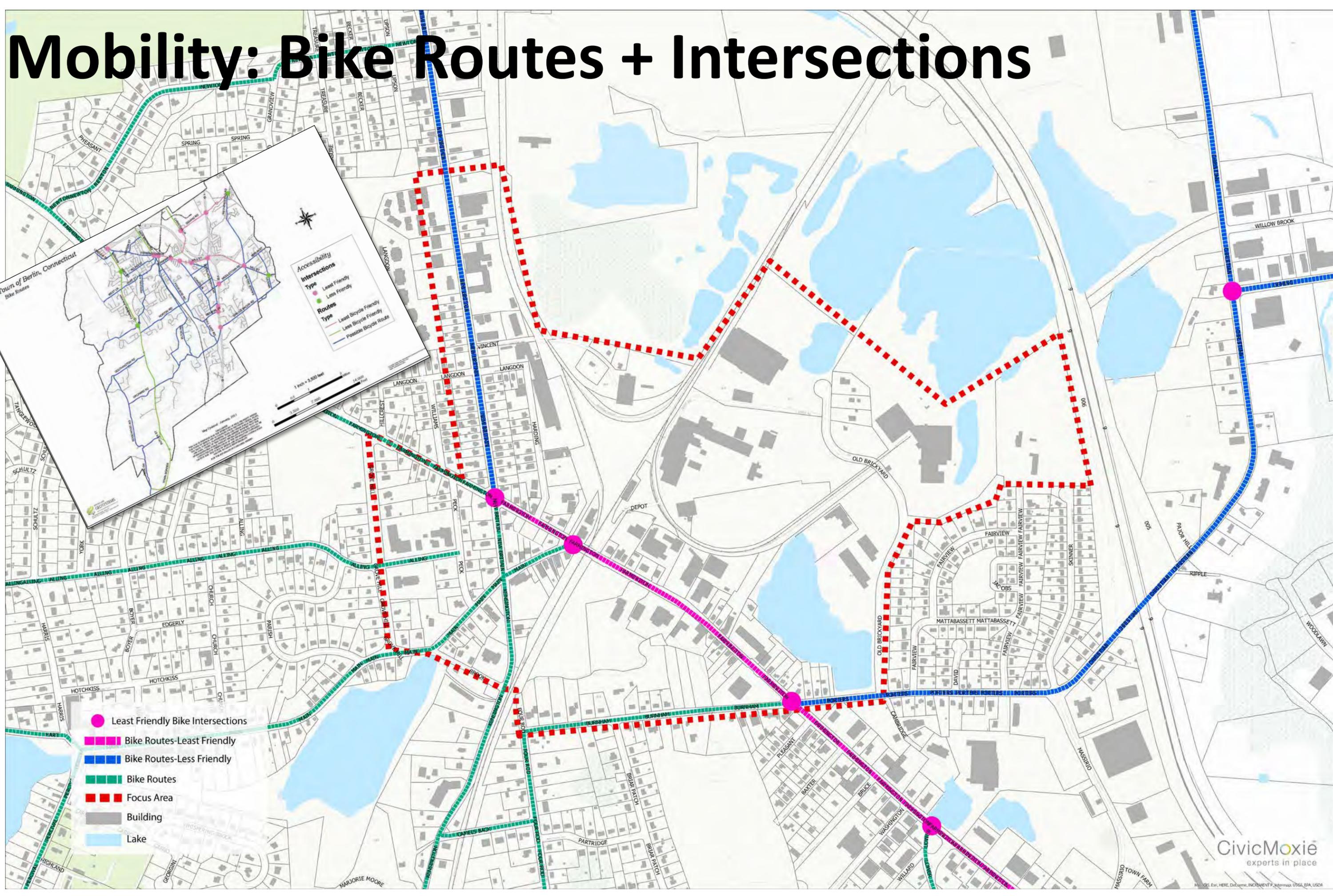


-  Publicly-Owned
-  Privately-Owned
-  Focus Area

Mobility: Bike Routes + Intersections



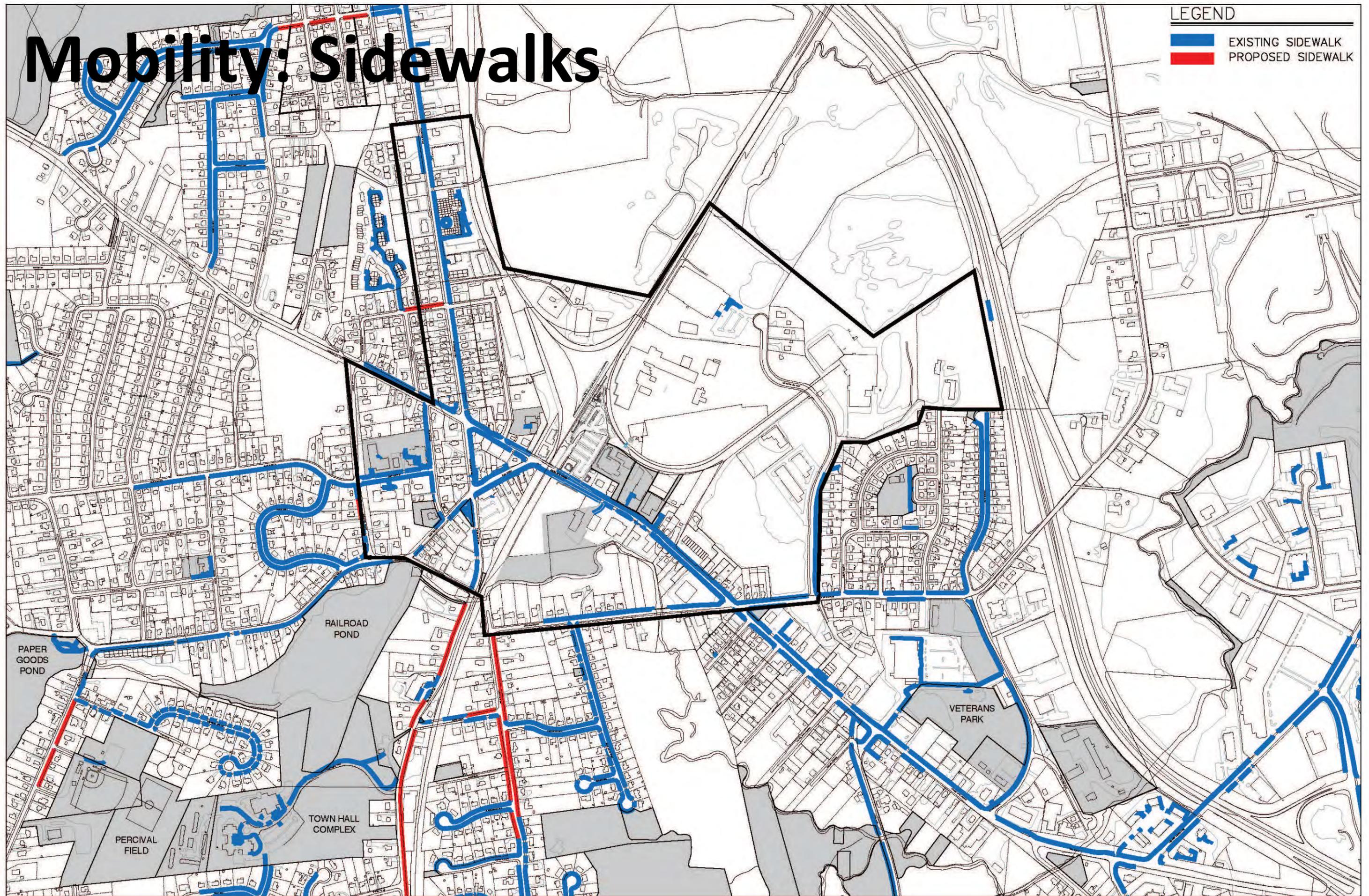
- Least Friendly Bike Intersections
- Bike Routes-Least Friendly
- Bike Routes-Less Friendly
- Bike Routes
- Focus Area
- Building
- Lake



Mobility: Sidewalks

LEGEND

- EXISTING SIDEWALK
- PROPOSED SIDEWALK



What We See and Hear

“We need to define what Kensington Center is – we have no unified image.”

“Market rents won’t support the costs of development, so subsidies are needed, even for market rate housing.”

“We need foot traffic. We need to get some activity here.”

“It’s been hard to get retailers into Kensington and Farmington Ave.”



What We See and Hear

“Trends are changing...we can appeal to empty nesters and millennials”

“We aren’t like any other town...we need to find a way to be uniquely Berlin”

“Developers are looking for projects in Connecticut”

“We see ourselves as an agricultural community even though we aren’t”



Current Office Market Conditions



Modest supply and rents with low vacancy

*includes Eversource

Current Retail Market Conditions

Large retail base with considerable competition

- Berlin has 1.8 million SF of retail space
- 10% vacant/available to lease
- Asking rents average \$12 to \$14 dollars
- 216 business: restaurant, auto, food stores largest
- Berlin Turnpike is main retail corridor and competing location

Weak demand for retail space in Kensington Center

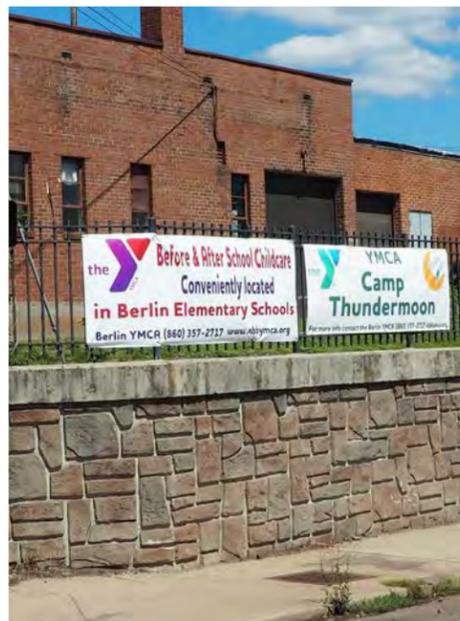
- Depot Crossing has been slow to secure retail tenants

Current Residential Market Conditions



Berlin has limited supply of rental apartments

- Several age-restricted (senior) complexes (795 units)
- Three affordable/mixed income projects (104 units)
- Includes 16 unit Depot Crossing across from train station
- Competing large supply + new projects in adjacent towns



Population projections to 2025 indicate modest demand from young households and empty nesters

- 4.4% total growth for Hartford County with:
- 5% growth for 55 to 64 cohort; 2.3% decline for 25 to 34 year olds
- Berlin: 1,038 new residents and 399 new households
- Over 70% expected to be in 55 to 64 age group

New Britain

11: 125 Columbus Blvd: 168 units

11

Rocky Hill

8: Altera: 144 Units
9: Cromwell Ave and West Street: 144 Units
10: River's Edge Project (Meadow Road and Glastonbury Avenue): 77 units

10

9

8

Berlin

1: 24 Colony St: 63 Units
2: 77 State St: 75 Units + 75 Proposed
3: 11 Crown St: 81 Units
4: 116 Cook Ave: 184 units
5: 161 + 177 State St (Meriden Commons): 170 Units

6: Corner of Broad and College: 93 Units
7: River Road and Eastern Drive: 43 Units

6

7

Middletown

1 2 3 4 5

Meriden

Real Estate Market Summary

Office Market

- Slow growth and limited demand for space
- Growing sectors (health care/professional services) locating in other communities

Retail Market (Analysis for 2.5 mile radius)

- Potential for specialty food, clothing, home furnishing, restaurants and bars
- Major retailers unlikely; small independent stores possible
- More and higher concentration of housing will help build market

Residential Market

- Potential rental market gap to fill
- Increasing train service, retail and dining amenities, and quality new units could attract young workers/new residents

Early Thoughts + General Discussion

An aerial photograph of Berlin, Germany, with a circular area in the center highlighted in green and blue, representing a city center or park area. Yellow dashed lines form a circular boundary around this area, and a solid orange line runs diagonally across the map. The background is a light beige color with a subtle grid pattern.

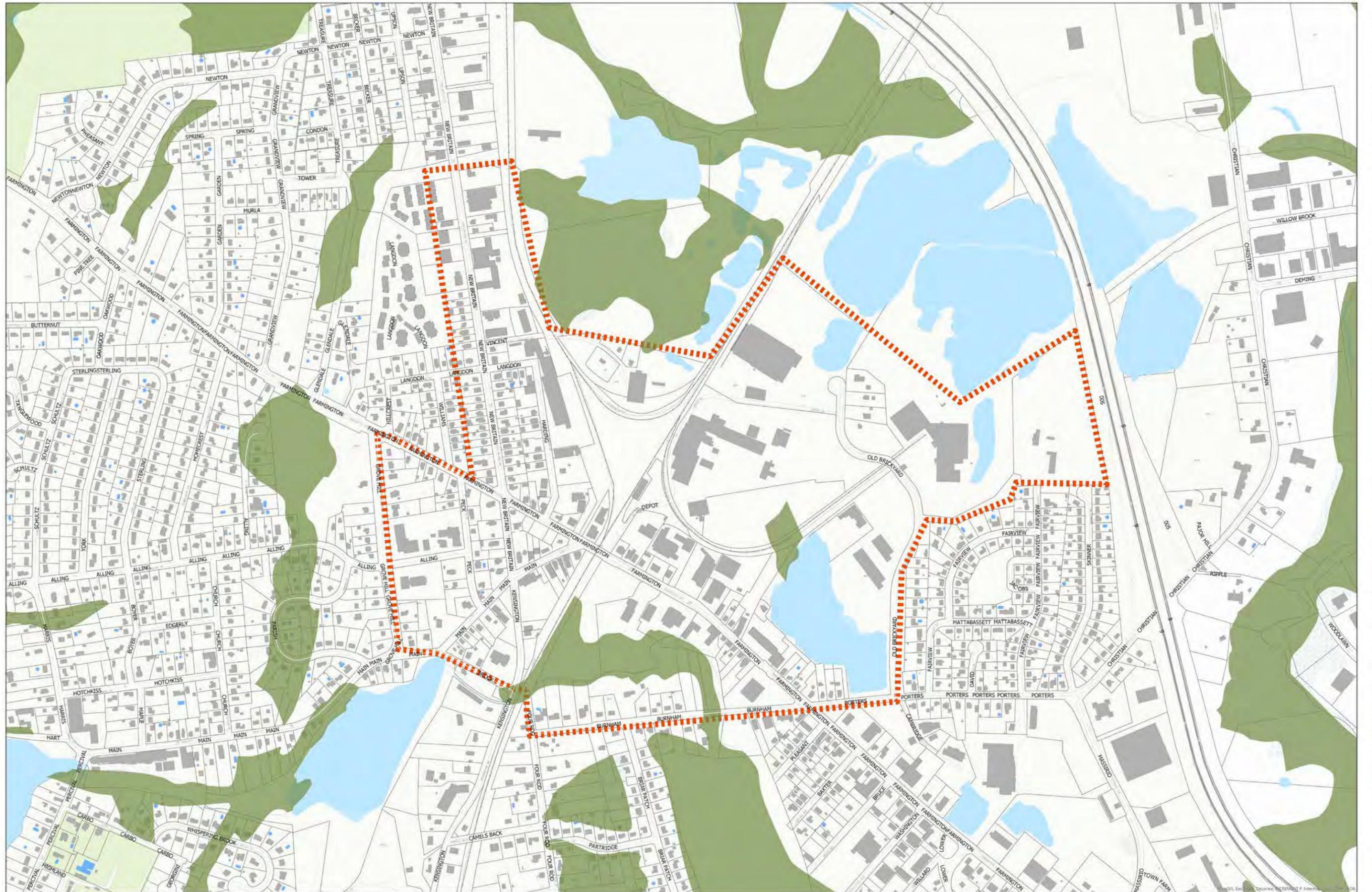
- 1. Challenge of attracting new people and supporting businesses**
- 2. How to maximize Berlin's natural resources**
- 3. How to encourage the transformation of traditional industrial spaces for new light-industry, business, or commercial uses**

Challenge of attracting new people and supporting businesses

1. What is Unique about Berlin? What resources can we draw on?



How to maximize Berlin's open space, wetlands, trails?



How to encourage the transformation of traditional industrial spaces for new light-industry, business, or commercial uses?

Examples



TAXI, Denver Colorado

Mixed-use development in a former taxi holding facility that includes entrepreneurial spaces, innovation centers, and co-working space with ancillary residential, child care and fitness amenities.

Duisburg-Nord, Duisburg, Germany

Recreational reuse of an industrial site without complete demolition of existing structures and without eliminated the history and memory of the site.



**What are other places you like?
What do you like about these places?**



Tonight's Breakout

Glastonbury



Southington



Middletown



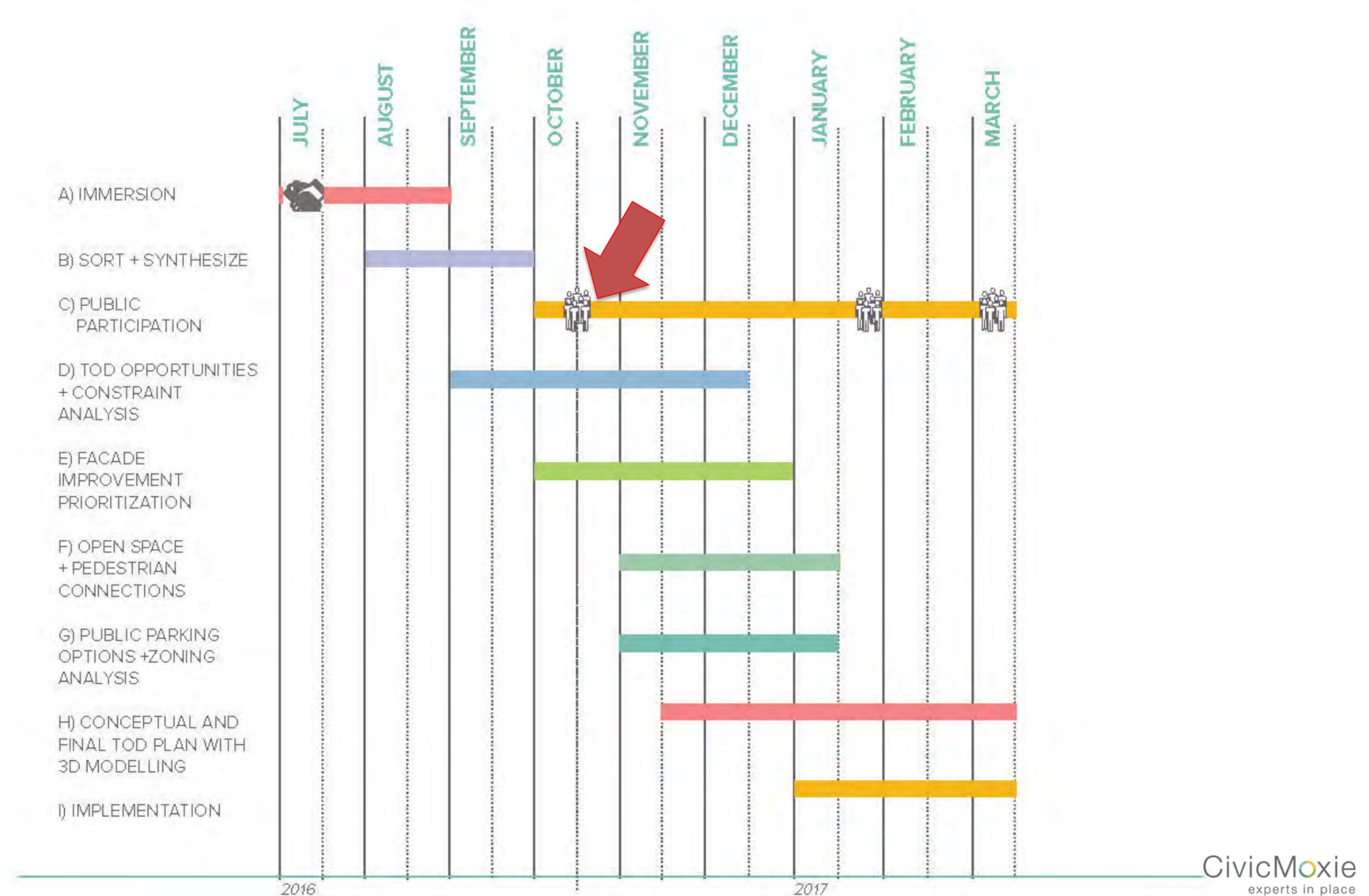
West Hartford



Tonight's Breakout – 20 Minutes

- 1. Walk around the room to the maps.**
- 2. Take a pen or marker and answer the questions or write your thoughts on the pages next to each map.**
- 3. Talk to your neighbors, meet someone new!**

Schedule + Next Steps



Thank you!

1. Please make sure you have signed in and provided your email.
2. Questions? Contact Chris Edge, Economic Development Director, at cedge@town.berlin.ct.us or (860)828-7005
3. If you haven't already, please take our brief survey at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/BerlinTOD