

Presentation to

Town of Canton, CT

Overview of the Site Analysis

May 28, 2014



FUSS & O'NEILL

Existing Conditions Overview

- History Summary
- Site Analysis
- Character Observations
- Economic Conditions

A Brief History

V. 2 CANTON (1935)

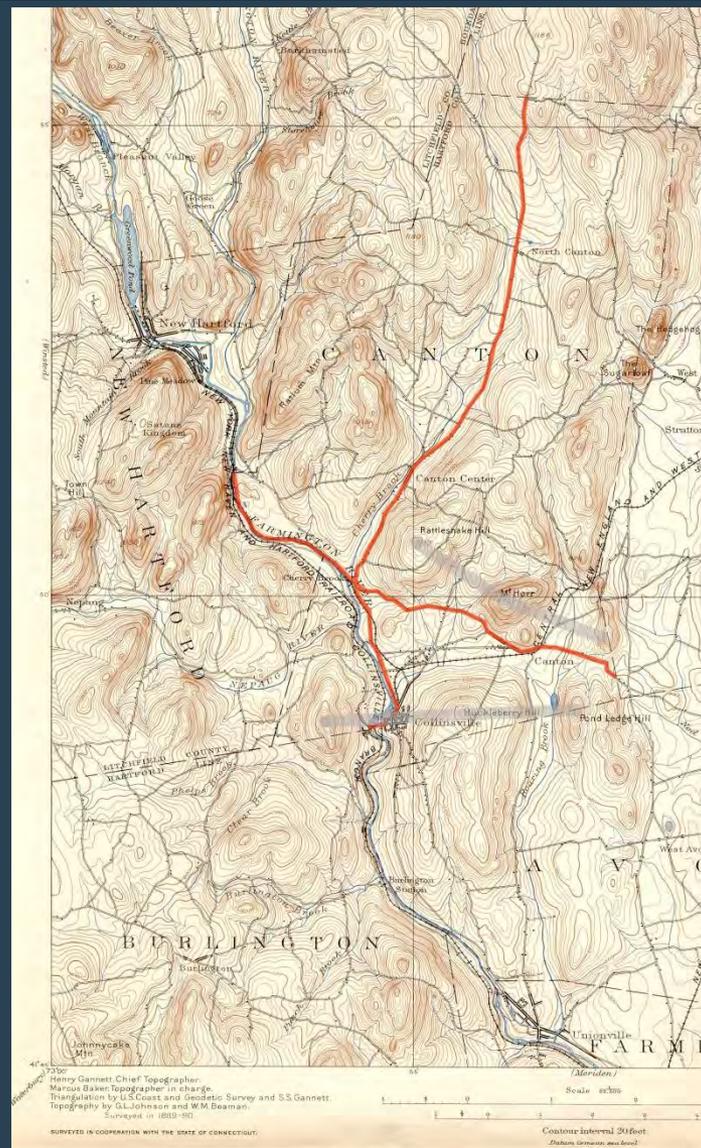
The town of Canton, reached by R. 4 or by R. 101 from Avon, was settled in 1737, organized in 1750 as the parish of West Simsbury, and made a separate town in 1806. The name adopted suggests the growing interest of Connecticut in the China trade. Canton forms the eastern boundary of the Western Highlands at this point, with elevations rising to over 1000 feet.

R. 4 swings northwest through good scenery to the Nepaug Reservoir. At Collinsville, which lies chiefly on the east bank of the Farmington River, is the *Collins Co.*, which has been manufacturing axes and edged tools here since 1826. Before that date, all axes had been made in blacksmiths' shops or were imported from England. An old grist mill was purchased, and iron brought from Salisbury. They were the first edge-tool makers in the world to use coal in their forges (1829.) John Brown ordered 500 pikes in 1857, and bayonets were made here during the Civil War. Since 1840, the company has made a large proportion of the machetes used in Central and South America. Collins Co. tools were used almost exclusively in building the Trans-Siberian Railway.

Going northeast from Collinsville, we pass on the right in about a mile the *Dowd Place*, dating from 1747, with another house on the left built in 1756. In Canton Village, farther to the east, the *Congregational Church*, erected in 1814, has a good pilastered pediment. At the end of the Green is an Elm nearly as large as the great elm at Wethersfield. On the northwest corner, the *Moses Dyer House*, 1784, was a tavern on the Hartford-Albany stage route. This highway was laid out in 1764, and became a turnpike in 1799. There are other houses in the village and on the back country roads dating from the late 18th century.

In the northeast corner of the town, by taking the rather poor road from West Simsbury and turning right instead of going to North Canton, we climb a mountain slope and obtain a remarkable view to the east and south.

As we go west from Canton Village on R. 101, a road turns north through Canton Center; following this about 2 miles farther and turning west $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, we pass on the right the house built in 1756 by *Capt. John Brown*. He was the grandfather of John Brown of Harper's Ferry; the abolitionist's father moved from here to Torrington and later to Ohio.



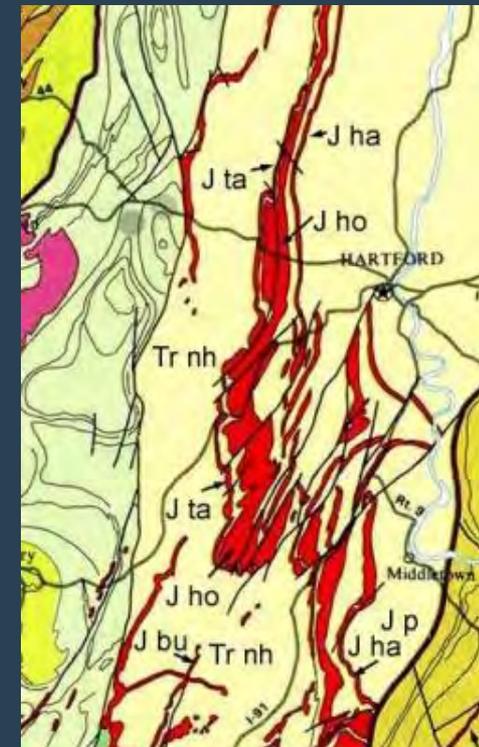
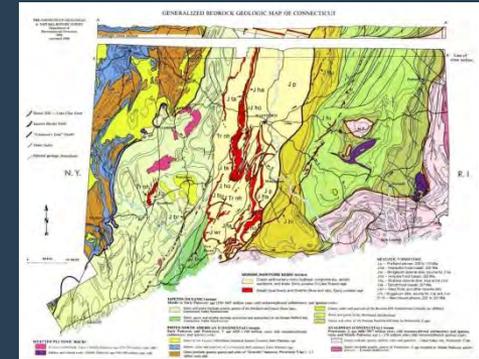
Town Seal

The geometry of it is confused but in an historically and psychologically interesting way. North Canton, Canton Center, and Collinsville are all on north-south Route 179, the tree "trunk", which is essentially local. Canton is on a "branch" to the east, but actually is on the larger, older, more travelled east-west through route, Route 44, which was the Providence RI to Hartford CT to Albany NY Turnpike, this section as early as 1678. Route 44 was aimed out from Hartford to hit the relatively low gap between Mount Horr and Rattlesnake Hill on the north and Huckleberry Hill on the south. In other words, there's an argument that the tree on the town seal should be turned sideways, the roots towards Hartford on the east, the branches north and south. BUT that would ignore the psychological, historic, and economic significance of the Farmington River, so that's why the tree's roots are in Collinsville and its dam.



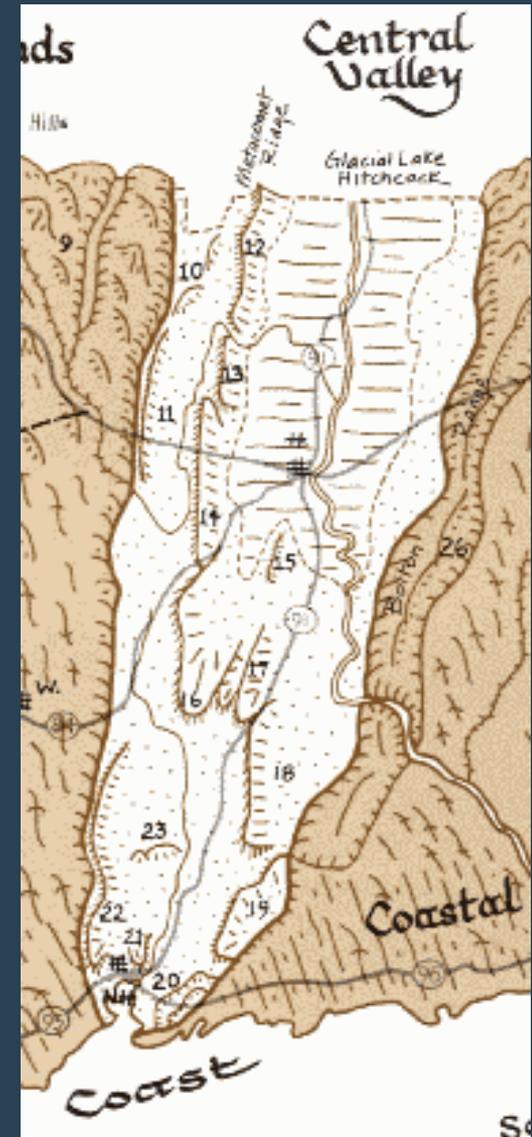
Geology

Canton (the town overall) is located at a really complex four-"neighborhood" geological intersection. The Northwest Highlands are at bottom very old, but they've had some newer areas literally pushed over the top of them. The dark line in the complex map, the dashed line in the simplified one, mark an old shoreline (Iapetus Terrane), something called Cameron's Fault. Canton, at the north edge of the Southwest Hills, was formerly underwater! Almost last note that, newer than those other areas, the Central Valley, a combo of traprock basalt and sedimentary brownstone, is to the east; note the last red line of basalt passed over by 44 as it comes into Canton village. The dark gray line of 44 passes from the light yellow flats of Avon, over and through the thin red line of basalt at Crowley's Corner, then through the narrowest section of light green (schist), before heading up into the Highlands. Again, in short; it's complicated, but has historic significance and economic implications for the present.

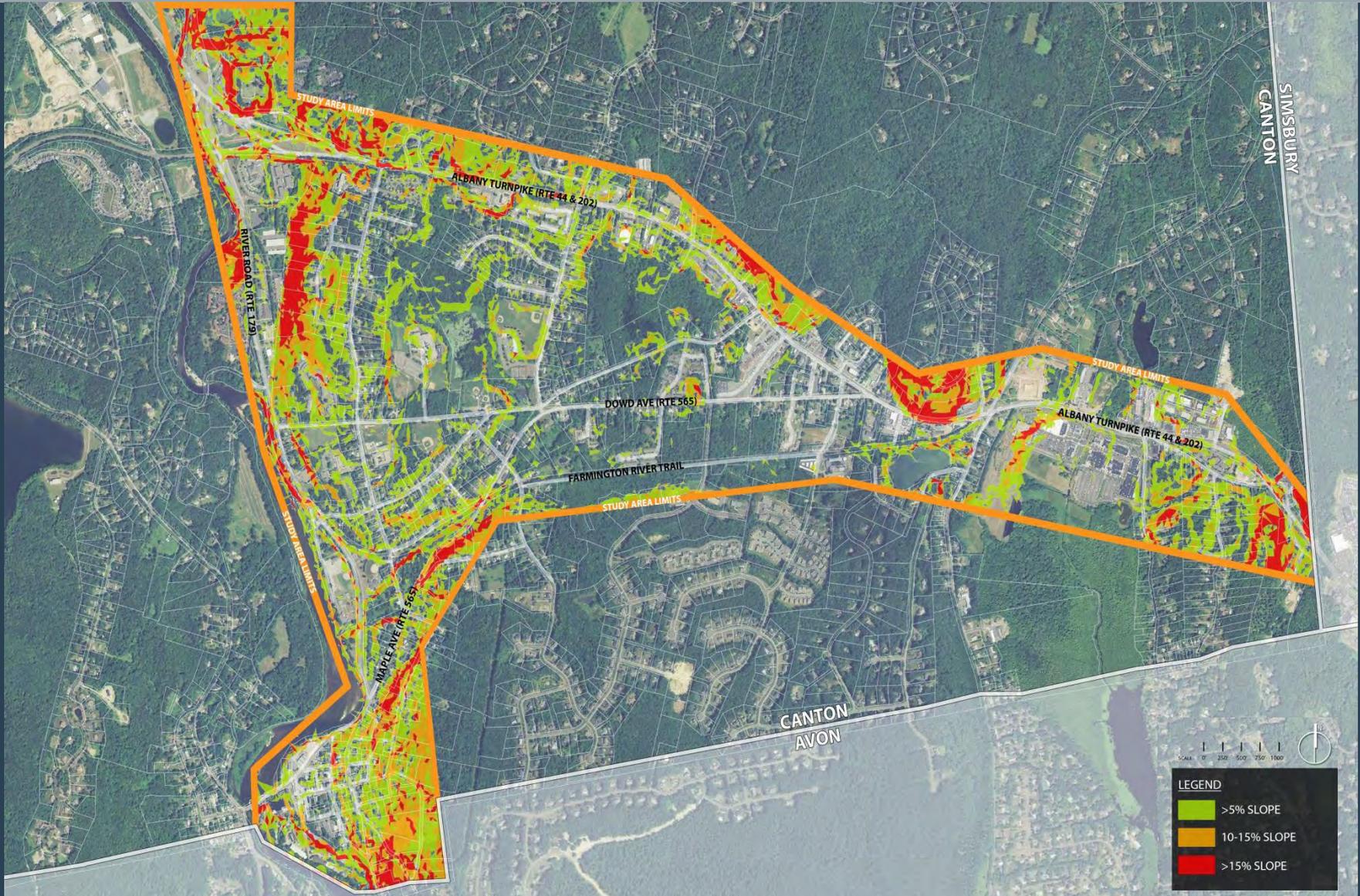


Farmington River

The Farmington River comes out of the Northwest Hills flowing southward through Collinsville, as though intending to head peacefully down to New Haven. But then, at Farmington, it bounces off Rattlesnake Mountain and is deflected to flow northward, really unusual in New England, eventually cutting east to join the Connecticut at Windsor. Now, what that means is that the old east-west Route 44 crosses the Farmington TWICE. Avon, weirdly, is downstream from Collinsville. Furthermore, the fact that the Farmington almost headed down to New Haven was the impetus behind the early 19th c. construction of the Farmington Canal (later railway) along the set of lower elevations from New Haven up to Northampton MA. The canal was a major impetus to north-south industrial town development, such as the gunpowder mills in the centers of Avon and Simsbury. Upshot is that with the vestiges of that non-local north-south force, things get even more confusing about local vs. regional, and N-S vs. E-W



Steep Slopes



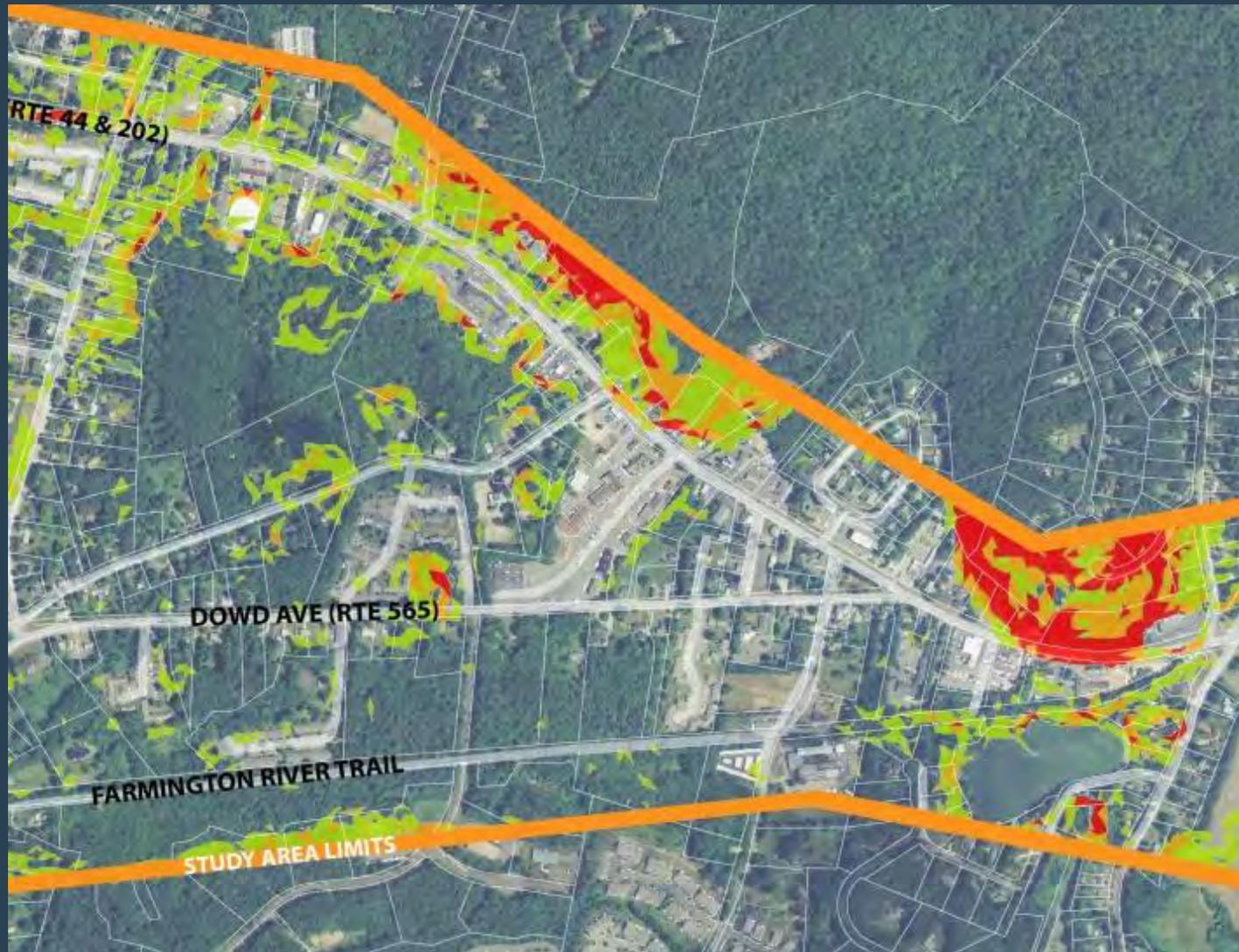
Steep Slopes

Eastern Gateway



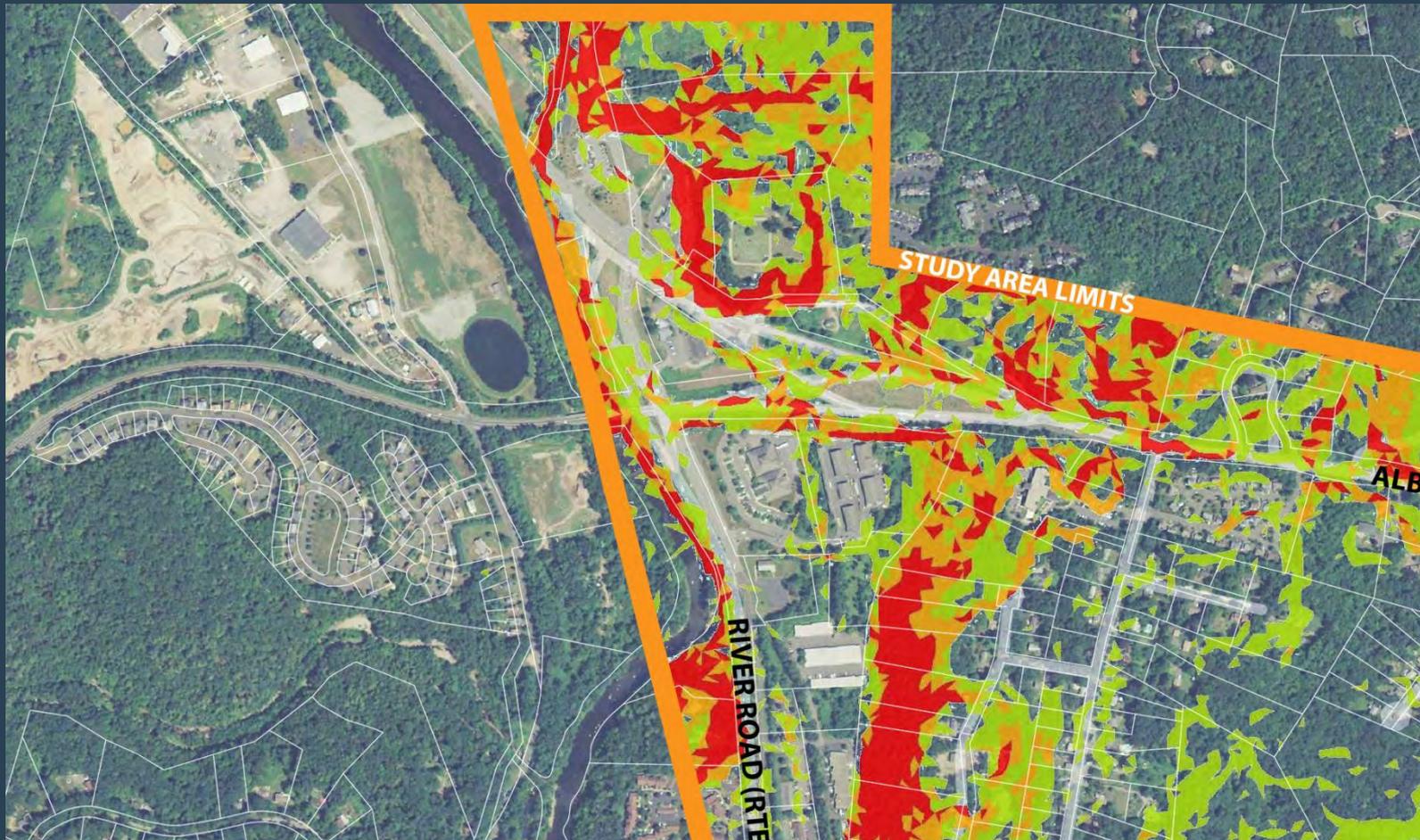
Steep Slopes

Canton Village



Steep Slopes

Western Gateway

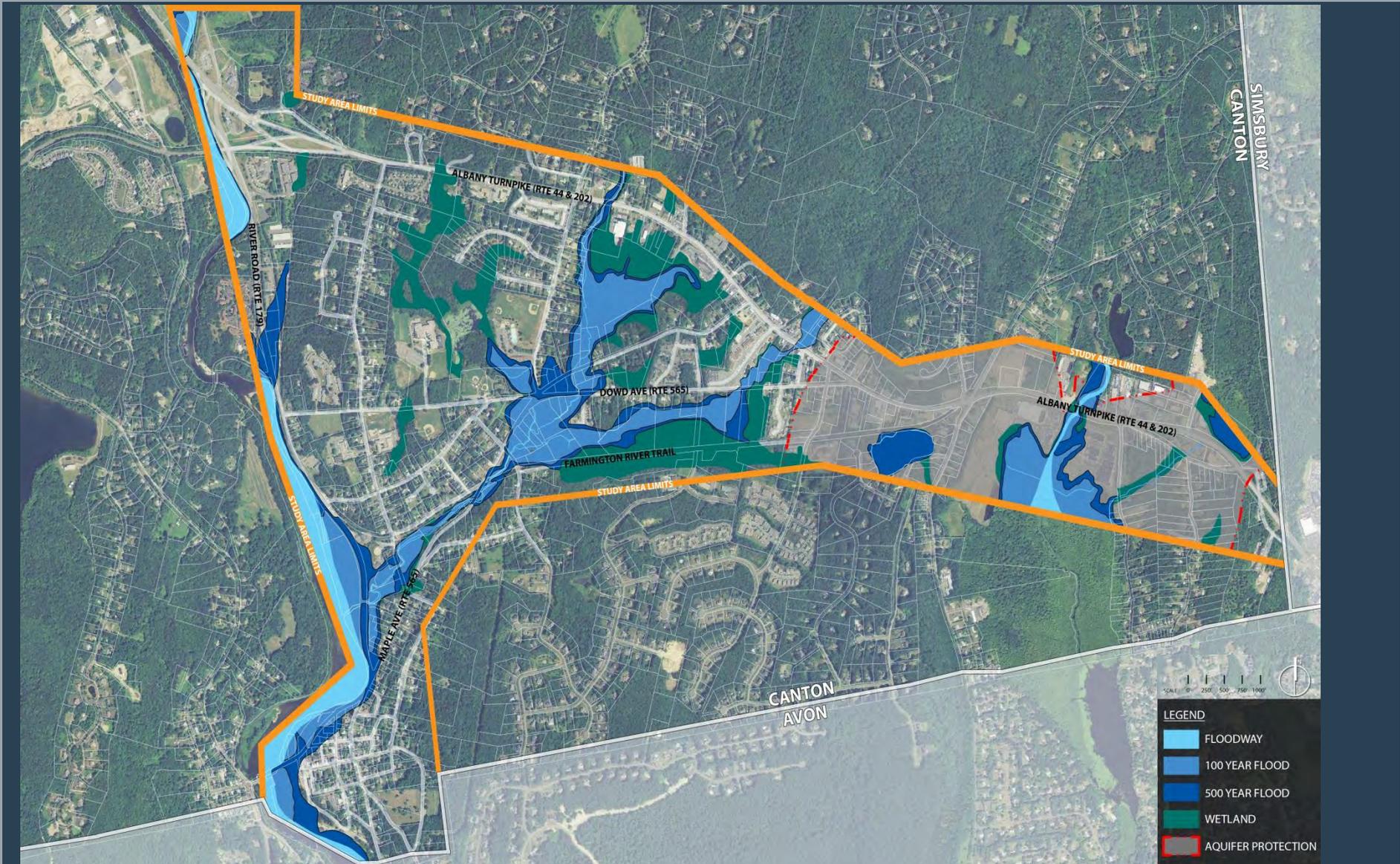


Steep Slopes

Collinsville

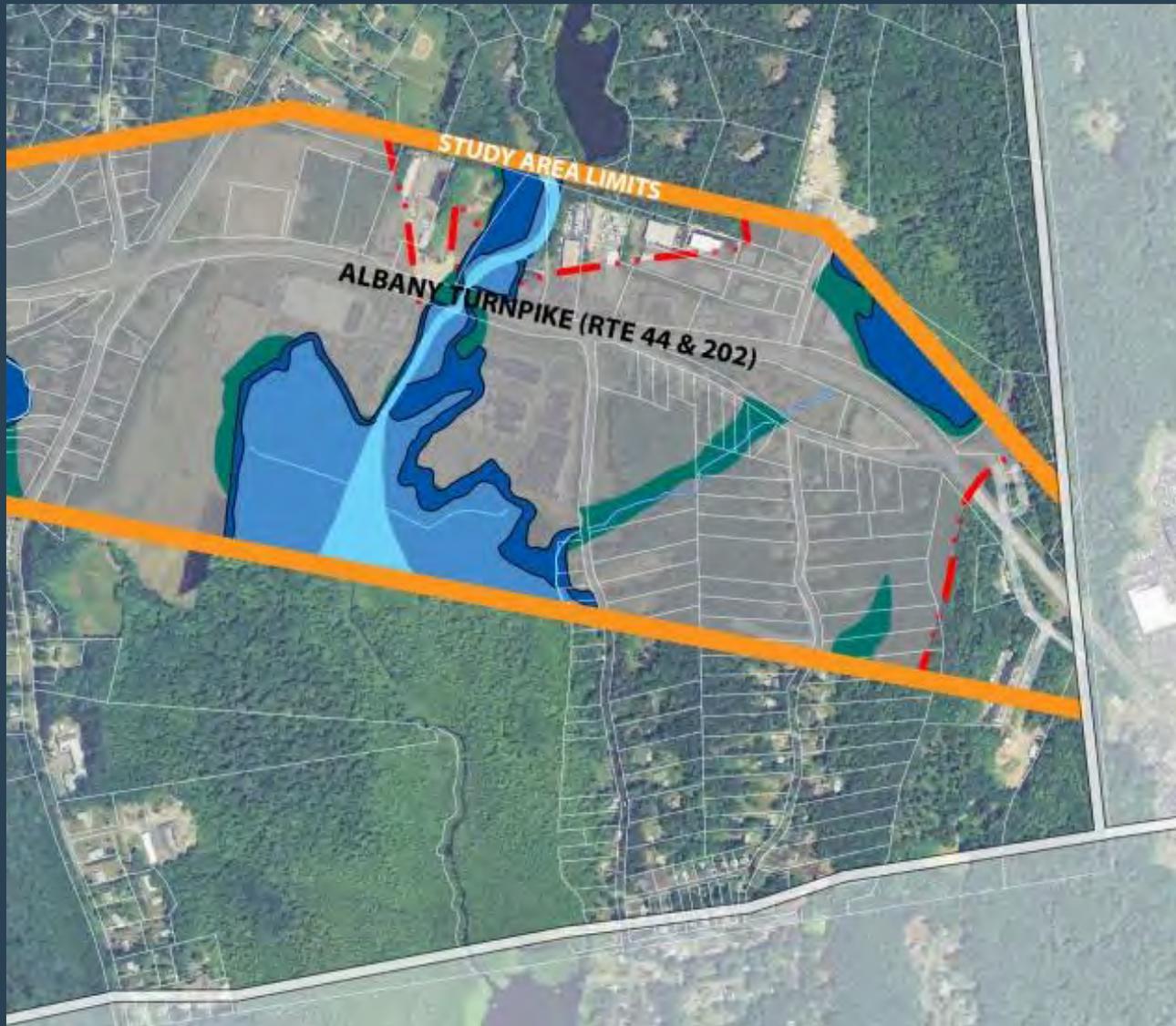


Water Resources



Water Resources

Eastern Gateway

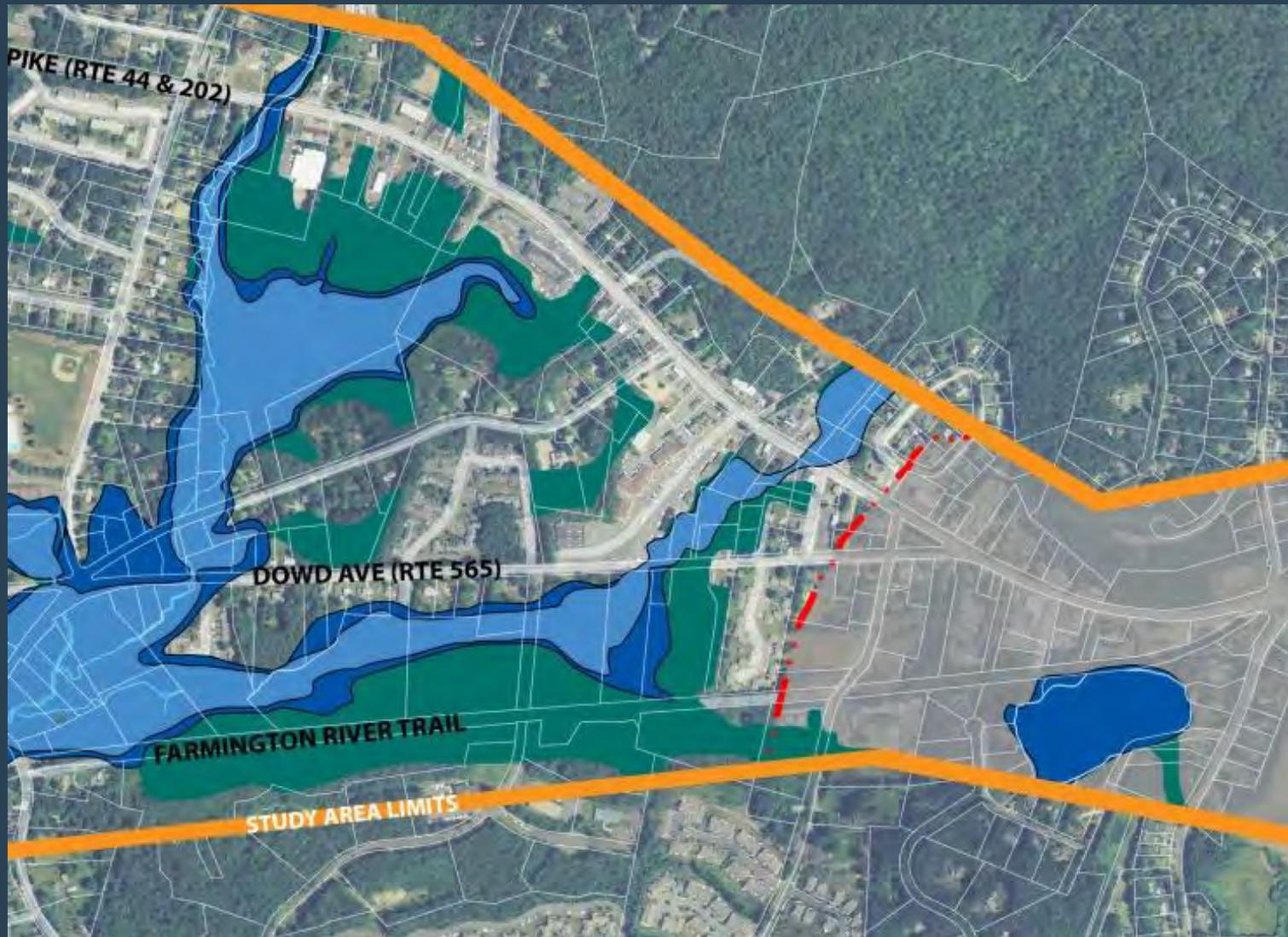


LEGEND

	FLOODWAY
	100 YEAR FLOOD
	500 YEAR FLOOD
	WETLAND
	AQUIFER PROTECTION

Water Resources

Canton Village



Water Resources

Western Gateway



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Water Resources

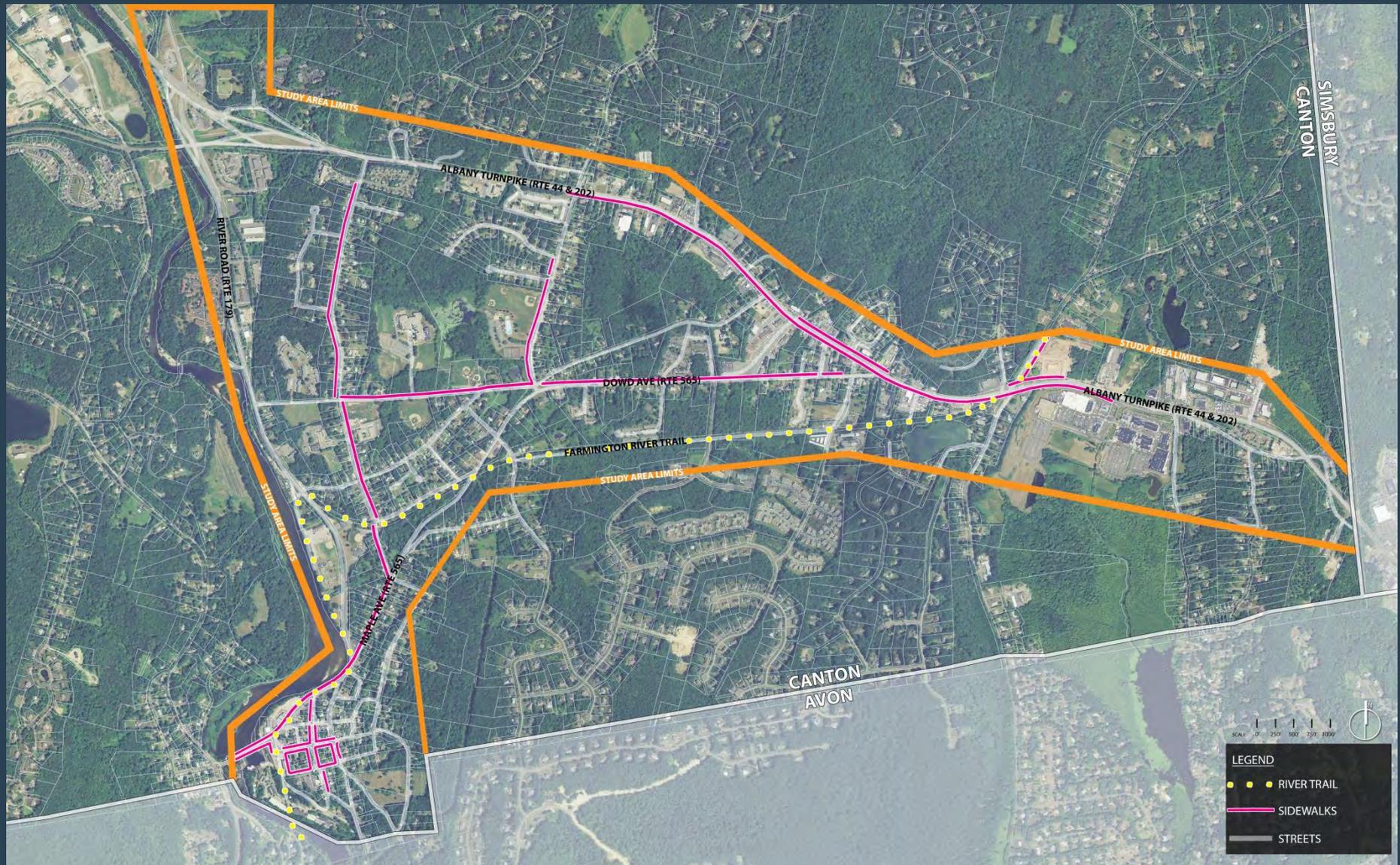
Collinsville



LEGEND

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Street & Pedestrian Network



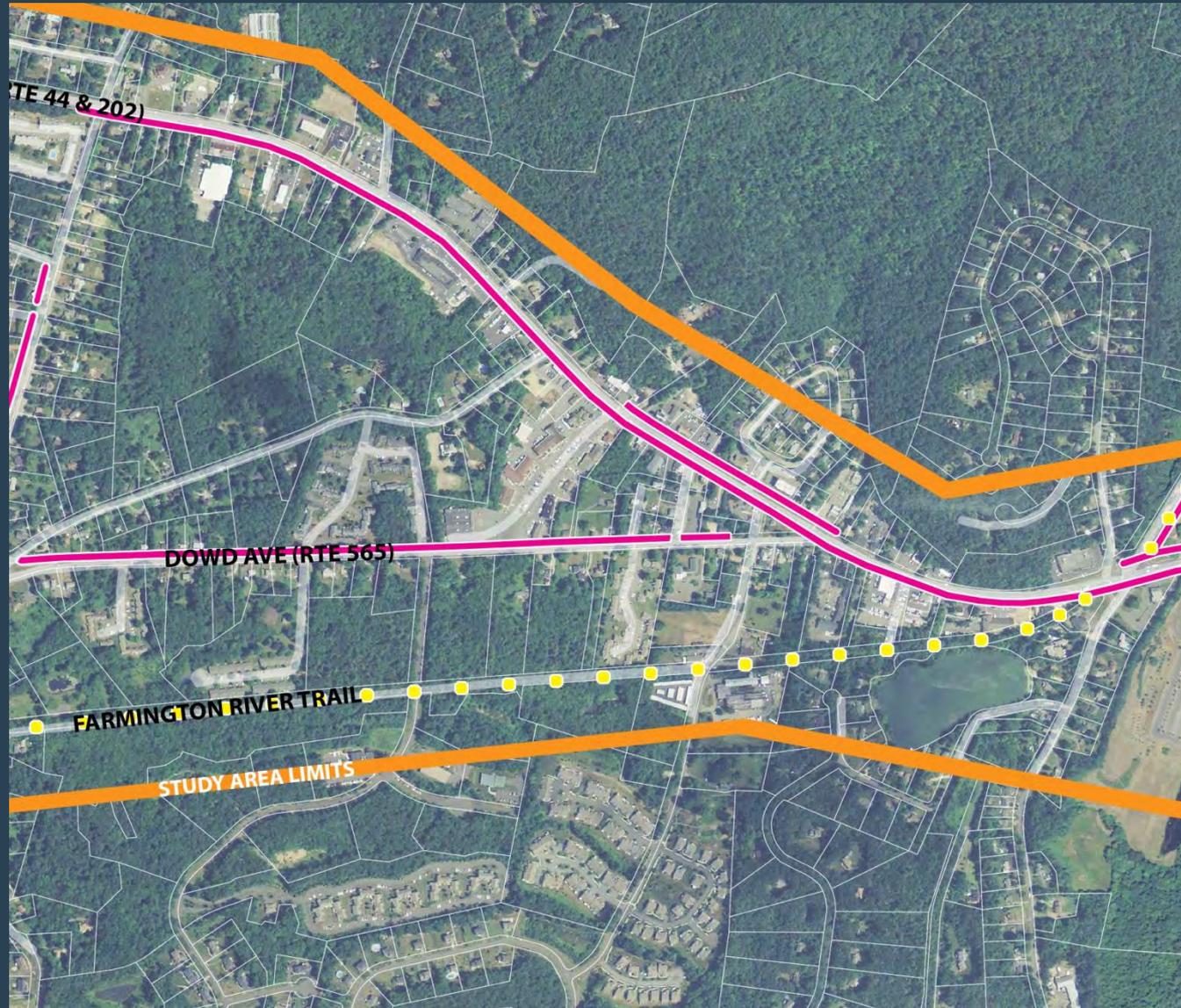
Street & Pedestrian Network

Eastern Gateway



Street & Pedestrian Network

Canton Village



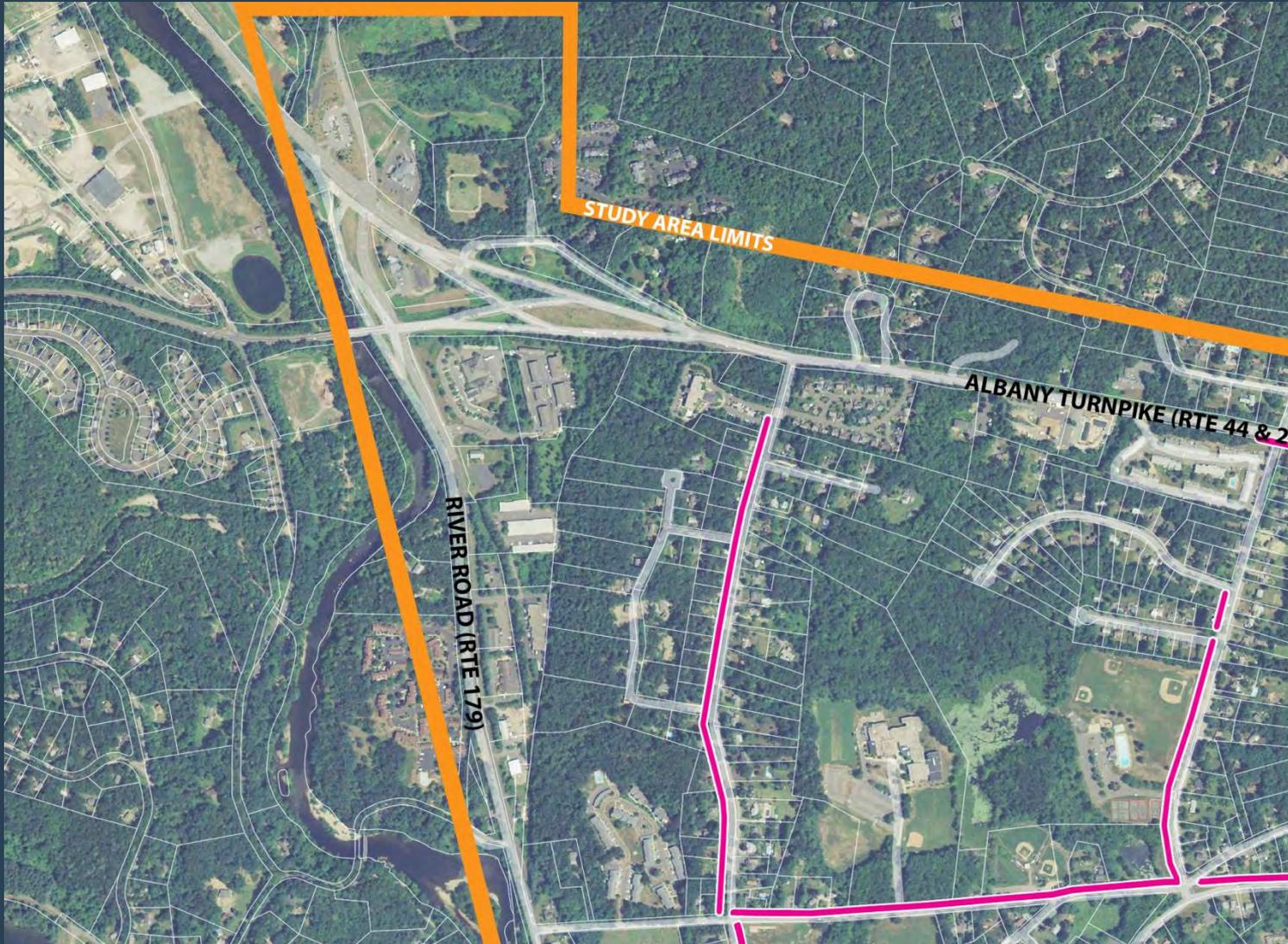
SCALE 0' 250' 500' 750' 1000'

LEGEND

- ● ● RIVER TRAIL
- SIDEWALKS
- STREETS

Street & Pedestrian Network

Western Gateway



Street & Pedestrian Network

Collinsville



Publicly Owned Parcels



Publicly Owned Parcels

Eastern Gateway



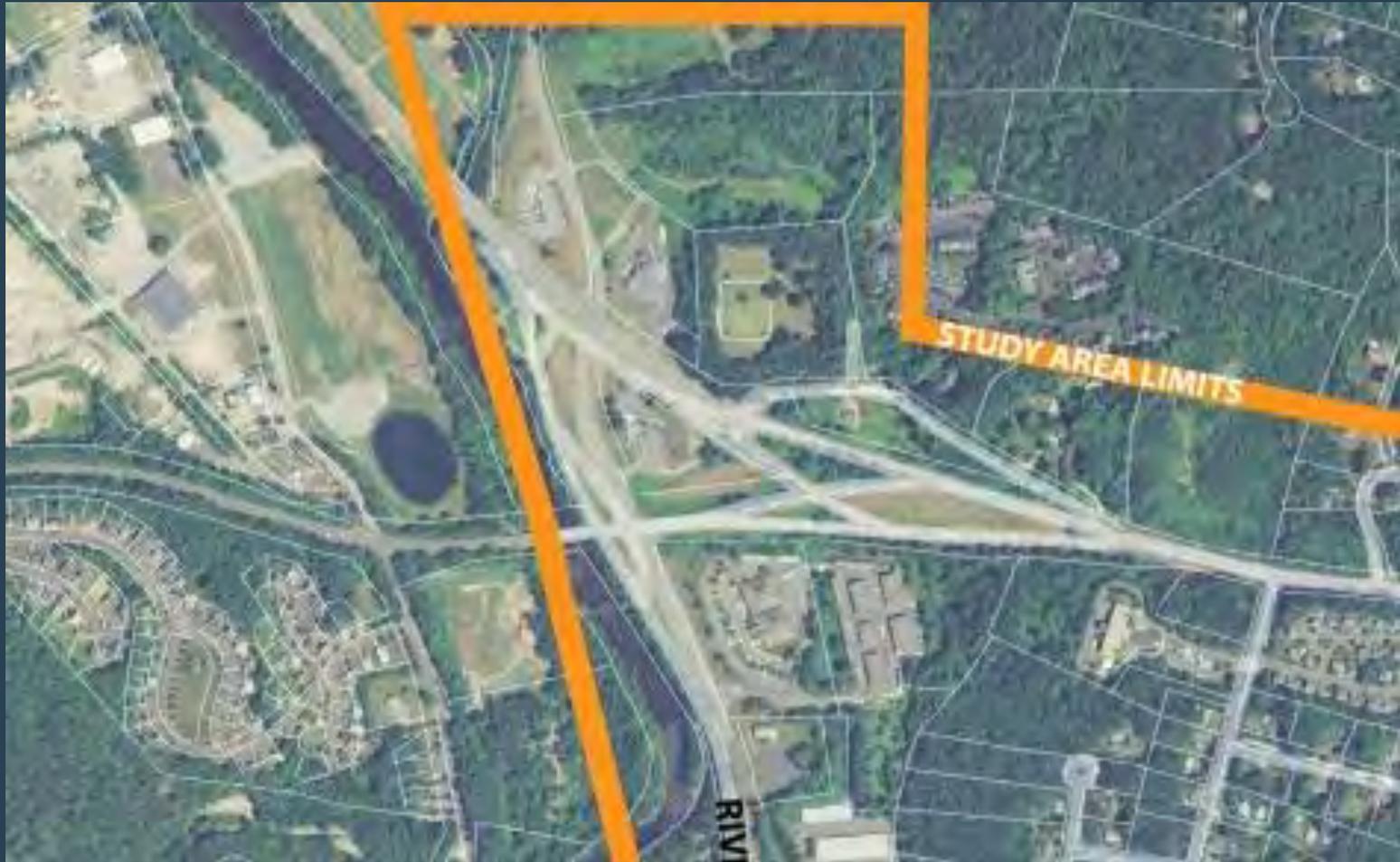
Publicly Owned Parcels

Canton Village



Publicly Owned Parcels

Western Gateway



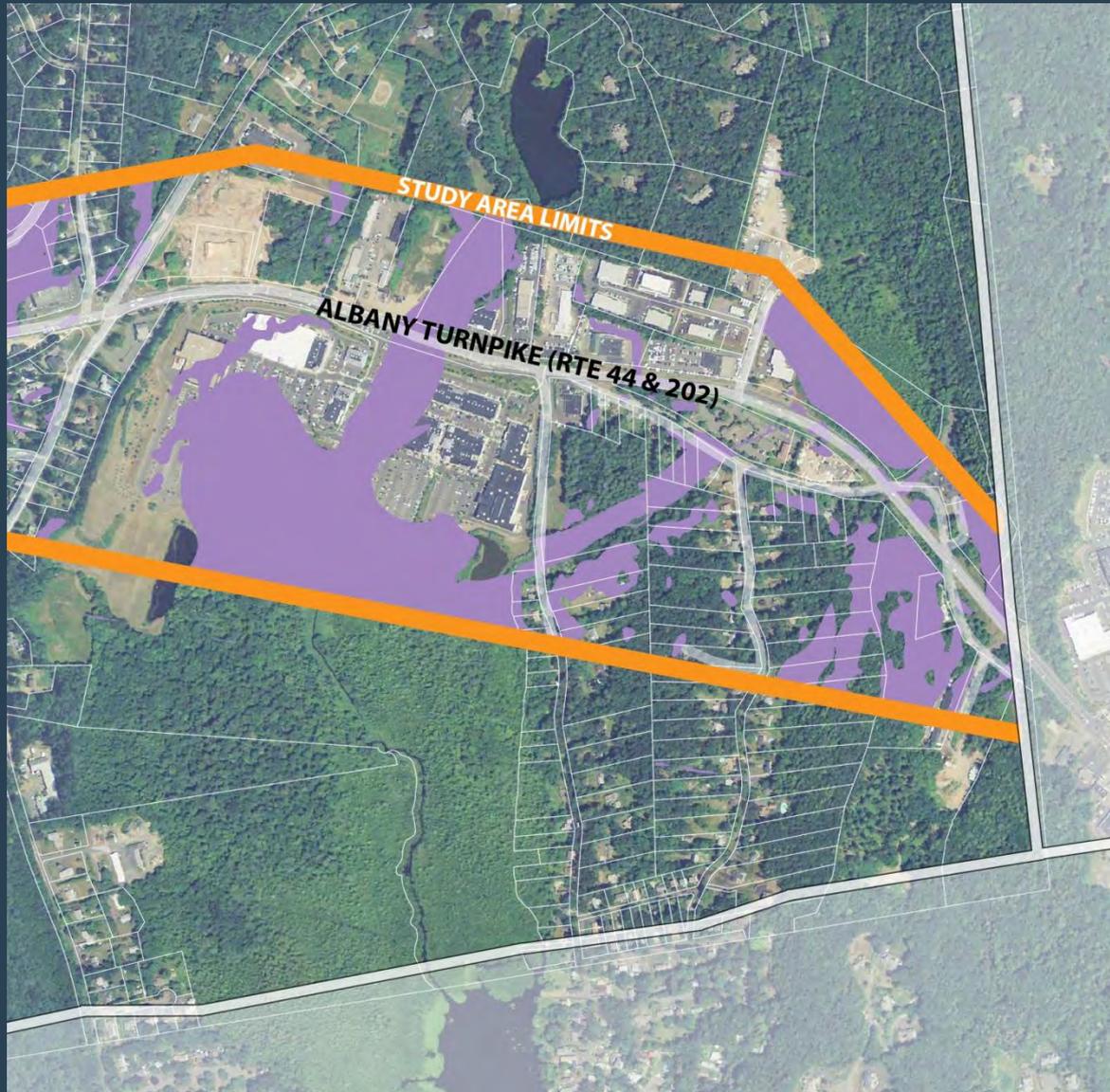
Publicly Owned Parcels

Collinsville



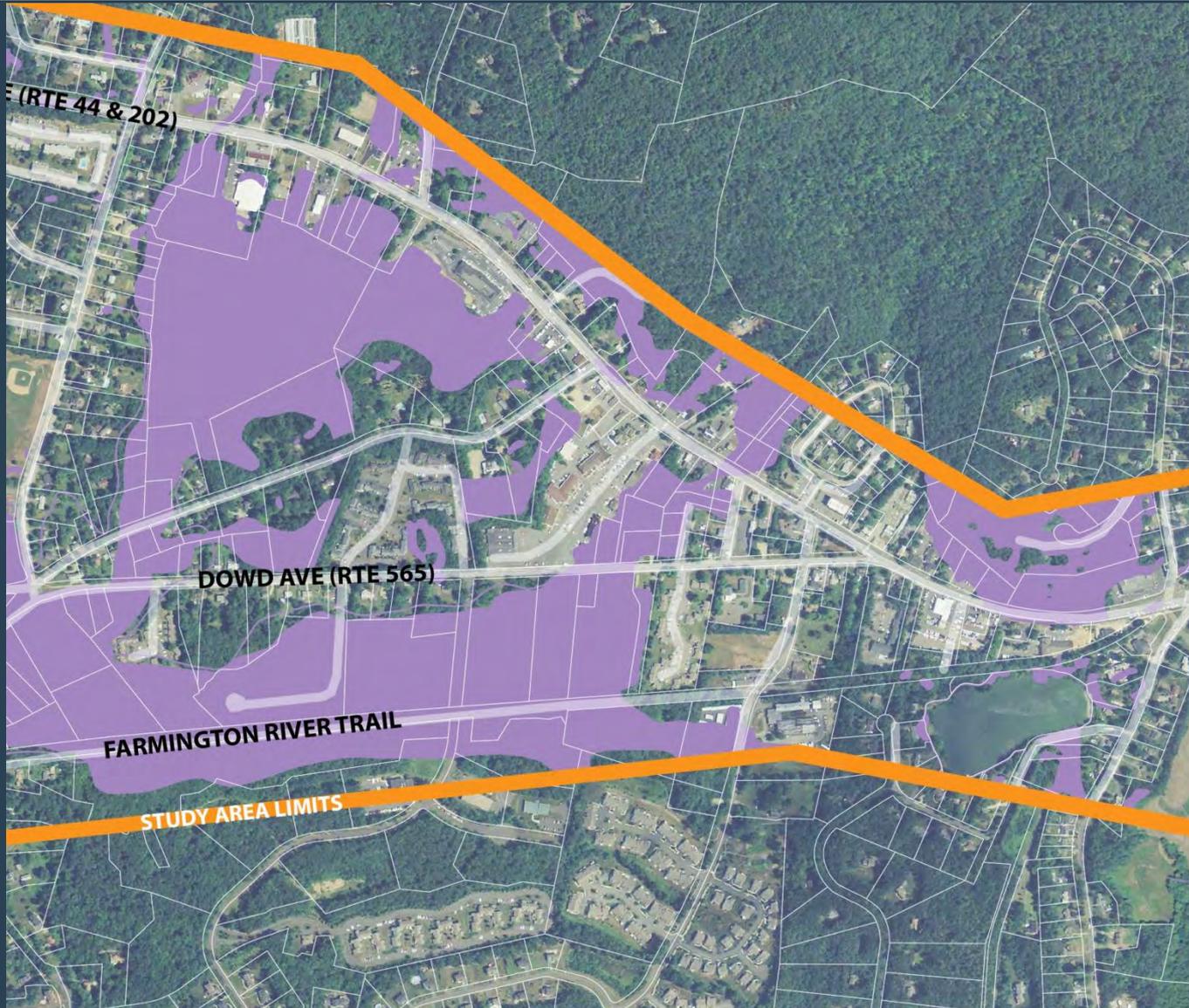
Land Constraints

Eastern Gateway



Land Constraints

Canton Village



Land Constraints

Western Gateway

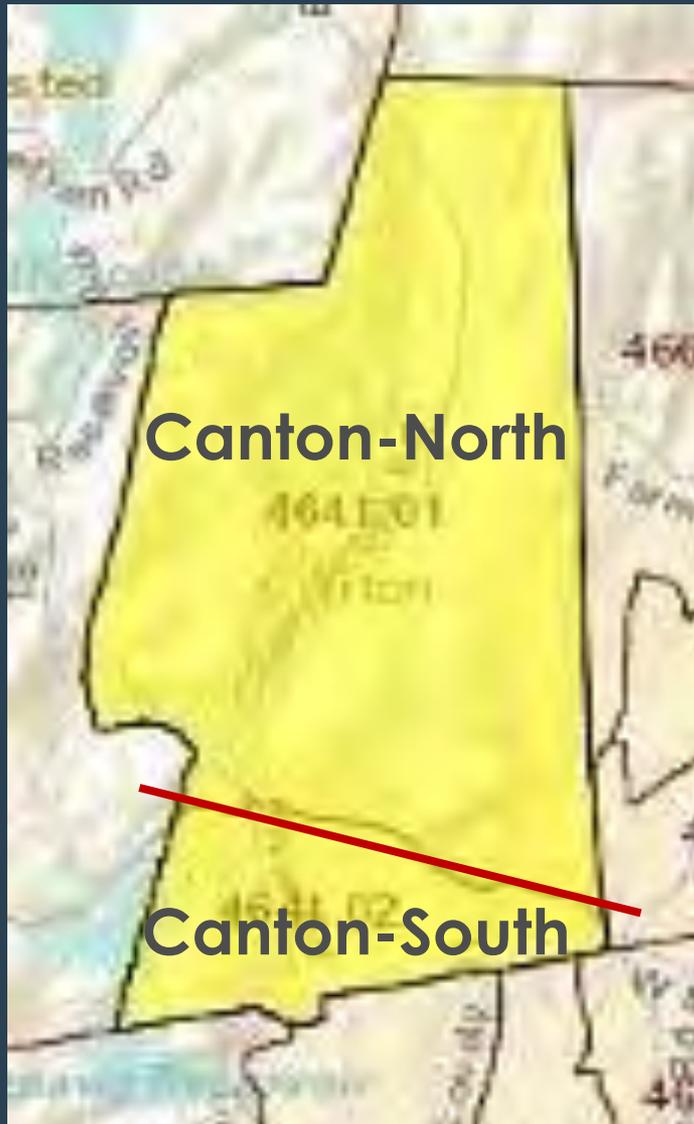


Land Constraints

Collinsville



Existing Market Conditions



- Growing faster than the region in population and households
- Housing production out-paced household growth (vacancies)
- Jobs and business growth exceeds region and state numbers
- More retail sales than demand (shopping destination)

Housing Trends

Disparity between Canton-North and Canton-South

- Median household income: Canton-North \$100,664 vs. Canton-South \$66,834
- Median value of owner-housing: Canton-North \$363,400 vs. Canton-South \$265,600
- Percentage of single-family homes (detached & attached): Canton-North 98% vs. Canton-South 84%
- Owner occupied rates: Canton-North 93% vs. Canton-South 70%



Employment Data

Very little change in labor force numbers (2005-2014)

- Of 5,178 workers residing in Canton, only 23% work in Canton (11% commute to Hartford)
- 30% of Canton jobs are held by neighboring community residents (Avon, New Hartford, & Simsbury)
- 73 new businesses established since 2000 (21% growth)
- Strong industry sectors: construction, retail trade, arts/entertainment, accommodations, & food services



Retail Indicators

Local stores are not capturing all of the local demand (retail sales leakage)

- “Retail gravity” of Shoppes at Farmington Valley could be capitalized
- Within 5-minute drive time: need for electronics, specialty & convenience foods, and some dining/drinking
- Within 15- & 25-minute drive time: need for all merchandise lines except health & drug stores



Initial Growth Projections

- 275 new households at the rate of 50-70 per year and approximately 1/3rd rental
- 55-60,000gsf office and service uses (but approximately half of demand could be met by existing vacancies)
- 150 new positions by 2022
- 135,000gsf retail space equivalent from recaptured sales leakage



Design & Visioning Workshop

Wednesday April 30th

Pre-Workshop Education Session: Zoning + POCD Review

Wednesday May 28th

Pre-Workshop Education Session: Physical Conditions

Time	Monday June 9th	Tuesday June 10th	Wednesday June 11th	Thursday June 12th		
9:00am		Open Design Studio stop by anytime to see the design team working on ideas from your friends and neighbors	Additional Stakeholder Interviews, as required	Open Design Studio stop by anytime to see the design team working on ideas from your friends and neighbors		
10:00am					Open Design Studio stop by anytime to see the design team working on ideas from your friends and neighbors	Open Design Studio
11:00am						
12noon						
1:00pm						
2:00pm						
3:00pm						
4:00pm						
5:00pm	Summary Presentation & HANDS-ON PUBLIC WORKSHOP an overview of the charrette and the initial analysis materials, all are invited to come and participate, and have your voice heard.					
6:00pm						
7:00pm			Pin-Up Session participate as the design team debates ideas		WORK-IN-PROGRESS a presentation of the work created during the workshop	
8:00pm						

