



TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON RHODE ISLAND

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

APPROVED BY THE LITTLE COMPTON PLANNING BOARD
ADOPTED BY THE LITTLE COMPTON TOWN COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 15, 2018

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Affordable housing is residential housing that has a sales price or rental amount that is within the means of a household that is moderate income or less. In the case of dwelling units for sale, housing that is affordable means housing in which principal, interest, taxes, which may be adjusted by State and local programs for property tax relief, and insurance constitute no more than thirty (30%) percent of the gross household income for a household with less than one hundred twenty (120%) percent of area median income, adjusted for family size. In the case of dwelling units for rent, housing that is affordable means housing for which the rent, heat, and utilities other than telephone constitute no more than thirty (30%) percent of the gross annual household income for a household with eighty (80%) percent or less of area median income, adjusted for family size. Affordable housing shall include all types of year-round housing, including, but not limited to, manufactured housing, housing originally constructed for workers and their families, accessory dwelling units, housing accepting rental vouchers and/or tenant-based certificates under Section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937, as amended and assisted living housing, where the sales or rental amount of such housing, adjusted for any Federal, State, or municipal government subsidy, is less than or equal to thirty (30%) percent of the gross household income of the low and/or moderate income occupants of the housing. [See RIGL § 42-128-8.1(d)(1)].

An **affordable housing trust fund** is separate funds established by states or localities to provide a stable source of revenue reserved solely for affordable homes.

In a **BioBlitz**, volunteer naturalists, working in teams, have 24 hours to tally as many species of animals and plants as they can on a particular parcel of land. The idea was pioneered by Harvard "ant man" E.O. Wilson and others in 1996 and now BioBlitzes are held all across the United States and around the world. The Rhode Island Natural History Survey organized the first Rhode Island BioBlitz in 2000 in Roger Williams Park, Providence.

BMPs, or Best Management Practices, are activities or structural improvements that help reduce the quantity and improve the quality of stormwater runoff.

Climate change is a long-term shift in the statistics of the weather (including its averages). For example, it could show up as a change in climate normal (expected average values for temperature and precipitation) for a given place and time of year, from one decade to the next.

The **Community Rating System** is a voluntary program for National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) participating communities. The goals of the CRS are to reduce flood damages to insurable property, strengthen and support the insurance aspects of the NFIP, and encourage a comprehensive approach to floodplain management. The CRS has been developed to provide incentives in the form of premium discounts for communities to go beyond the minimum floodplain management requirements to develop extra measures to provide protection from flooding.

Highway Functional Classification System is a management tool to group highways and streets into classes according to the character of service they are intended to provide. Federal, State and local governments use this tool to assign jurisdictional responsibility, allocate funds, and establish

appropriate design standards for roadways. A functional classification for highways has been an important part of Federal-aid highway programs for many decades.

Low or moderate income housing is any housing whether built or operated by any public agency or any nonprofit organization or by any limited equity housing cooperative or any private developer, that is subsidized by a federal, state, or municipal government subsidy under any program to assist the construction or rehabilitation of housing affordable to low or moderate income households, as defined in the applicable federal or state statute, or local ordinance and that will remain affordable through a land lease and/or deed restriction for ninety-nine (99) years or such other period that is either agreed to by the applicant and town or prescribed by the federal, state, or municipal government subsidy program but that is not less than thirty (30) years from initial occupancy.

LID is an innovative stormwater management approach with a basic principle that is modeled after nature. LID's goal is to mimic a site's predevelopment hydrology by using design techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff close to its source. Instead of conveying and managing / treating stormwater in large, costly end-of-pipe facilities located at the bottom of drainage areas, LID addresses stormwater through small, cost-effective landscape features located at the lot level.

A **municipal government subsidy** is the assistance that is made available through a city or town program sufficient to make housing affordable, as affordable housing is defined in § 42-128-8.1(d)(1); such assistance may include, but is not limited to, direct financial support, abatement of taxes, waiver of fees and charges, and approval of density bonuses and/or internal subsidies, and any combination of forms of assistance.

A **natural hazard** is an event or series of events caused by forces of nature that has a negative impact on people, infrastructure or the environment.

Salt marshes are coastal wetlands that are flooded and drained by salt water brought in by the tides.

Sea level rise refers to the current and projected rise in sea level associated with climate change and global warming.

Storm surge is a coastal flood of rising water as a result of atmospheric pressure changes and wind associated with a storm.

The **Town** refers to the Town of Little Compton.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a list of transportation projects the State of Rhode Island intends to implement using United States Department of Transportation funds. Federal regulations require that the State Planning Council adopt a new TIP at a minimum of every four years.

Wave Attenuation is the loss of dissipation of wave energy resulting in a reduction of wave height.

ACRONYMS

CRMC – RHODE ISLAND COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

CRS – COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM

FEMA – FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

LCACT – LITTLE COMPTON AGRICULTURAL CONSERVANCY TRUST

LCHC – LITTLE COMPTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NFIP - NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

RIHPHC – RHODE ISLAND HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND HERITAGE COMMISSION

SLAMM – SEA LEVEL AFFECTING MARSHES MODEL

SLR – SEA LEVEL RISE

1. NATURAL RESOURCES

THE PLAN MUST BE BASED ON AN INVENTORY OF SIGNIFICANT NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS SUCH AS, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, WATER, SOILS, PRIME AGRICULTURAL LANDS, FORESTS, WILDLIFE, WETLANDS, AQUIFERS, COASTAL FEATURES, AND FLOODPLAINS. THE PLAN MUST INCLUDE GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES FOR THE PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THESE AREAS.

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL § 45-22.2-6(b)(3)



NATURAL RESOURCES - GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS

GOAL NR1. PROTECT WATER QUALITY BY REDUCING OR ELIMINATING EXISTING AND POTENTIAL GROUNDWATER AND SURFACE WATER CONTAMINANTS

Policy NR1.A. Support a comprehensive program of groundwater protection measures

Policy NR.1.B. Recognize upland areas are where groundwater recharge occurs and that land use activities in upland areas are a major contributing factor in water quality

Policy NR1.C. Promote best management practices in agriculture, lawn care and landscaping in order to protect water resources and voluntarily mitigate sources of nitrogen

Policy NR1.D. Prioritize and pursue land conservation in critical watershed locations

Policy NR2.E. Maintain substantial vegetative buffers around watercourses including coastal ponds and tributary streams

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action NR1.a. Review new State wetlands setback regulations, identify critical resource areas, and petition State for additional protections for critical resource areas in Little Compton	Conservation Commission; Planning Board; Town Council	Short-term	
Action NR1.b. Work with partners to provide guidance and tools for farmers regarding identification of non-point source pollution, best management practices, and resources available	Conservation Commission; LCACT	Long-term	USDA NRCS RI
			RIDEM BMP's for Agriculture
Action NR1.c. Educate landowners on best management practices lawn care and landscaping	Conservation Commission	Medium-term	
Action NR1.d. Distribute educational materials (tax bill insert, website, etc.) relating to steps residents can take individually to prevent non-point source pollution	Planning Board, Tax Assessor	Short-term	Rhode Island Stormwater Solutions Education Material
Action NR1.e. Conduct a Town-wide hydrologic study to provide a quantitative assessment of groundwater resources	Town Council, Planning Board, Conservation Commission	Short-term	USGS Seacoast Groundwater Availability Study

Action NR1.f. Work with partners to implement a water quality monitoring program of ponds for early detection of trends including nitrate loading	Conservation Commission	Medium-term	
GOAL NR2. ENSURE THAT ONSITE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS (OWTS) IN THE COMMUNITY WORK PROPERLY AND DO NOT THREATEN PUBLIC HEALTH, LOCAL WATER RESOURCES, OR THE ENVIRONMENT			
Policy NR2.A. Prioritize the establishment of a local onsite wastewater management program which identifies all existing systems, ensures new OWTS are designed properly and existing OWTS are operating correctly, and educates homeowners about the importance of good system operation and maintenance practices			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action NR2.a. Create a database of approved onsite wastewater treatment systems and associated maintenance agreements. Ensure contracts are renewed on an annual bases.	Building Official, Town Clerk	Short-term	<u>RIDEM Summary of Municipal Onsite Wastewater Management Programs</u>
Action NR2.b. Apply for the Community Septic System Loan Program (CSSLP) to provide low-interest loans to homeowners to cover costs associated with septic system repairs or upgrades (requires preparation of an onsite wastewater management plan)	Town Council	Medium-term	

GOAL NR3. PROACTIVELY ADDRESS A WIDE RANGE OF NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION ISSUES UNDER THE ENCOURAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP OF AN EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Policy NR3.A. Work collaboratively with partners such as the Agricultural Conservancy Trust, Sakonnet Preservation Association, and The Nature Conservancy in order to achieve shared conservation goals

Policy NR3.B. Increase the role and responsibility of the Conservation Commission in local conservation efforts

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action NR3.a. Advocate for long-term conservation goals and annually update the Town Council on progress	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	<u>10 Things Conservation Commission Can Do Handout</u>
Action NR3.b. Foster regular dialogue among the Agricultural Conservancy Trust, Sakonnet Preservation Association and The Nature Conservancy	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	
Action NR3.c. Establish a subcommittee to focus on water protection efforts	Town Council, Conservation Commission	Short-term	<u>Charlestown Potable Water Working Group</u>
			<u>Charlestown Source Water Protection Plan</u>
Action NR3.d. Establish an education initiative to encourage participation in the State's Farm, Forest and Open Space Program	Town Council, Conservation Commission	Medium-term	
<i>Timeframes: Short-term (0-2 years); Medium-term (3-6 years); Long-term (7-10 years)</i>			

INTRODUCTION

The Town is rich in natural resources: shorelines with some of the finest beaches and natural harbors, scenic open spaces, valuable wetlands, high quality surface water, and prime agricultural lands. The Town's natural environment adds immeasurably to its quality of life. It is a priority of the Town to preserve and protect the natural resources of the Town and to manage physical development that could have direct and indirect impacts on the quality of those natural resources.

The Natural Resources element provides an inventory of the significant natural resource areas such as water, soils, prime agricultural lands, natural vegetation systems, wildlife, wetlands, aquifers, coastal features, floodplains and other natural resources and the policies for protection and management of such areas. This element considers the attributes of the Town's natural environment, the ability of the Town's natural resources to support physical development and other land use activities, the impact local regulations have upon the environment, and how natural resources can be best protected in the future.

WATER RESOURCES

The Town's water resources include streams, freshwater ponds and reservoirs, freshwater wetlands, coastal ponds and wetlands. Water resources are of paramount concern in the Town, since every resident depends upon groundwater for domestic use, and the City of Newport depends, in part, upon the Watson Reservoir for its drinking water supply. These resources are critical to the future functioning of the Town in terms of providing a continued safe drinking water supply, flood storage capacity, wildlife habitat, as well as secondary benefits such as recreation and scenic enjoyment. See *Natural Resources: Water Map* located in Chapter 11 for a delineation of watersheds in the Town.

GROUNDWATER

Groundwater is essentially held in common ownership by the residents of the Town, and is the Town's most important resource in terms of the health, safety and welfare of all residents. All residents of the Town rely on groundwater for drinking water and other domestic purposes.

RESIDENTS USE PRIVATE WELLS FOR ALL DOMESTIC WATER NEEDS.

THERE IS CONCERN ABOUT THE ADEQUACY OF WATER YIELDS IN WELLS IN CERTAIN AREAS OF THE TOWN.

The Town is almost entirely underlain by till aquifer, a type of glacial sediment which yields the lowest amount of groundwater of the soil types found in the State. There are a few small areas of stratified drift in the Town, which is a higher yielding soil type, as described above. These areas have not been mapped. There are no groundwater reservoirs located in the Town.

The saturated thickness of till in the Town averages between 5 and 10 feet. In winter and spring, when water tables are high, water levels in till commonly are within 5 to 10 feet of land surface, even in hilly areas. Till may become unsaturated during dry periods of summer and fall, and is generally an unreliable source of water in many areas. In the Town, some older homes may have shallow wells in till, but new homes generally have wells drilled into the underlying bedrock. There are a number of combined wells located along the Adamsville Brook in the northeast part of Town.

GROUNDWATER QUALITY

Groundwater quality is generally good, attributable to the generally low density of development and the lack of major industrial and commercial development. The primary threats to groundwater quality in the Town are onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS), leaking underground storage tanks not identified by or registered with RIDEM, and fertilizers and pesticides used in agriculture or for residential lawns.

Potential Sources of Groundwater Contamination - Groundwater quality may be affected by "point" sources of pollution (coming from a specific source) and "nonpoint" (coming from disperse activities).

Point pollution sources previously identified by RIDEM in the Town include the Town Transfer Station, the State salt storage site, and leaking underground fuel storage tanks.

Non-point sources such as active farms using pesticides and fertilizers, residential lawns, roadway runoff, and runoff from other paved surfaces threaten groundwater quality. Nitrates are a specific concern, as they may be introduced to the groundwater through individual septic systems as well as through fertilizers applied to residential lawns and active agricultural lands.

Recognizing that the Town depends solely upon groundwater for its drinking water supply, and that alternatives to this supply are few and prohibitively expensive, it is critical that a comprehensive program of groundwater protection measures be instituted. The Town has identified as a need, and therefore has listed in its implementation program, to conduct a Town-wide hydrologic study to provide a quantitative assessment of groundwater resources

The cumulative effect of substandard, malfunctioning, improperly designed or sited, and poorly maintained OWTS contributes to the pollution of surface and groundwater. A goal of this plan is to ensure that OWTS do not threaten public health, water resources or the environment. As such, the

Town will prioritize the establishment of an onsite wastewater management program. Under State law, municipalities have the authority to establish local management programs to meet the onsite wastewater needs their community. Most of these programs established to date were created with the assistance of State Bond funds or Federal Nonpoint Source of funds. Towns use these funds to develop an onsite wastewater management plan (OWMP) designed to meet local needs. An OWMP describes the elements of the municipal management program for septic systems. In order to meet the needs of its community, the Town is using State Bond funds or Federal Nonpoint Source of funds to develop an onsite wastewater management plan, which once approved by RIDEM will make the Town eligible to apply for a Community Septic System Loan Program (CSSLP). CSSLP will be used to provide low-interest loans to homeowners in the Town to cover the costs associated with septic system repairs or upgrades.

RESERVOIR

The Harold E. Watson Reservoir is a 375 acre reservoir owned by the City of Newport as part of its public drinking water supply. Streams feeding the reservoir include Pachet Brook and a number of small, unnamed streams. The City owns 300 watershed acres surrounding the reservoir. The watershed stretches from the Tiverton boundary south to a point north of Simmons Road, west to Old Main Road and east to the high ground beyond Long Highway. To the northwest of the reservoir are two hills, Windmill Hill and Richmond Hill, rising approximately 130 to 140 feet above sea level. Most of the steep land in these areas is owned by the City of Newport, and will remain undeveloped.

Protection of the quality of this reservoir as a drinking water supply for the City of Newport is critical, and the City has taken and continues to take measures to maintain the water quality in its water resource management plans. Activities which occur around the reservoir may affect the quality of the water, for example, salting of Peckham Road or Willow Avenue within the watershed. As the host community for this resource, the Town has the responsibility to ensure that such activities do not degrade the reservoir's quality. Maintaining vegetated buffers around the tributary streams which feed the reservoir will help maintain the water quality. The Town has perpetual rights to acquire or purchase water from the Reservoir through its agreement with the City of Newport (Rhode Island General Laws, Chapter 78, Section B, page 276, 1957-58).

COASTAL WATERS AND FEATURES

The Town is bounded by the Rhode Island Sound to the south. The coastline has been an attraction for residential development, as many people desire to live along the coast for its scenic beauty. It is dotted with residential development, both estates on large lots and smaller, high density cottage type development. Interspersed with the development are coastal ponds, beaches, and rocky shores.

Moderately developed barrier beaches include Tunipus Pond Beach and Watch House Pond Beach. These designations limit the extent and type of new development permissible on these beaches. Undeveloped barrier beaches are intended to remain as conservation areas, with no future development permitted. New development is prohibited on moderately developed barrier beaches, with specific exceptions as regulated by CRMC.

Other coastal features in the Town are also regulated by the CRMC, including coastal beaches and dunes, barrier beaches, coastal wetlands, coastal cliffs, bluffs and banks, rocky shores, and manmade shores. Waters within 500 feet of the mean high water mark of the Town's coastline are classified as Type 1 by CRMC. These are: 1) water areas that are within the boundaries of designated wildlife refuges and conservation areas; 2) water areas that have retained undisturbed natural habitat or maintain scenic values of unique or unusual significance; and 3) water areas that are particularly unsuitable for structures due to their exposure to severe wave action, flooding and erosion. Waters beyond this 500 foot mark east of the southern tip of West Island near Sakonnet point are Type 4 waters. These are multipurpose waters which support a variety of commercial and recreational activities while maintaining good value as fish and wildlife habitat, and water adjacent to shorelines that could support water-dependent commercial, industrial and/or high-intensity recreational activities. Each type of water has an associated list of activities which either require an assent from the CRMC or are prohibited, such as filling, removal and grading of shoreline features, residential structures, marinas, municipal sewage treatment facilities and individual sewage disposal systems. The waters along the Town's southern coastline are class SA waters, the highest water quality class, considered suitable for bathing and contact recreation, shellfish harvesting for direct human consumption, fish and wildlife habitat. It is important that the quality of these waters be maintained to protect the Town shoreline for continued commercial fishing, tourism and recreational uses. See CRMC Water Type Maps included in Chapter 11.

SAKONNET HARBOR

Sakonnet Harbor, on the southwestern tip of the Town, is one of the most valuable natural, cultural, recreational and economic resources of the Town. Located on the east side of the entrance to the Sakonnet River, it is a fairly shallow, rockbound cove that is open to the river on the north, protected on the south and east by land, and on the west by an 800-foot riprap breakwater.

The harbor has a water surface of some 25 acres, 12 acres of which are dredged to a depth of eight feet. (RIDEM has given the harbor an SA rating in water quality condition and classification). The southern shore of the harbor consists of a federally protected bather beach and, behind it, a natural tidal wetland owned by the state and management by RIDEM as a wildlife refuge. The western side is composed largely of commercial fishing and pleasure boating docking facilities; the eastern side consists of the Sakonnet Yacht Club and numerous private residences.

CRMC has divided the use of the harbor into two classifications. Waters adjacent to the bather beach area are considered Type 2, low intensity use. This includes "waters in areas with high scenic value that support low-intensity recreational and residential uses. These waters include seasonal

mooring areas where good water quality and fish and wildlife habitat are maintained. The remainder of the harbor is designated Type 5, commercial and recreational waters. CRMC policy for Type 5 waters is to maintain the diversity of water-related activities (such as recreational boating, commercial fishing, etc.) while maintaining and/or enhancing the character of the area and promoting the most efficient use of space.

The water area immediately adjacent to the barrier beach, starting at Point A (the northeast edge of Lot 385 where the eastern boundary of the barrier beach, identified by Dr. Boothroyd, intersects with the shore) then extending toward the western shore boundary of the barrier beach designated by Dr. Boothroyd to Point B (where a line drawn in a northerly direction as an extension of the eastern boundary of Lot 429 forms an intersect) are designated as Type 2. The remainder of the water area in Sakonnet Harbor are designated Type 5.

Sakonnet Harbor is the site for a variety of water-related activities: recreational boating, commercial fishing, swimming scuba diving and sailboarding. While commercial fishing is the primary winter activity, it continues at a high level throughout the year. In warm weather, recreational boating also reaches its peak. Further issues and policies regarding the harbor, and the ongoing needs of both the commercial fishing and the recreational boating interests, are identified in the Sakonnet Harbor Management Plan.

SAKONNET RIVER

The Sakonnet River forms the western boundary of the Town, running from the Taunton River through Mount Hope Bay into Rhode Island Sound. The River's waters are considered RIDEM Class SA, as described previously. Waters within 500 feet of the mean high water mark of the Sakonnet River shoreline are classified as CRMC Type 1, and waters beyond this 500 foot line are Type 2 waters.

FRESHWATER

RIVERS, PONDS AND STREAMS

There are three major freshwater stream systems flowing from north to south. The easternmost is Adamsville Brook, rated as Class-B waters along its entirety. Wetlands associated with this system in the Town are forested wetlands. It meanders along the east side of Crandall Road before flowing into Mill Pond in Westport. From there it passes under Adamsville Road and into the West Branch of the Westport River. Adamsville Brook is stocked with trout and used extensively by fishing enthusiasts in the spring. The Sakonnet Preservation Association owns some of the land between Adamsville Brook and Crandall Road, assuring access for fishing enthusiasts.

The second major freshwater system includes Colebrook and its associated forested wetlands, shrub swamps and wet meadows. It originates in Tiverton just north of the Town line. It flows into Simmons Pond (an old mill pond) and then through a series of manmade ponds before becoming

West Brook and reaching Quicksand Pond. Simmons Pond supports largemouth bass, chain pickerel, sunfish and an occasional osprey. Wood ducks nest there and other species of ducks including black ducks, mallards and buffleheads have been observed. There is very little residential development along Colebrook, increasing its value as wildlife habitat. The Sakonnet Preservation Association has acquired various lots bordering the brook in an attempt to protect this freshwater system. The Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust (LCACT) has acquired development rights to a parcel swaddling the brook. After meandering through several miles of undisturbed woods, Colebrook enters Quicksand Pond.

The third freshwater system is Dunderly Brook. This brook and associated forested wetlands, shrub swamps and wet meadows originates south of Peckham Road and flows southward into a small pond on the north side of Meeting House Lane at "The Ponderosa." From there, Dunderly Brook flows under Meeting House Lane and meanders a little more than a mile through undeveloped woodlands before flowing into Town-owned Wilbour Woods on the north side of Swamp Road. Dirt roads and trails through Wilbour Woods provide access to the brook where the Town maintains a few picnic sites. The brook supports trout, so fishing enthusiasts as well as picnickers, hikers, and runners use the area. Local garden clubs conduct walks along the brook to see the streamside flowers that bloom there. In addition, teachers from the Wilbour School occasionally bring their classes to Wilbour Woods to conduct field trips along the brook. From Wilbour Woods, the brook flows under Swamp Road before entering Briggs Marsh. Dunderly Brook is a valuable natural feature and is used in a variety of ways by many people. The Town protects part of it and makes it accessible through its ownership and maintenance of Wilbour Woods. The Sakonnet Preservation Association has acquired some lots bordering the brook and continues to pursue strategies for protecting more of Dunderly Brook.

A number of other intermittent streams are found throughout the Town, in addition to numerous small natural and manmade ponds (Simmons Pond, Grays Mill Pond). These water bodies serve as part of the Town's natural drainage system, channeling overland runoff into wetlands, ponds, the Sakonnet River, and Rhode Island Sound. Maintaining adequate vegetated buffers is critical the protecting water and habitat quality.

COASTAL WETLANDS AND PONDS

The entire shoreline of the Town has been defined by RIDEM as marine/estuarine unconsolidated shore. Coastal wetlands include salt marshes and freshwater or brackish wetlands contiguous to salt marshes. Areas of open water within coastal wetlands are considered a part of the wetland. A number of large coastal ponds are located along the southern shore of the Town. Coastal ponds within the Town include Quicksand Pond, Briggs Marsh, Round Pond, Little Pond, Watch House Pond, Tunipus Pond and Long Pond. These ponds are particularly susceptible to nitrate loading that may adversely impact water quality, and can in turn affect wildlife and plant habitat values. Many of the ponds are surrounded by estuarine emergent wetlands, typically salt marshes. Such ecosystems are very productive, support a variety of species of fish, and provide nesting, feeding and resting

grounds for ducks and shorebirds. They are protected by CRMC regulations, U.S. Army Corps regulations, and local and state land acquisition programs.

All the coastal ponds are designated as Type 1 Waters, Conservation Areas, by the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC). By designating these areas Type 1, CRMC indicates the intention to preserve and protect the ponds from "activities and uses that have the potential to degrade scenic, wildlife, and plant habitat values, or which may adversely impact water quality and the diversity of natural shoreline types."

Coastal ponds support a variety of species of fish. Alewives and perch migrate from the sea into coastal ponds each spring to lay eggs in the streams that flow into them. Eels and white perch live in some of the ponds and those with lower salinity can even support bass. Migrating ducks including canvasback, bufflehead, grebes, coot, goldeneye, black ducks, and mergansers are seen on the ponds. In addition, Canada Geese use these ponds extensively during annual migration and for nesting. Quicksand Pond is also an extremely valuable seasonal feeding area for osprey.

Quicksand Pond is a major winter flounder spawning area. It is also a Rare Species Habitat and has a Significant Natural Communities designation and is part of a proposed natural greenway corridor. Quicksand Pond is also entirely surrounded by critical habitats, and there are a number of protected areas adjacent to Quicksand Pond. It is part of one of the most scenic and undisturbed coastal areas in the State and its protection is of high priority. Approximately half of the shorelines on Quicksand Pond are undeveloped, the remainder are developed as private residences.

Consideration should be given to further protective efforts for coastal ponds, including, land acquisition, buffering of tributary streams and the pond itself, and systematic monitoring to detect excessive nitrate loading.

BEACHES

CRMC has classified Long Pond Beach, Round Pond Meadow, High Hill Marsh Bather (eastern portion), Briggs Beach, Round Pond Beach, Ship Pond Cove, and Quicksand Pond Beach as undeveloped barrier beaches. Moderately developed barrier beaches include Sakonnet Harbor Beach (eastern portion), Tunipus Pond Beach, and Watch House Pond Beach. These designations limit the extent and type of new development permissible on these beaches. Undeveloped barrier beaches are intended to remain as conservation areas, with no future development permitted. New development is prohibited on moderately developed barriers, with specific exceptions detailed in the CRMP handbook. See Recreation, Conservation, and Open Space Element for additional discussion on the Town's beaches.

FRESHWATER WETLANDS

The dominant type of inland wetland in the Town is the forested wetland, commonly known as the wooded swamp. Most of the wooded swamps are vegetated with broad-leaved deciduous trees, including red maples, gum, oak, holly, mountain laurel and others. Small wooded swamps dominated by coniferous vegetation are also found in the Town.

The scrub/shrub swamp, also known as a shrub wetland, is the second most common inland wetland type found in the Town. Though not as common as the wooded swamp, the scrub/shrub swamp is found in most areas of the Town, with the largest swamp located west of West Main Road south of the Meetinghouse Road intersection. These swamps are characterized by a dominance of shrubs or tree saplings less than 20 feet tall, broad-leaved shrubs and other low growing plants including buttombush, sweetgale, pussy willow, blueberry, swamp azalea, winterberries and others.

Wetlands provide several important functions, as follows:

Environmental Quality - water quality maintenance: pollution filter, sediment removal, oxygen production, nutrient recycling, chemical and nutrient absorption, aquatic productivity;

Socio-Economic Values - flood control, wave damage protection, shoreline erosion control, groundwater recharge, water supply, timber and other natural products, energy source (peat), livestock grazing, fish and shellfishing, hunting and trapping, recreation, aesthetics, education and scientific research;

Ecological Values - fish and shellfish habitat, waterfowl and other bird habitat, mammal and other wildlife habitat.

Wetlands are critical as wildlife and waterfowl habitat. Areas surrounding wetlands provide the seclusion waterfowl need to rest and carry out their activities without predation and disturbance. Geese and black ducks all regularly nest in the coastal wetland areas of the Town. Shorebirds, herons and egrets feed in the Town's marshes. Many mammals and other wildlife inhabit wetlands, including muskrats, river otter, mink, beaver, raccoon, skunk, red fox, fisher, and weasel. Reptiles and amphibians, such as turtles, snakes, toads and frogs also make their homes in wetlands.

The type of wetland and its diversity plays an important role in determining its habitat value. Wetlands which provide habitat to rare, threatened or endangered species should be given priority consideration for protection.

Buffering wetlands from areas of human activity will help to remove additional pollutants before they reach the wetland. Maintaining strict regulatory standards for wetland setbacks from dwellings and septic systems are critical to safeguarding both surface water resources and groundwater. Recent

State legislation provides for a unified wetlands setback statewide. The Town is one of six Rhode Island communities that are at risk of having reduced setbacks and buffers due to this legislation. Although specific regulations are still in development by RIDEM, the Town is concerned that this legislation and resulting standards may not adequately protect significant and fragile ecosystems. The new regulations will include a procedure for municipalities to petition to increase the jurisdictional areas for environmentally sensitive areas, something that the Town should consider.

PRIME AGRICULTURAL SOILS

Approximately 50 percent of the Town is comprised of prime agricultural soils. Impacts of development on prime agricultural soils include loss of water purification capability, loss of visual and scenic qualities, loss of open field and field edge type habitat, economic impacts in terms of the loss of active agricultural businesses, and others. The Town's Agricultural Conservancy Trust, The Nature Conservancy and the Sakonnet Preservation Association have been actively pursuing the preservation of farm and open space property throughout the Town. The Trust utilizes outright purchase or acquisition of development rights as their primary preservation techniques. It also may receive land donations.

Entering the Town from West Main Road, there are large tracts of land which are actively farmed or have recently become idle farmland. This area, stretching along the western side of the Town, has the most productive agricultural soils in the community. For the most part, they are more fertile and less stony than the soils underlying the eastern part of the Town. A variety of economic factors caused a decline in farming and a conversion of farms to other uses or simply a reversion to woodlands. Farms on better soils have tended to remain active while those on poorer soils have not, exemplified by the ongoing operation of the West Main Road farms.

FORESTS AND WILDLIFE

The vegetation and wildlife populations of the Town's uplands reflect the past use of the land which was determined, to a great extent, by the underlying soils. The east side of the Town is mostly woodland. Much of this area was farmland at one time but, having poorer soils, these farms were abandoned. Some of the soils in this section of Town were so poorly suited for crops that they were never farmed, serving instead as woodlots. The types of woodland communities developing along the eastern side of the Town depend on the topography. Hardwood forest types, and the wildlife populations associated with them, are found on higher ground. Stands of *Nyssa sylvatica* (commonly called black gum or tupelo) are found in low areas with wet soil types and wooded swamps are dominated by red maple stands. The woodlands provide suitable habitat for deer, grouse, woodcock, great horned owls, grey and red fox, raccoons, screech owls, woodpeckers, and numerous species of song birds.

Although much of active farmland is devoted to crops and does not have large areas of natural vegetation, farms do support a variety of wildlife. Stonewalls dividing fields are often lined with native trees and shrubs, becoming narrow ribbons of woodland crisscrossing the agricultural land. These

field borders, and upland areas associated with them, support wildlife including pheasants, quail, redtail hawks, sparrow hawks, doves, and woodcock. In addition to avian species, these areas are also inhabited by a number of mammals which typically exist in Rhode Island, i.e., fox, rabbit, skunk, woodchuck, deer, etc. The topography of the farms is not uniform and many have wet lowlands that are unsuitable for agriculture. Such wetlands and the land immediately surrounding them provide another valuable type of wildlife habitat. Animals utilizing these habitats include wood ducks, black ducks, mallards, snipe, rails, egrets, ibis, herons, kingfishers, marsh hawks, muskrats, mink and otter.

The West Main Road farms not only provide wildlife habitat but also afford spectacular views of the Sakonnet River by virtue of their tree-less terrain. If these farms become idle, natural plant succession would occur in the fields, or these areas may be developed. Eventually tall trees or structures may interrupt the views of the river and eliminate the feeling of openness now experienced when traveling West Main Road. These farms are an important part of the Town's character, and have been identified by RIDEM as deserving high priority for preservation. The LCACT is aggressively attempting to preserve this unique facet of the community and other farms throughout the Town. Similar woodlands can be seen in the central part of Town, in the vicinity of Swamp Road. The Sakonnet Preservation Association has acquired and permanently preserved numerous woodlands throughout the Town ensuring that they will always remain wildlife habitat.

Critical to the continuance of common wildlife species in the Town is preservation of habitat diversity. Wildlife diversity depends upon habitat for food and cover, water sources and specific climatic, topographic and geographic conditions. Overall, the Town should try to maintain the balance of vegetation cover types in the community, i.e., forest, wetland, open field etc. In planning for future open space protection actions, consideration should be given to preserving large undisturbed areas and connecting future acquisitions with existing protected areas.

See *Natural Resources: Land Map* located in Chapter 11 which displays the location of forests and wetlands in the Town.

SPECIES INVENTORIES

Preserving biological diversity through the protection and management of state and federal-listed rare species habitat areas and ecologically significant natural communities is an important objective of the Comprehensive Plan. The 16th annual Rhode Island BioBlitz was held in the Town on Friday, June 12 and Saturday, June 13, 2015. The event took place at Dundry Brook Preserve, Marvel Preserve, and Goosewing Beach. During this 24-hour period, 215 volunteer naturalists documented 1,204 species of animals and plants.

Through the BioBlitz, a picture emerges of Little Compton as a place that is somewhat homogenous at a large scale but has great diversity at a fine scale. Though only two taxa exceeded the previous BioBlitz records, many taxa were very well

represented and exceeded the BioBlitz average. One way to understand this is by reflecting on Little Compton's long and continuing agricultural history. Agriculture, at least at the relatively small, pre-industrial scale, creates a diversity of micro-habitats such as bare soil, wet meadows, woodlots and hedgerows, walls, farm ponds, barns, and other structures. Though commercial agriculture is not as widespread in Little Compton now as it was in the past, land management practices with aesthetic goals, such as horse stables, hobby farming, and aesthetic mowing continue to sustain many of the same types of habitat patchiness and similarly foster species diversity.

LITTLE COMPTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

According to RIGL § 45-35-1, a local Conservation Commission can be created by a Town Council:

“to promote and develop the natural resources, protect the watershed resources, and preserve natural esthetic areas within municipalities. The commission shall conduct researches into its local land areas and seek to coordinate the activities of unofficial bodies organized for similar purposes, and may advertise, prepare, print, and distribute books, maps, charts, plans, and pamphlets which in its judgment it deems necessary for its work. It shall make and keep an index of all open spaces within the city or town, publicly or privately owned, including open marshlands, swamps, and other wetlands for the purpose of obtaining information on the proper use of those areas. It may recommend to municipal councils, boards, or agencies, a program for the better promotion, development, utilization, or preservation of open areas, streams, shores, wooded areas, roadsides, swamps, marshlands, and natural esthetic areas.”

The Conservation Commission should proactively address a wide range of natural resource protection and conservation issues. The Conservation Commission should also work collaboratively and foster regular dialogue between other partner conservation organizations that work in the Town including, but not limited to:

- [The LCACT](#)
- [Sakonnet Preservation Association](#)
- [The Nature Conservancy](#)
- [Audubon Society](#)

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS & RESOURCES

2015 BIOBLITZ

RHODE ISLAND WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN, PREPARED BY TERWILLIGER CONSULTING INC. FOR THE RHODE ISLAND CHAPTER OF THE NATURE CONSERVANCY FOR THE RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT, 2015. *(SEE CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITY AREAS AND ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES CLASSIFICATION MAPS INCLUDED IN CHAPTER 11)*

WATER QUALITY 2035, RHODE ISLAND WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN, STATE GUIDE PLAN ELEMENT, REPORT #121, OCTOBER 13, 2016.

2. RECREATION, CONSERVATION & OPEN SPACE

THE PLAN MUST BE BASED ON AN INVENTORY OF OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL RESOURCES, OPEN SPACE AREAS, AND RECORDED ACCESS TO THESE RESOURCES AND AREAS. THE PLAN MUST CONTAIN AN ANALYSIS OF FORECASTED NEEDS, POLICIES FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION OF THESE RESOURCES AND AREAS, AND IDENTIFICATION OF AREAS FOR POTENTIAL EXPANSION. THE PLAN MUST INCLUDE GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES FOR THE PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING RESOURCES AND ACQUISITION OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES IF APPROPRIATE.

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL §45-22.2-6(b)(4)



RECREATION, CONSERVATION & OPEN SPACE - GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS

GOAL R1: OFFER A WELL-MAINTAINED NETWORK OF OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL AREAS AND CONSERVED LANDS THAT MEETS THE DIVERSE NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF RESIDENTS

Policy R1.A. (E2.C.) Support the efforts of the LCACT to preserve farmland and open space

Policy RC1.B. Prioritize the conservation of lands abutting conserved lands to create large protected greenways, habitat areas and opportunities for expanded recreational trails

Policy RC1.C. Promote public access to the Town's recreational facilities, conserved lands, and shoreline

Policy RC1.D. Ensure proper management of conservation land like the beach, Wilbour Woods and Town Landing, owned by the Town

Policy RC1.E. Protect from development sensitive coastal habitat and barrier beaches

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action RC1.a. Maintain a detailed conserved lands inventory that includes which properties are available for public access	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Middletown RCOS Inventory
Action RC1.b. Acquire property to increase public access to the harbor	Town Council	Long-term	
Action RC1.c. Maintain pedestrian trails including right-of-ways to the shore so that they remain passable	Public Works; Harbor Commission; Beach Commission	Ongoing	CRMC Public Access Guide to RI Coast
			ArcGIS interactive map of CRMCs ROWs
Action RC1.d. Create and disseminate a blueways map and guide to promote paddling	Harbor Commission; Beach Commission; Recreation Committee	Medium-term	Explore RI Water Trails

Action RC1.e. Develop and implement a fiscally feasible Recreation Master Plan that serves the long-term needs of residents	Planning Board; Recreation Committee; Town Administrator	Medium-term	<u>Complete Communities - Steps to Complete a Parks & Recreation Master Plan</u>
Action RC1.f. Determine if need exists for additional efforts related to the prevention, control and clean-up of litter, and support Earth Day and coastal cleanup efforts	Town Council; Conservation Commission	Medium-term	<u>Keep America Beautiful</u>
Action RC1.g. Consider establishing an "adopt-a-spot" program to encourage ongoing engagement in addition to annual scheduled cleanups	Public Works; Conservation Commission	Medium-term	<u>Keep Carbondale Beautiful Adopt-a-Spot</u>
Action RC1.h. Establish an annual maintenance and operations program for park and open space properties owned by the Town, such as Town Way, Town Landing, Taylors Lane, Harbor, Recreation Fields, Basketball court, tennis courts, etc.	Town Administrator; Public Works	Short-term	
Action RC1.i. Identify and prioritize conservation of undeveloped lands consisting of significant coastal habitat	Conservation Commission	Short-term	
<i>Timeframes: Short-term (0-2 years); Medium-term (3-6 years); Long-term (7-10 years)</i>			

INTRODUCTION

Acknowledging that recreation is vital to the health and wellbeing of Town's residents, it is a goal of the Town to offer a well-maintained network of outdoor recreational areas and conserved lands that meets the diverse needs and interests of residents. The following Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Element provides an inventory of recreational assets and presents a plan to enhance recreational offerings of the Town and expand the open space network for current and future generations to enjoy.

INVENTORY OF EXISTING RECREATIONAL ASSETS

This element focuses on publicly owned and/or publicly accessible recreational facilities and open spaces. See Table R1 for an inventory and the following summary of existing recreational assets and publicly accessible open space areas within the Town. The most heavily used recreational and open space areas by residents are Wilbur Woods, Town Beach, Town Landing, The Ponderosa, Town Playground, tennis courts and the basketball court.

Table R1: Inventory of Recreational Properties in Little Compton						
Name	Type	Location	Ownership	Acres	Uses and Activities	Protected
Recreation Complex	Active	Meeting House Lane	Town	10.8	soccer field, tennis courts, basketball court, walking trail	No
Veterans' Field and surroundings	Active	Meeting House Lane	Town	10.6	town open space, community gatherings, fairs, parking for baseball and tennis	Yes
Wheeler Memorial Common	Active	Adamsville	Town	1.5	Little League Field	Yes
Wilbour School Playfield	Active	Commons	Town	5.5	Little League Field; Tennis/Basketball Court -partially lighted; 2 Tennis Courts - not lighted	No
Wilbour School Playground	Active	Commons	Town	0.25	playlot	No
Wilbour School Playlot	Active	Commons	Town	0.25	playground	No
East and West Islands	Conservation	Off Sakonnet Point	SPA	9.6	Access by private vessel only; scenic islands; closed for nesting birds during summer	Yes
Haffenreffer Wildlife Refuge	Conservation	Sakonnet Point Rd.	State	11.9	access discouraged/limited	Yes
Marvell	Conservation	South Shore Rd	LCACT	3.1		Yes
Marvell Tract II	Conservation	South Shore Rd	LCACT	2.3		Yes
Nature Conservancy	Conservation	West shore of Quicksand Pond	TNC	8	open space, habitat and watershed protection	Yes
Simmons Mill Management Area	Conservation	Colebrook & John Dyer	State	353	hunting, hiking, fishing	Yes
Simmons Mill Pond	Conservation	Colebrook Rd	TNC	29		Yes
The Ponderosa	Conservation	Meeting House Lane	SPA	3.3	habitat, pond, ice skating, benches	Yes
Wilbour Woods / Crandon Tract	Conservation	Swamp Rd	Town	81	picnic areas, trails	Yes
Pike's Peak	Passive	Commons	Town	0.67	New England Town Green, town open space for gatherings, rallies, fund-raising, etc.	Yes
Scouts Camping Area	Passive	Long Highway	Public	16.5	owned by Little Compton Scouts; plans to add sanitary facilities	No
Breakwater	Water	Sakonnet Harbor	Federal	0.67	used by public for fishing	N/A
Goosewing Beach/Dunes/Marsh	Water	Town Beach to State Line	Town, Dev-Rights (LCACT)	75	lifeguards, nesting area, habitat	Yes
Harbor Beach (excluding ramps)	Water	Sakonnet Point Road	Town	1.4	small protected beach, preserves view of harbor	Yes
Lloyd's Beach	Water	Sakonnet Point	Private	1.5	Perpetual Easement; Restricted to Town Residents	No
Sakonnet Harbor Boat Ramps	Water	Sakonnet Point Road	State	0.18	two concrete boat launches; parking for vehicles with boat trailers	N/A
Sakonnet Yatch Club	Water	Sakonnet Point Road	Private	1.7	Docks and Buildings, 50 moorings, 40 parking spaces, membership only	Yes
Taylor's Lane	Water	End of Taylor's Lane	Town	N/A	public access to water; picnic, fishing, surfing, etc	Yes
Town Beach & Facility	Water	South Shore Road	Town	5.2	free to residents, fee for non-residents; heavy usage; parking for 200 cars, lifeguards, restrooms	Yes
Town Dock	Water	Sakonnet Point	Town	0.74		N/A
Town Landing	Water	End of Grange Ave	Town	4.7	town residents; picknicking, fishing, surfing	Yes
Town Way	Water	End of Town Way	Town	N/A	public access to water; used for fishing, bathing; beachcombing	Yes

WATER-BASED RECREATION

With miles of beaches and a harbor, water-based recreational opportunities are arguably the most significant recreational resources in the Town.

BEACHES

The Town is fortunate to have extensive beach areas and rights-of-ways that provide access to the coast. In the Town, the Town's public and private beaches meet the recreational needs of the community for a large park. There are over 43 acres of combined public and private beaches in the Town.

The three types of beach facilities in the Town are differentiated by their accessibility to the public. These include beaches that are open to the general public, beaches that are open only to Town residents, and beaches that are open to dues paying members. The Town Beach (South Shore Beach) is owned by the Town and is open to the general public. Lloyd's Beach is privately owned and is restricted to Town residents. Briggs' Beach and Warren's Point Beach are private beach clubs that are open only to their respective members.

SOUTH SHORE BEACH

Located at the end of South Shore Road, South Shore Beach is a long, sandy beach on the Atlantic Ocean, with a large dirt parking lot, portable toilets, and lifeguards. There is a parking fee for nonresidents during the summer; weekly, overnight and seasonal passes are available. There is a beautiful view of the Atlantic with Cuttyhunk and the Elizabeth Islands in the distance, a picturesque salt pond (Tunipus Pond), and a farm located behind the parking lot. One can walk east along the beach across a shallow tidal creek to Goosewing Beach, a wildlife refuge, owned by The Nature Conservancy. Parking for fishing is available in the evening and off-season. As a popular public beach it can become very crowded during the peak summer season and the parking lot is often at capacity.

GOOSEWING BEACH

Located adjacent to South Shore Beach is Goosewing Beach Preserve, a very scenic system of pristine coastal pond, beach and dune environments. An environmental education center was opened in June of 2010 and provides visitors with stunning views of the preserve. The Benjamin Family Environmental Center offers seasonal nature walks, rotating educational exhibits and other special events and encourages beach goers to become better stewards of their environment.

During the summer months, the Town manages the recreational use of the beach through an agreement with The Nature Conservancy. Access to the preserve is through South Shore Beach.

The Nature Conservancy purchased the 75 acre preserve in 1989 for the main purpose of protecting endangered shorebirds. It is one of only five

breeding sites in Rhode Island for the globally rare piping plover. In addition, this area provides excellent breeding habitat for the least tern, which is state threatened species.

The beaches, particularly those that are open to the general public, are heavily used by the Town's increasing summer population and day trippers from other Rhode Island and Massachusetts communities. Based on observations by residents and parking lot use, the beaches are used to capacity during the summer season. There is a need to preserve existing beaches for continued beach use.

SHORELINE ACCESS POINTS

In addition to the Town's beaches, public access to the coast also include the following three designated CRMC Right-of-Ways to the shore.

TOWN WAY

At the western end of Town Way, off West Main Road and Old Main Road, there is room for about ten cars to park and a short path down to a cobble beach on the Sakonnet River. At low tide, it is possible to walk along the cobble beach to the mouth of Almy's Creek, and from there, partway into Donovan's Marsh, a well-preserved tidal creek and unditched salt marsh. From the beach, there is a nice view of the Sakonnet River and Sachuest Point. A sign is posted indicating that this is not a public swimming beach and there are no lifeguards. Primary use is path to the shore.

TAYLOR'S LANE

Located at the end of Taylor's Lane, off West Main Road, is another public path to the shore. Parking is available for about ten cars and a dirt path about ten yards long leading down to a small sand and cobble beach on the Church Bay portion of the Sakonnet River. It is possible to walk out to Church Point by scrambling along boulders at the tide line. There is a nice view of the mouth of the Sakonnet River, Sachuest Point, and the Atlantic Ocean.

SAKONNET HARBOR FISHING ACCESS

Located off Sakonnet Point Road at the southern end of Route 77, this site has two cement plank ramps across a beach into Sakonnet Harbor and a sheltered basin with access to the Sakonnet River and the Atlantic Ocean. There is a parking area for boat trailers across the road and a nice view of the Haffenreffer Wildlife Refuge. Parking is limited to 48 hours. Primary use is boating.

Due to its coastal location and Sakonnet Harbor, boating and fishing are recreational opportunities for residents and the Town's visitors. In addition, the breakwater that forms the entrance to Sakonnet Harbor is popular for walking and enjoying scenic vistas.

PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS

The single playlot and playground in the Town is located at the Wilbur School. These facilities are located in the center of Town, within the Commons. The playlot was constructed in 1988 with the help of volunteers. Given that the Town is a rural community with a two acre minimum lot size, playlots and playgrounds scattered throughout the Town are not as critical to serve the recreational needs as they might be in densely settled urban areas. The existing playlot and playground appear to adequately serve the Town's needs, however public use may be impacted when school is in session.

BALLFIELDS & COURTS

The new Recreational Complex on Meeting House Lane near The Common includes a basketball court, soccer field, two tennis courts and a figure-eight walking trail. Similar to the Wilbur School playground, school use of recreational facilities takes precedence during the school year. The ballfields needs have been met with this additional sports complex.

CONSERVED LANDS AND TRAILS

Open space within the Town includes an abundance of diverse natural areas which offer recreational opportunities while preserving agricultural lands, wildlife habitat, and water quality. Some open space in the Town that is conserved by easement is privately owned or held for agricultural or conservation purposes and therefore may limit or exclude public access. However, there are numerous opportunities for residents and visitors to take advantage of the Town's open space resources for a variety of passive activities, such as walking, hiking, equestrian riding, enjoying scenic vistas and observing wildlife.

TRAILS

BUMBLEBEE PRESERVE

Dundery Brook Trail is located within the 118-acre Bumblebee Preserve owned by The Nature Conservancy. It is a 1.1 mile (2.2 miles out and back) trail. The first 0.6 miles of the trail consist of an elevated boardwalk which is handicap accessible. The Nature Conservancy recently completed a new trailhead on West Main Road and a connecting trail to the Dundery Brook Trail. See Trail Map located in Chapter 11.

SIMMONS MILL POND MANAGEMENT AREA

Simmons Mill Pond Management Area covers approximately 400 acres. The land is dominated by forest cover comprised of deciduous trees consisting of oaks, red maples and American beech. Freshwater wetlands are also abundant throughout the site. Miles of well-marked trails take visitors through the area's grass covered cart paths, historical landmarks, many ponds and hollow wood bird shelters. See Trail Map located in Chapter 11.

WILBOUR WOODS

Trails located within heavily wooded area of the Town. Loop road follows the shore of Dundery Brook.

MARVELL PRESERVE

Nearby Goosewing Beach, a few paths meander through the Marvell property. A variety of species of birds can be spotted and visitors can view the ocean from the lookout tower.

CONSERVED LANDS

The Town has made substantial efforts in the conservation of open space and agricultural land. This is largely due to legislation enacted in 1985 which allowed the Town to create a Trust (LCACT) to preserve agricultural property, open space and other undeveloped natural areas in an effort to preserve the "open rural character" of the Town. To this end, the Trust may employ two preservation strategies: acquisition of development rights and fee simple acquisition of appropriate parcels. LCACT is financed through a transfer tax assessment of 4% of the purchase price of real property in excess of \$300,000 in the Town. See *Conserved Lands* map located in Chapter 11 for a depiction of conserved properties in the Town by ownership.

Efforts to expand the Town's inventory of conserved land and protect critically important lands should continue by the Town and its partners. Priorities for the acquisition of conservation lands are identified below:

- **Protect freshwater resources / quality drinking water**
- **Protect scenic viewsheds and landscapes**
- **Wetlands which provide habitat to rare, threatened or endangered species**
- **Farmlands with prime or important soils**
- **Abut existing conservation lands / promote large greenways**
- **Provide opportunity to extend existing trail network**
- **Provide public access to the shore**
- **Opportunity for salt marsh migration**

EXISTING AND FUTURE RECREATIONAL NEEDS

Given the recent significant investment and expansion to recreational facilities in the Town with the Recreational Complex on Meeting House Lane, it is anticipated that the Town's recreation facilities will meet the current and anticipated future needs of residents. However, the Town should continue to periodically reevaluate the needs of the community in the future as the needs of the population may evolve. For example, given the growing aging population, the demand for recreational programs for seniors may increase in the future. When evaluating needs, consideration must be made for the costs to the community associated with ongoing maintenance of any additional recreational facilities.

In providing for recreation, the Town's first priority must be to ensure safe and clean facilities through proper management and maintenance. The Town must also encourage stewardship of the lands already set aside for conservation. The Town should establish an annual maintenance and operations program for parks and open space properties owned by the Town, such as the Town Way, Town Landing, Taylor's Lane, the Harbor, and ballfields and courts. The Town should identify strategies for the control of litter and work with partners and volunteers to assist the Town in cleanups and beautification efforts to remain a scenic community.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS & RESOURCES

OCEAN STATE OUTDOORS: RHODE ISLAND'S COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN. STATE GUIDE PLAN ELEMENT 152, ADOPTED 2003, AMENDED 2009, RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION DIVISION OF PLANNING AND RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT.

ALLARD COX, M (ED). 2004. PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE RHODE ISLAND COAST. RHODE ISLAND SEA GRANT. NARRAGANSETT, RI

3. CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

THE PLAN MUST BE BASED ON AN INVENTORY OF SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES SUCH AS HISTORICAL BUILDINGS, SITES, LANDMARKS, AND SCENIC VIEWS. THE PLAN MUST INCLUDE GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THESE RESOURCES.

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL § 45-22.2-6(b)(5)



HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES - GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS			
GOAL HC1. MAINTAIN AND PROTECT THE RURAL CHARACTER, VISUAL AESTHETICS AND HERITAGE OF THE TOWN			
Policy HC1.A. Conserve agricultural lands and the traditional working landscape			
Policy HC1.B. Further the protection of stonewalls, buildings and other historic features			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action HC1.a. Maintain a prioritized list of agricultural lands at risk of development and proactively approach land owners to discuss conservation options	LCACT, Conservation Commission	Ongoing	
Action HC1.b. Explore mechanisms to encourage the long-term protection of historic stonewalls including tax exemptions and easements	Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Town Council	Medium-term	Smithfield Stonewall Ordinance
			State Stonewall Exemption
GOAL HC2. PRESERVE BUILDINGS AND SITES OF HISTORIC AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE ALONG WITH THE HISTORIC AND DOCUMENTARY RECORD OF THE COMMUNITY			
Policy HC2.A. Collaborate with and support the efforts of the Little Compton Historical Society and other organizations that further historic preservation in the Town			
Policy HC2.B. Promote the use of historic preservation easements and other voluntary measures to preserve sites of historic interest on private property			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action HC2.a. Establish a committee that will: maintain a list of historic and cultural assets in Town, work with RIHPHC to develop a list of properties within the Town that are potentially eligible for listing on the National Register, and encourage property owners to nominate qualified properties to the National Register	Town Council	Medium-term	
Action HC2.b. Provide information on programs available to property owners who seek to voluntarily protect historic sites	Town Council	Ongoing	Preserve RI Historic Preservation Easement

Action HC2.c. Explore the establishment of a voluntary Historic District and financial and other incentives to encourage property owners to opt-in.	Planning Board	Short-term	Warren Voluntary Historic District Committee Narragansett Historic District Commission and Guidelines
GOAL HC3. PROTECT THE PEACE AND QUIET ENJOYED BY RESIDENTS AND THE NIGHT SKY FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS			
Policy HC3.A. Using a combination of public education and regulatory measures, address residents' concerns over excessive noise and light pollution			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action HC3.a. Enact a lighting ordinance that addresses artificial light at night to limit night sky pollution and glare and promote energy conservation	Town Council; Planning Board	Short-term	International Dark Sky Association
Action HC3.b. Review and revise existing noise ordinance to reduce or eliminate, where possible, excessive noise and related adverse conditions in the community	Town Council; Planning Board	Short-term	
Action HC3.c. Initiate a public awareness campaign regarding preservation of dark skies	Planning Board	Short-term	Huntsville Outdoor Lighting By-law
Timeframes: Short-term (0-2 years); Medium-term (3-6 years); Long-term (7-10 years)			

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Cultural and Historic Resources element is to inventory local historic and cultural resources, describe why they are significant, and to identify actions the Town can undertake for the protection and enhancement of those resources. The multitude of historic and cultural resources within the Town provide residents and visitors the opportunity to learn about their heritage and the history of the Town. It is a priority of the Town to protect its historic sites and landscapes and to sustain the unique and rural character of the Town.

The Town's historical heritage continues to influence the present character of the community. The cultural integrity of the Town has been preserved partly because of its remote location, removed from the secondary development pressures often created by new transportation corridors, railways and the like. Its character in Rhode Island is unique. Stonewalled farms, traditional houses, a historic village common, beautiful summer homes, set within outstanding natural landscapes brings the Town its status as a special coastal New England community.

EXISTING HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The report entitled the *Historic and Architectural Resources of Little Compton, Rhode Island* published in 1990 by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission (RIHPC) provides a comprehensive summary and inventory of the Town's historical and architectural resources. It includes a selective list of approximately 280 sites, structures, objects, buildings and districts considered important to an understanding of the Town's past and sense of place.

The *Historic and Architectural Resources of Little Compton, Rhode Island* report notes:

Few towns in New England can tell so well the story that Little Compton does. Architecturally, the town is home to notable seventeenth and eighteenth century structures, modest yet important civic buildings, nineteenth century farm complexes, and exceptionally well-done country houses of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Historically, it documents many phases of New England's rural, agricultural and recreational past that have long since disappeared elsewhere. Above all, its historical legacy, a pre-eminent part of the town's collective consciousness, and its natural setting remain mutually balanced and enhanced.

THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

The National Register of Historic Places is the official federal list of significant historic properties worthy of preservation. Benefits of being on the National Register include official recognition of the property's importance; eligibility to apply for federal planning and restoration grants when funds are available; eligibility for federal investment tax credits for certified substantial rehabilitations of income-producing properties; and protection from the adverse effects of state or federally funded or licensed projects through a review and assessment program. Listing on the Register does not require the owner to preserve or maintain the property. Unless the owner applies for and receives special federal or state benefits, she/he can do anything with the property which is permitted by local ordinances.

There are six National Register historic sites within the Town, as well as, one National Register historic district. These properties are highlighted below and are included in the *Cultural and Historic Resources* Map in Chapter 11. However, there are a number of additional properties and districts in the community which may have the qualities necessary for inclusion on the National Register.

THE RHODE ISLAND RED (*Adamsville Road*) is a sculpture commemorating Rhode Island's state bird, the Rhode Island Red. The Rhode Island Red Club of America, a chicken breeder organization founded in 1898 raised the funds for a monument in Adamsville because the Rhode Island Red was first bred near the village in the 1850's. The sculpture was completed in 1925 by Henry Norton and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2001.

WILLIAM WHALLEY HOMESTEAD (*33 Burchard Avenue*) is a well-preserved example of a typical 19th century farmstead in the Town with a main house, barn and outbuilding bounded by a low stonewall. The main house is a 1 ½ story wooden structure built sometime between 1815 and 1830 that is a fairly typical Cape style house, five bays wide, with a central chimney.

SAKONNET LIGHT STATION (*Little Cormorant Rock*) is a sparkplug lighthouse built in 1884. It was deactivated in 1954 and was going to be destroyed but local citizens protested and Carl and Carolyn Haffenreffer purchased the lighthouse in 1961. The lighthouse was listed on the National Register in 1983 and the Friends of Sakonnet Lighthouse acquired the lighthouse in 1985. It was reactivated by the U.S. Coast Guard in 1997 and a \$1.45 million dollar restoration was completed in 2012.

THE STONE HOUSE INN (*122 Sakonnet Point Road*) was constructed in 1854 by David Sisson, an iron and textile manufacturer, and was also home to his son Henry Tillinghast Sisson, a Civil War hero and Lt. Governor of Rhode Island. It is a four-story ocean-front stone home that became an inn in the early 20th century. The old tap room is rumored to have been a speakeasy during prohibition. It was

added to the National Register in 2008 and today serves as a luxury resort.

FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE AND CEMETERY (234 West Main Road), constructed in 1815 with modifications in 1870, is a fine example of traditional New England Quaker architectural design. It exemplifies the distinctive architectural austerity of the meeting house building type and is part of a well-preserved rural setting. The Little Compton Historical Society (LCHS) purchased the property in 1946 and restored the building in the 1960's. It was added to the National Register in 2000. The Friends Cemetery is a significant example of an eighteenth and nineteenth century burial site exhibiting various kinds of headstones. Evolution of common Quaker burial practice is represented in this small cemetery.

WILBOR HOUSE (548 West Main Road), added to the National Register in 2007, currently serves as an historic house museum and the headquarters of the LCHS. The property includes eight buildings of historical significance including six which were part of the Wilbor farmstead, a complex used for farming between 1690, when the house was built, and 1955.

LITTLE COMPTON COMMON HISTORIC DISTRICT (encompassing the triangle formed by South Commons Road, Meeting House Lane and School House Lane) is an irregularly shaped lot bordered on all sides with commercial, religious, civic and residential buildings, forming the physical and spiritual center of the Town. The Commons reflects the Town's connections to Plymouth Colony and the settlement patterns of Massachusetts towns and is one of very few green commons in Rhode Island.

ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

NATIVE AMERICAN

The RIHPC has identified a number of archaeological sites in the Town. These include Indian burial sites as well as artifacts indicating pre-historic occupation. There are likely many more archaeological sites which have not been identified or documented. It appears that most of the Native American activity was along the coast where they gathered to fish and spend the summer.

CEMETERIES

The LCHS maintains information on local cemeteries. Where locations are known, cemeteries are depicted on the Town's Tax Maps. A listing of fifty cemeteries in the Town is currently available on the LCHS website through the following link:

<https://lchistorical.files.wordpress.com/2013/11/lc-cemeteries.pdf>.

STONE WALLS

The adaptation of the land to agriculture is manifested dramatically by the stone walls lining most of the roads of the Town. Not only do they bear silent witness to the labors of the early settlers, who moved tons of stone so casually deposited by the glaciers to make the land tillable, but they are also a vital contributor to the character of the Town. Well beloved by most residents and an outstanding attraction for visitors, they deserve to be preserved.

LANDSCAPES

The Town's landscape is truly one of the most beautiful and unique in Rhode Island. Its long agricultural history has shaped the landscape of the Town. Few communities match the coherence of architectural design of the Town and the cohesion between the natural and built environment.

The Rhode Island Landscape Inventory published by RIDEM in 1990 noted most of the Town as having distinctive or unique natural landscapes of high scenic quality. E.g., areas of outstanding topographic and geologic features, areas with a variety of natural or pastoral vegetation, lakes, ponds, rivers, and wetlands, which are pristine, untouched and unpolluted. Specifically noted were the "beautiful farms and homes" dotting the landscape. Such features contribute to the sense of place in the Town and its overall quality of life.

Little Compton presents an idyllic picture, complete with rolling topography, a quilt work pattern of stone-wall-bounded farms and woodland, complemented by marshes, saltwater ponds, barrier beaches, a rocky promontory at Sakonnet Point, old farm complexes, comfortable summer houses, winding roads, and tree-lined villages or Adamsville and the Commons. All these elements combine to produce a townscape, the most sublime in Rhode Island that projects the very image of a typical seaside New England town.

The RIHPHC in its *Historic Landscapes of Rhode Island* report, published in 2001, identified a number of properties and areas in the Town, which are considered outstanding from a landscape perspective. Said identified properties and areas are as follows:

- *The Commons*
- *Long Highway (Tunipus-Goosewing Farm)*
- *68 Maple Avenue (Lake-Pierce Farm)*
- *90A Old Main Road (Frederick G. Almy Farm)*
- *64 Pottersville Road (Hezekiah Wilbour Farm)*
- *79 Sakonnet Pont Road (Sakonnet Golf Club)*
- *100 Shaw Road (Briggs Farm)*
- *59 South of Commons Road (Isaac Bailey Richmond Farm)*
- *66 Swamp Road (Marshside – Dr. Franklin C. Southworth Residence)*
- *Swamp Road (Wilbour Woods)*
- *48 Washington Road (Seaconnet Point Farm – The Lloyd-Haffenreffer Residence)*
- *120 West Main Road (Woodman-Chase Rego Farm)*
- *228 West Main Road (John Hunt Farm)*
- *241 West Main Road (J. Edward Newton Residence)*
- *316 West Main Road (Bumblebee Farm – Blanch B. Frenning Residence)*
- *411 West Main Road (Brownell Farm)*
- *561 West Main Road (William and Betty Alden Peabody Residence)*
- *147 Willow Avenue (Gray-Briggs-Bullock Farm)*

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Other cultural resources play an important role in defining the Town's identity, including artistic groups, places of worship, civic improvement and beautification groups, fraternal groups, social groups, and environmental organizations.

THE ARTISTIC COMMUNITY

The Town has been home to recognized professional artists of all kinds for over a century. Visual artists in particular have found The Town's sea and sky landscape a compelling and inspiring place in which to work. Since Thomas Worthington Whitridge, whose famous *A Breezy Day on Sakonnet Point* was painted in the 1880's, the list of celebrated painters and sculptors who have lived or spent summers in the Town include: Frederick and Reginald Marsh, Lloyd Goodrich, Molly Luce, Betty Burroughs Woodhouse, Sidney Burleigh, Audrey Buller Parsons, John Sloan, Sue Walker, Meredith Wildes Cornell, Dora Atwater, Johanne Mackenzie, Josie Richmond Arkins just to name a few. Local art groups today include the Sakonnet Art Association and the Sakonnet Painters Cooperative, which operates a small gallery on the Commons.

LITTLE COMPTON COMMUNITY CENTER

Housed in the historic Grange Building on the Town Common, and renovated through the labor and private funding secured by the Town's citizens, the mission of the Little Compton Community Center is to bring people from all corners of the community together. It fosters and supports a sense of belonging by providing programs, facilitating programs, and offering meeting space for local non-profits and community groups. A great variety of programs are offered at the community center including senior programs, after-school programs, teen programs, summer camps, theatre, a concert series and other special events.

LAND CONSERVATION GROUPS

Since 1972, with the founding of the Sakonnet Preservation Association, the first private non-profit community land trust in the state, there has been an ever increasing community acceptance and active engagement in using conservation as a tool for protecting the Town's historic and natural resources. Local acquisition efforts of the Sakonnet Preservation Association and the LCACT, combined with the acquisition efforts of The Nature Conservancy of RI, RI Department of Environmental Management, Audubon Society of RI, and the US Department of Agriculture has led to the permanent protection of over 25% of the Town's open space.

EXISTING RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS RELATED TO PROTECTING HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

The Little Compton Historical Society (LCHS) was founded in 1937 and adopted as its purpose, *"the preservation of landmarks and the identification of historical sites in the town of Little Compton, the encouragement of research into matters pertaining to the early and current history of the town, the assembling, acquisition and preservation of books, documents, paintings, photographs, agricultural equipment and other materials relating to Little Compton."* Since 1955, the LCHS has been housed in the historic Wilbor House Museum, where it maintains an archive of materials pertaining to the history of the Town and sponsors lectures and exhibits. Wilbor House Museum is open for visiting during the summer season. The Society also maintains a farm museum, a school house built in 1725 and the Friends Meeting House.

The Adamsville Historical Association was formed in 1989 to maintain the character of the Historic District. The Adamsville Historical Association applied for and received a grant from the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission to purchase and install colonial-type lampposts in the District, further recognizing the District's historical importance.

AG TRUST – LOCAL PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX

In 1986, recognizing the need to protect the Town's agricultural identity, scenic beauty, water quality and habitat, the Town voters established the LCACT. The LCACT preserves land and open space through purchasing land, purchasing development rights, or receiving donations of land or easements. The seed money for the purchase and protection of land comes from a property transfer tax, paid by the buyer in each land transaction. These funds become the basis on which grants from state, federal and private sources can be leveraged. This policy has been instrumental in successfully acquiring and conserving significant portions of open space land in Little Compton. As of 2016, the LCACT has preserved close to 2,000 acres of land.

As enacted by the RI General Assembly in 1985 and approved by the 1986 the Town's Financial Town Meeting: *There is hereby established a Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust (hereafter called Trust) for the primary purpose of acquiring development rights to agricultural property within the town. The Trust shall have as a secondary purpose the acquisition of agricultural property, and/or property, or interest therein, to preserve open spaces, fresh and saltwater marshes, estuaries and adjoining uplands, groundwater recharging areas, land providing access to the ocean, land for bicycle paths and land for future public recreational facilities and use.*

PRESERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM

A consistent priority of the residents of Little Compton is the Town's preservation of its "rural character". Local land conservation efforts by the Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust and the Sakonnet Preservation Association in partnership with the state wide efforts of The Nature Conservancy of Rhode Island, and other state and federal entities and organizations, will continue to be essential in maintaining the Town's rural character. It is the Town's belief that its conservation efforts should be holistic, and should concentrate on conserving not only the land but also the historic structures that contribute to its rural landscape and heritage. The Town uses historic preservation easements in conjunction with conservation easements to achieve its goals of land conservation and historic preservation.

A historic preservation easement is a legal agreement that ensures the historic and architectural qualities of a property will not be destroyed. Several regional non-profit organizations, including Preserve RI, offer historic easements programs to ensure that subsequent owners will follow the terms set forth as a means to protect historic properties and landscapes perpetually. Due to the current lack of local regulations regarding historic preservation, and possible lack of desire for voluntary historical protection, historic easements are an important tool to encourage and implement in the Town. Further, many historical structures of interest are located throughout the Town and, therefore, cannot be contained in one single historic district.

THREATS TO HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES

There is a relative lack of development in the Town, compared to other coastal communities, along with an exceptional landscape of historic and natural resources. Said qualities which make the Town a desirable place to live are potentially compromised by developmental pressures associated with the rise in demand of second/seasonal homes, corporations purchasing local businesses to profit from the Town's unique qualities and the approval of building a casino in the neighboring Town of Tiverton. Development must be balanced with the active protection of the Town's natural, historic and cultural resources in order to maintain its aesthetic and rural qualities of the Town.

RENOVATION AND DEMOLITION

Development which does not comply with the Town's traditional architecture, scale and character has negative impacts on the Town's historic sites and scenic landscapes. Historic structures aid in the preservation of the character of the town, and as such, their preservation should be encouraged. Changes in ownership may result in a lack of appreciation for the history and significance of a site. As a result, structural changes

occasionally violate the integrity of historic buildings, and in some cases complete demolition of historic buildings occur. Continuing educational and outreach programs should be part of the overall approach to our efforts to preserve the Town's architectural resources, unique aesthetic and rural character.

LACK OF LOCAL REGULATIONS

In the absence of local regulatory measures to protect them, the Town's cultural resources may be at risk. There is no Historic District Commission in the Town to regulate and/or review development proposals specifically in regard to historic resource protection and preservation. Current zoning and subdivision regulations do not provide specific measures for protection of historic or archaeological resources and/or landscapes. Land owners and developers are not required to consider architectural and landscape suitability, as well as historical and archaeological resources, when submitting building proposals. Without regulatory measures in place to protect the Town's historic and scenic landscapes, the Town has been and may continue to be negatively impacted by inappropriate development. The Town's ability to require developers to consider architectural and landscape suitability, as well as historical and archaeological resources, is limited. The Town needs to balance the desire for independent spirit and protection of property rights with the desire to protect the Town's cultural and historic resources. As a compromise to the competing goals of preservation and property rights, the Town should explore options for a voluntary historic district. Mixing financial incentives with voluntary participation can address concerns about over-regulation, while providing a mechanism for the preservation of historic sites. Local examples exist, such as in Warren, RI, where property owners may volunteer to join the historic district and receive a tax credit of up to twenty percent of the cost of an exterior renovation and a waiver of construction fees.

NATURAL HAZARDS AND SEA LEVEL RISE

Being a coastal community, some of the Town's historic and cultural resources are located in areas more susceptible to impacts from major weather related events and the projected sea level rise. See National Hazards and Climate Change Chapter for additional discussion.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS & RESOURCES

HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES OF LITTLE COMPTON, RHODE ISLAND, RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION, 1990.

HISTORIC LANDSCAPES OF RHODE ISLAND, RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION, 2001.

4. HOUSING

THE PLAN MUST INCLUDE THE IDENTIFICATION OF EXISTING HOUSING PATTERNS, AN ANALYSIS OF EXISTING AND FORECASTED HOUSING NEEDS, AND IDENTIFICATION OF AREAS SUITABLE FOR FUTURE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT OR REHABILITATION. THE PLAN SHALL INCLUDE AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM THAT MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS OF RIGL § 42-128-8.1, THE "COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING PRODUCTION AND REHABILITATION ACT OF 2004" AND RIGL CHAPTER 45-53, THE "RHODE ISLAND LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING ACT". THE PLAN MUST INCLUDE GOALS AND POLICIES THAT FURTHER THE GOAL OF RIGL § 45-22.2-3(C)(3) AND IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES THAT IDENTIFY SPECIFIC PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE THE PRESERVATION, PRODUCTION, AND REHABILITATION OF HOUSING.

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL § 45-22.2-6(b)(6)



HOUSING – GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS			
GOAL H1: MEET THE NEEDS OF THE TOWN’S RESIDENTS FOR ATTAINABLE HOUSING			
Policy H1.A Further understanding of local housing needs			
Policy H1.B. Encourage an increased diversity of housing stock including more year-round rental opportunities			
Policy H1.C. Support the development of senior housing and opportunities to age in place			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action H1.a. Conduct a survey in order to evaluate demand for senior housing and affordable housing	Little Compton Housing Trust	Medium-term	
Action H1.b. Continue to offer tax relief for income eligible seniors and disabled residents to allow them to age in place / maintain residency in the Town	Tax Assessor; Town Council	Ongoing	
GOAL H2: REACH THE STATE'S MINIMUM TEN PERCENT LOW-AND-MODERATE INCOME HOUSING REQUIREMENT			
Policy H2.A. Advocate for fair and effective affordable housing legislation at the state level			
Policy H2.B. Continue to offer fee waivers for the construction of low-and-moderate income housing			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action H2.a. In partnership with other municipalities, participate in review and update of current affordable housing legislation	Town Council	Short-term	
Action H2.b. Maintain an inventory of affordable housing in the Town beyond the units that currently meet the state's regulatory definition of Low-and-Moderate Income Housing (i.e. are not deed restricted)	Little Compton Housing Trust	Short-term	
Action H2.c. Implement a "capturing existing housing" program using repair grant funding, tax assessment subsidies and deed restrictions	Town Council	Medium-term	<u>Barrington - Capturing Existing Housing Presentation</u>

Action H2.d. Develop a municipal subsidies system that incentivizes property owners willing to deed-restrict accessory dwelling units and other types of housing units that the Town has identified as a local need	Planning Board; Town Council	Medium-term	<i>The RIGL amended in 2016 to allow owner-occupied SF residence the right to build accessory family dwelling unit for family member 62 years or older (previously just disabled)</i>
Action H2.e. Establish a Town affordable housing trust fund; explore funding mechanism options	Little Compton Housing Trust	Medium-term	<u>MA Municipal Affordable Housing Trusts Guidebook</u>
Action H2.f. Identify sources of funding for the development of affordable units including partnership with Rhode Island Housing and/or other State agencies	Little Compton Housing Trust	Ongoing	
GOAL H3: ENSURE THAT NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IS DESIGNED IN A WAY THAT MINIMIZES IMPACTS ON NATURAL, HISTORIC AND SCENIC RESOURCES			
Policy H3.A. Work with partners, to achieve affordable housing units that are both appropriately located and consistent with the rural and scenic character of the community			
Policy H3.B. Encourage scattered site affordable housing throughout the Town rather than a concentration of affordable housing units			
Policy H3.C. Promote residential energy efficiency programs to assist residents in lowering cost of housing			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action H3.a. Explore cooperative acquisitions that meet the dual goals of land conservation and affordable housing development	Little Compton Housing Trust; LCACT; Planning Board	Long-term	<u>Vermont Housing and Conservation Board - Examples of Dual Goal Projects</u>
Action H3.b. Allow mixed-use development in the business zone	Planning Board	Ongoing	
<i>Timeframes: Short-term (0-2 years); Medium-term (3-6 years); Long-term (7-10 years)</i>			

INTRODUCTION

Housing is a key element of the Comprehensive Plan as the availability and affordability of housing is a major factor in the livability of a community. The following housing element assesses the Town's existing housing stock particularly in terms of affordability, evaluates current and future housing needs, and identifies strategies to increase the supply of affordable housing. This housing element also serves as the Town's Affordable Housing Plan, as required by the Rhode Island Low and Moderate Income Housing Act, RIGL § 45-53.

It is a goal of the Town to support appropriate housing development while not detracting from the unique character and rural setting of the community. Residential development in the Town should be planned and designed in a way that complements the Town's rural heritage, preserves the Town's natural and scenic resources, and enhances the quality of life of residents. At the same time, a goal of the community is to allow multiple generations to call the Town home. In order to achieve this goal, the Town must create opportunities for different housing types and affordability levels. Housing types should include those designed for the local workforce and seniors.

Future housing developments supported and pursued in the Town should:

- *Sustain rural landscapes*
- *Be compatible with the aesthetic quality of the community*
- *Minimize negative environmental impacts including energy consumption*
- *Be in keeping with the Town's rural character*
- *Be appropriately scaled*
- *Be consistent with the overall low-density housing pattern*
- *Create diversity of housing types for various income levels*
- *Serve residents' needs for affordable and safe housing*
- *Allow multiple generations to call the Town home*

EXISTING HOUSING INVENTORY

HOUSING PATTERNS AND CONDITION

HOUSING TYPE

At the time of the 2010 Census, the Town had 2,367 housing units. The Town saw an increase of 264 dwellings from the 2000 Census. According to the 2011-2015 American Community Survey, the Town has an estimated 2,336 (+/- 147) housing units. Over 92% of these units are single-family detached units. Multi-family dwellings constitute just over 5% of the Town's housing stock.

*Single-family housing units: **2,052** or **92.6%** of total housing units*
*Multi-family housing units: **112** or **5.1%** of total housing units*
*Other types of housing units: **51** or **2.3%** of total housing units*

Single-family homes in the Town range from historic farmhouses and seasonal cottages to newly constructed homes on large lots. Some of the older homes in the Town originally built for seasonal use are now occupied on a year-round basis. Mobile Homes are located on individual lots throughout the Town. The number of mobile homes in the Town has seen a decline. According to ACS 2015, there are 52 mobile homes in the Town.

HOUSING DENSITY

There is one residential zoning district in the Town, referred to as Residence (R) District. The creation of new lots within the residential zoning district requires a minimum of two acres of land. However, there are many existing non-confirming lots, also referred to as "grandfathered lots", that are under two acres of land that can be developed. The historic villages of the Town have a greater density pattern and mixed-use character.

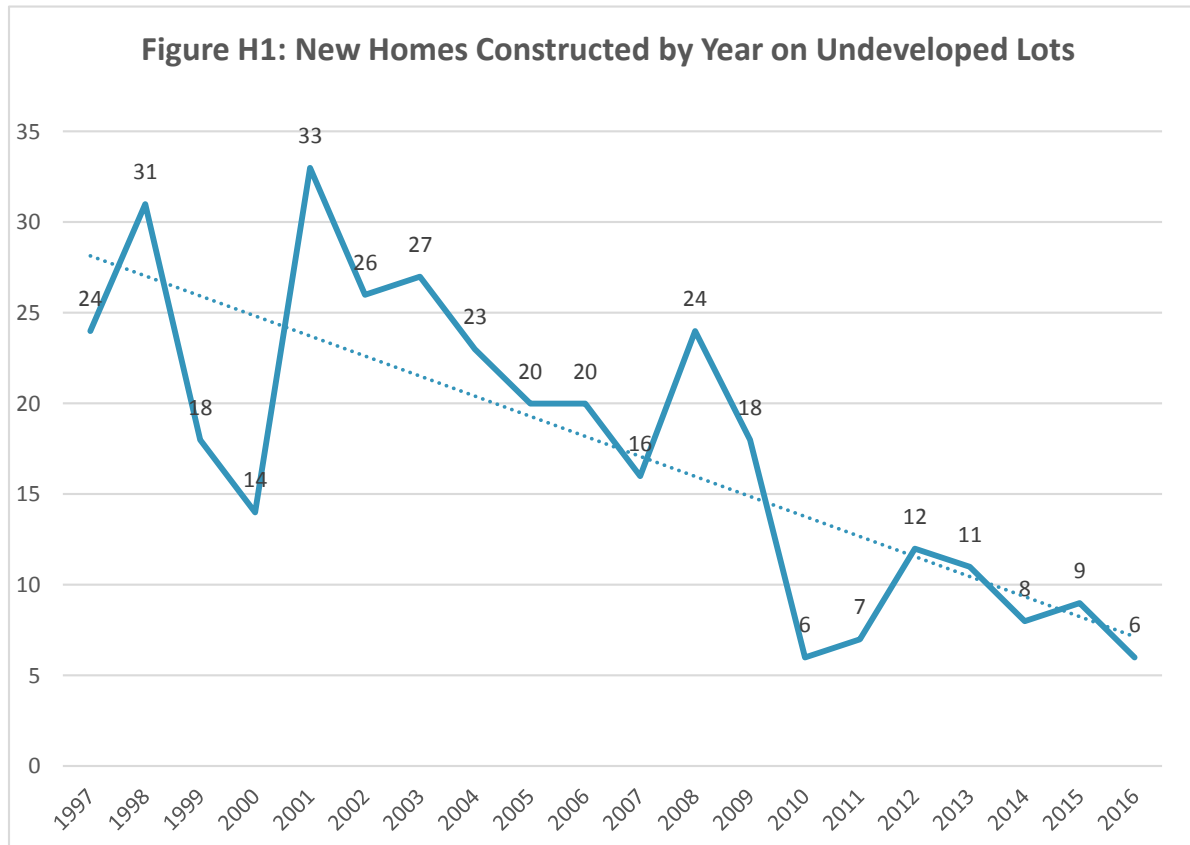
OVERALL HOUSING CONDITION

The overall condition of the housing stock in the Town is above average. Pride of ownership is evident throughout Town. Properties appear to be very well maintained throughout the Town, with very few exceptions. There are no specific areas in the Town where substandard or deteriorating housing conditions exist.

*The median age of the Town’s housing stock is currently 50 years
and the median age built is 1967.*

RECENT HOUSING DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Local building permit data establishes an average annual new home construction total of 18 units over the past 20 years. The chart below details the annual construction data and demonstrates a decreasing trend line. It should be noted that this data does not include permits for new homes that replace existing structures (tear downs and rebuilds).



SEASONAL HOUSING

One of the most significant components of the Town's housing stock is the seasonal and vacant housing units. Seasonal use of the Town's housing stock is estimated at over 30% and is an increasing percentage of the Town's housing stock.

CHANGE IN SEASONAL HOUSING UNITS

2000 28% (587 DWELLINGS)

2010 32% (752 DWELLINGS)

It should be noted, pursuant to RIGL § 45-53, and for the purposes of this Affordable Housing Plan, the permanent year-round housing units will be used to determine the need for additional low-and-moderate income housing units.

LOW AND MODERATE INCOME HOUSING

LOW OR MODERATE INCOME HOUSING IS DEFINED AS ANY HOUSING UNIT, WHETHER BUILT OR OPERATED BY ANY PUBLIC AGENCY, NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION, LIMITED EQUITY HOUSING COOPERATIVE OR ANY PRIVATE DEVELOPER, THAT IS SUBSIDIZED BY A FEDERAL, STATE, OR MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT SUBSIDY PROGRAM TO ASSIST IN THE CONSTRUCTION OR REHABILITATION OF HOUSING AFFORDABLE TO LOW OR MODERATE INCOME HOUSEHOLDS AS DEFINED IN THE APPLICABLE FEDERAL OR STATE STATUTE, OR LOCAL ORDINANCE. SAID HOUSEHOLDS WILL REMAIN AFFORDABLE THROUGH A LAND LEASE AND/OR DEED RESTRICTION FOR NINETY-NINE (99) YEARS OR SUCH OTHER PERIOD THAT IS EITHER AGREED TO BY THE APPLICANT AND TOWN OR PRESCRIBED BY THE FEDERAL, STATE, OR MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT SUBSIDY PROGRAM BUT THAT IS NOT LESS THAN THIRTY (30) YEARS FROM INITIAL OCCUPANCY.

THE LOW-AND-MODERATE INCOME HOUSING ACT

The Low-and-Moderate Income Housing Act (R.I.G.L. § 45-53-3) requires that all communities in Rhode Island achieve 10% affordable housing. Since the Town currently does not meet the 10% threshold, the Town could be faced with Comprehensive Permit applications, with little regard to the Town's specific needs for affordable housing or the Town's character.

According to the official 2016 Low-and-Moderate Income Housing Chart, the Town has a total of nine low-and-moderate income housing units which equates to a percentage of 0.6 of the Town's total year-round housing units (2010 Census – Seasonal (1,615)). All nine units are in the category of family and there currently are zero elderly or special needs low-and-moderate units in the Town.

There are an estimated 151 units needed to meet the 10% threshold (2013 ACS 1,511 year-round units). The deficit between the 10% threshold and the number of low-and-moderate income housing units that currently exists in the community is 142 units.

HOUSING NEEDS

The following data from the [2012 American Housing Survey \(AHS\)](#) estimates the number of households within the community that are housing cost-burdened.

**Number of cost-burdened households
(paying more than 30% of their income on housing):
490 or 33.1% of total households**

**Number of severely cost-burdened households
(paying more than 50% of their income on housing):
225 or 15.2% of total households**

**Number of LMI cost-burdened households:
305 or 79.2% of total LMI households**

**Number of LMI severely cost-burdened households:
200 or 51.9% of total LMI households**

**Number of LMI cost-burdened households that are renting:
85 or 27.9% of total LMI cost-burdened households**

**Number of LMI cost-burdened households that own their home:
220 or 72.1% of total LMI cost-burdened households**

WORKING WITH THE TOWN'S STATE LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION, THE TOWN SHOULD SEEK MODIFICATIONS TO THE STATE'S CURRENT LOW-AND-MODERATE INCOME HOUSING ACT, SUCH AS, EXPANDING THE DEFINITION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND OTHER AMENDMENTS THAT WOULD CREATE MORE FAIRNESS AND REASONABLENESS IN PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES IN ALL COMMUNITIES IN RHODE ISLAND.

HOUSING COSTS

Housing is considered affordable when a household spends 30% or less of its income on housing costs. The cost of housing in the Town is driven by those with the financial resources to afford second homes.

***THE AVERAGE YEAR-END MEDIAN SALES PRICE
FOR A SINGLE FAMILY HOME IN LITTLE COMPTON
FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS (2012-2016)
IS \$515,950.***

HOME SALES STATISTICS

On April 2017, an internet search, performed on www.riliving.com, showed 27 residential properties for sale in the Town. The least expensive listing for a single family home with three bedrooms or more was \$399,000. Twelve of the homes listed were above \$1,000,000. Vacant land accounted for an additional 13 listings ranging in cost from \$170,000 to \$1,295,000.

Table H1: Median Sales Price for a Single-Family Home in Little Compton	
<i>Year</i>	<i>Median Purchase Price</i>
2010	\$410,000
2011	\$507,500
2012	\$468,000
2013	\$550,000
2014	\$531,500
2015	\$539,000
2016	\$491,250
<i>Source: Rhode Island Association of Realtors (www.riliving.com)</i>	

HOUSING WORKS RI

As contained in the HousingWorks RI 2016 Housing Fact Book, the median home price of a single family home in the Town is \$500,000. The annual report by HousingWorks assumes a down payment of 3.5% and a 30-year mortgage to determine an estimated monthly housing payment of \$2,999. The annual income needed to afford this monthly payment is \$119,000. The median household income, according to the 2011-2015 American Community Survey, is \$78,370. In comparison, the state’s estimated average monthly cost of a median price home (\$225,000) is \$1,632. The Town is listed as having the fifth most expensive housing costs out of the 39 cities and towns in Rhode Island in the 2016 Housing Fact Book.

Table H2: Household Income in Little Compton		
Median Household Income: \$85,8524		
<i>Income</i>	<i># of Occupied Households</i>	<i>% of Occupied Households</i>
Less than \$10,000	92	6.00%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	19	1.2%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	87	5.6%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	90	5.8%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	206	13.3%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	205	13.3%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	201	13.0%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	309	20.0%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	92	6.0%
\$200,000 or more	243	15.7%
TOTAL	1,544	

Table H3: Little Compton Population Projection					
<i>Year</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2025</i>	<i>2030</i>	<i>2035</i>	<i>2040</i>
<i>Population</i>	3,468	3,494	3,508	3,503	3,475
<i>Source: Statewide Planning</i>					

As the year-round housing inventory rises, the need for low-and-moderate income units to meet current state legislation will also rise (unless the percentage of seasonal housing units increases beyond a certain point).

20-YEAR POPULATION PROJECTION: 3,503 (SOURCE: SPP)

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE: 2.26 (SOURCE: ACS 2013)

20-YEAR HOUSING UNIT PROJECTION (=3,503/2.26): 1,550

FORECASTED 10% THRESHOLD: 155

If this 20 year housing unit projection is accurate, the Town’s inventory of low-and-moderate income housing units would need to increase an average of at least eight low and moderate income housing units per year over the next twenty years in order for the Town to reach the 10% threshold.

Over the last three years, the Town’s total annual building permits for new homes has been approximately eight. Therefore, a significantly longer planning horizon (beyond 20 years) is anticipated in order for the Town to realistically reach the current 10% mandate for low-and-moderate income housing.

ELDERLY

Currently, none of the Town’s low-and-moderate income housing units are designated as senior housing. Given the data presented in the table below, the need for senior housing may develop as the total number of residents above age 62 continues to rise. Many senior citizens in the Town would prefer to stay in their own homes and the Town has developed programs and services, including a local tax abatement program, to allow its citizens to age in place.

Table H4: Little Compton's Aging Population			
	<i>2000 Census</i>	<i>2010 Census</i>	<i>2015 ACS</i>
<i>Median age</i>	43.5	50.2	52.2
<i>62 years and over</i>	750	794	1133 (+/- 157)
<i>% 62 years and over</i>	20.9%	22.7%	32.3%

HOMELESSNESS

The Town has no official provision for the homeless, nor a recorded homeless population. Faith-based or social service agencies within the Town may be a resource in identifying and offering assistance to those individuals and households at the brink of homelessness or without safe housing.

EXISTING LOCAL HOUSING PROGRAMS

Currently, the Town has a number of programs to provide assistance to residents in meeting their housing needs.

- The Little Compton Community Center (LCCC) provides meals and entertainment
- The Wellness Center provides day care, immunizations, health counseling, entertainment and exercise programs
- Stay at Home provides in home nursing
- The Town provides a van to transport seniors to above locations and events, as well as shopping trips

LOCALLY SPONSORED HOME REPAIR LOAN PROGRAM

Administered by the Church Community Housing Corporation, the locally sponsored home repair loan program provides applicants who fail to meet income/debt ratio requirements for the Rhode Island Housing Program, a less stringent, more flexible alternative to obtaining a home repair loan. The Town has the final decision in approving loans and the fund is expected to grow based on interest payments. The Town may also apply to the State for additional funds.

LOCAL TAX ABATEMENT PROGRAM

The Town sponsors a tax exemption program for low income, elderly and disabled property tax payers. Qualifying households earned less than \$32,600.00 for one person, and \$4,000.00 for each additional household member, per year. In 2016, 38 resident taxpayers in those categories received tax abatements ranging from \$40,000 to \$320,000, which in turn saved them between \$226.80 and \$1,814.40 in actual tax savings.

This well utilized program, while meeting residents' need for affordable housing and allowing seniors the option of aging in place, does not qualify as low-and-moderate income housing. Although the Town is providing a subsidy, since the housing units are not deed restricted in perpetuity, the Town does not receive credit on the official Low-and-Moderate Income Housing Chart.

ZONING REGULATIONS

A number of existing Zoning Regulations in the Town further the goals of a diversified housing stock and affordability, including:

(1) Manufactured Housing

In order to maintain affordable housing in the Town, the placement of a manufactured home is permitted by right in the Residence (R) District.

(2) Accessory Dwelling Units

In order to maintain affordable housing in the Town, and provide for the protection of family living units, accessory dwelling units are allowed, subject to certain requirements including a minimum of three acres or more.

(3) Home Occupations Allowed as Accessory Uses

In many cases, by allowing accessory business use for residents on their residential properties this provides additional income to afford their homes, as well as, lowers the costs of operating their business (i.e. avoids the need to purchase/lease commercial space).

AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY

One identified purpose of the Town's Zoning Ordinance includes: "promoting a balance of housing choices, for all income levels and groups, to assure the health, safety and welfare of all citizens and their rights to affordable, accessible, safe, and sanitary housing."

Efforts and programs to increase the production of housing must be sensitive to the distinctive characteristics of the Town and the need to manage growth. The overall goals of maintaining rural character in the Town and achieving affordable housing that addresses the needs of the Town are not necessarily mutually exclusive. With careful planning and making positive advances to close the affordability gap for its citizens, the Town can achieve the goals through the strategies included in this updated Affordable Housing Plan.

ASSESSMENT OF PREVIOUS STRATEGIES

In 2005, the Town created, by ordinance, a "Little Compton Housing Trust" (LCHT). The purpose and responsibilities of the LCHT include, but are not necessarily limited to, applying for grant funding, contracting with housing agencies such as Rhode Island Housing and Church Community Housing, contracting for consultant services, recommending to the Town Council property tax abatements for low and moderate income households, and generally overseeing the implementation of the Town's Affordable Housing Plan. The LCHT can also monitor the long term affordability of deed-restricted units.

THE TOWN'S 2006 AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING TEN STRATEGIES (SUMMARIZED):

- (1) Allow one additional dwelling unit with a total of two detached single household units on minimum of 3 acres, where one unit is affordable. The affordable unit will be eligible for the Town's low income and disabled property tax relief.

Status: IMPLEMENTED

The construction of a second, detached single-family dwelling unit on a 3-acre parcel is now permitted by right, provided that DEM OWTS approval is obtained and affordability restrictions are in place for one unit.

- (2) Allow accessory dwelling unit by right on one and two acre parcels. Attached unit could be existing or new, as long as the unit will be affordable. Currently, accessory dwelling units are allowed only on a minimum of three acres.

Status: IMPLEMENTED

Within local zoning, an accessory family dwelling unit is permitted in any residential structure on a lot containing one acre, provided that the unit is affordable and affordability restrictions are in place and that such accessory unit will be eligible for the Town's low income and disabled property tax relief.

As of 2016, the Rhode Island Zoning Enabling Act now stipulates that "an accessory family dwelling unit in an owner-occupied, single-family residence shall be permitted as a reasonable accommodation for family members with disabilities or who are sixty-two (62) years of age or older. Previously, this State allowance was established only for family members with a disability.

- (3) Allow multi-household dwellings (maximum of 6) by right in the Business zone, with development plan review by the Planning Board. Allow conversion of lawfully existing commercial structures which are legal non-conforming by use into multiple-household affordable housing units by special use permit. The LCHT could purchase or lease land within the business zones, and if necessary, request the Town Council to rezone to "Business" up to 1/4 mile of the existing B zone, and seek development proposals to construct and manage such units.

Status: IMPLEMENTED / AVAILABLE FOR APPROPRIATE PROJECTS

This strategy has been implemented and has produced low-and-moderate income units.

- (4) Allow Duplexes (two household units) throughout the Town, on 3 acres by right or 2 acres by special use permit, provided that one unit is affordable. Allow legally established lot of record to be used for a Duplex, as of right, provided both units shall be affordable and that DEM OWTS approval is obtained. Condominium conversion of the units will enhance their affordability into perpetuity.

Status: *Not implemented and currently not being considered for implementation as other similar strategies have been achieved.*

- (5) Rehabilitation of existing housing unit to an affordable unit. Unit to be eligible for Town's low income and disabled property tax relief. LCHT and Church Community Housing to implement through a ground lease program.

Status: AVAILABLE FOR APPROPRIATE PROJECTS

- (6) Amend the Subdivision Regulations to require that for all subdivisions of 5 or more lots, 20% of the lots shall have 30-year affordability restrictions and be eligible for the Town's low income and disabled property tax relief. The LCHT will use the lot to develop an affordable

house or use the optional fee to purchase land elsewhere for the same purpose.

Status: IMPLEMENTED

A zoning ordinance requiring affordable housing in five or more lots subdivisions was adopted in 2016. Alternatives include the construction of at least one affordable unit, deeding of 20% of the lots to the Town or a nonprofit housing developer or fee in lieu with the approval of the Planning Board.

- (7) Implement a ground lease program, where the LCHT will purchase or lease land, with assistance from RIH and Church Community Housing. Potential beneficiaries will include the Town's employees, teachers and public safety employees.

Status: IMPLEMENTED / AVAILABLE FOR APPROPRIATE PROJECTS

In 2006, a ground lease program was added to the Zoning ordinance to permit any authorized Town agency to purchase existing land, lease land, or sublease land for ninety-nine years in order to be eligible for State or Federal funding sources for the construction of affordable housing.

- (8) Allow Town-owned properties to be leased by the LCHT and/or Church Community Housing affordable housing for 99 years.

Status: IMPLEMENTED /AVAILABLE FOR APPROPRIATE PROJECTS

In 2006, a ground lease program was added to the Zoning ordinance to permit any authorized Town agency to purchase existing land, lease land, or sublease land for ninety-nine years in order to be eligible for State or Federal funding sources for the construction of affordable housing.

- (9) Support appropriate HUD Section 811 Supportive Housing for persons with disabilities (with conditions).

Status: AVAILABLE FOR APPROPRIATE PROJECTS

- (10) Support appropriate HUD Section 202 Housing for the Elderly project in the Town (with conditions).

Status: AVAILABLE FOR APPROPRIATE PROJECTS

CONTINUED AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGIES

Continue to permit forms of housing that are affordable without subsidies; such types of housing include multi-family housing, mobile homes and accessory family dwelling units.

Continue to allow second dwelling units and attached accessory dwelling units for affordable units provided that site planning, zoning standards, and OWTS criteria are met.

5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

THE PLAN MUST INCLUDE THE IDENTIFICATION OF EXISTING TYPES AND PATTERNS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, BUSINESS, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, AGRICULTURAL, AND TOURISM. THE PLAN MUST ALSO IDENTIFY AREAS SUITABLE FOR FUTURE ECONOMIC EXPANSION OR REVITALIZATION. THE PLAN MUST INCLUDE GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES REFLECTING LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND STATEWIDE CONCERNS FOR THE EXPANSION AND STABILIZATION OF THE ECONOMIC BASE, AND THE PROMOTION OF QUALITY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND JOB GROWTH.

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL § 45-22.2-6(b)(7)



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS			
GOAL ED1. SUPPORT A LOCAL ECONOMY THAT CREATES QUALITY JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS, PROVIDES A DIVERSE TAX BASE, AND IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE AESTHETIC AND RURAL NATURE OF THE TOWN			
Policy ED1.A. Preserve existing commercially zoned areas and increase opportunities for new business enterprises fitting with the character of the community			
Policy ED1.B. Promote opportunities for low-impact home based businesses			
Policy ED1.C. Support local service industries (such as building, plumbing, landscaping, property management, general maintenance, etc.) that service the large non-resident population			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Link to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action ED1.a. Amend zoning ordinance as needed to provide adequate standards which permit and support home-based businesses while ensuring that they are compatible with neighboring residential uses and the overall environmental, aesthetic and economic goals of the community	Planning Board, Town Council	Medium-term	<u>Regulations for Home-Based Business - Morton Grove, IL</u>
Action ED1.b. Establish design guidelines for the appearance of home-based business	Planning Board, Town Council <i>(in partnership with Little Compton Historical Society)</i>	Medium-term	

GOAL ED2: RETAIN AND EXPAND AGRICULTURE AND FISHING AS VIABLE ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES, METHOD TO PRESERVING OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL RESOURCES, AND SOURCE OF LOCAL FOOD			
Policy ED2.A. Ensure local regulations protect waterfront-reliant businesses in Sakonnet Harbor Policy ED2.B. Maintain farming as a permitted use in Residential zoning districts Policy ED2.C. Support the efforts of the LCACT to preserve farmland and open space Policy ED2.D. Regulate uses on farms not directly related to the agricultural operations or principal use of the farm			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Link to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action ED2.a. Promote options to offer no-cost or low-cost leasing of idle and conserved agricultural lands to farmers	LCACT, Finance, Tax Assessor, Conservation Commission	Ongoing	
Action ED2.b. Offer informational sessions on the State's Farm, Forest and Open Space Program	Conservation Commission, Tax Assessor, LCACT	Medium-term	<u>A Citizen's Guide to FFOS Act</u>
Action ED2.c. Amend zoning ordinance as needed to provide adequate standards which permit and support agricultural businesses while ensuring that they are compatible with neighboring residential uses and the overall environmental, aesthetic and economic goals of the community	Planning Board, Town Council	Short-term	<u>Community Guidance to Maintain Working Farms</u>
<i>Timeframes: Short-term (0-2 years); Medium-term (3-6 years); Long-term (7-10 years)</i>			

INTRODUCTION

It is a goal of the Town to support and sustain local economic development while not detracting from the unique character and rural setting of the community. The Town's economy has traditionally been represented mostly by farming, small service/retail businesses, and home-based trades/occupations. Location in relation to major highways, lack of infrastructure and the desire of residents to maintain the Town's character have directed the types of economic development existing in the Town. The purpose of this element is to present the economic development limitations of the Town, and to focus on those areas where the local economy may be enhanced with appropriate business operations while maintaining and protecting the community's peaceful rural, village and residential areas.

Future economic development supported and pursued in the Town should:

- *Sustain rural landscapes*
- *Direct growth away from farm and forest areas into villages / existing commercial areas*
 - *Be compatible with the aesthetic quality of the community*
 - *Minimize negative environmental impacts including energy consumption*
 - *Be in keeping with the Town's rural character*
 - *Be appropriately scaled*
 - *Create employment opportunities for local residents*
 - *Serve residents' needs for services or goods*
 - *Sell goods grown, crafted or produced locally*

EXISTING COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES IN LITTLE COMPTON

Commercial development in the Town has been largely centered in three areas, the Commons, the village of Adamsville and at Sakonnet Point. The Commons is the activity center of the Town, serving as the seat of government and as a gathering place for residents and visitors. Along with town buildings and three places of worship, there are several retail and service businesses located in the Commons. Adamsville is more of a residential village, with a few stores serving the local and visiting population. Sakonnet Point provides some facilities for commercial fishing activities and recreational boating.

According to RIDLT, in 2015, Little Compton had 137 private sector business establishments with an average annual wage of \$34,652. Little Compton experienced the largest employment increase on a percentage basis (7%) in the State between 2014 and 2015.

Small businesses in the Town are diverse in nature, including, but not limited to, electrical contractors, carpenters, lawn care, home-based industries/tradespeople, small engine repair, fish markets and computer services, etc. Larger businesses include excavating contractors, the vineyard, an inn, nurseries/landscaping, restaurants and retail stores.

COMMERCIAL ZONING

There is no minimum lot size requirement for a business use within the Business zoning district. However, lots must be of sufficient size to accommodate an onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS), water supply, and the required off-street parking and loading area.

Although there is a very limited amount of land commercially zoned in Little Compton, home occupations are permitted throughout the Town. In order to maintain the rural agricultural character of the Town, which traditionally includes a variety of other occupational uses on the land in combination with and in addition to the agricultural use, a number of customary home occupation uses are allowed as accessory uses in the Residence (R) Zoning District.

PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

The primary industries of Little Compton include agriculture, landscaping, fishing and more recently, seasonally-oriented businesses. Home-based businesses also form the core of the Town's economy. Technology and the ability to telework has increased economic opportunity for the Town's residents, allowing residency in the Town to be a more viable option. Seasonal residency is also a major component of the local economy.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is an industry that provides the Town with economic, as well as, visual and ecological benefits. The Town has historically been a farming community, beginning in the late 1600's. Agriculture continues to play an important role in the economy and culture of the Town. Current agricultural operations are listed in Appendix E2. Agricultural lands and important soils are displayed on the *Agricultural Land and Soils Map* located in Chapter 11. The Town's farms produce a variety of crops including corn, grapes, vegetables, Christmas trees, nursery stock, and livestock. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the agricultural industry is expanding in the Town and diversifying, with value-added products such as cheese, yogurt, soap and prepared foods. Nursery and landscaping businesses also appear to be increasing locally.

Residents of the Town have been proactive and vigorous in working to preserve the Town's agricultural land. The Sakonnet Preservation Association, the first private and non-profit community land trust in Rhode Island, was founded in 1972. In 1985, the Town established the Little Compton Agricultural Conservancy Trust to preserve agricultural property, open space and other undeveloped natural areas. The Trust has taken action by acquiring development rights to parcels and purchasing property. The Trust is financed through a real estate transfer tax.

As of 2016, over 3,470 acres of property in the Town is included in the State's Farm, Forest and Open Space Program (FFOS) (*See RIGL § 44-27*). Approximately 2,690 acres of the FFOS properties are designated as farms. Properties may qualify for this program based on lot sizes, production and use. Qualifying properties are offered tax relief. The property assessment is based on the current undeveloped value of the land rather than the "highest and best" use possible. The purpose of this program is to encourage landowners to maintain their land for agriculture, forestry production, or open space.

The Town is concerned not only with preserving agricultural land but also with improving the vitality of existing agricultural operations and maintaining a rural economy. In many farming communities, accessory uses to support agriculture are a growing portion of revenues for farmers and are often necessary to maintain active farms. While the Town is generally supportive of this concept, it is a strong desire of the Town to ensure that commercial activities on farmland are of an appropriate scale and are directly related to the

agricultural production or principle use of the land. The Town should consider regulations that will support desired and appropriate commercial activities on farms and discourage or set limits on the types of activities which may create a nuisance for surrounding residential properties or compromise the rural and peaceful nature of the community.

COMMERCIAL FISHING & AQUACULTURE

Commercial and wholesale businesses relating to fishing and aquaculture is another important industry in Little Compton. Sakonnet Harbor supports a small, yet diverse and flexible fishing fleet of smaller boats. This is due to several factors, including its optimal location between the ports of Newport and New Bedford, close proximity to the fishing grounds of the Atlantic Ocean and relatively easy access to major East Coast markets. Commercial shell fishing, lobstering and trap fishing are the most common fishing activity out of the Harbor. Other boats are involved in fin-fishing and shell-fishing.

HOME OCCUPATIONS

A substantial number of businesses operating in the Town are home-based industries/trades, defined as a business which is owner-operated and situated in a principal personal residence or within an accessory structure to the residence. Such home-based industries/trades have a long history in the community, and are seen as vital component of the Town's economy. Home-based businesses are often interdependent and supportive of each other, and provide an opportunity for local residents to be economically self-sufficient. Technology has provided an increased opportunity for residents of a variety of professions to work from home, making living in Little Compton a more viable option without having a long commute. As a dynamic part of the local economy, these activities should be encouraged, supported and permitted by zoning and other regulations.

SEASONAL POPULATION

Local businesses are substantially enhanced during the summer months. In recent decades, the community's large and growing seasonal population (anecdotally estimated at two-thirds of the population) has resulted in the growth of numerous small year round businesses serving the needs of summer residents and visitors. Opportunities may exist for new business opportunities catering to the seasonal population. However, caution must be taken to ensure businesses are of the appropriate scale and do not detract from the aesthetic qualities of the community. It is not a desire of the community to become or promote itself as a tourist destination.

Revenues generated from seasonal properties support the Town's local government services and facilities. People choose Little Compton as their seasonal home mostly for its remarkably beautiful rural and coastal landscapes. As a result, these natural and cultural resources become important contributors to the local economy, and as such, their protection and enhancement must be prioritized.

LIMITING FACTORS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Town is limited by a number of factors in pursuing substantial economic development activities and growth in the Town's commercial tax base. The Town has prioritized the protection of its rural landscapes through land use policies (two acre minimum lot sizes, little commercially zoned land, and no industrial zoned land), and through limited provision of community services (no sewers or public water). Its environmental characteristics (wetlands, poor soils for development, reliance on groundwater, and sensitive coastal ponds) are constraining to intensive development and deserve protection. The Town's geographic location and limited accessibility serve to further discourage intensive economic development. Most importantly, economic development is limited by the desire of the residents to live in a quiet rural community. As a result, the Town does not significantly invest in economic development activities or actively recruit new businesses to relocate to the Town.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS & RESOURCES

COMMUNITY GUIDANCE TO MAINTAIN WORKING FARM AND FORESTS, RIDEM, OCTOBER 2012.

RHODE ISLAND RISING: A PLAN FOR PEOPLE, PLACES AND PROSPERITY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT, RHODE ISLAND STATE GUIDE PLAN REPORT #118, DECEMBER 2014.

APPENDIX E1: ECONOMIC PROFILE FOR LITTLE COMPTON

JOB BY INDUSTRY

The Town’s top three growing industries, as indicated by the amount of jobs in the Town, are highlighted in the table below. Employment in the Town in the agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting industry increased 90% between 2006 and 2016. Employment in other services, including professional and technical jobs, experienced an over 50% increase between 2006 and 2016. Industries with decreasing employment figures include real estate, accommodation & food services, and health care & social services.

Little Compton Employment				
	2006	2009	2015	% Change from 2006 to 2015
Establishment Employment				
Total Private & Government	702	647	673	-4%
Total Private Only	566	526	553	-2%
Government	136	121	120	-12%
Construction	144	103	110	-24%
Other Services	49	41	75	53%
Accommodation & Food Services	113	54	65	-42%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	56	80	59	5%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	29	39	55	90%
Retail Trade	31	31	40	29%
Professional & Technical Services	16	15	26	63%
Health Care & Social Assistance	18	*	8	-56%
Wholesale Trade	6	6	7	17%
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	9	7	2	-78%
Administrative Support & Waste Management	32	75	*	N/A
Manufacturing	*	*	*	N/A
Transportation & Warehousing	*	*	*	N/A
Finance & Insurance	*	*	*	N/A
Management of Companies & Enterprises	*	*	*	N/A
Educational Services	*	*	*	N/A
Information	0	0	*	N/A
Mining	*	*	0	N/A
Utilities	0	0	0	N/A
<i>Source: RIDLT (*not available - may identify individual business)</i>				

LABOR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT

The Town’s unemployment rate averaged 4.5% in 2015, the fifth lowest in the State and below the State’s average of 6%.

Little Compton Labor Force Statistics					
Not Seasonally Adjusted					
2005-2015					
Month	Year	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
Annual Average	2015	1,886	1,802	84	4.5
Annual Average	2014	1,899	1,780	119	6.3
Annual Average	2013	1,898	1,754	144	7.6
Annual Average	2012	1,902	1,735	167	8.8
Annual Average	2011	1,903	1,727	176	9.2
Annual Average	2010	1,951	1,762	189	9.7
Annual Average	2009	1,973	1,785	188	9.5
Annual Average	2008	1,987	1,858	129	6.5
Annual Average	2007	2,010	1,920	90	4.5
Annual Average	2006	1,992	1,909	83	4.2
Annual Average	2005	1,983	1,893	90	4.5

Source: RIDLT

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Median Household Income: \$85,8524		
Household Income	Households	% of Occupied Households
Less than \$10,000	92	6.0%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	19	1.2%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	87	5.6%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	90	5.8%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	206	13.3%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	205	13.3%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	201	13.0%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	309	20.0%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	92	6.0%
\$200,000 or more	243	15.7%
TOTAL 1,544	1,544	99.9%
<i>Source: 2013 American Community Survey</i>		

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Educational Attainment	Population 25-years & Older	% Population 25-years & Older
Less than 9th grade	20	0.8%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	90	3.5%
High School Diploma or GED Equivalency	593	22.7%
Completed Some College	459	17.6%
Associate Degree	277	10.6%
Bachelor's Degree	648	24.9%
Master's Degree	374	14.3%
Professional Degree	114	4.4%
Doctorate Degree	32	1.2%
Total	2607	100.0%
<i>Source: 2013 American Community Survey</i>		

APPENDIX E2: ACTIVE AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS

Below is an extensive, however potentially incomplete, inventory of active agricultural operations in the Town, to provide a general idea of the types of agricultural operations and products.

- ❖ ***BEANHOUSES - FLOWERS (104 SOUTH OF COMMONS)***
- ❖ ***BOUGHS AND BERRY FARM – BERRIES, CHRISTMAS TREES, HAY (255 PECKHAM RD)***
- ❖ ***DELUCIA’S BERRY FARM – BERRIES, JAMS (96 WILLOW AVE)***
- ❖ ***DUGGAN FARM – MEAT, BREEDING STOCK (JOHN DYER RD)***
- ❖ ***FIELDSTONE GARDENS – LANDSCAPING (59 PECKHAM RD)***
- ❖ ***FRANLART NURSERIES – TREES, SHRUBS (EAST MAIN RD / PEANUTS LN)***
- ❖ ***HIGHBUSH NURSERIES – TREES, SHRUBS, FLOWERS (53 WILLIAM SISSON RD)***
- ❖ ***LITTLE COMPTON PLANTATIONS – TREES, SHRUBS, FLOWERS, CHRISTMAS TREES (100 MAPLE AVE)***
- ❖ ***MACIEL’S TREE FARM –CHRISTMAS TREES (101 MAPLE AVE)***
- ❖ ***MAUROLOU FARM – (503 LONG HIGHWAY)***
- ❖ ***OAK HILL SUFFOLKS – EGGS, MEAT, PLANTS (208 LONG HIGHWAY)***
- ❖ ***OLD STONE ORCHARD –APPLES, PUMPKINS, PEARS, FLOWERS AND VEGETABLES (33 COLEBROOK RD)***
- ❖ ***PETE’S FARM – BEEF, PRODUCE, HYDROPONIC LETTUCE (43 PECKHAM ROAD)***
- ❖ ***PUDDINGSTONE FARM – CORN, LAMB, HAY (125 SOUTH OF COMMONS)***
- ❖ ***SAKONNET VINEYARDS – WINES (162 WEST MAIN RD)***
- ❖ ***SILK TREE FARM – HERITAGE BREED LIVESTOCK, CHEESE, SOAP, EGGS, FRUITS AND VEGETABLES (64 POTTERSVILLE ROAD)***

- ❖ *SPRING ACRES FARM – CORN, BEEF, LAMB, BEDDING PLANTS, CHRISTMAS TREES (2 MAPLE AVE)*
- ❖ *SWEET & SALTY FARM – CHEESE, YOGURT, MEAT, BREEDING STOCK (68 SHAW RD)*
- ❖ *TREATY ROCK FARM – BEEF, LAMB (60 TREATY ROCK ROAD)*
- ❖ *WALKER’S ROADSIDE STAND – VEGETABLE, FRUIT, HERBS, FLOWERS, CIDER, LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTS (261 WEST MAIN RD)*
- ❖ *WINDARD FARM – CORN, MILK, LAMB (24 SNELL RD)*
- ❖ *WINDY HILL NURSERY – TREES, SHRUBS (60 OLD MAIN RD)*
- ❖ *WISHING STONE FARM – VEGETABLES, FRUITS, EGGS, LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTS (25 SHAW RD)*
- ❖ *YANKEE BILL FARM – MILK, CORN, VEGETABLES (392 LONG HWY)*
- ❖ *YOUNG FAMILY FARM – VEGETABLES, FRUIT, PUMPKINS, FLOWERS (242 WEST MAIN RD)*

6. FACILITIES & SERVICES

THE PLAN MUST BE BASED ON AN INVENTORY OF EXISTING PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE SUCH AS, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES, PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITIES, LIBRARIES, INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES, AND COMMUNITY CENTERS. THE PLAN MUST DESCRIBE SERVICES PROVIDED TO THE COMMUNITY SUCH AS, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, WATER SUPPLY AND THE MANAGEMENT OF WASTEWATER, STORM WATER, AND SOLID WASTE. THE PLAN MUST CONSIDER ENERGY PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION. THE PLAN MUST ANALYZE THE NEEDS FOR FUTURE TYPES AND LEVELS OF SERVICES AND FACILITIES, INCLUDING (IN ACCORDANCE WITH RIGL § 46-15.3-5.1), WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM MANAGEMENT PLANNING, WHICH INCLUDES DEMAND MANAGEMENT GOALS AS WELL AS PLANS FOR WATER CONSERVATION AND EFFICIENT USE OF WATER CONCERNING ANY WATER SUPPLIER PROVIDING SERVICE IN THE MUNICIPALITY. THE PLAN MUST CONTAIN GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES FOR MEETING FUTURE DEMANDS.

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL § 45-22.2-6(b)(8)



FACILITIES & SERVICES - GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS			
GOAL FS1: MEET THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES AND DELIVER IN A COST EFFICIENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABLE MANNER			
Policy FS1.A. Proactively plan for the long-term community needs for municipal services and facilities Policy FS1.B. Strive for environmental sustainability in the provision of municipal services and facilities Policy FS1.C. Continually explore ways to reduce the costs of delivering services and operating facilities Policy FS1.D. Maintain municipal facilities in a good state of repair to ensure reliable operations and limit unplanned expenses or investments			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action FS1.a. Conduct detailed existing conditions and physical assessments for all municipal buildings, recommend capital improvements to extend the useful life of each facility and annual maintenance needs	Public Works Director; Town Administrator	Long-term	Easton, MA Municipal and School Facilities Assessment
Action FS1.b. Explore regional provision of services and equipment sharing opportunities	Town Administrator	Ongoing	NY Municipalities Shared Services Brief
GOAL FS2: MEET OR EXCEED THE STATE'S MANDATED 35% RECYCLING RATE AND 50% DIVERSION RATE FOR SOLID WASTE			
Policy FS2.A. Encourage residents and businesses to increase recycling rates through incentives and education Policy FS2.B. Lead by example and implement municipal waste reduction strategies and strict recycling policies for the Town's operations and the School			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action FS2.a. Conduct a waste audit of municipal operations, private haulers and citizens who utilize the Town transfer station	Public Works Director; Town Administrator	Short-term	Audit Datasheet
Action FS2.b. Conduct public education and outreach regarding recycling and encourage composting	Conservation Commission	Short-term	RIRRC Presentation Request
Action FS2.c. Continue and expand program which offers compost bins to residents	Town Clerk; Conservation Commission	Ongoing	RIRRC Composting

GOAL FS3: ACHIEVE REDUCTIONS IN ENERGY AND WATER USE AS A MUNICIPALITY AND A COMMUNITY			
Policy FS3.A. Promote energy-efficiency and water conservation practices for municipal operations, businesses, and residents			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action FS3.a. Conduct a baseline assessment of the amount of energy being used by municipal buildings, vehicles and equipment	Public Works Director	Short-term; Ongoing	
Action FS3.b. Explore the use of solar energy for municipal buildings and energy storage opportunities at the transfer station	Town Council	Ongoing	
Action FS3.c. Develop guidelines for residential wind and solar. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to provide definitions, use tables, policies and procedures which protect neighboring property and rural character.	Planning Board; Town Council	Short-term	<u>New Shoreham Solar Ordinance</u>
Action FS3.d. Assess future opportunities for water use efficiency in municipal operations including the recycling of waters	Conservation Commission	Long-term	<u>RI State Guide Plan Water 2030</u>
Action FS3.e. Implement a program to offer rain barrels to residents	Conservation Commission	Medium-term	<u>RI Water Lady</u>
Action FS3.f. Implement water reduction strategies for the Town during times of drought	Emergency Management Director	Ongoing	

GOAL FS4: ENHANCE TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE WITHIN THE TOWN AND EXPAND THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE DELIVERY OF MUNICIPAL FUNCTIONS

Policy FS4.A. Utilize current technologies to improve municipal operations and efficiencies and to expand outreach to residents

Policy FS4.B. Work with service providers to enhance telecommunications within the Town

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action FS4.a. Establish a Technology Committee whose purpose is to promote internet and technology literacy, bring faster, cheaper and more reliable internet to the Town. Establish public Wi-Fi hot spots at the School, Community Center, and Town Hall. Offer continuing education at the school for residents on computer skills and using mobile devices.	Town Council; School	Short-term	
Action FS4.b. Expanding on reverse 911, develop a municipal communications strategy to get important information out to residents including related to public health, accidents, road closures, meetings, etc.	Town Clerk; Town Administrator	Short-term	<u>Sustainable NJ Municipal Communications Strategy Action Guidance</u>
<i>Timeframes: Short-term (0-2 years); Medium-term (3-6 years); Long-term (7-10 years)</i>			

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Facilities and Services Element is to identify and describe the Town's existing facilities and their related services and to establish goals and policies regarding the provision of these municipal services. Recent major investments in the Town's facilities include the new public safety complex and school renovation project. The Town has also invested in new recreational facilities discussed further in the Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Element. There is no identified current or near future need for building anew or making major improvements to any Town facility. The need to prioritize ongoing maintenance of Town facilities, such as painting, has been identified.

THE TOWN HAS A TRADITION AND DESIRE TO REMAIN A COMMUNITY WITH LIMITED MUNICIPAL SERVICES.

There is no public sewer, public water, or public curbside trash pickup available in the Town and there are no current plans to make those services available. Water supply and wastewater disposal are provided by individual wells and onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS). Residents dispose of waste and recycling at the transfer station or hire private vendors to provide curbside pick-up.

THE TOWN WILL CONTINUE TO STRIVE TO PROVIDE QUALITY FACILITIES AND RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT SERVICES IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ITS RESIDENTS.

If a need or desire for additional or enhanced municipal services develops in the future, a regional approach should be explored. Any current or future municipal services, including the construction and operation of municipal facilities, should be done in a manner that supports land use goals, natural resource protection and the long-term ability of the Town to fiscally maintain increased services and facilities.

TOWN GOVERNMENT

The Town is governed by a five member Town Council which is headed by the Council President. Other elected posts in the Town include the Town Clerk, Treasurer, and Town Moderator (serving two year terms), as well as five posts for School Committee (serving four year terms).

The following are administrative positions appointed by the Town Council:

- **LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY DIRECTOR**
- **POLICE CHIEF**
- **FIRE CHIEF**
- **ASSESSOR**

- ***BUILDING OFFICIAL***
- ***DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS***
- ***TOWN SERGEANT***
- ***WELFARE DIRECTOR***
- ***LOCAL BOARDS***

The Town, with limited municipal staffing, relies on active volunteer boards to serve important local government functions and services. Below is a listing of current boards and committees of the Town with a description of their responsibilities.

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVANCY TRUST

The LCACT is a seven member board appointed by the Town Council that fulfills several functions assigned to it by State Enabling Legislation and the Town Charter. These duties include acquiring agricultural property or development rights to agricultural property and preserving open spaces that contain or offer fresh and saltwater marshes, estuaries and adjoining uplands, groundwater recharge areas, access to the ocean, and recreational opportunities.

BEACH COMMISSION

The Beach Commission consists of five members elected at the Financial Town Meeting for four year staggered terms. The Commission has the authority to manage, regulate and control all public beaches owned by the Town and to have the authority to make suitable provisions for the care, management, maintenance, protection and improvement of the beaches.

BOARD OF CANVASSERS

The Board of Canvassers acts as the local election authority in conformity with State Law and the Town Charter. Its duties include: receiving and certifying nomination papers, registering voters, certifying voting lists, certifying local election results, assisting the Town Moderator with the management of the Financial Town Meeting, running the elections, serving as local liaison for the Secretary of State and Board of Elections, and all other functions under State Law.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

The Budget Committee consists of five members elected at the Financial Town Meeting for two year staggered terms. The Budget Committee is charged by the Town Charter to aggregate information, investigate all requests for Town funds, and recommend a level of funding to the voters so that they can be better informed at the Financial Town Meeting. The Committee produces a report once a year and mails it to each voter in the Town detailing the requests the Town has received and the recommendations the Committee has made.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Conservation Commission is a five member board appointed by the Town Council for three year staggered terms. The purpose of the Commission is to promote and develop the natural resources, to protect watershed resources, and to preserve the natural esthetic areas within the Town.

HARBOR COMMISSION

The Harbor Commission consists of seven members appointed by the Town Council for three year staggered terms. The Harbor Commission serves as the local advisory body concerning the implementation of the Harbor Management Plan and related ordinances.

THE LITTLE COMPTON HOUSING TRUST

The Little Compton Housing Trust serves as an advocacy group for any person or group desiring to address the problem of housing affordability or housing for the elderly, those with special needs, and families of low and moderate income. The Trust oversees implementation of the Town's Affordable Housing Plan, monitors long-term housing affordability, and serves as an advisor to the Town Council. The Trust is funded by federal and state grants, and gifts and bequests from individuals and corporations.

PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board is a nine member board appointed by the Town Council, for four year staggered terms, responsible for issues related to the growth and development of the Town. The Planning Board fulfills several functions assigned to it by State Law and the Town Charter. These duties include:

- Advising the Town Council on all matters concerning the growth and development of the Town including the effects of that growth on the health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants
- Playing a role in long range capital planning and the preparation of the Town capital budget. Submitting recommendations and decisions on all matters referred to it relating to the Town Zoning Ordinance, land subdivision and proposals for development
- Adopting, modifying and amending rules and regulations governing and restricting the platting and subdivision of land and land development.
- Preparation and approval of the Comprehensive Plan; review of any proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

RECREATION COMMITTEE

The responsibility of the Recreation Committee, appointed by the Town Council for three year staggered terms, is to update, maintain and implement the Town's plan for the interrelated development of recreation areas. This committee also has oversight over the scheduling and conduct of appropriate activities in the Auditorium-Gymnasium of the school when the facility is not used for school purposes.

ZONING BOARD OF REVIEW

The Zoning Board of Review is a five member board appointed by the Town Council for five year staggered terms. The Zoning Board of Review fulfills several functions assigned to it by State Law. These duties include:

- To authorize variances in the application of the terms of the Zoning Ordinance
- To authorize special-use permits when designated as a permit authority
- To refer matters to the Planning Board, or to other boards or agencies of the Town as appropriate, for findings and recommendations; and
- To issue conditional zoning approvals where a proposed application would otherwise be approved except that one or more state or federal agency approvals which are necessary are pending.

INVENTORY OF EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES & RELATED SERVICES

Below is a description of existing facilities owned by the Town along with a discussion of building condition, if relevant, and the services offered. In order to ensure current Town facilities continue to meet the needs of the community in the long-term, maintenance is critical, particularly with regard to the historic buildings owned by the Town. A detailed conditions and physical assessment for municipal buildings should be conducted to recommend capital improvements that will extend the useful life of these facilities.

TOWN HALL

The Little Compton Town Hall, constructed in 1882 and located at 40 Commons, functions as the Town's center of local government. The structure includes approximately 6,500 square feet of finished space and houses the operations of the Town Clerk, the Building Inspector's Office, Town Council Office and Chambers, Tax Collector, Treasurer, Tax Assessor's Office, and the Office of the Director of Public Works. Renovations and expansions have been made over the years to accommodate the space needs of various offices and to bring the building into compliance with handicap accessibility needs. However, storage space within various offices remains inadequate. Future expansion of the building could be achieved by adding a second story above the prior addition and/or expansion into another property owned by the Town.

LIBRARY

The Town is served by the Brownell Library located in the Commons area. The Brownell Library, built in 1929, was bequeathed to the residents of the Town by Mr. Pardon Brownell in 1921. In 1963, the stack addition was added and the Town's public library was removed from the Town Hall and physically combined with the Brownell Library. The Trustees of the Brownell Trust provide maintenance and repair of the building. Through the Town annual appropriations, the taxpayers provide the funds for staffing, books and supplies.

The Library, which has expanded its programming considerably in recent history, offers children programs, special exhibits and talks, book signings, and an outdoor tent with Wi-Fi. The library maintains a genealogy section consisting primarily of works associated with the local area. Some of this material was relocated from the Historical Society so the public would have greater access to the material.

The Friends of the Brownell Library, a 501(c)3 organization, raises funds to support programs at the library including the Toddler and After School Story Hour programs, the Summer Story Hour Program, museum passes, audio books, adult programs and the yearly newsletter. The Friends of Brownell Library also organize and run an Annual Summer Book Sale.

THE LIBRARY SHOULD REMAIN A PLACE WHERE ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES ARE HELD AND SHOULD HAVE A BALANCED COLLECTION REPRESENTING A WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECT MATTER.

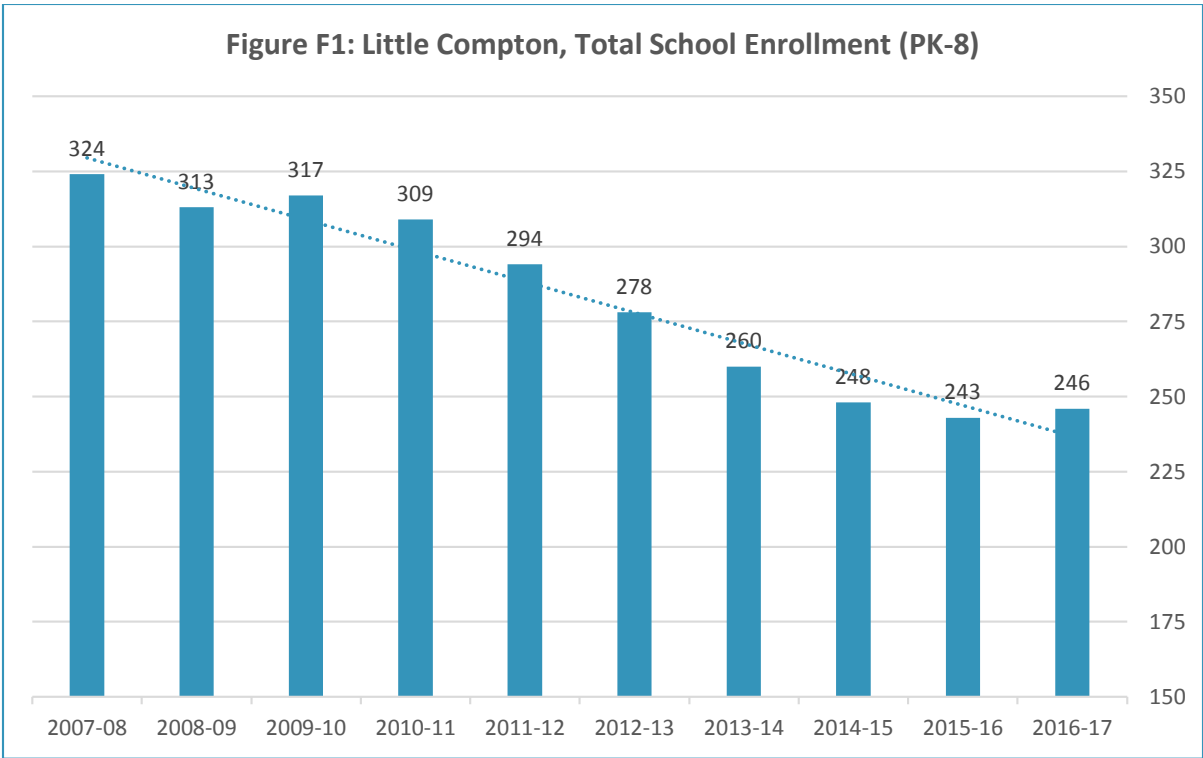
SCHOOL

Currently the Town operates one school facility, the Wilbur and McMahon School, located on the Commons (28 Commons). The school was constructed in 1929. Its 62,000 square feet of finished space includes classrooms and associated activity space, a cafeteria, a gymnasium, and administration. The building was renovated in 2013-2014.

The School accommodates grades PK-8th. The Town does not provide a school for high school students. The Town currently has a contract with the Town of Portsmouth for residents in grades 9-12 to attend Portsmouth High School on a tuition basis. The Little Compton School District has approximately 31 teachers and 18 staff and administrative positions.

The general trend line for school enrollment, as displayed in the figure below is decreasing. School enrollment between 2007 and 2011 was consistently above 300 students in the PK to 8th grades. For the past several years (2013-2017), the average total enrollment for Little Compton School District has been approximately 250 students.

THE SCHOOL UNDERWENT A MAJOR RENOVATION RECENTLY AND IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT IT WILL MEET THE EDUCATION FACILITY NEEDS FOR AT LEAST THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS.



PUBLIC SAFETY

The Little Compton Police Department operates from the Public Safety Complex located at 60 Simmons Road. The Department is led by the Police Chief who has command over nine sworn Police Officers and four full-time and three part-time Public Safety Dispatchers.

The Little Compton Fire Department also operates from the Public Safety Complex. Personnel of the Fire Department include the Fire Chief, eight full-time and three part-time firefighters. Services include but are not limited to: fire suppression, rescue, fire prevention, fire inspection, emergency medical services, ocean rescues, and disaster mitigation. Apparatus includes several rescues, a tanker, a fire engine, forestry vehicle and a boat. All are up-to-date and well maintained.

The 12,000+ square foot Public Safety Complex was constructed in 2000 and will meet the fire and policing facility needs of the community for at least twenty years. It includes a four bay firehouse and a generator to remain operational during times of power outages.

BOTH THE FIRE DEPARTMENT AND POLICE DEPARTMENT PROTECT THE COMMUNITY 24 HOURS A DAY, 365 DAYS A YEAR.

PUBLIC WORKS

The Public Works Department oversees various contractors selected for snow removal, road maintenance, and major road repairs. In addition, the Town has a small Maintenance Department that is responsible for maintaining all public buildings and grounds with the exception of the school property. The Director of Public Works has an office in Town Hall and storage for the Department is housed in the former Fire Hall.

COMMUNITY CENTER

The historic Grange Hall on the Commons (34 Commons) has been reactivated as a community center. A large variety of programs are housed or administered by the Little Compton Community Center (LCCC), including, but not limited to: after-school programs, teen programs, summer camps, senior programs (including meals and exercises), theatre, special events and various other human services. The mission of the LCCC is to bring people together from all corners of the community to foster and support a strong and vibrant Little Compton. LCCC achieves this by providing and facilitating programs to meet community needs and by providing space for other individuals and organizations who serve residents of the Town.

TRANSFER STATION

The Town's waste disposal needs are served by a Transfer Station located just off Colebrook Road at 122 Amy Hart Path. The facility also contains a small site (less than 10,000 square feet) for a wireless communications tower. Residents of the Town can obtain a household trash permit (vehicle sticker) from the Town Clerk to utilize the transfer station. Solid waste which is not recycled is compacted and transported to the Central Landfill in Johnston under a municipal contract with Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation. Yard waste dropped off at transfer station is composted and used by local farmers.

The Town owned facility is manned by Town employees at all times, while operating with at least one person who is responsible for running equipment, overseeing good order, safety rules and cleanliness. The person operating the Transfer Station works for the Town Maintenance Department. **THE TOWN DOES NOT INTEND TO CLOSE THE FACILITY IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.**

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

As evidenced by data presented in Table F1 below, the Town has not made progress over the past five years in meeting the State's mandated 35% recycling rate and 50% diversion rate. Rhode Island Resource Recovery has recommended that the Town consider a Pay-As-You-Throw program, which has been implemented at other transfer stations in Rhode Island, and has been successful in increasing their diversion and recycling rates.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Population Projection	3,492	3,480	3,477	3,473	3,472
Refuse Tons	1,635	1,703	1,663	1,662	1,683
Overall Diversion Rate	31.70%	29.50%	29.60%	30.20%	30.10%
Mandatory Recycling Rate	30.30%	28.10%	27.70%	28.40%	28.60%
MRF Recycling Rate	25.90%	23.80%	24.20%	23.90%	23.80%
<i>Source: RIRRC</i>					

In order to reduce financial and environmental costs, there should be an effort to reduce waste from residents and local businesses, and recover more of the recyclables. Currently, the Town has a program which offers composting bins at a reduced cost to residents. The Town should expand its public education campaign and other programs which encourage and incentivize proper recycling and composting. Other simple measures, such as giving recycling a priority location within the transfer station, could be implemented to encourage recycling.

WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT

Since the Town does not have any sewered areas, all developed properties have OWTs (Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems). OWTs that are old, failing or not maintained properly are a major concern for the Town's residents because of the potential for contamination of public and private drinking water supplies and other health hazards. The Town has identified as an action the preparation of an onsite wastewater management plan to allow the Town to qualify for the Community Septic System Loan Program (CSSLP), which provides low-interest loans to homeowners for septic system repair and replacement. See Natural Resources Element for additional discussion.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The Town has a limited amount of stormwater infrastructure. Maintenance needs, including the annual cleaning of catch basins, and associated costs are minimal. Given the high importance of water quality to the community, the Town will explore and implement best practices for stormwater management. It is anticipated the Town will take steps in the short-term to increase public education on the importance of stormwater management. For example, distributing material to residents on steps individuals can take to prevent non-point source pollution, including best practices for landscaping (reducing fertilizer use, incorporating native plants, and installing rain gardens).

ENERGY AND WATER CONSERVATION

The Town supports water conservation measures, the use of renewable energy technology and efforts to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Several action items have been included in the implementation program to further these goals including: assessing the amount of energy currently being used by municipal buildings, vehicles and equipment; exploring the use of solar and recycling of waters for municipal operations; developing guidelines in the Zoning Ordinance for solar and wind; and offering a rain barrel program for residents.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

There are a number of local and regional agencies that provide health and human services within the Town, several of which are profiled below. The Town does provide some funding for a Director of Social Services position.

LITTLE COMPTON WELLNESS CENTER

The Little Compton Wellness Center located at 115 East Main Road supports a wide range of healthy aging services within the Town and its surrounding communities. Services include professional mental and physical support, vaccinations, exercise, food bank, and health-related educational programs for seniors, adults with disabilities, and persons with dementia.

CHURCH COMMUNITY HOUSING

Church Community Housing, a regional housing agency supported by federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, provides assistance and low interest loans to residents who need to retrofit existing homes, including handicap accessibility projects.

LITTLE COMPTON HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

In 1991, nine local caregiving organizations formed a network, the Little Compton Health and Human Resources Committee (LCHRC), for the following purposes: to inform residents of the Town about the resources which are available both locally and statewide, to identify future community needs and to assist in initiating solutions, and to increase the community's awareness of its own resources and its responsibility to all residents. This is not an active Town committee.

A COORDINATED EFFORT TO SUPPORT OR DISSEMINATE INFORMATION REGARDING AVAILABLE HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCE SERVICES WITHIN THE TOWN SHOULD BE REINVIGORATED.

7. TRANSPORTATION

THE PLAN MUST BE BASED ON AN INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED MAJOR CIRCULATION SYSTEMS, INCLUDING TRANSIT AND BIKEWAYS; STREET PATTERNS; AND ANY OTHER MODES OF TRANSPORTATION, INCLUDING PEDESTRIAN, IN COORDINATION WITH THE LAND USE ELEMENT.

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL § 45-22.2-6(b)(9)



O.E. Dubois, c. 1910. Little Compton Historical Society Collection

TRANSPORTATION - GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS

GOAL T1. PROVIDE A SAFE, EFFICIENT, AND MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT MINIMIZES IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND PRESERVES THE RURAL CHARACTER OF THE TOWN

- Policy T1.A. Improve the safety of all transportation modes through education, enforcement and design**
- Policy T1.B. Promote a *Complete Streets* approach to design and renovation of infrastructure that ensures safety and mobility of all users is considered**
- Policy T1.C. Expand transportation services within and outside the Town boundaries**
- Policy T1.D. Encourage development of walking trails, multi-use paths and bicycle lanes**
- Policy T1.E. Ensure that any transportation improvements and amenities including signage and guardrails are of appropriate scale, material and design and do not have a negative impact on the scenic and rural qualities of the Town**
- Policy T1.F. Provide an adequate amount of parking in a manner which preserves the historic and aesthetic character of the Commons and enhances pedestrian safety and experience**
- Policy T1.G. Track and coordinate investments in the transportation system with RIDOT and utility companies to minimize duplication of effort and costs**
- Policy T1.H. Avoid negative impacts to the environment and private property by responsibly managing stormwater runoff from the Town’s roadways**

<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action T1.a. Submit projects for inclusion in the State TIP (Transportation Improvement Plan)	Public Works; Town Administrator	Medium-term; Ongoing	<u>State Transportation Improvement Plan</u>
Action T1.b. Develop a circulation and parking plan for the Commons that incorporates pedestrian safety	Planning Board	Medium-term	<u>Barrington Village Center Parking Study</u>
Action T1.c. Improve parking facilities at Sakonnet Harbor	Public Works; Town Administrator	Medium-term	
Action T1.d. Develop a pavement management program and conduct annual road condition survey as a means to better prioritize and plan for future infrastructure investments	Public Works; Town Administrator	Short-term; Ongoing	<u>Town of Middletown Annual Pavement Management System Inventory and Assessment / Road Condition Survey</u>

Action T1.e. Work with RIPTA to identify, offer, and promote innovative transportation options that respond to the transportation needs of residents	Town Administrator	Short-term; Ongoing	<u>RIPTA Commuter Resources</u>
Action T1.f. Advocate for increased transportation options for individuals, including seniors and the disabled, with unmet transportation needs	Town Council	Ongoing	
Action T1.g. Identify potential locations for the installation of BMPs (Best Management Practices) in order to manage stormwater runoff from roadways and protect water quality of receiving waters	Planning Board; Public Works	Medium-term	<u>RI Stormwater Solutions</u>
			<u>Inventory of LID projects in RI</u>
<i>Timeframes: Short-term (0-2 years); Medium-term (3-6 years); Long-term (7-10 years)</i>			

INTRODUCTION

The following element provides an inventory and assessment of the transportation network within the Town. The Town understands the interconnected nature of the transportation network and the existing and future land uses. As a rural community, Little Compton lacks the residential density to support significant utilization of alternatives to the automobile for commuting and other daily transportation needs. As a result, the automobile is the primary mode of travel for most residents. However, the Town intends to take steps to promote a more diverse utilization of transportation modes to promote a cleaner and greener transportation system in the Town.

The Town supports the State’s Transportation policy and a Complete Streets approach that transportation plans and investments should consider the needs of all users of our roadways; including: pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists and citizens of all ages and abilities, including children, the elderly and the disabled. Furthermore, future transportation investments and improvements in the Town should:

- *PROMOTE SAFE CIRCULATION OF PEOPLE AND GOODS*
- *BE COMPATIBLE WITH THE AESTHETIC QUALITY OF THE COMMUNITY*
- *MINIMIZE NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS*
- *BE IN KEEPING WITH THE TOWN’S RURAL CHARACTER AND BE APPROPRIATELY SCALE*
- *ADEQUATELY ADDRESS STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND NOT CONTRIBUTE TO WATER QUALITY IMPAIRMENT*

MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

The following section provides an inventory and analysis of the modes of transportation currently serving the community. There is no bus route, rail service, or airport within the Town.

AUTOMOBILE

The road network in the Town is made up of a combination of state, local and private roads.

STATE ROADS

[2016 Official State Highway Map](#)

Access to the Town is principally provided by State roads from the north (Tiverton, RI) and from the East (Westport, MA). West Main Road (Route 77) enters the Town in the north western corner and runs the length of the Town terminating at Sakonnet Harbor. Stone Church Road (Route 179) and Crandall Road (Route 81) converge in the Adamsville Village area. Other State roadways in the Town include Meeting House Lane, Peckham Road, Cole Brook Road, East Main Road, Snell Road, Mullin Hill Road, and South of Commons Road.

[State of Rhode Island Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\) FFY 2017-2025](#)

In 2014, the Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program and the Rhode Island Department of Transportation completed a comprehensive update to the state's Highway Functional Classification System, as required by the Federal Highway Administration. Under 2012 federal transportation authorization (MAP-21), a roadways functional classification now has increased importance when the State determines project priority in development the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). See Table T1 for an illustration and listing of the functional classification of roadways within the Town.

The following projects within the Town are listed in the current TIP:

- **EAST MAIN RD (PECKHAM RD TO SIMMONS RD): RECLAIMING THE ROADWAY**
- **SNELL RD (EAST MAIN ROAD TO LONG HWY): RECLAIMING THE ROADWAY**
- **SOUTH OF COMMONS RD AND SIMMONS RD (BROWNELL RD TO EAST MAIN RD): RECLAIMING THE ROADWAY**

LOCAL ROADS

The Town has identified the following three priorities related to management of its 20.2 miles of local roadways. These management measures will assist the Town in controlling costs and impacts related to road projects.

(1) Pavement Management

As a management tool, the Town should implement a pavement management program, to assist in inventorying the condition of local roadways, prioritizing maintenance and scheduling improvements.

(2) Utility Coordination

Efforts should be made to coordinate investments in the transportation system with utility companies' roadwork.

(3) Stormwater Management

Within right-of-ways along roadways may be opportunities for the installation of BMPs (best management practices) to treat and manage stormwater runoff.

THE TOP PRIORITY FOR ANY TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT IN THE TOWN SHOULD BE SAFETY.

TRAFFIC GENERATORS

The Commons, being the center of activity for the Town, is the largest generator of traffic within the Town. Alternative circulation patterns have been discussed in the past. There is a need for the community to envision, evaluate and implement an improved circulation pattern and parking plan for the Commons. The plan must identify a solution which preserves the historic and aesthetic character of the Commons while also enhancing pedestrian safety and experience and accommodating bicycles.

BICYCLING & WALKING

There are no dedicated bicycle lanes or shared-use paths in the Town. However, many miles of the main roads within the Town are designated as suitable and most suitable for bicycling according to the State's Official Bicycle Map, [A Guide to Cycling in the Ocean State](#), produced by RIDOT in 2015. Most bicycling in the Town is recreational rather than a principal means of transportation. As a policy, the Town does support the promotion of bicycling and walking within the Town as a mode of transportation and the development of multi-use paths within the Town to serve as both a transportation and recreational resource for residents and visitors.

Additional bicycle and pedestrian amenities should be considered and incorporated during the planning process for the Commons circulation and parking plan.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

There is currently no public transit services (fixed-route or flex/dial-a-ride service) within the Town beyond the Town-owned senior van. A Park-n-Ride Lot located at the intersection of Fish Road and Route 24 in Tiverton provides the closest access point to Rhode Island Public Transit Authority

(RIPTA) bus service. The Park-n-Ride offers free parking and a bus stop along Route 60 that travels to both Newport and Providence. Given the high cost per rider of providing public transit to a rural community like the Town, alternative and creative solutions should be identified to address any unmet transportation needs of the community.

The Town will work with RIPTA to identify those alternative and creative transportation solutions and also to promote existing programs that may respond to the transportation needs of residents of the Town. Commuter Resources Rhode Island (CRRI) offers free carpool programs, such as NuRide, to Rhode Island residents who want to reduce their carbon footprint. Participation is free and includes benefits such as reduced parking in Downtown Providence.

BOAT

Sakonnet Harbor, originally known as Church Cove, provides boat access to the Town. It is a small-boat harbor on the northerly side of Sakonnet Point near the entrance to the Sakonnet River and is mostly used by recreational watercraft and fishing boats. There is no ferry service to or from Sakonnet Harbor.

The harbor is protected by an 800 foot breakwater. Initial work in the harbor by the US Army Corps of Engineers was completed in 1908 and involved constructing a 400-foot-long breakwater extending northerly from the western side of the harbor, and removing a ledge near the wharf to a depth of eight feet. In 1957, the Corps constructed a 400-foot-long extension to the breakwater and dredged the harbor to a depth of eight feet. The total area dredged was about 13 acres.

There is a need for improvements to public parking at Sakonnet Harbor and increased public access for use of the harbor. The Town is currently exploring options including property acquisition. Sakonnet Harbor is also discussed in the Economic Development Element and Recreation and Open Space Element.

ROADWAYS VULNERABLE TO SEA LEVEL RISE

Statewide Planning completed the Vulnerability of Transportation Assets to Sea Level Rise Study in 2015 which identifies transportation infrastructure potentially exposed under 1, 3 and 5 feet of sea level rise scenarios. The Vulnerability of Municipal Transportation Assets to Sea Level Rise and Storm Surge Study, completed in 2016 by Statewide Planning, builds upon the previous study by also factoring in storm surge. The Table below identifies the top ten roadways in the Town vulnerable to sea level rise with projected number of linear feet of inundation under various sea level rise scenarios. Sakonnet Point Road is the most vulnerable transportation asset within the Town to the impacts of sea level rise.

Table T1: Top Ten Roadways Vulnerable to Sea Level Rise

	<i>1 Ft of SLR</i>	<i>3 Ft of SLR</i>	<i>5 Ft of SLR</i>	<i>7 Ft of SLR</i>	<i>Total Linear Feet</i>	<i>Evacuation Route</i>	<i>Functional Classification</i>
Sakonnet Point Road	0	315	1,139	165	1,619	Yes	Major Collector
Round Pond Road	0	1,517	457	283	2,257	Yes	Local
Washington Road	0	601	224	327	1,151	Yes	Local
Oliver Lane	0	376	114	76	566	No	Local
Maryland Road	0	303	79	82	464	No	Local
Pennsylvania Road	0	519	409	20	948	No	Local
John Sisson Road	0	0	341	241	582	Yes	Local
Shaw Road	0	0	0	57	57	Yes	Local
South Shore Road	0	0	6	92	98	Yes	Minor Collector
Bluff Head Ave	0	0	82	146	228	No	Local

Source: http://www.planning.ri.gov/documents/sea_level/fact/LittleComptonfs.pdf

See Natural Hazards and Climate Change Element and the studies and factsheet linked to above in the Relevant Documents & Links to Resources Section for additional discussion and information.

SCENIC ROADWAYS

The importance of views from the Town’s roadways should not be overlooked. Farmland lining West Main Road afford outstanding views of the Sakonnet River, and many other routes provide interesting and attractive views of farmland, the shoreline, forest, fields and other natural areas, among many.

Maintaining the visual quality of the Town’s roadways is critical to ensure the scenic beauty of the Town. Designating roadways and vistas as "scenic roads" is a method of protecting the visual values of the roadways. State highways may be designated as scenic roads by the State's Scenic Highway Board. Currently there are eight roadways in the State designated as scenic roadways; none listed in the Town. The Town should investigate the potential benefits of having roadways in the Town listed as a State scenic roadway.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS & RESOURCES

2016 OFFICIAL STATE HIGHWAY MAP, RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.

A GUIDE TO CYCLING IN THE OCEAN STATE, RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, 2015.

RHODE ISLAND'S COMPLETE STREETS ACTION PLAN, RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, FEBRUARY 2015.

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FFY 2017-2025.

TRANSPORTATION 2035, STATE GUIDE PLAN ELEMENT 611, DECEMBER 2012, STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM.

VULNERABILITY OF MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION ASSETS TO SEA LEVEL RISE AND STORM SURGE, TECHNICAL PAPER 167, SEPTEMBER 2016, RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM.

VULNERABILITY OF MUNICIPAL TRANSPORTATION ASSETS TO SEA LEVEL RISE AND STORM SURGE - LITTLE COMPTON FACT SHEET.

VULNERABILITY OF TRANSPORTATION ASSETS TO SEA LEVEL RISE, TECHNICAL PAPER 164, JANUARY 2015, RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM.

8. NATURAL HAZARDS & CLIMATE CHANGE

THE PLAN MUST INCLUDE AN IDENTIFICATION OF AREAS THAT COULD BE VULNERABLE TO THE EFFECTS OF SEA-LEVEL RISE, FLOODING, STORM DAMAGE, DROUGHT, OR OTHER NATURAL HAZARDS. GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES MUST BE IDENTIFIED THAT WOULD HELP TO AVOID OR MINIMIZE THE EFFECTS THAT NATURAL HAZARDS POSE TO LIVES, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND PROPERTY.

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL § 45-22.2-6(b)(10)



NATURAL HAZARDS & CLIMATE CHANGE - GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS			
GOAL NH1. MINIMIZE THE RISK POSED TO LIVES, PROPERTY, INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT BY NATURAL HAZARDS AND CLIMATE CHANGE			
Policy NH1.A. Improve the community's awareness of threats from natural hazards and climate change through education and communication			
Policy NH1.B. Support coordinated municipal preparedness, response and recovery efforts to all disasters			
Policy NH1.C. Make the protection of Sakonnet Harbor area from impacts of natural hazards and sea level rise a priority			
Policy NH1.D. Limit development in flood-prone and erosion-prone areas			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action NH1.a. Work with partners, to identify appropriate adaptation measures specific to the Town that will increase the resiliency of the Town to climate change and sea level rise impacts	Planning Board; Town Administrator	Medium-term	<u>BI Harbors Sea Level Rise Study</u>
Action NH1.b. Educate owners of property at risk to impacts of sea level rise	Public Works; Town Administrator	Short-term	<u>STORMTOOLS</u>
Action NH1.c. Identify lands that can provide marsh migration areas for coastal wetlands in response to sea level rise and work with partners to prioritize preservation of these lands	Conservation Commission	Short-term	<u>SLAMM Maps</u>
Action NH1.d. Provide information for the public on the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan through a tax bill insert. Provide a copy of the plan on the Town website and at the library.	Town Administrator	Short-term; Medium-term; Long-term	
Action NH1.e. Investigate northerly wave attenuation capability for the harbor	Harbormaster	Short-term	<u>Brooklyn Wave Attenuation</u>
			<u>Kittery, ME Wave Attenuation Feasibility Study</u>

Action NH1.f. Review Town regulations to ensure new development conforms to DEM and CRMC setback requirements	Planning Board, Building Official	Short-term	
Action NH1.g. Restrict or prohibit certain uses, activities, and development from locating within flood hazard areas and require those uses, activities, and developments that do occur within flood hazard areas to be protected and/or flood-proofed against flood damage	Planning Board, Building Official	Short-term	
Action NH1.h. Develop a plan to handle evacuation of RV's and other items located at South Shore Beach and Round Meadows	Town Administrator	Medium-term	
Action NH1.i. Undertake eligible activities to gain entrance into NFIP's (National Flood Insurance Program) Community Rating System and save on flood insurance premiums	Town Administrator, Building Official	Short-term	
<i>Timeframes: Short-term (0-2 years); Medium-term (3-6 years); Long-term (7-10 years)</i>			

INTRODUCTION

Natural hazards and climate change are becoming an increasingly important consideration and component of land use planning as impacts could threaten public infrastructure, private property, public safety, and the environment. A goal of the Town is to reduce the risk to people and property from natural hazards and climate change. Increased awareness of impacts and specific local vulnerabilities from natural hazards will assist the Town in proactively planning for and implementing effective mitigation actions.

The Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program, Coastal Resources Management Council and other agencies and organizations in the State have been undergoing efforts to evaluate climate change and sea level rise and the resulting potential risks to the State's population, infrastructure and natural environment. A number of State studies and resources, listed in the previous section, were utilized to inform this element of the Little Compton Comprehensive Plan.

It is projected that natural hazards will be worsened by the effects of climate change. In general, long-term climate change is likely to cause the following impacts in Rhode Island:

- EXPEDITED SEA LEVEL RISE, WHICH WILL ALSO CAUSE MORE EXTREME HIGH TIDES AND GREATER AREAS OF SALTWATER INTRUSION IN STORM EVENTS
- INCREASED STORM SURGE LEVELS AND STRONGER, MORE FREQUENT COASTAL STORM EVENTS, WHICH MAY LEAD TO MORE FREQUENT AND FARTHER REACHING COASTAL FLOODING EVENTS, GREATER AREAS OF SALTWATER INTRUSION, AND INCREASED COASTAL EROSION
- HEAVIER AND MORE FREQUENT PRECIPITATION EVENTS, WHICH MAY CAUSE MORE RIVERINE AND FLASH FLOODING EVENTS
- LONGER PERIODS OF DROUGHT, WHICH MAY LEAD TO MORE FREQUENT WILDFIRES AND WATER AVAILABILITY CONCERNS
- INCREASING AIR AND WATER TEMPERATURES
- MORE FREQUENT HIGH HEAT DAYS AND HEAT WAVES

Due to its coastal location, the Town is vulnerable to a number of different storm events and impacts related to wave action, storm surge, coastal erosion, and flooding. The following element provides an overview of the areas and assets within the Town that could be vulnerable to the effects of natural hazards and sea level rise. Goals, policies, and implementation actions are identified to assist the Town in minimizing the effects that natural hazards pose to the lives and property of residents and visitors, as well, as public assets and the natural environment.

VULNERABILITY SUMMARY

PRIORITY NATURAL HAZARDS

The following priority natural hazards were identified for the Town as part of the Comprehensive Plan update process:

- WIND RELATED HAZARDS
- COASTAL EROSION
- SEVERE WINTER WEATHER
- FLOODING
- CLIMATE CHANGE & SEA LEVEL RISE

Impacts from these hazards pose significant threats to residents of the Town, property and natural environment and therefore should be factored into the Town's comprehensive planning process.

WIND RELATED HAZARDS

Hurricanes, storm surge and other high wind events are considered high risk factors for the Town. Given the geographical location of the Town, its rural character, its dependence on above ground utilities and no municipal water or sewer services, the Town is vulnerable to wind related hazards, such as hurricanes and storm surge. Downed power lines resulting from high wind events can cause loss of life and damage to property from a range of problems associated with loss of power such as fire, loss of communication to public safety personnel, loss of sanitary facilities and potable water or a blockage of a means to evacuate by debris.

In the Town, lands along the western and southern coastlines are the most vulnerable to impacts from storm surge. Low-lying coastal areas in close proximity to the shore, sounds or estuaries are exposed to the threat of flooding from wind events and storm surge. See *Hurricane Inundation* Map located in Chapter 11.

COASTAL EROSION

Storm events including hurricanes, Nor'easters and severe winter weather can accelerate natural shoreline erosion. CRMC shoreline change maps depict the location of the shoreline at a given time based on measurements from vertical aerial photographs. Detailed maps are available for the

Town and provide measurements for the total amount in feet and rate of change of the mean high water mark for the period between 1939 and 2003. For example, sections of the shoreline south of Round Pond have eroded over 100 feet during the 64 year period and the South Shore Beach shoreline has eroded anywhere from 33 feet to 107 feet in sections. More frequent and severe storm events due to climate change is anticipated to contribute to an acceleration of coastal erosion and dune destabilization.

SEVERE WINTER WEATHER

Severe winter storm events impact the Town to a higher degree when power outages occur as a result of downed power lines. People and property are a risk due to loss of communication with public safety personnel, loss of sanitary facilities or potable water or a blockage of a means to evacuate by debris or non-passable roadways from snow or ice. Past blizzards (1978, 1996, 1997, 2005 and 2015) provide examples of storm events that blocked roadways and left residents without power for basic services.

FLOODING

Coastal flooding and erosion are considered a higher risk due to the Town's coastal exposure and geographical location. Areas of frequent coastal flooding such as Round Pond Road or Washington Road are of particular concern with hurricanes and storm surge events. Flash flooding, stream flooding and dam failures are all risk factors that occur less frequently, but have an impact on the Town. To date the Town has not experienced a Dam failure. That being said, the failure of a Dam could result in loss of life or damage to property due to the location and sizes of the dams in the Town. Flash flooding and stream flooding has affected several areas in Town historically and should be considered a higher level of threat.

Low-lying roads within the Town include John Dyer Road, Meeting House Lane, Round Pond Road and Swamp Road that have a history of flooding due to heavy rain events or Nor'easters. There are a few areas in the Town that could have access cut off due to inundation of low-lying roadways. These areas include Sakonnet Harbor, Round Pond, Indian Rock Acres and the Town's Northwest coastline. Historically Round Pond has been the only area that has had access cut off due to flooding, while the other locations have had nominal flooding which did not block access for any significant period of time.

The Town is currently exploring undertaking activities that will qualify the Town to gain entrance into FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS) program. This program will provide property owners of the Town discounts on National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) premiums.

CLIMATE CHANGE & SEA LEVEL RISE

The main issues surrounding climate change are rising global temperatures, and the resulting increase in weather extremes such as more frequent floods, droughts and rising sea levels. Recent NOAA scenarios, which CRMC adopted in 2016 for planning purposes (CRMP Section 145), project 2 meters (6.6 feet) of sea level rise by 2100. Little Compton is one of the more susceptible communities in the State to the impacts from projected sea level rise. It is anticipated that sea level rise will have a substantial impact on coastal features, marshes, wetlands and coastline habitat in the Town. As a result, climate change poses a major threat to the marine and wildlife populations of the Town.

According to the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC), potential effects of a rise in sea level include:

- INCREASED EXTENT OF FLOOD DAMAGE AND GREATER VULNERABILITY TO STORM SURGES IN LOWER ELEVATIONS
- GREATER RISK TO INFRASTRUCTURE— ROADS, STORMWATER MANAGEMENT, UTILITIES—IN AREAS MORE PRONE TO FLOODING
- SALTWATER INTRUSION INTO AQUIFERS CONTAMINATING WATER SUPPLIES
- HIGHER WATER TABLES RESULTING IN SUBSURFACE ISSUES SUCH AS WET BASEMENTS
- A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN INCIDENCE OF EXTREME HIGH TIDE LEVELS
- MORE COASTAL LANDS BECOMING SUSCEPTIBLE TO EROSION DUE TO INCREASED INTENSITY AND FREQUENCY OF STORMS
- A NET LOSS OF COASTAL MARSHES THAT BECOME INUNDATED AT A GREATER RATE, RESULTING IN A LOSS OF SALT MARSH VEGETATION AND AN ALTERATION OF HABITAT TYPES

VULNERABLE ASSETS

The Town does not have a critical facility or bridge located within the areas of concern under the various sea level rise scenarios. However, other critical infrastructure potentially at risk from natural hazards in general and impacts of climate change include:

- HAROLD WATSON RESERVOIR – CITY OF NEWPORT
- WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY – TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON
- SIMMONS MILL POND PRESERVE DAM – STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
- SAKONNET HARBOR – TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON
- SAKONNET POINT MARINA – PRIVATE
- ROUNDMEADOWS CAMPGROUND (SOUTH SHORE ROAD) - PRIVATE

DUE TO ITS RURAL NATURE AND LIMITED DEVELOPMENT, THE TOWN HAS LESS RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES AT RISK TO SEA LEVEL RISE. ACCORDING TO THE *SOCIOECONOMICS OF SEA LEVEL RISE* REPORT, THERE ARE FIVE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES IN LITTLE COMPTON THAT ARE VULNERABLE AT THE FIVE FEET OF SEA LEVEL RISE SCENARIO. THERE ARE NO RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES AT RISK AT THE 1 FOOT AND 3 FEET SEA LEVEL RISE SCENARIOS IN THE TOWN.

SAKONNET HARBOR

Concern has been raised for the potential impacts of sea level rise, coupled with wave action associated with major storms, for Sakonnet Harbor. In an effort to enhance the level of protection of the community's mooring field and other infrastructure assets within the harbor, the Town would like to identify natural or structural solutions to provide northerly wave attenuation for Sakonnet Harbor. A wave attenuation feasibility study could be conducted in order to explore solutions, investigate impacts, identify permitting requirements and estimate cost versus benefits related to such a project for Sakonnet Harbor.

VULNERABLE ROADS

According to the *Vulnerability of Municipal Transportation Assets to Sea Level Rise and Storm Surge* study, two miles of roadway inundation can be expected in the Town. Of this, 82% (1.50 miles) are local. The Town's roads (state and local) are the 17th most vulnerable in the state (out of 39 cities and towns) to sea level rise and the impacts of 100-year storm surge events. Sakonnet Point Road is listed as the most vulnerable transportation asset to the impacts of sea level rise within the Town and the 67th most vulnerable roadway in the state. Round Pond Road and

Washington Road are the second and third most vulnerable transportation assets within the Town to the impacts of sea level rise. See the Transportation Element for additional discussion and information including a detailed table of the top ten most vulnerable roadways in the Town to sea level rise.

The Town should consider submitting projects for consideration in the State Transportation Improvement Plan, or other sources of Federal and State funding, related to mitigation of these vulnerable roadways.

IMPACTS OF SEA LEVEL RISE ON WETLANDS

Salt marshes are among the most diverse and productive habitats. They help maintain water quality and reduce coastal erosion and infrastructure damage from storms by absorbing wave energy. Today, many of the State's remaining marshes are threatened by sea level rise. A considerable percentage of coastal wetlands may be permanently lost by the end of this century unless upland areas abutting coastal wetlands are protected or otherwise set aside for the purpose of providing wetland migration.

The Rhode Island Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) project analyzed the potential impacts to coastal wetlands from sea level rise and the landward migration potential of coastal wetlands. An existing inventory of coastal wetlands based on the 2010 National Wetlands Inventory, calculates 116.2 acres of irregularly flooded (high marsh) salt marsh and 43.6 acres of regularly flooded (low marsh) salt marsh exist in the Town for a total of approximately 160 acres. The report estimates the marsh habitat loss under specified sea level rise scenarios for the Town. Under 1 foot of SLR, the Town will lose an estimated 24.8 acres of salt marsh; under 3 feet of SLR, the Town will lose an estimated 72.5 acres of salt marsh; and under 5 feet of sea level rise, the Town will lose an estimated 96.2 acres of salt marsh. See SLAMM maps for depictions of areas of persistent marsh habitat and new marsh habitat for the Town under the three sea level rise scenarios in Chapter 11.

The report also estimates the freshwater wetland losses under specified sea level rise scenarios for the Town. Under 1 foot of SLR, the Town will lose an estimated 12.1 acres of freshwater wetlands; under 3 feet of SLR, the Town will lose an estimated 23.1 acres of freshwater wetlands; and under 5 feet of sea level rise, the Town will lose an estimated 47 acres of freshwater wetlands.

The Town will identify affected upland areas that will likely be future coastal wetlands, and then use the information to develop and implement adaptive management strategies to protect and conserve these abutting upland areas and restore degraded wetlands.

SHELTERS & EVACUATION

The Town has a high percentage of elderly residents who are more likely to need assistance during times of evacuation. With this population in mind, the Town has taken the initiative to encourage residents with special needs to enroll in the Rhode Island Special Needs Emergency Registry (RISNER). This registry has provided a system to identify residents of the Town who will require additional assistance during emergencies.

The American Red Cross has developed a regional system for emergency mass care facilities. Residents of the Town evacuated during times of emergencies are sheltered at the regional mass care facility located at the Tiverton Middle School in the Town of Tiverton, RI. In the event of overcrowding, the Town can open the Wilbur-McMahon School to serve as an emergency mass care facility. Following recent renovations in 2014, the facility has been authorized to be used as the main emergency shelter due should the magnitude of an event require the Town to shelter residents within the Town's limits.

The Town has identified as part of the Hazard Mitigation Plan Update implementing the certification of a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). A CERT is a team of volunteers who will be trained in emergency response needs such as traffic control during times of natural disasters and other emergencies.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS & RESOURCES

The Town of Little Compton Draft Hazard Mitigation Plan was resubmitted to RIEMA for plan review in 2017.

The revised Little Compton Emergency Operations Plan details the Town's responsibilities and actions in the event of an extraordinary emergency situation associated with natural, man-made and technological disasters.

CRMC's Shoreline Change Maps are available at http://www.crmc.ri.gov/maps/maps_shorechange.html

Rhode Island Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) Project, Summary Report, March 2015.

Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) Maps, Little Compton.

The purpose of the SLAMM project is to show how coastal wetlands will likely transition and migrate onto adjacent upland areas under projected sea level rise scenarios of 1, 3 and 5 feet.

Socioeconomics of Sea Level Rise, Technical Paper #168, 2016, Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program available at

http://www.planning.ri.gov/documents/sea_level/socio/Technical%20Paper%20168.pdf.

Socioeconomics of Sea Level Rise Coastal Community Fact Sheet for Little Compton is available at

http://www.planning.ri.gov/documents/sea_level/socio/PDF%20-%20Little%20Compton%20Factsheet%20and%20Data%20Profile.pdf

This project aims to identify the number and demographic and socioeconomic makeup of the people located within multiple sea level rise inundation scenarios.

STORMTOOLS offers public access to interactive maps with property specific GIS data to better understand the risks of coastal inundation.

Vulnerability of Transportation Assets to Sea Level Rise, Technical Paper 164, January 2015, Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program available

at http://www.planning.ri.gov/documents/sea_level/2015/TP164.pdf. Using a GIS-based methodology, this statewide study analyses the

transportation assets potentially exposed under 1, 3 and 5 feet of sea level rise.

Vulnerability of Municipal Transportation Assets to Sea Level Rise and Storm Surge, Technical Paper #167, 2016, Rhode Island Statewide Planning

Program available at <http://www.planning.ri.gov/geodeminfo/data/slr.php>. This report indicates local infrastructure and transportation assets

impacted at various sea level rise scenarios, and also factors in storm surge.

Vulnerability of Municipal Transportation Assets to Sea Level Rise and Storm Surge Little Compton Fact Sheet available at

http://www.planning.ri.gov/documents/sea_level/fact/LittleComptonfs.pdf

9. LAND USE

THE PLAN MUST CONTAIN A LAND USE COMPONENT THAT DESIGNATES THE PROPOSED GENERAL DISTRIBUTION AND GENERAL LOCATION AND INTERRELATIONSHIPS OF LAND USES INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, OPEN SPACE, AGRICULTURE, RECREATION FACILITIES, AND OTHER CATEGORIES OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE USES OF LAND. THE LAND USE COMPONENT SHALL BE BASED UPON THE REQUIRED PLAN CONTENT AS STATED IN THIS SECTION. IT SHALL RELATE THE PROPOSED STANDARDS OF POPULATION DENSITY AND BUILDING INTENSITY TO THE CAPACITY OF THE LAND AND AVAILABLE OR PLANNED FACILITIES AND SERVICES. THE LAND USE COMPONENT MUST CONTAIN AN ANALYSIS OF THE INCONSISTENCY OF EXISTING ZONING DISTRICTS, IF ANY, WITH PLANNED FUTURE LAND USE. THE LAND USE COMPONENT SHALL SPECIFY THE PROCESS AND SCHEDULE BY WHICH THE ZONING ORDINANCE AND ZONING MAP SHALL BE AMENDED TO CONFORM TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND SHALL BE INCLUDED AS PART OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM.

The Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act, RIGL § 45-22.2-6(b)(11)



LAND USE - GOALS, POLICIES & ACTIONS			
GOAL LU1. ACHIEVE A LAND USE PATTERN THAT PRESERVES OPEN SPACE, AESTHETIC QUALITIES AND THE TOWN'S RURAL HERITAGE			
<p>Policy LU1.A. Ensure that municipal land use regulations are consistent with the goals and policies set forth within this comprehensive plan</p> <p>Policy LU1.B. Retain low-density development pattern that is consistent with no public infrastructure such as sewer and public water, is consistent with the historic rural character of the Town and is sensitive to the environment</p> <p>Policy LU1.C. Ensure future development will have as limited an impact on scenic resources and the quality of life of residents as possible</p> <p>Policy LU1.D. Support the rural landscape by creating an economic climate that enhances the viability of working lands and conserves natural lands</p>			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action LU1.a. Support partners in their continuing efforts to acquire land and development rights for conservation purposes	Conservation Commission	Ongoing	<u>Putting Smart Growth to Work in Rural Communities (ICMA)</u>
Action LU1.b. Update the design booklet for property owners considering new construction or renovation, encouraging compatibility with the Town's traditional vernacular. Consider inclusion of landscaping best practices.	Conservation Commission in partnership with SPA	Medium-term	<u>Hillsborough CA Design Guidelines</u>
Action LU1.c. Advocate for the Town to digitize its Tax Maps and to begin building a Geographic Information System to aid in decision-making	Tax Assessor, Conservation Commission	Medium-term	<u>RIGIS Examples of Municipal Digital Maps</u>
Action LU1.d. Conduct a build-out analysis (assessment of future development capacity) to be incorporated in next Comprehensive Plan Update	Planning Board	Medium-term	<u>New Shoreham Comp Plan Build-Out Analysis (pg. 11-5 to 11-11)</u>
			<u>Statewide Planning - Land Use Standards (pg. 15)</u>
Action LU1.e. Review results of build-out analysis and make determination if subdivision and/or zoning regulations should be amended	Planning Board	Long-term	
Action LU1.f. Participate in regional planning efforts with appropriate partners and neighboring communities	Planning Board; Town Administrator	Ongoing	

GOAL LU2. PROTECT THE COMMUNITY FROM POTENTIAL NEGATIVE IMPACTS RESULTING FROM DEVELOPMENT IN NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES			
Policy LU2.A. Investigate potential impacts to Little Compton residents, properties, infrastructure, municipal facilities and services, and environment from the proposed casino in Tiverton and advocate for the Town's interest			
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Links to Best Practices / Resources</i>
Action LU2.a. Consider funding a study and/or request a Neighboring Community Impact Report that analyses potential impacts specific to the Town from the approved development of a casino in Tiverton, The study should address potential impacts on roadways (traffic and condition), government resources (increase in public safety demands and visitors to publicly-owned destinations), and any environmental or societal impacts	Town Council; Town Administrator	Short-term	
Action LU2.b. Advocate for a community mitigation fund to offset any costs to the community as a result of casino operation	Town Council; Town Administrator	Short-term	<u>Mass Gaming Community Mitigation Fund</u>
<i>Timeframes: Short-term (0-2 years); Medium-term (3-6 years); Long-term (7-10 years)</i>			

INTRODUCTION

The Town is a representation of a New England seaside town, and is generally characterized as a rural community. The sum of its many parts -- the Commons and village of Adamsville, the farmland, the seasonal shorefront houses, and the unparalleled shoreline environment -- equals a landscape unlike any other in Rhode Island.

Land use planning is necessary to provide for the protection, appropriate development, use and management of land and natural resources. The Land Use Element is a culmination of the goals and policies discussed in the previous element of this Comprehensive Plan.

Orderly development ensures that suitable land will be available for development to serve future generations, and land better suited to remain open space for purposes which may include groundwater protection, landscape preservation, wildlife conservation, or other health, safety and welfare purposes will remain undeveloped. The following element includes goals, policies and actions that should be implemented to ensure preservation of the Town's existing character and to guide appropriate development.

Priority land use themes:

- MAINTAIN A LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PATTERN AND RURAL LANDSCAPE
PROMOTE ACTIVE AGRICULTURAL LAND USE
- PROTECT WATER QUALITY AND GROUNDWATER RESOURCES
- CONTINUE TO PROTECT OPEN SPACE INCLUDING FARMLAND AND CRITICAL HABITAT
- PRESERVE VILLAGES AS MIXED USE HISTORIC CENTERS OF ACTIVITY THAT OFFER SERVICES AND GATHERING SPACES FOR THE COMMUNITY
- ENSURE NEW RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT HAS A HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EXISTING HISTORIC, RURAL AND SCENIC CHARACTER OF THE COMMUNITY

EXISTING LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

The Town's total area encompasses approximately 14,850 acres, of which 1,024 acres are inland open water and 2,200 acres are wetland. See Map *Existing Land Use* in Chapter 11 for an illustration of existing land use as categorized by RIGIS, the State's Geographic Information System.

Development in the Town is relatively homogeneous. Single family residences on large lots dominate the landscape, interspersed with sizable areas of agriculture, forested areas and wetlands. Existing development of shorefront areas is somewhat more diverse than inland areas, ranging in intensity of use from conservation land to large acreage residential estates to the high density cottage development at Briggs Beach. Large

areas of agricultural lands are located throughout the Town, primarily west of Long Highway. There is no intensive commercial or industrial development. The village of Adamsville and the Commons form the Town's main commercial areas and the center of Town government.

The primary factors which impact land use in the Town include:

- COMPLETE COMMUNITY RELIANCE ON GROUNDWATER FOR DRINKING WATER SUPPLY
- NO PUBLIC SEWER SYSTEM
- ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS, INCLUDING SUBSTANTIAL WETLAND AREA, COASTAL PONDS, FLOOD HAZARD AREAS, PUBLIC DRINKING WATER WATERSHED AREA
- A GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION CONSIDERED SOMEWHAT REMOTE AND ARGUABLY INCONVENIENT TO HIGHWAYS AND URBAN AREAS

A combination of these factors and strong resident sentiment that the unique rural character of the Town be preserved serves to guide future land use in the community.

EXISTING ZONING

The Town's zoning ordinance reinforce a general land use pattern of business confined to the traditional villages and low density residential in a large majority of the Town. The Town's existing zoning ordinance, originally enacted in 1968, was amended in its entirety in 1987 and has been periodically amended since then. Agricultural development is allowed anywhere in Town in the Residence District. The Zoning ordinance separates the Town into two zoning districts, as follows (see *Zoning Map* in Chapter 11).

1. **RESIDENCE (R) DISTRICT.** Over 90% of the Town's land area is within the Residence District. These lands are considered suitable for residential, agricultural and related development at densities consistent with the ability of the soils to yield potable domestic water supplies and provide for domestic waste disposal. A minimum land area of two acres is required within the Residence District.
2. **BUSINESS (B) DISTRICT.** This district includes areas of existing and proposed limited business and commercial development within and in the vicinity of village centers (Adamsville, the Commons/Meeting House Lane, and Sakonnet Point) where patterns of business development have been established. There is no minimum lot size requirement in the Business District but lots must be able to accommodate the required off-street parking and loading area, safe and adequate water supply and OWTS. The business district in Adamsville supports light retail and office uses, while the district at Sakonnet Point is largely marine-related businesses, a restaurant and residential uses. The Commons business zone includes light retail and office, government and institutional, and recreational uses.

FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use Map is a policy statement directing municipal decision-makers as to what types of land uses are desired in each area of Town and setting a vision for future growth over the next 20-years. The Future Land Use Map serves as the underpinning for local zoning regulations that legally regulate development in the community.

Recommended future land uses, as illustrated through the *Future Land Use Map* located in Chapter 11, were determined based upon the Town's historic development pattern, the natural characteristics of the land, the transportation network, the availability of services and facilities, and the need to protect water quality, environmental quality, and the scenic quality of the community. The updated Future Land Use Map includes the categories described below, meets current State requirements and is consistent with CRMC Water Type Classifications.

Description of future land use categories:

OPEN SPACE / CONSERVED LAND

The major change to the Future Land Use Map in this Comprehensive Plan update is the expansion of land designated as “open space / conserved land.” The Town has made substantial gains in the conservation of open space and agricultural land. This future land use category includes properties conserved through acquisition of development rights and fee simple ownership by the Town, State, and Federal Governments, as well as, private conservation organizations.

BUSINESS / MUNICIPAL

The future land use category of “business/municipal” includes existing commercial areas or land currently zoned business. This category includes the villages of Adamsville and The Commons and the harbor area Sakonnet Point. Also included in this future land use category is existing municipal properties and functions such as Town Hall, the School, Police/Fire Station, and the Transfer Station.

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL / AGRICULTURAL

The majority of the land in the Town is categorized as low density *residential/agricultural*. Scenic landscapes of rural fields, narrow lanes, stonewalls, ponds, and coastal views provide the setting for shingled cottages and farmhouses. New residential development in this designation should be located on large lots, preserve historic and significant natural features, and blend into the landscape as much as possible.

THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP IS CONSISTENT WITH EXISTING ZONING AND, THEREFORE, DOES NOT REQUIRE ANY ZONING AMENDMENTS.

SCENIC RESOURCES

A goal of this Comprehensive Plan is to ensure future development does not negatively impact the scenic resources and quality life of the residents of the Town. Visual quality in the environment makes a significant contribution to the Town's overall quality of life. The character and interplay between topographic features, natural and man-made landmarks, the form of open space and development, as well as historic and culturally meaningful structures and sites, has created a community identity unlike any other in Rhode Island. Residential development and other associated land use activities place pressure on the Town's visual integrity. The Town must guide these changes to avoid destroying the original character of the place.

Incongruous elements in, or aberrations to this perceived landscape or the lack of a perceivable form and order adversely affects residents' and visitors' attitudes toward the community. As such, the erosion of the visual and cultural character of a community can have not only psychological impacts, but also economic impacts through depreciated real estate and failing marketability to prospective new businesses and residents.

Efforts which focus on identifying, protecting and preserving the scenic landscape are one way to maintain a balance between the preservation of the traditional landscape and demands for new development. The Town should continue to pursue the protection of visually important lands through a variety of techniques including conservation easements and visual easements.

Other measures the Town should undertake to remain scenic with an aesthetically cohesive built environment include establishing design guidelines and/or updating the design booklet for property owners considering new construction or renovation that encourages compatibility with the Town's traditional vernacular, and taking measures to preserve the traditional working landscape by promoting participation in the State's Farm, Forest and Open Space Program by local agricultural landowners.

In addition to agriculture's important role in the local economy, the Town recognizes that vast expanses of farmland provide residents with scenic open space and vistas which contributes to their overall health and welfare and community character. As of 2016, there were 168 parcels totaling more than 3,472 acres in the Town that were included in the Farm, Forest, and Open Space program. Rhode Island law (44- 27) allows property enrolled in the Farm, Forest and Open Space Program to be assessed at its

current use, not its value for development. The purpose of the law is not to reduce property taxes, but to conserve Rhode Island's productive agricultural and forest land by reducing the chance it will have to be sold for development.

GIS

The Town should consider building a Geographic Information System (GIS) program to improve decision making, service delivery and citizen engagement. GIS can be a very useful and important tool in land use planning. GIS databases contain layers of geographic information and their relational databases that may be projected into maps. GIS can be used to produce maps of existing conditions in a community (i.e. prime agricultural land, wetlands, flood hazard areas), and can be used for analyses, such as, the identification of lands suitable and unsuitable for development. It can also be useful in identifying and prioritizing lands for conservation by displaying those lands already conserved and the locations of critical natural resources. Many communities utilize GIS to maintain their parcel databases and to edit parcels following the recording of subdivisions.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS & RESOURCES

LAND USE 2025: RHODE ISLAND STATE LAND USE POLICIES AND PLAN, STATE GUIDE PLAN ELEMENT 121, RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION, DIVISION OF PLANNING, 2006.

10. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The following Implementation Program defines and schedules the specific actions to be undertaken by the Town in order to achieve the goals of the Plan. These actions are also listed within each of the corresponding Chapters of the Plan in the Goals, Policies and Actions Tables. None of the actions are currently included in the Town’s Capital Improvement Program. This Implementation Program will be used to assist the Town in implementing the plan. The Planning Board will utilize the Implementation Program to evaluate progress on Plan implementation annually. The Implementation Program is sorted by timeframe and the timeframes are as follows: Short-term (0-2 years); Medium-term (3-6 years); and Long-term (7-10 years).



ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIMEFRAME
Action ED2.c. Amend zoning ordinance as needed to provide adequate standards which permit and support agricultural businesses while ensuring that they are compatible with neighboring residential uses and the overall environmental, aesthetic and economic goals of the community	Planning Board, Town Council	Short-term
Action FS2.a. Conduct a waste audit of municipal operations, private haulers and citizens who utilize the Town's transfer station	Public Works Director; Town Administrator	Short-term
Action FS2.b. Conduct public education and outreach regarding recycling and encourage composting	Conservation Commission	Short-term
Action FS3.c. Develop guidelines for residential wind and solar. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to provide definitions, use tables, policies and procedures which protect neighboring property and rural character.	Planning Board; Town Council	Short-term
Action FS4.a. Establish a Technology Committee whose purpose is to promote internet and technology literacy, bring faster, cheaper and more reliable internet to the Town. Establish public Wi-Fi hot spots at the School, Community Center, and Town Hall. Offer continuing education at the school for residents on computer skills and using mobile devices.	Town Council; School	Short-term
Action FS4.b. Expanding on reverse 911, develop a municipal communications strategy to get important information out to residents including related to public health, accidents, road closures, Town meetings, etc.	Town Clerk; Town Administrator	Short-term
Action H2.a. In partnership with other municipalities, participate in review and update of current affordable housing legislation	Town Council	Short-term
Action H2.b. Maintain an inventory of affordable housing in the Town beyond the units that currently meet the state's regulatory definition of Low-and-Moderate Income Housing (i.e. are not deed restricted)	Little Compton Housing Trust	Short-term
Action HC2.c. Explore the establishment of a voluntary Historic District and financial and other incentives to encourage property owners to opt-in.	Planning Board	Short-term
Action HC3.a. Enact a lighting ordinance that addresses artificial light at night to limit night sky pollution and glare and promote energy conservation	Town Council; Planning Board	Short-term
Action HC3.b. Review and revise existing noise ordinance to reduce or eliminate, where possible, excessive noise and related adverse conditions in the community	Town Council; Planning Board	Short-term

Action HC3.c. Initiate a public awareness campaign regarding preservation of dark skies	Planning Board	Short-term
Action LU2.a. Consider funding a study and/or request a Neighboring Community Impact Report that analyses potential impacts specific to the Town from the proposed casino in Tiverton, The study should address potential impacts on roadways (traffic and condition), government resources (increase in public safety demands and visitors to publicly-owned destinations), and any environmental or societal impacts	Town Council; Town Administrator	Short-term
Action LU2.b. Advocate for a community mitigation fund to offset any costs to the community as a result of casino operation	Town Council; Town Administrator	Short-term
Action NH1.b. Educate owners of property at risk to impacts of sea level rise	Public Works; Town Administrator	Short-term
Action NH1.c. Identify lands that can provide marsh migration areas for coastal wetlands in response to sea level rise and work with partners to prioritize preservation of these lands	Conservation Commission	Short-term
Action NH1.e. Investigate northerly wave attenuation capability for the harbor	Harbormaster	Short-term
Action NH1.f. Review Town regulations to ensure new development conforms to DEM and CRMC setback requirements	Planning Board, Building Official	Short-term
Action NH1.g. Restrict or prohibit certain uses, activities, and development from locating within flood hazard areas and require those uses, activities, and developments that do occur within flood hazard areas to be protected and/or flood-proofed against flood damage	Planning Board, Building Official	Short-term
Action NH1.i. Undertake eligible activities to gain entrance into NFIP's (National Flood Insurance Program) Community Rating System and save on flood insurance premiums	Town Administrator, Building Official	Short-term
Action NR1.a. Review new State wetlands setback regulations, identify critical resource areas, and petition State for additional protections for critical resource areas in the Town	Conservation Commission; Planning Board; Town Council	Short-term
Action NR1.d. Distribute educational materials (tax bill insert, website, etc.) relating to steps residents can take individually to prevent non-point source pollution	Planning Board, Tax Assessor	Short-term

Action NR1.e. Conduct a Town-wide hydrologic study to provide a quantitative assessment of groundwater resources	Town Council, Planning Board, Conservation Commission	Short-term
Action NR2.a. Create a database of approved onsite wastewater treatment systems and associated maintenance agreements. Ensure contracts are renewed on an annual bases.	Building Official, Town Clerk	Short-term
Action NR3.c. Establish a subcommittee to focus on water protection efforts	Town Council, Conservation Commission	Short-term
Action RC1.h. Establish an annual maintenance and operations program for park and open space properties owned by the Town, such as Town Way, Town Landing, Taylors Lane, Harbor, Recreation Fields, Basketball court, tennis courts, etc.	Town Administrator; Public Works	Short-term
Action RC1.i. Identify and prioritize conservation of undeveloped lands consisting of significant coastal habitat	Conservation Commission	Short-term
Action ED1.a. Amend zoning ordinance as needed to provide adequate standards which permit and support home-based businesses while ensuring that they are compatible with neighboring residential uses and the overall environmental, aesthetic and economic goals of the community	Planning Board, Town Council	Medium-term
Action ED1.b. Establish design guidelines for the appearance of home-based business	Planning Board, Town Council (in partnership with Little Compton Historical Society)	Medium-term
Action ED2.b. Offer informational sessions on the State's Farm, Forest and Open Space Program	Conservation Commission, Tax Assessor, LCACT	Medium-term
Action FS3.e. Implement a program to offer rain barrels to residents	Conservation Commission	Medium-term
Action H1.a. Conduct a survey in order to evaluate demand for senior housing and affordable housing	Little Compton Housing Trust	Medium-term
Action H2.c. Implement a "capturing existing housing" program using repair grant funding, tax assessment subsidies and deed restrictions	Town Council	Medium-term
Action H2.d. Develop a municipal subsidies system that incentivizes property owners willing to deed-restrict accessory dwelling units and other types of housing units that the Town has identified as a local need	Planning Board; Town Council	Medium-term

Action HC1.b. Explore mechanisms to encourage the long-term protection of historic stone walls including tax exemptions and easements	Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Town Council	Medium-term
Action HC2.a. Establish a committee that will: maintain a list of historic and cultural assets in Town, work with RIHPHC to develop a list of properties within Little Compton that are potentially eligible for listing on the National Register, and encourage property owners to nominate qualified properties to the National Register	Town Council	Medium-term
Action LU1.b. Update the design booklet for property owners considering new construction or renovation, encouraging compatibility with the Town's traditional vernacular. Consider inclusion of landscaping best practices.	Conservation Commission in partnership with SPA	Medium-term
Action LU1.c. Advocate for the Town to digitize its Tax Maps and to begin building a Geographic Information System to aid in decision-making	Tax Assessor, Conservation Commission	Medium-term
Action LU1.d. Conduct a build-out analysis (assessment of future development capacity) to be incorporated in next Comprehensive Plan Update	Planning Board	Medium-term
Action NH1.a. Work with partners, to identify appropriate adaptation measures specific to the Town that will increase the resiliency of the Town to climate change and sea level rise impacts	Planning Board; Town Administrator	Medium-term
Action NH1.h. Develop a plan to handle evacuation of RV's and other items located at South Shore Beach and Round Meadows	Town Administrator	Medium-term
Action NR1.c. Educate landowners on best management practices lawn care and landscaping	Conservation Commission	Medium-term
Action NR1.f. Work with partners to implement a water quality monitoring program of ponds for early detection of trends including nitrate loading	Conservation Commission	Medium-term
Action NR2.b. Apply for the Community Septic System Loan Program (CSSLP) to provide low-interest loans to homeowners to cover costs associated with septic system repairs or upgrades (requires preparation of an onsite wastewater management plan)	Town Council	Medium-term
Action NR3.d. Establish an education initiative to encourage participation in the State's Farm, Forest and Open Space Program	Town Council, Conservation Commission	Medium-term

Action RC1.d. Create and disseminate a blueways map and guide to promote paddling	Harbor Commission; Beach Commission; Recreation Committee	Medium-term
Action RC1.e. Develop and implement a fiscally feasible Recreation Master Plan that serves the long-term needs of residents	Planning Board; Recreation Committee; Town Administrator	Medium-term
Action RC1.f. Determine if need exists for additional efforts related to the prevention, control and clean-up of litter, and support Earth Day and coastal cleanup efforts	Town Council; Conservation Commission	Medium-term
Action RC1.g. Consider establishing an "adopt-a-spot" program to encourage ongoing engagement in addition to annual scheduled cleanups	Public Works; Conservation Commission	Medium-term
Action T1.b. Develop a circulation and parking plan for the Commons that incorporates pedestrian safety	Planning Board	Medium-term
Action T1.c. Improve parking facilities at Sakonnet Harbor	Public Works; Town Administrator	Medium-term
Action T1.g. Identify potential locations for the installation of BMPs (Best Management Practices) in order to manage stormwater runoff from roadways and protect water quality of receiving waters	Planning Board; Public Works	Medium-term
Action H2.e. Establish an affordable housing trust fund for the Town; explore funding mechanism options	Little Compton Housing Trust	Medium-term
Action FS1.a. Conduct detailed existing conditions and physical assessments for all municipal buildings, recommend capital improvements to extend the useful life of each facility and annual maintenance needs	Public Works Director; Town Administrator	Long-term
Action FS3.d. Assess future opportunities for water use efficiency in municipal operations including the recycling of waters	Conservation Commission	Long-term
Action H3.a. Explore cooperative acquisitions that meet the dual goals of land conservation and affordable housing development	Little Compton Housing Trust; LCACT; Planning Board	Long-term
Action LU1.e. Review results of build-out analysis and make determination if subdivision and/or zoning regulations should be amended	Planning Board	Long-term
Action NR1.b. Work with partners to provide guidance and tools for farmers regarding identification of non-point source pollution, best management practices, and resources available	Conservation Commission; LCACT	Long-term

Action RC1.b. Acquire property to increase public access to the harbor	Town Council	Long-term
Action ED2.a. Promote options to offer no-cost or low-cost leasing of idle and conserved agricultural lands to farmers	LCACT, Finance, Tax Assessor, Conservation Commission	Ongoing
Action FS1.b. Explore regional provision of services and equipment sharing opportunities	Town Administrator	Ongoing
Action FS2.c. Continue and expand program which offers compost bins to residents	Town Clerk; Conservation Commission	Ongoing
Action FS3.b. Explore solar for municipal buildings and energy storage opportunities at the transfer station	Town Council	Ongoing
Action FS3.f. Implement Town water reduction strategies during times of drought	Emergency Management Director	Ongoing
Action H1.b. Continue to offer tax relief for income eligible seniors and disabled to allow them to age in place / maintain residency in the Town	Tax Assessor; Town Council	Ongoing
Action H2.f. Identify sources of funding for the development of affordable units including partnership with Rhode Island Housing and/or other State agencies	Little Compton Housing Trust	Ongoing
Action H3.b. Allow mixed-use development in the business zone	Planning Board	Ongoing
Action HC1.a. Maintain a prioritized list of agricultural lands at risk of development and proactively approach land owners to discuss conservation options	LCACT, Conservation Commission	Ongoing
Action HC2.b. Provide information on programs available to property owners who seek to voluntarily protect historic sites	Town Council	Ongoing
Action LU1.a. Support partners in their continuing efforts to acquire land and development rights for conservation purposes	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
Action LU1.f. Participate in regional planning efforts with appropriate partners and neighboring communities	Planning Board; Town Administrator	Ongoing
Action NR3.a. Advocate for long-term conservation goals and annually update the Town Council on progress	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
Action NR3.b. Foster regular dialogue among the Agricultural Conservancy Trust, Sakonnet Preservation Association and The Nature Conservancy	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
Action RC1.a. Maintain a detailed conserved lands inventory that includes which properties are available for public access	Conservation Commission	Ongoing

Action RC1.c. Maintain pedestrian trails including right-of-ways to the shore so that they remain passable	Public Works; Harbor Commission; Beach Commission	Ongoing
Action T1.f. Advocate for increased transportation options for individuals, including seniors and the disabled, with unmet transportation needs	Town Council	Ongoing
Action NH1.d. Provide information for the public on the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan through a tax bill insert. Provide a copy of the plan on the Town website and at the library.	Town Administrator	Short-term; Medium-term; Long-term
Action FS3.a. Conduct a baseline assessment of the amount of energy being used by municipal buildings, vehicles and equipment	Public Works Director	Short-term; Ongoing
Action T1.d. Develop a pavement management program and conduct annual road condition survey as a means to better prioritize and plan for future infrastructure investments	Public Works; Town Administrator	Short-term; Ongoing
Action T1.e. Work with RIPTA to identify, offer, and promote innovative transportation options that respond to the transportation needs of residents	Town Administrator	Short-term; Ongoing
Action T1.a. Submit projects for inclusion in the State TIP (Transportation Improvement Plan)	Public Works; Town Administrator	Medium-term; Ongoing

MAPPING

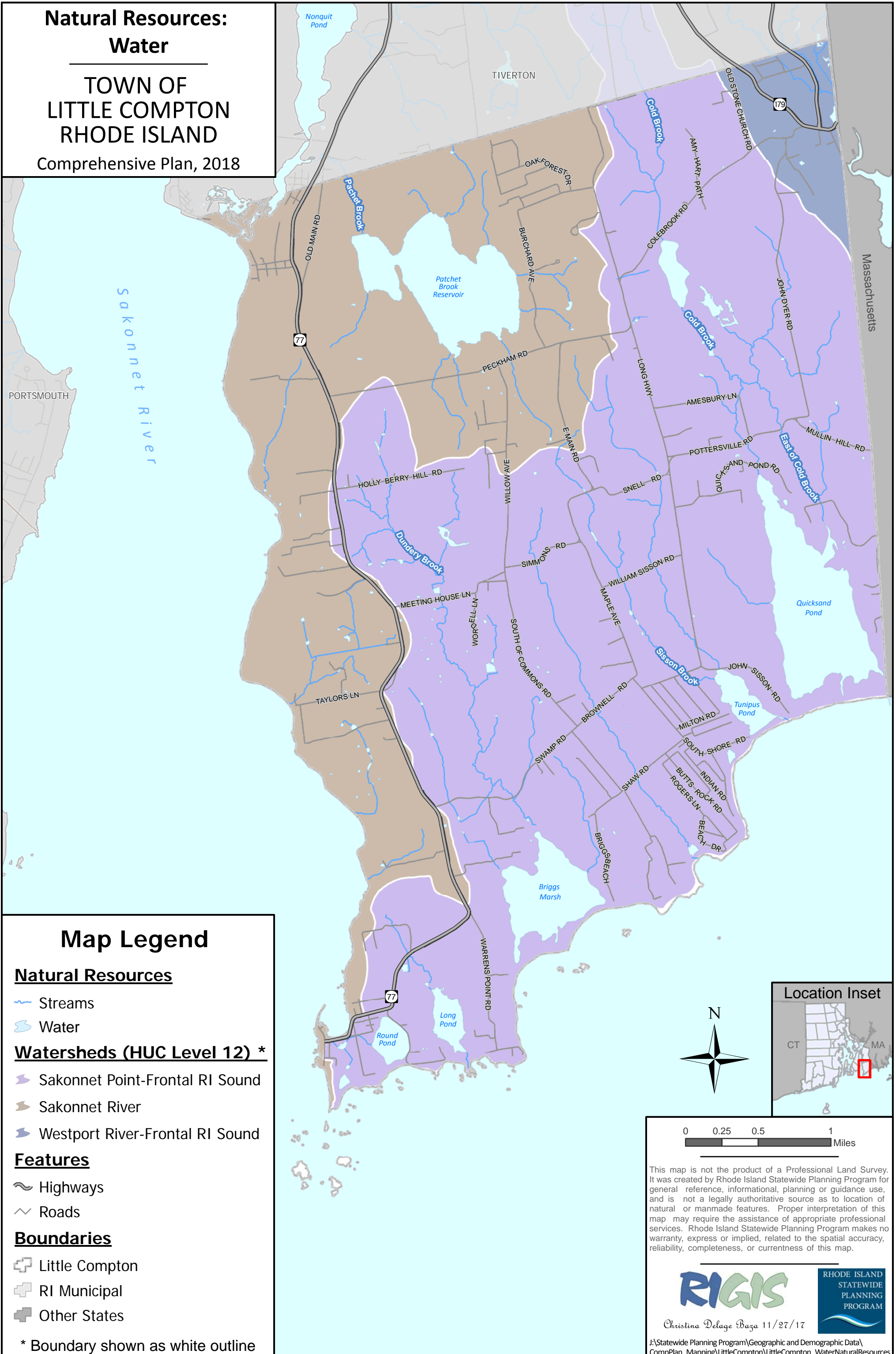
The following maps are incorporated in this Comprehensive Plan:

- **NATURAL RESOURCES: WATER**
- **CRMC WATER TYPE (3)**
- **NATURAL RESOURCES: LAND**
- **CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITY AREAS**
- **ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES CLASSIFICATION**
- **TRAILS (2)**
- **CONSERVED LANDS**
- **HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**
- **AGRICULTURAL LAND AND SOILS**
- **HURRICANE INUNDATION**
- **SLAMM MAPS AT 1 FOOT, 3 FEET AND 5 FEET OF SEA LEVEL RISE (3)**
- **EXISTING LAND USE**
- **EXISTING ZONING**
- **FUTURE LAND USE**

Natural Resources: Water

TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON RHODE ISLAND

Comprehensive Plan, 2018



Map Legend

Natural Resources

- Streams
- Water

Watersheds (HUC Level 12) *

- Sakonnet Point-Frontal RI Sound
- Sakonnet River
- Westport River-Frontal RI Sound

Features

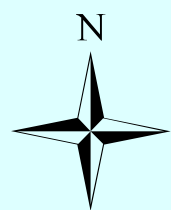
- Highways
- Roads

Boundaries

- Little Compton
- RI Municipal
- Other States

* Boundary shown as white outline

Location Inset



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RIGIS



Christina Delage Baza 11/27/17

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Little Compton (north) Water Type Classification

Legend

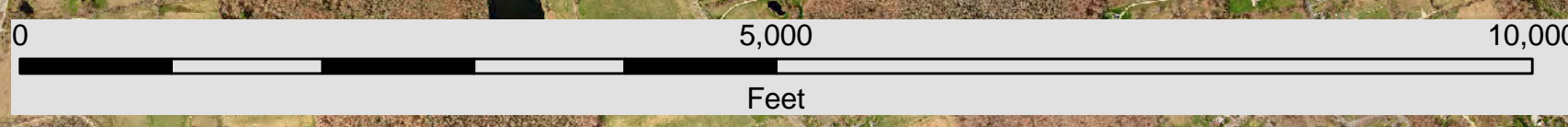
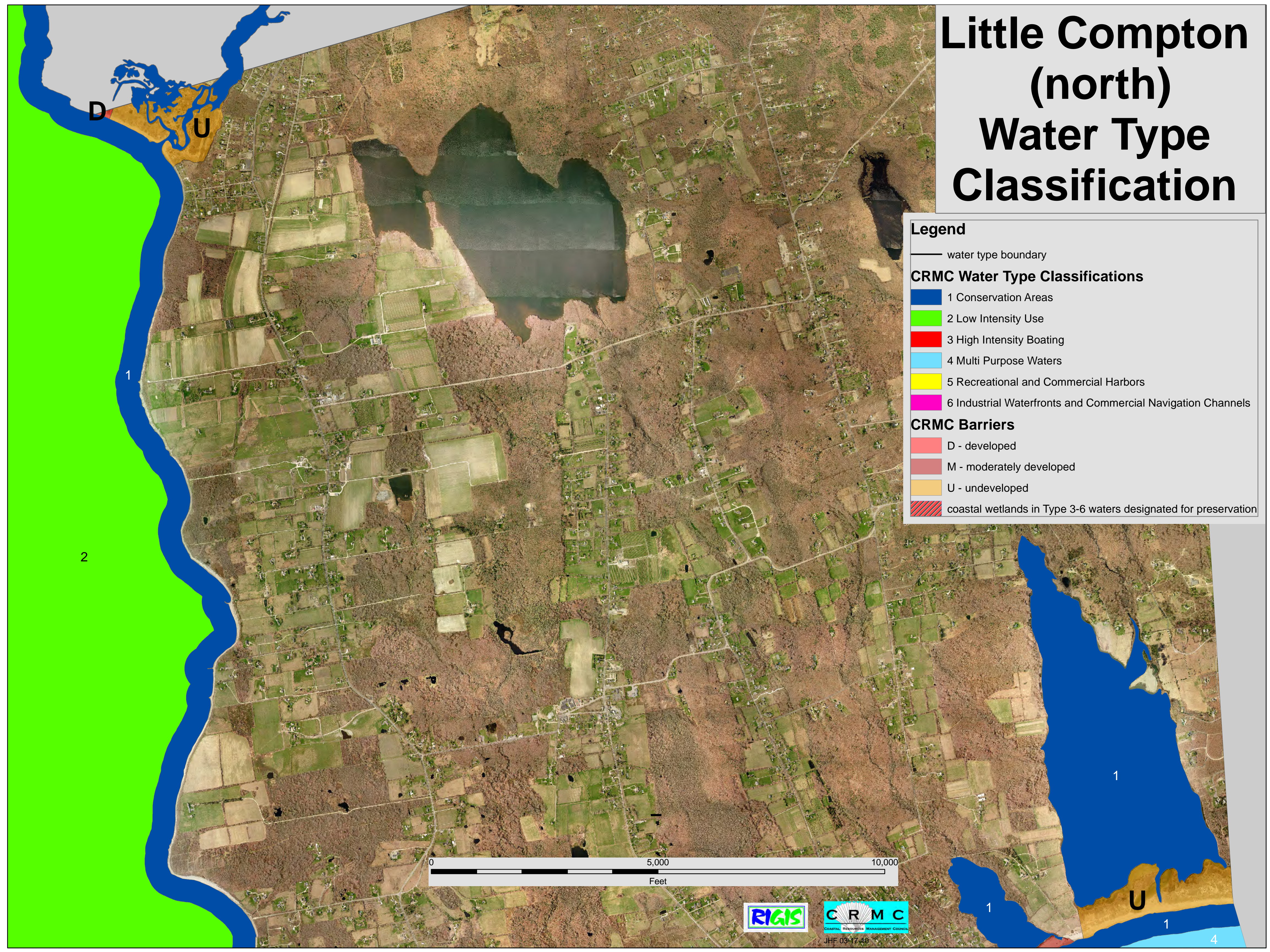
— water type boundary

CRMC Water Type Classifications

- 1 Conservation Areas
- 2 Low Intensity Use
- 3 High Intensity Boating
- 4 Multi Purpose Waters
- 5 Recreational and Commercial Harbors
- 6 Industrial Waterfronts and Commercial Navigation Channels

CRMC Barriers

- D - developed
- M - moderately developed
- U - undeveloped
- coastal wetlands in Type 3-6 waters designated for preservation



JHF 03-17-10

Little Compton (south) Water Type Classification

Legend

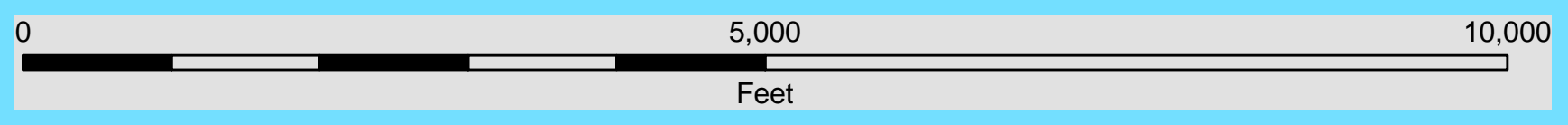
— water type boundary

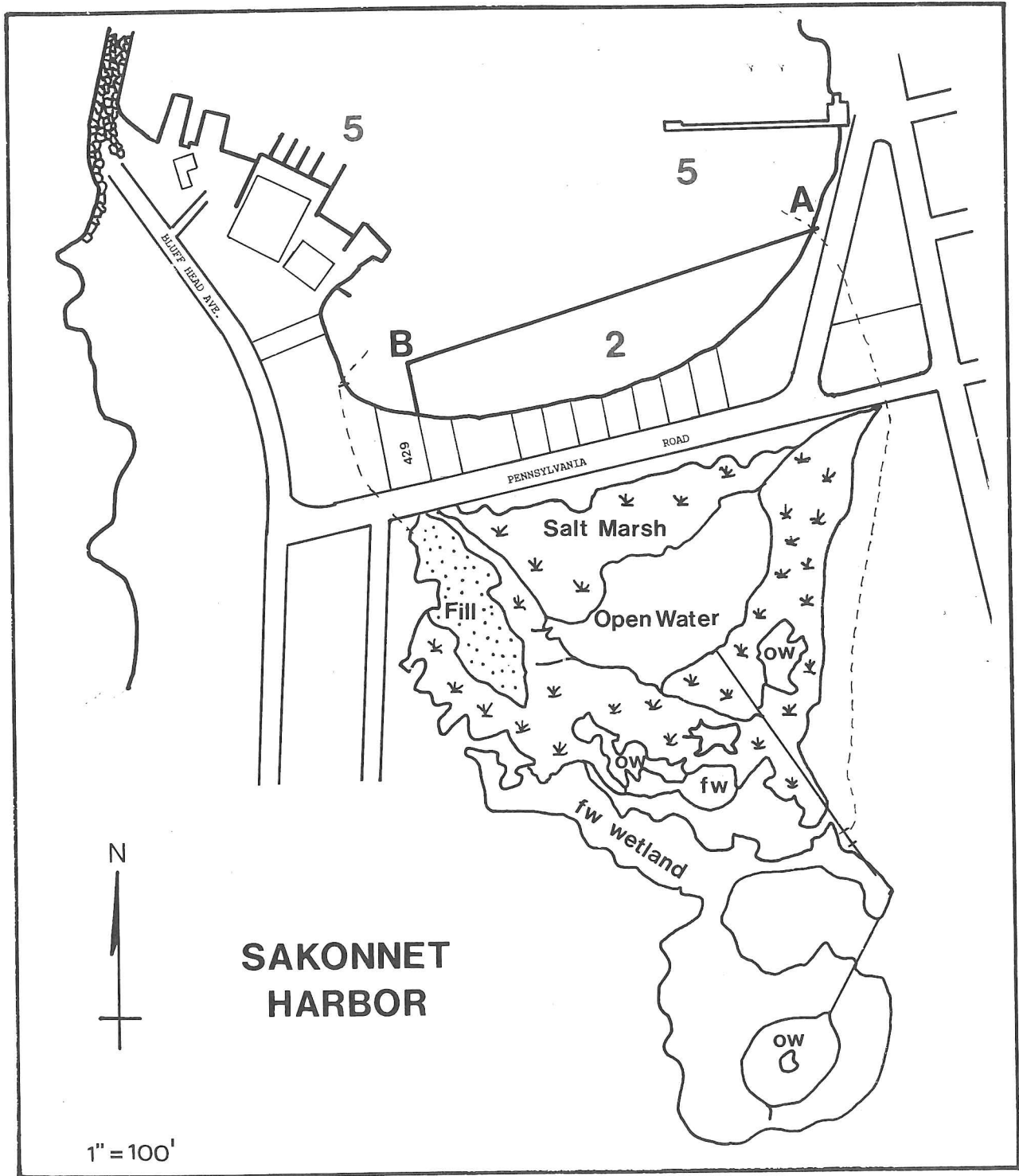
CRMC Water Type Classification

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CRMC Barriers

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- M - moderately developed
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- coastal wetlands in Type 3-6 waters designated for preservation

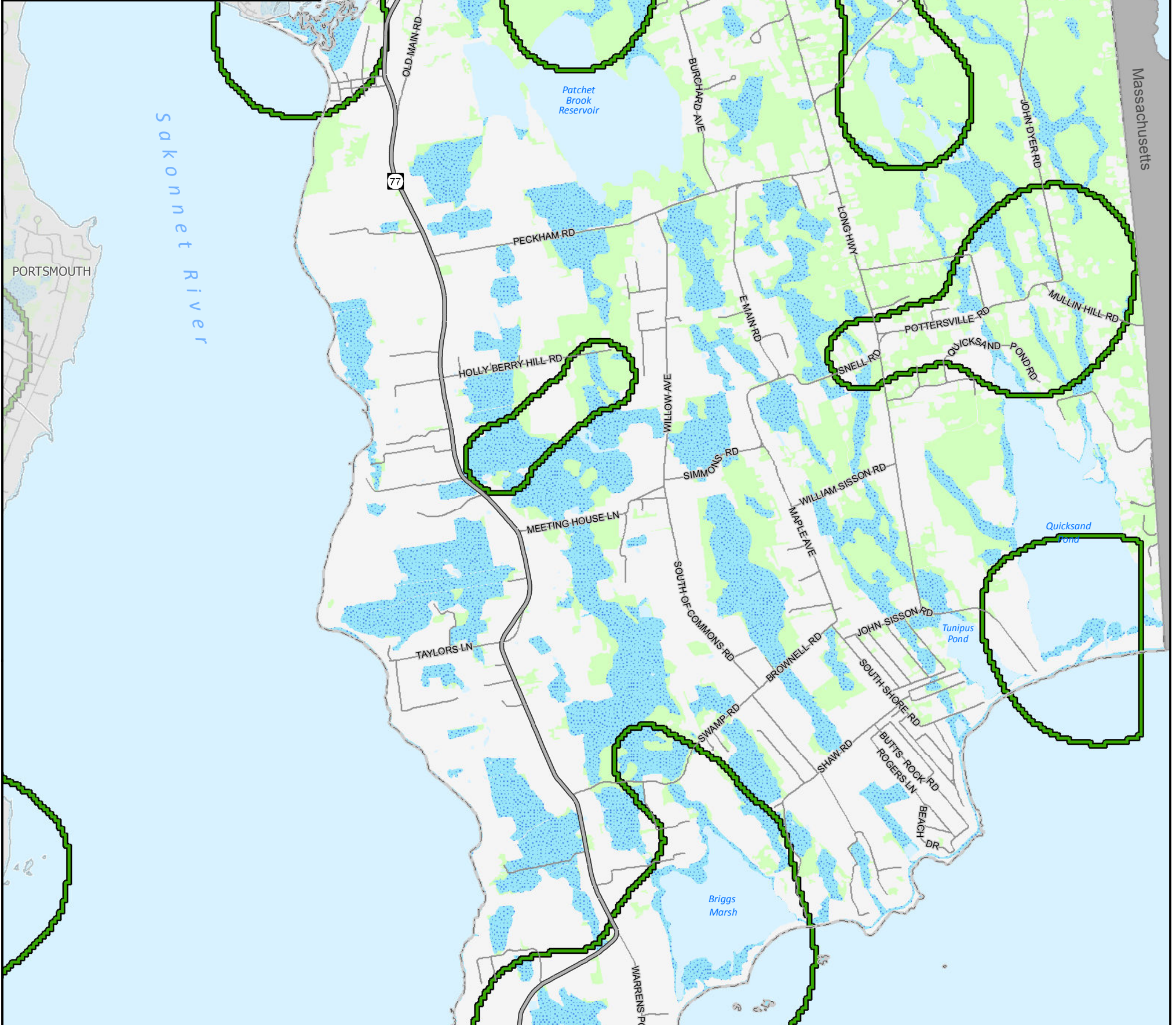




Natural Resources: Land

TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON RHODE ISLAND

Comprehensive Plan, 2018



Map Legend

Natural Resource Areas

- Natural Heritage Areas
- Forested Areas
- Wetlands
- Other Lands

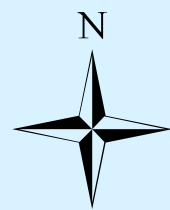
Features

- Highways
- Roads
- Water

Boundaries

- Little Compton
- RI Municipal
- Other States

Location Inset

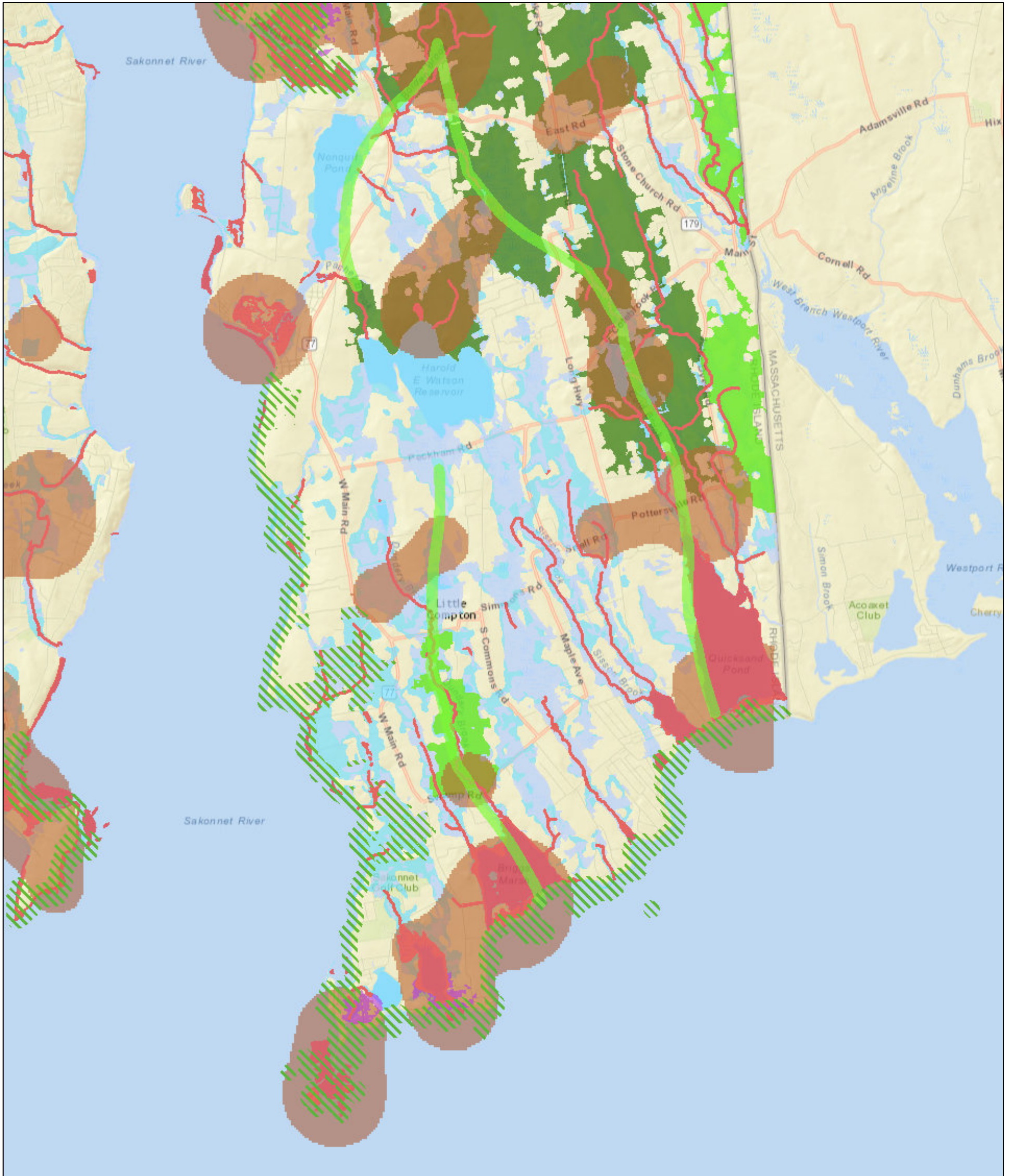


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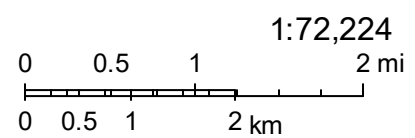
Christina Delage Baza 04/16/15
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Conservation Opportunity Area



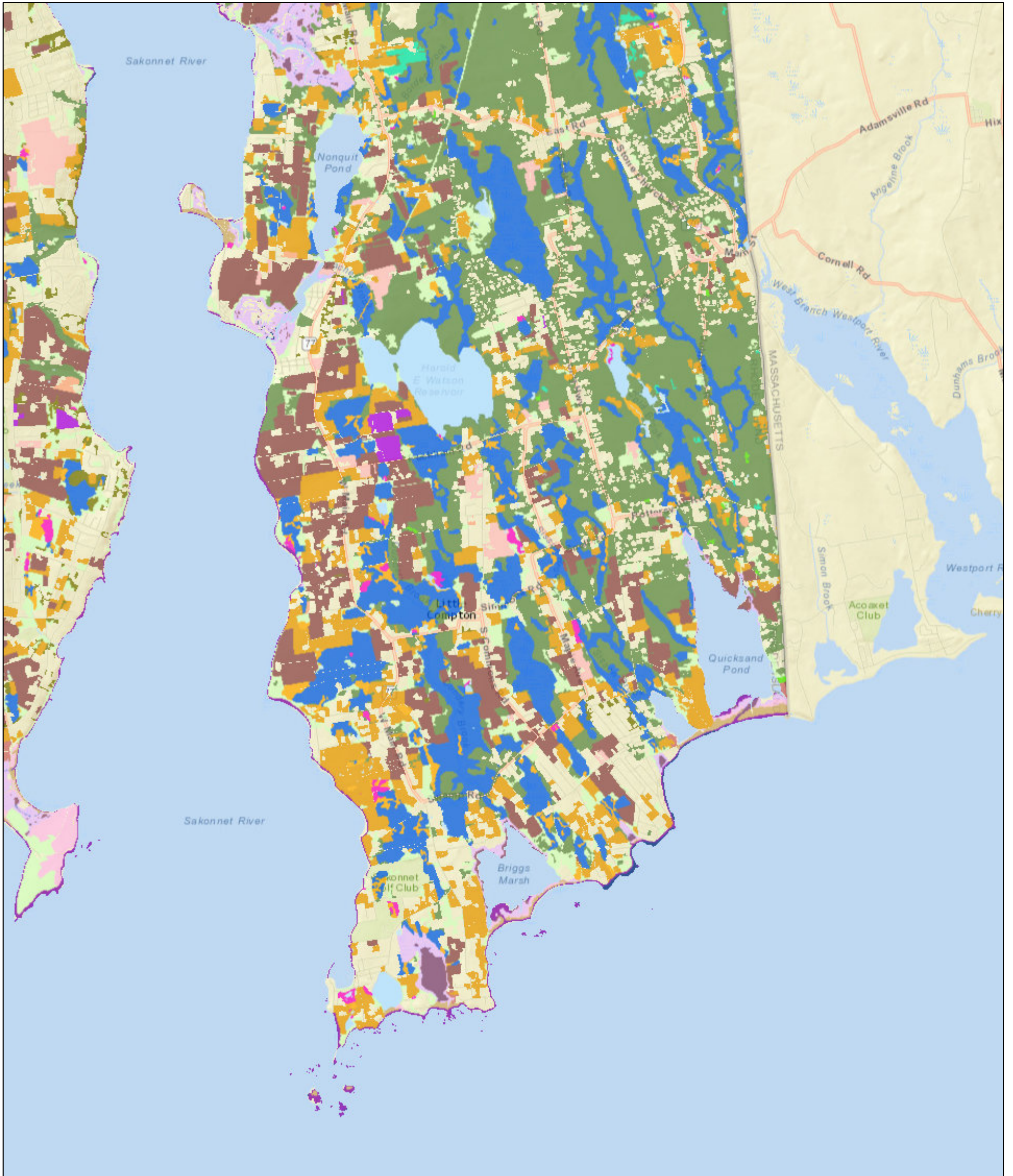
November 27, 2017

-  Important_Coastal_Habitat
-  Corridor
-  High Value / High Vulnerability Habitat
-  Ecological Land Unit
-  Natural Heritage Area
-  Unfragmented Forest Blocks (500 acres or more)
-  Unfragmented Forest Blocks (250 < 500 acres)
-  Wetland
-  Hydric Soil



RhodeMap; RIGIS; RIDEM
 Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), MapmyIndia, NGCC, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

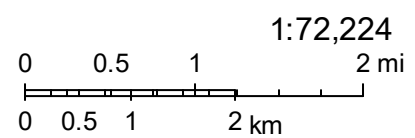
RI Ecological Communities Classification



November 27, 2017






RI Ecological Communities Classification



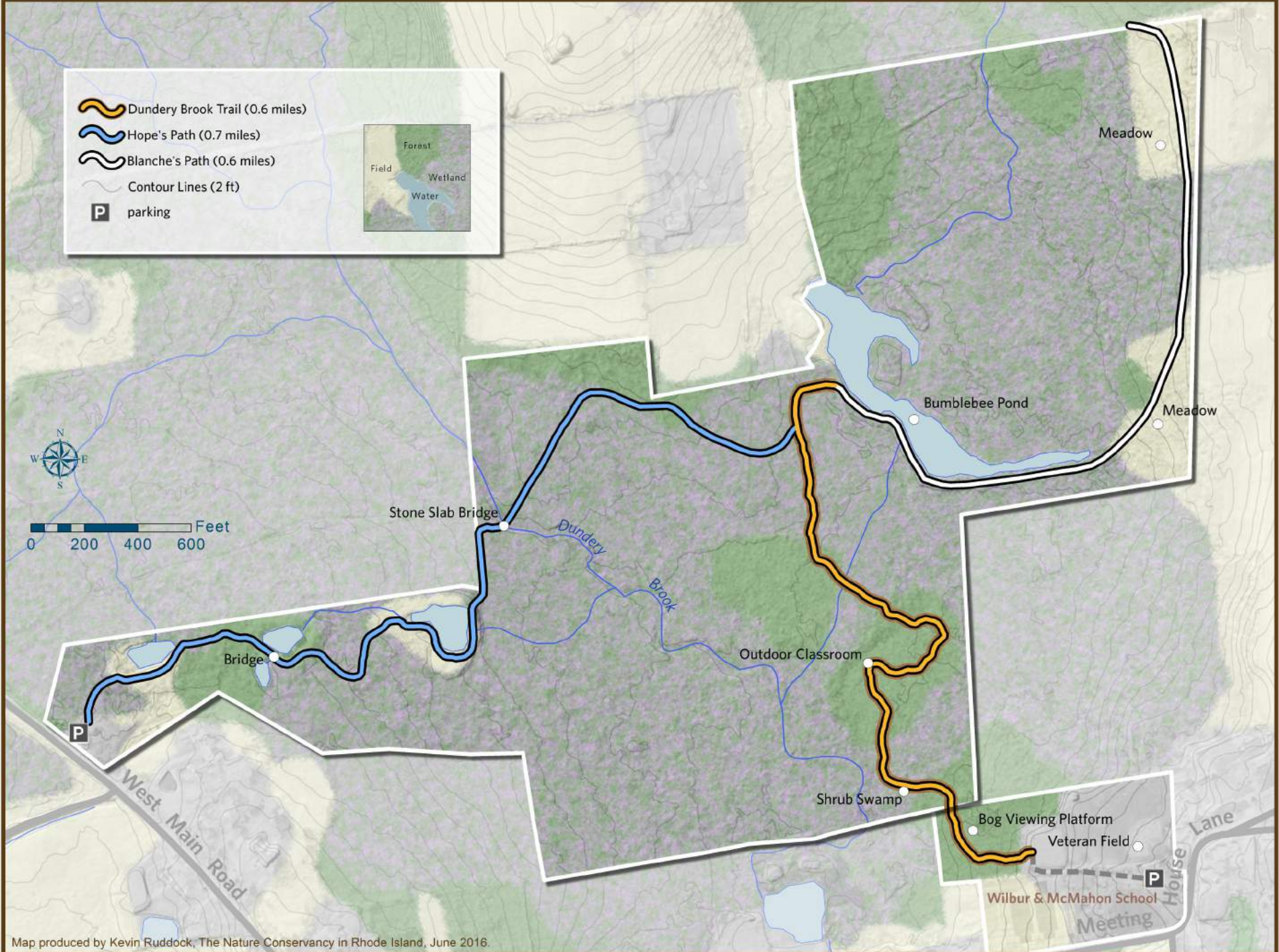

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Coastal Grassland | Maritime Shrubland | Ruderal Grassland/Shrubland |
| Cropland | Maritime Woodlands | Salt Marsh |
| Developed Recreation | Mixed Deciduous/Coniferous Forests | Salt Water |
| Emergent Marsh | Modified Managed Marsh | Shrub Swamp |
| Floodplain Forests | Mud Flat | Tidal Creek |
| Forested Swamp | Northern Hardwood Forest | Tidal River/Stream |
| Fresh Water | Nursery/Christmas Trees | Transitional/Vacant Land |
| Hayfields | Oak Forest | Tree Plantation |
| Hemlock/Hardwood Forest | Orchard | Turf |
| Inland Sand Barren | Pasture | Vineyard |
| Intertidal Shore | Peatlands | |
| Maritime Bluff | Pitch Pine Woodland/Barrens | |
| Maritime Shrub Dune | Power Lines | |
| | Ruderal Forest | |

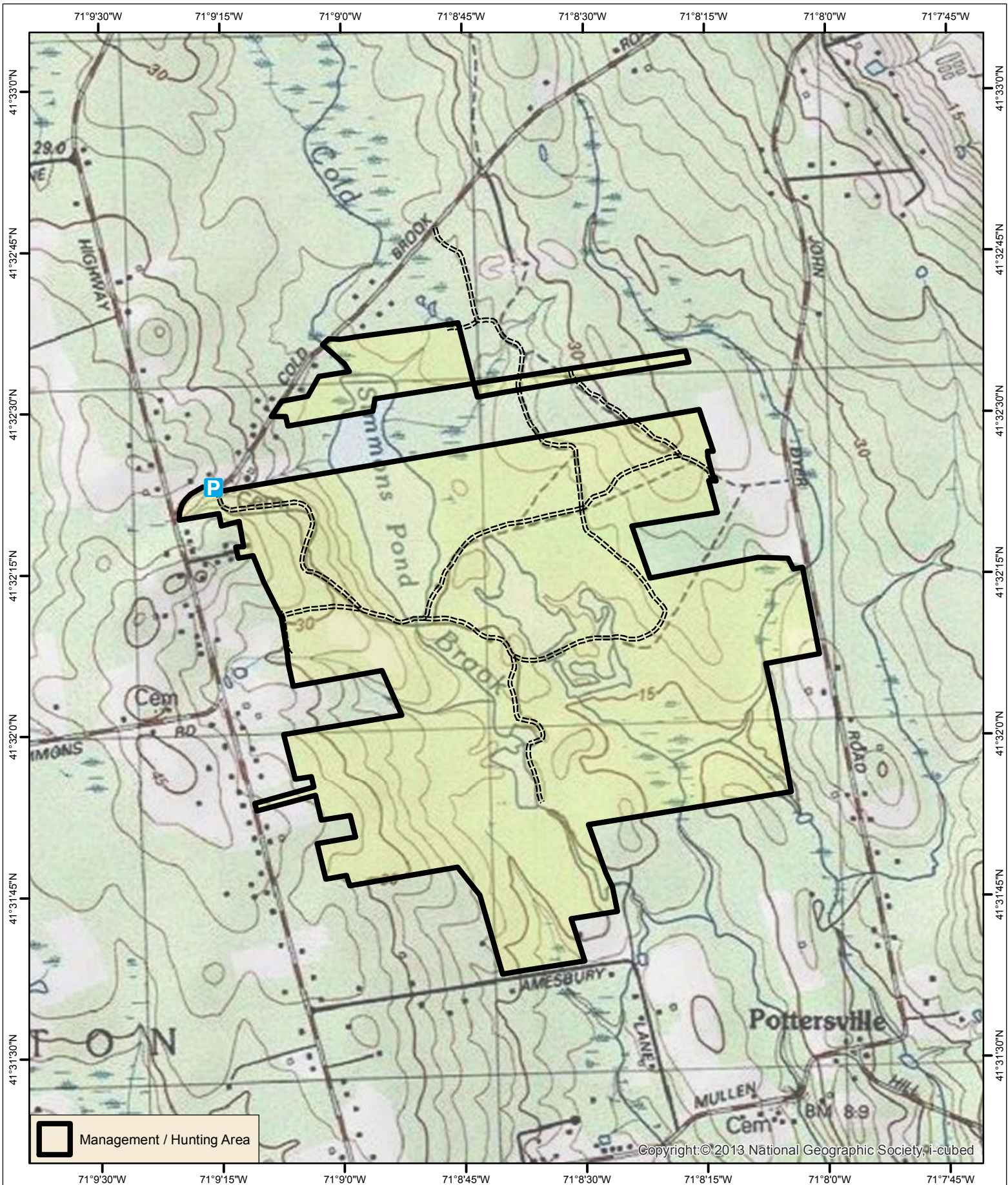


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John C. Whitehead Preserve Trail System

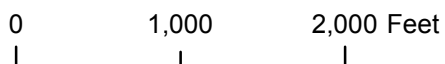
-  Dundery Brook Trail (0.6 miles)
-  Hope's Path (0.7 miles)
-  Blanche's Path (0.6 miles)
-  Contour Lines (2 ft)
-  parking



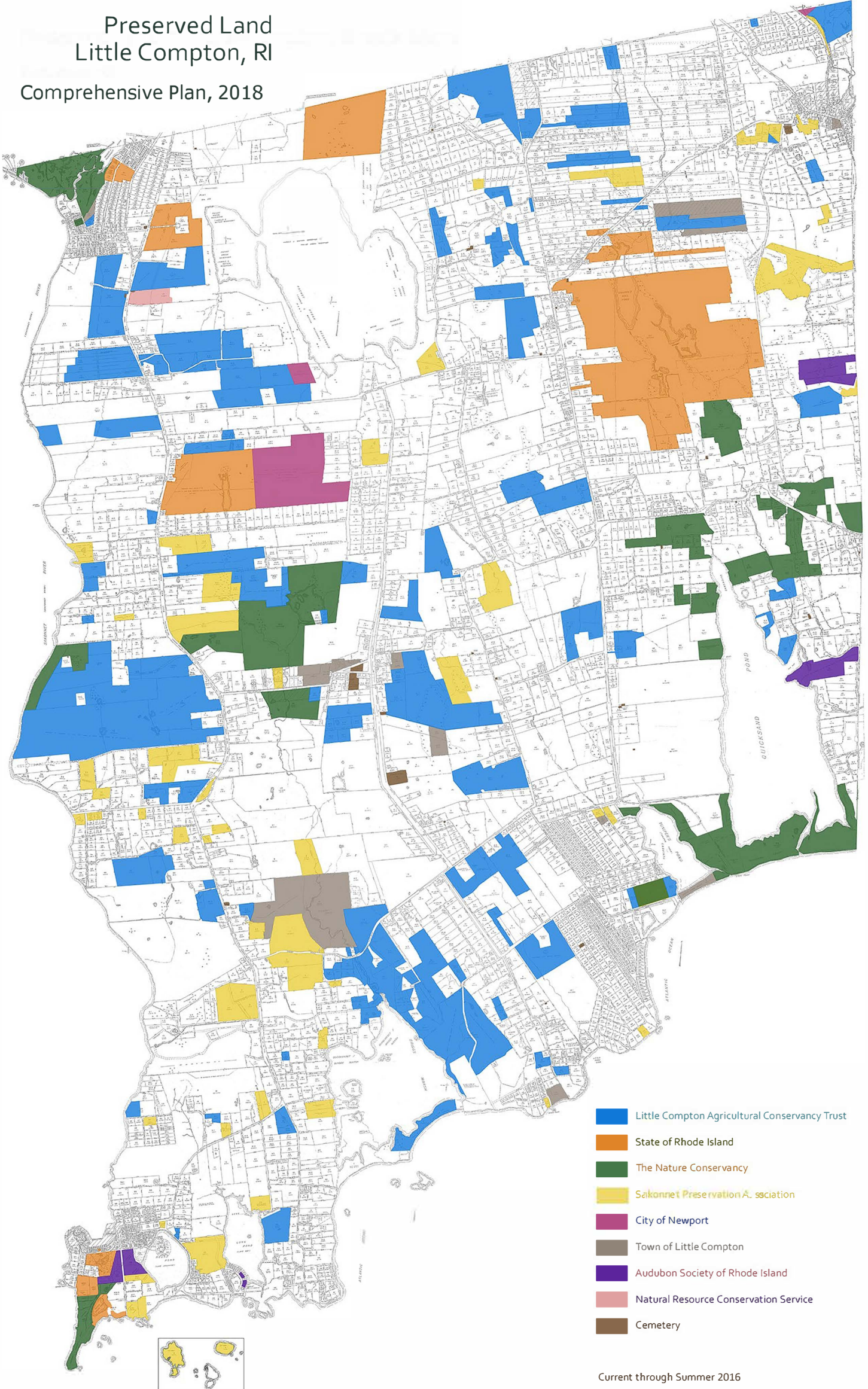
Map # 53

Simmons Mill
Management Area



RIDEM 2015
paj

Preserved Land Little Compton, RI Comprehensive Plan, 2018

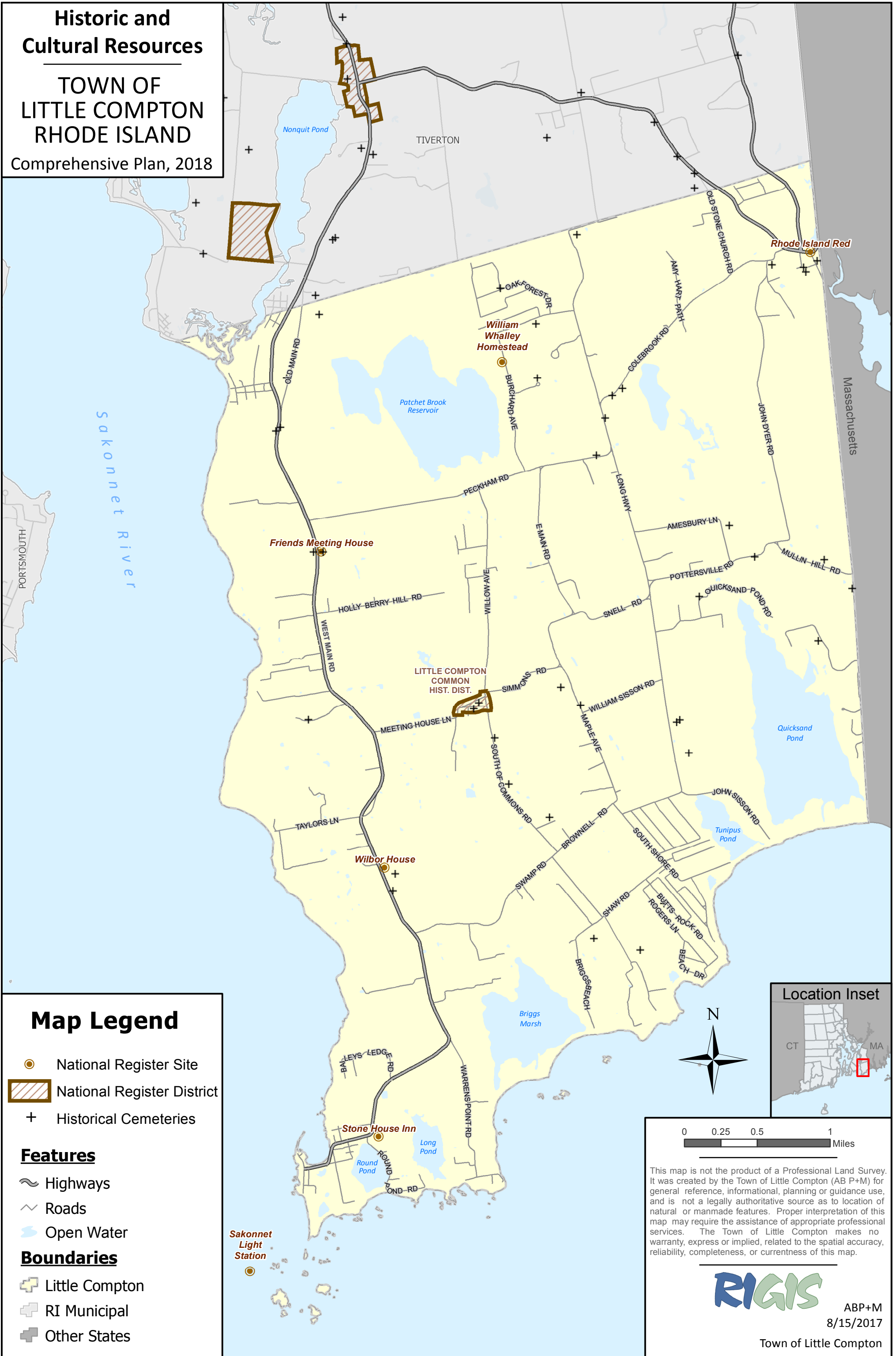


Current through Summer 2016

Historic and Cultural Resources

TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON RHODE ISLAND

Comprehensive Plan, 2018



Map Legend

- National Register Site
- National Register District
- Historical Cemeteries

Features

- Highways
- Roads
- Open Water

Boundaries

- Little Compton
- RI Municipal
- Other States

Location Inset



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

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RIGIS

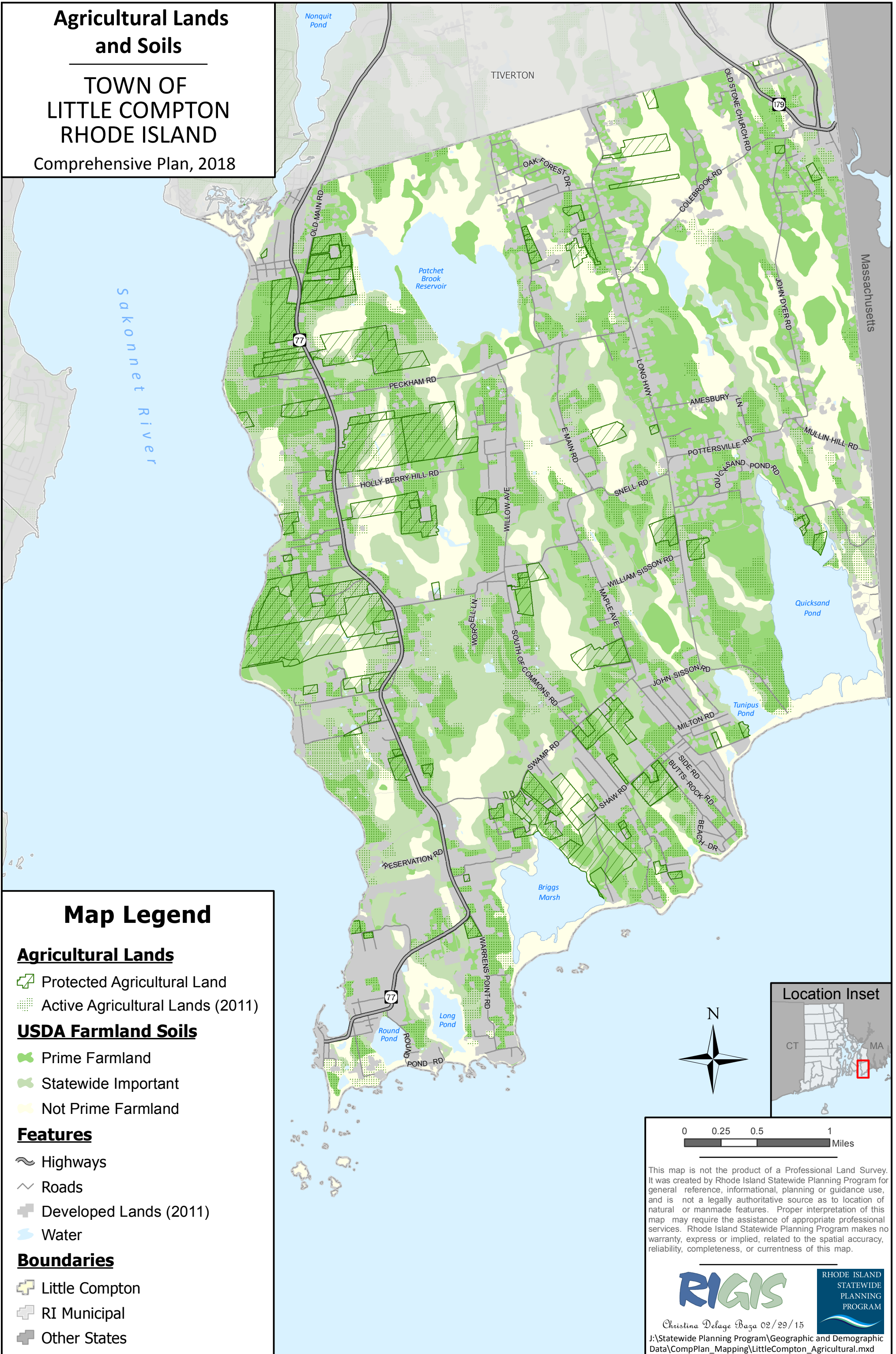
ABP+M
8/15/2017

Town of Little Compton

Agricultural Lands and Soils

TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON RHODE ISLAND

Comprehensive Plan, 2018



Map Legend

Agricultural Lands

- Protected Agricultural Land
- Active Agricultural Lands (2011)

USDA Farmland Soils

- Prime Farmland
- Statewide Important
- Not Prime Farmland

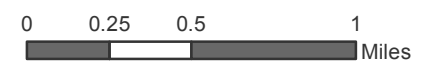
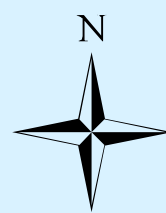
Features

- Highways
- Roads
- Developed Lands (2011)
- Water

Boundaries

- Little Compton
- RI Municipal
- Other States

Location Inset



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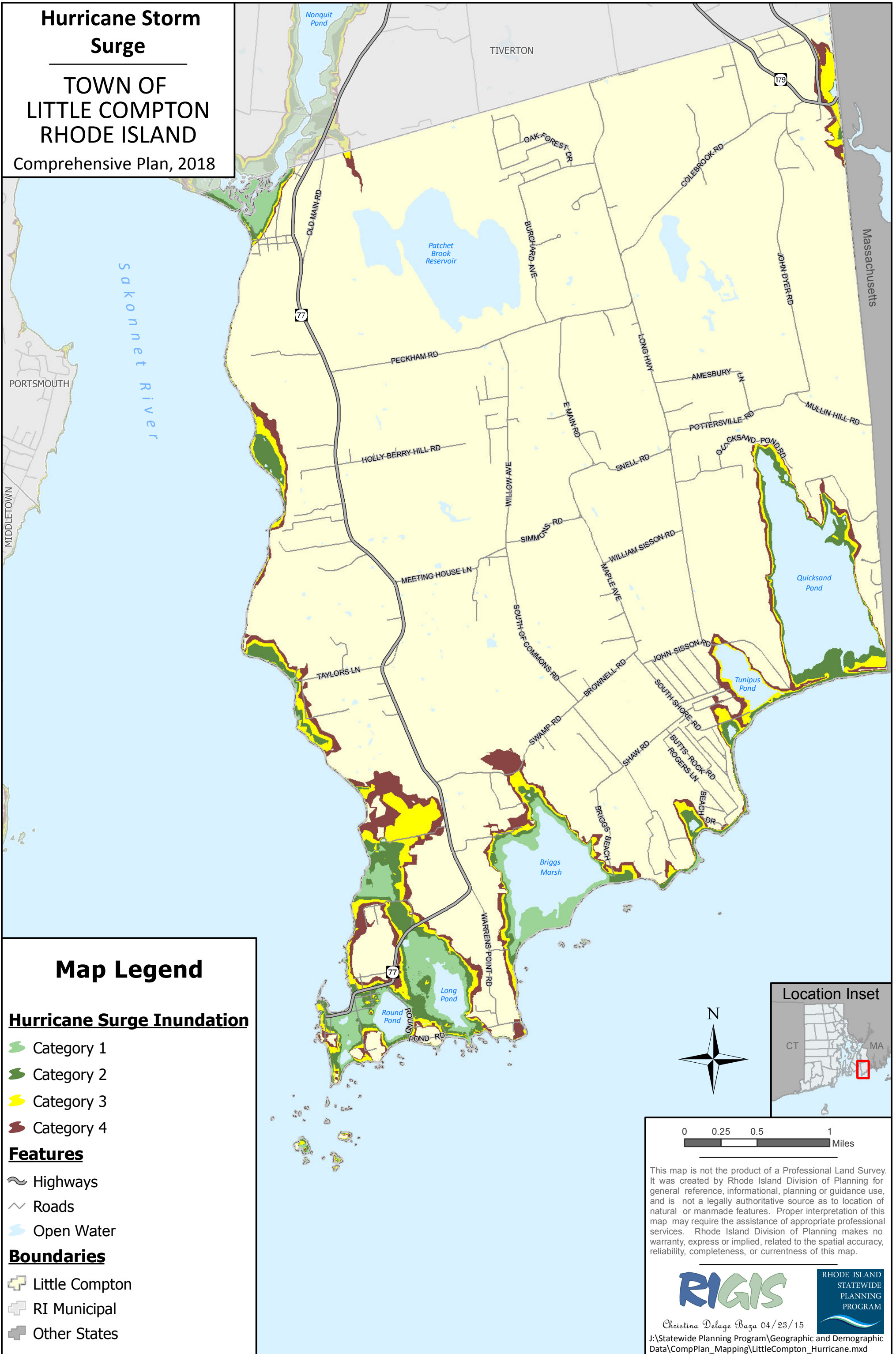
Christina Delage Baza 02/29/15

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Hurricane Storm Surge

TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON RHODE ISLAND

Comprehensive Plan, 2018



Map Legend

Hurricane Surge Inundation

- Category 1
- Category 2
- Category 3
- Category 4

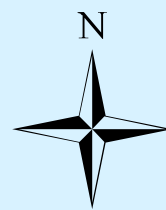
Features

- Highways
- Roads
- Open Water

Boundaries

- Little Compton
- RI Municipal
- Other States

Location Inset



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

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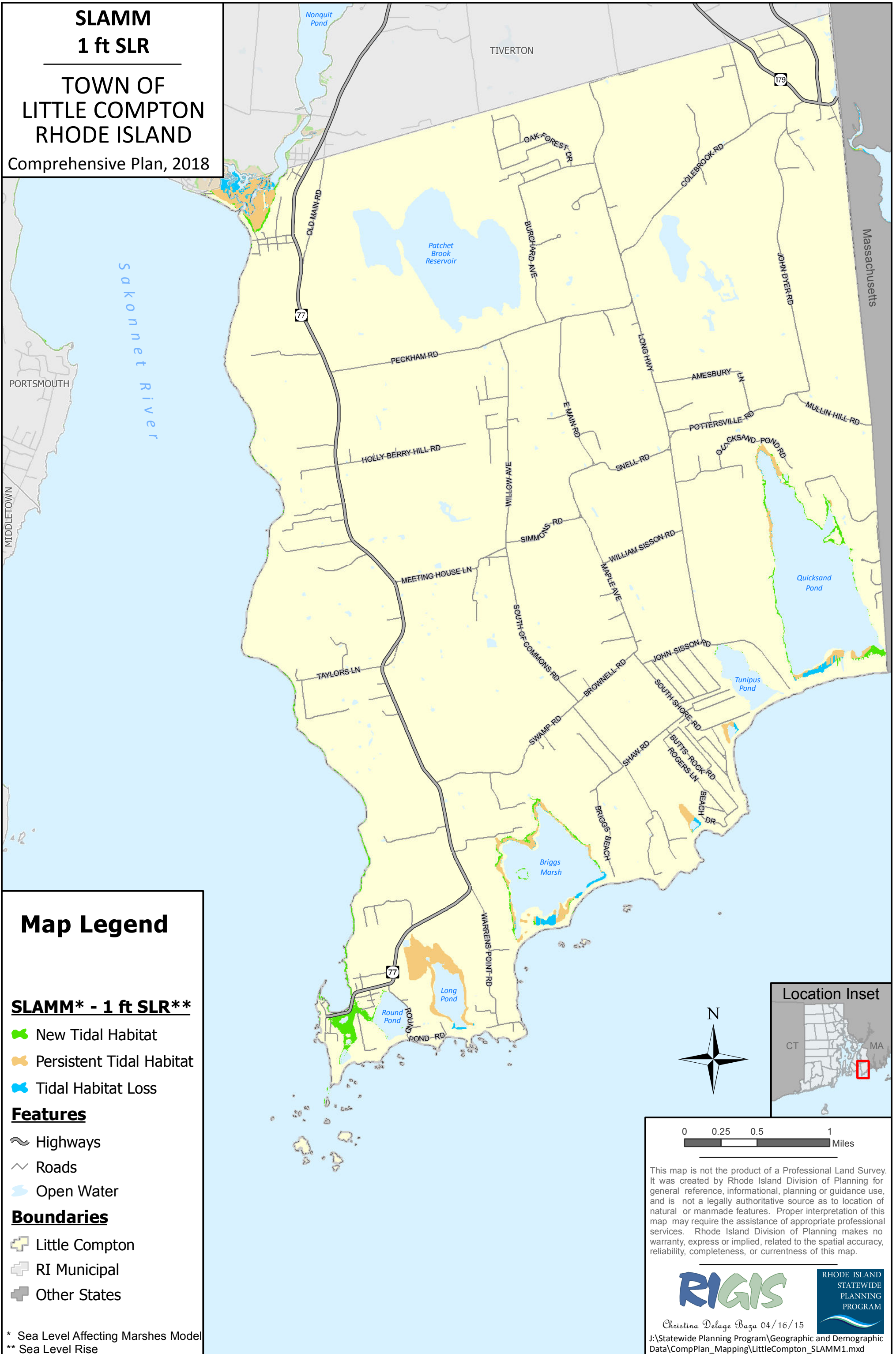
RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM

Christina Delage Baza 04/23/15
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SLAMM 1 ft SLR

TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON RHODE ISLAND

Comprehensive Plan, 2018



Map Legend

SLAMM* - 1 ft SLR**

- New Tidal Habitat
- Persistent Tidal Habitat
- Tidal Habitat Loss

Features

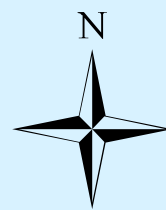
- Highways
- Roads
- Open Water

Boundaries

- Little Compton
- RI Municipal
- Other States

* Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model
** Sea Level Rise

Location Inset



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

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RIGIS

RHODE ISLAND
STATEWIDE
PLANNING
PROGRAM

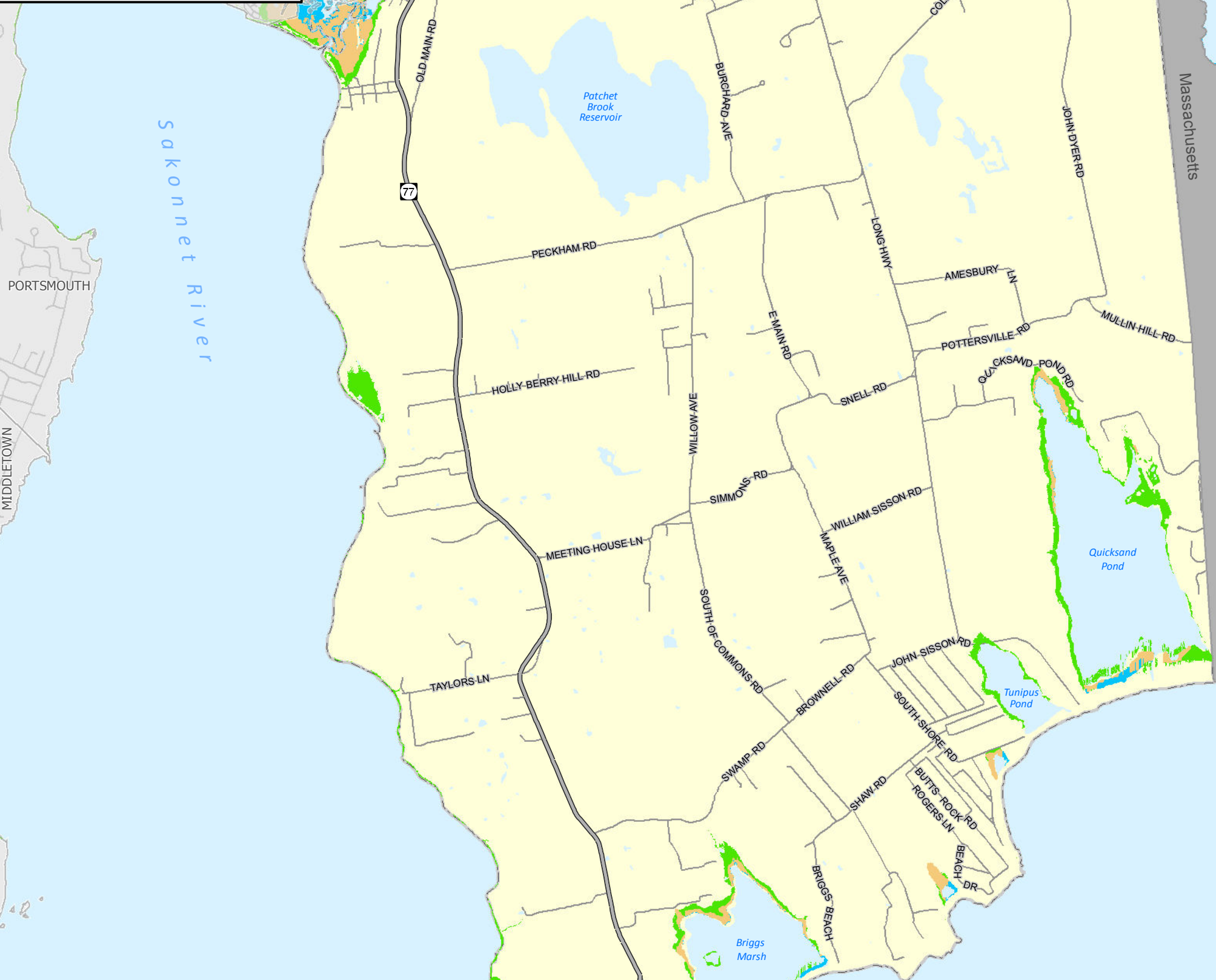
Christina Delage Baza 04/16/15

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SLAMM 3 ft SLR

TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON RHODE ISLAND

Comprehensive Plan, 2018



Map Legend

SLAMM* - 3 ft SLR**

- New Tidal Habitat
- Persistent Tidal Habitat
- Tidal Habitat Loss

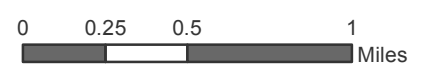
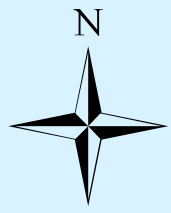
Features

- Highways
- Roads
- Open Water

Boundaries

- Little Compton
- RI Municipal
- Other States

* Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model
** Sea Level Rise



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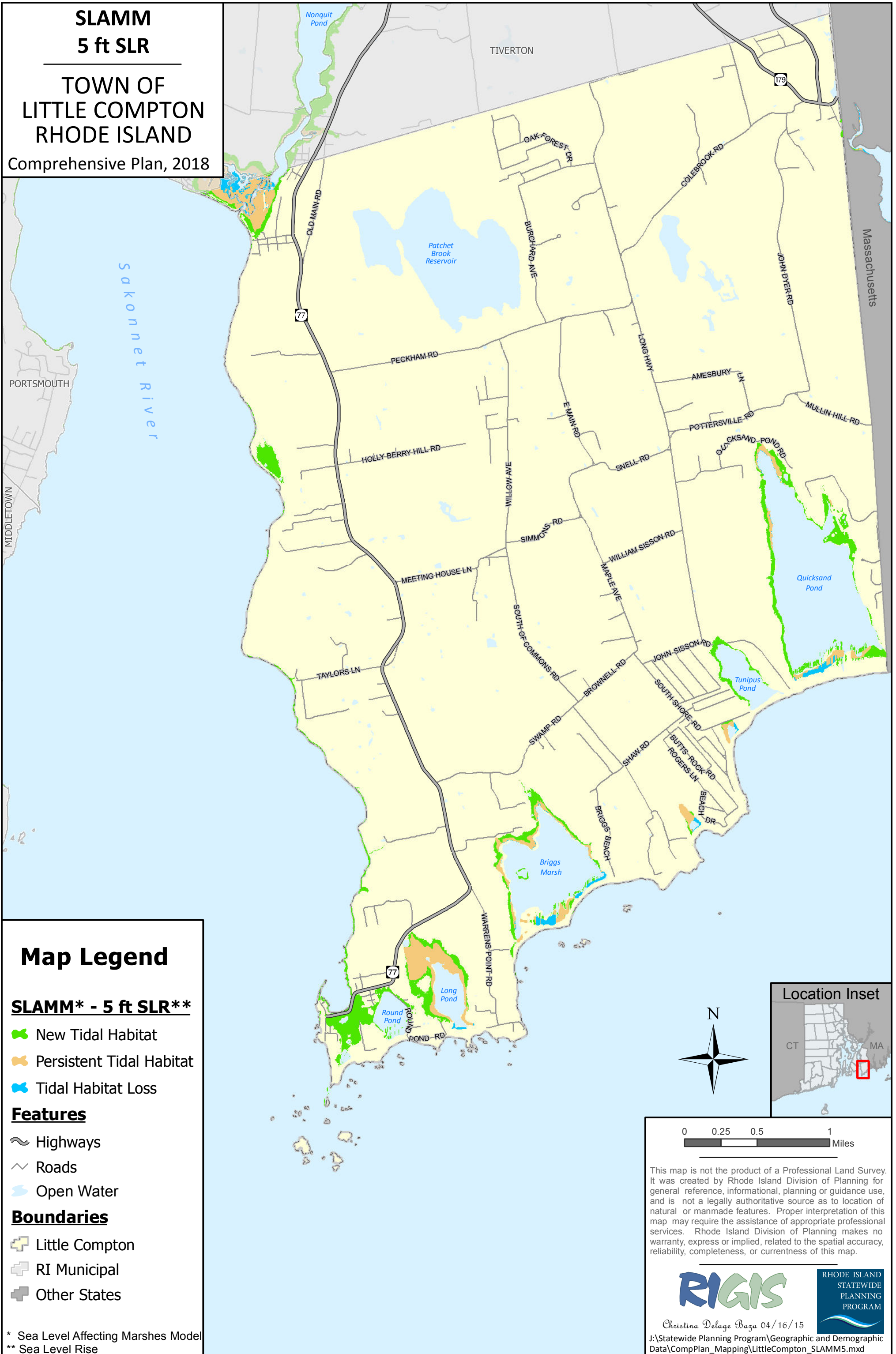


Christina Delage Baza 04/16/15
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SLAMM 5 ft SLR

TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON RHODE ISLAND

Comprehensive Plan, 2018



Map Legend

SLAMM* - 5 ft SLR**

- New Tidal Habitat
- Persistent Tidal Habitat
- Tidal Habitat Loss

Features

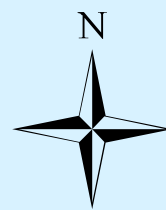
- Highways
- Roads
- Open Water

Boundaries

- Little Compton
- RI Municipal
- Other States

* Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model
** Sea Level Rise

Location Inset



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

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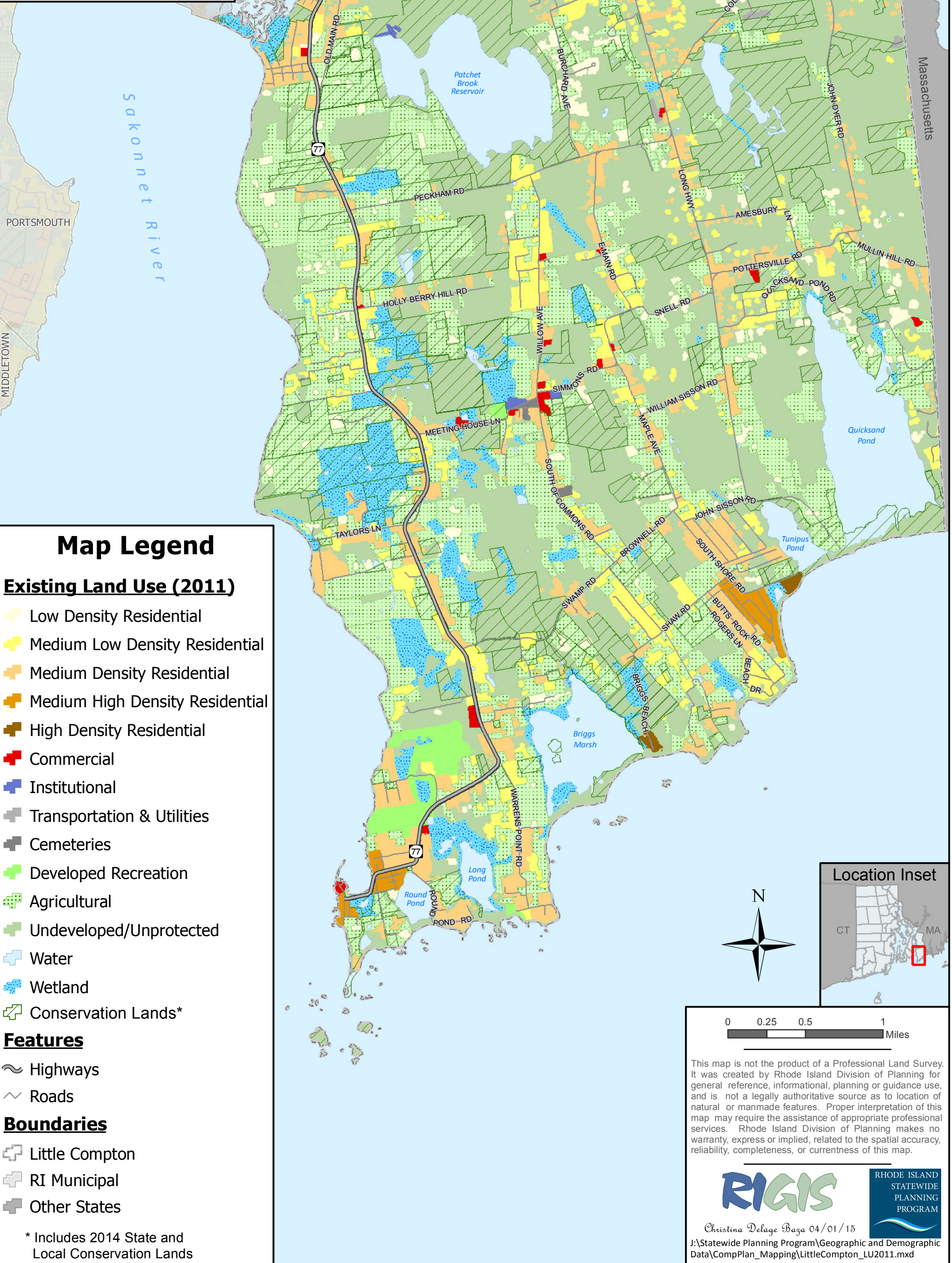
RHODE ISLAND
STATEWIDE
PLANNING
PROGRAM

Christina Delage Baza 04/16/15
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EXISTING LAND USE

TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON RHODE ISLAND

Comprehensive Plan, 2018



Map Legend

Existing Land Use (2011)

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Medium High Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Commercial
- Institutional
- Transportation & Utilities
- Cemeteries
- Developed Recreation
- Agricultural
- Undeveloped/Unprotected
- Water
- Wetland
- Conservation Lands*

Features

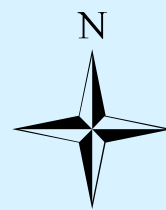
- Highways
- Roads

Boundaries

- Little Compton
- RI Municipal
- Other States

* Includes 2014 State and Local Conservation Lands

Location Inset



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

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RIGIS

RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM

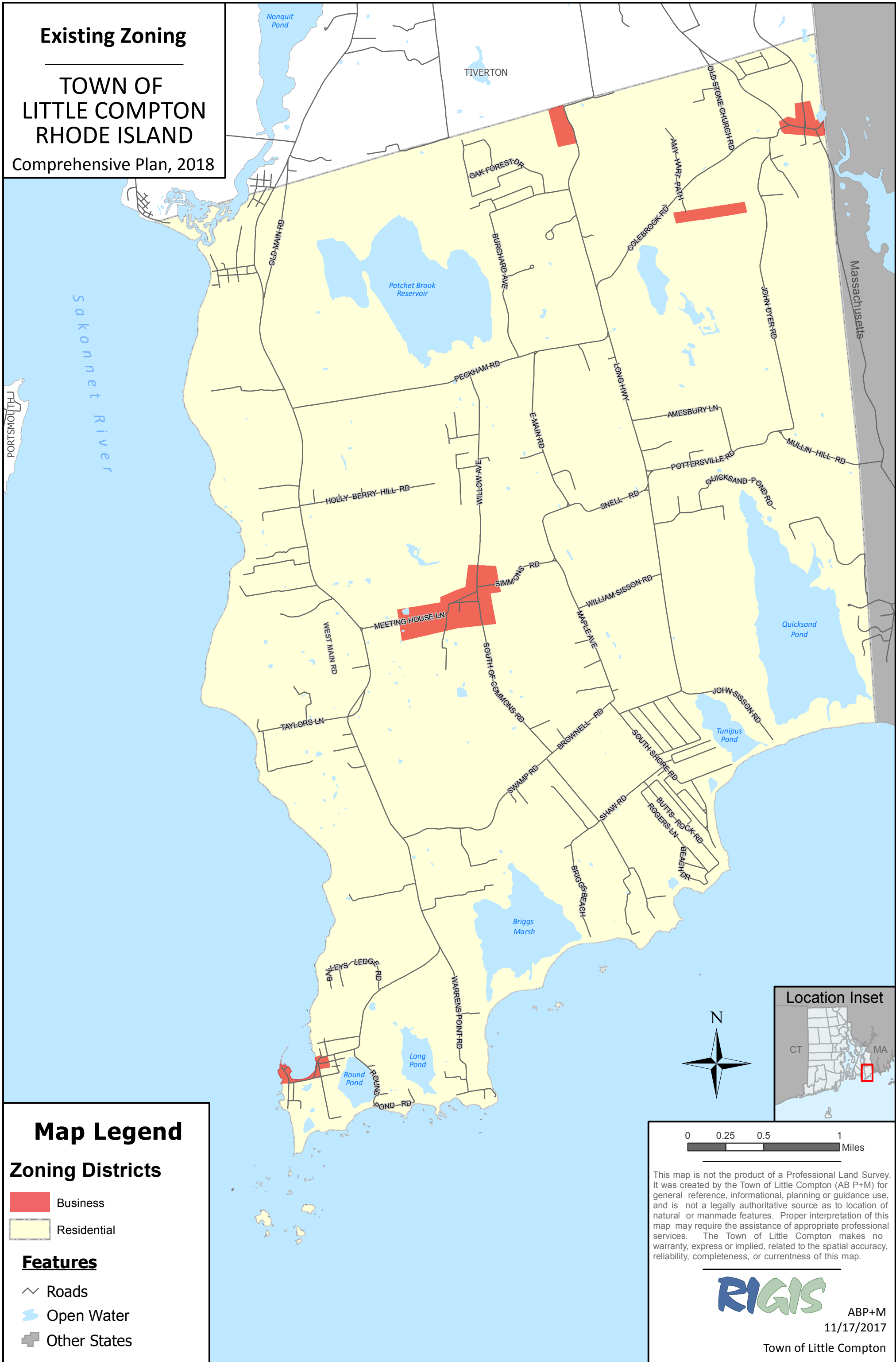
Christina Delage Baza 04/01/15

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Existing Zoning

TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON RHODE ISLAND

Comprehensive Plan, 2018



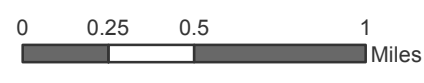
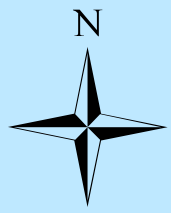
Map Legend

Zoning Districts

- Business
- Residential

Features

- Roads
- Open Water
- Other States

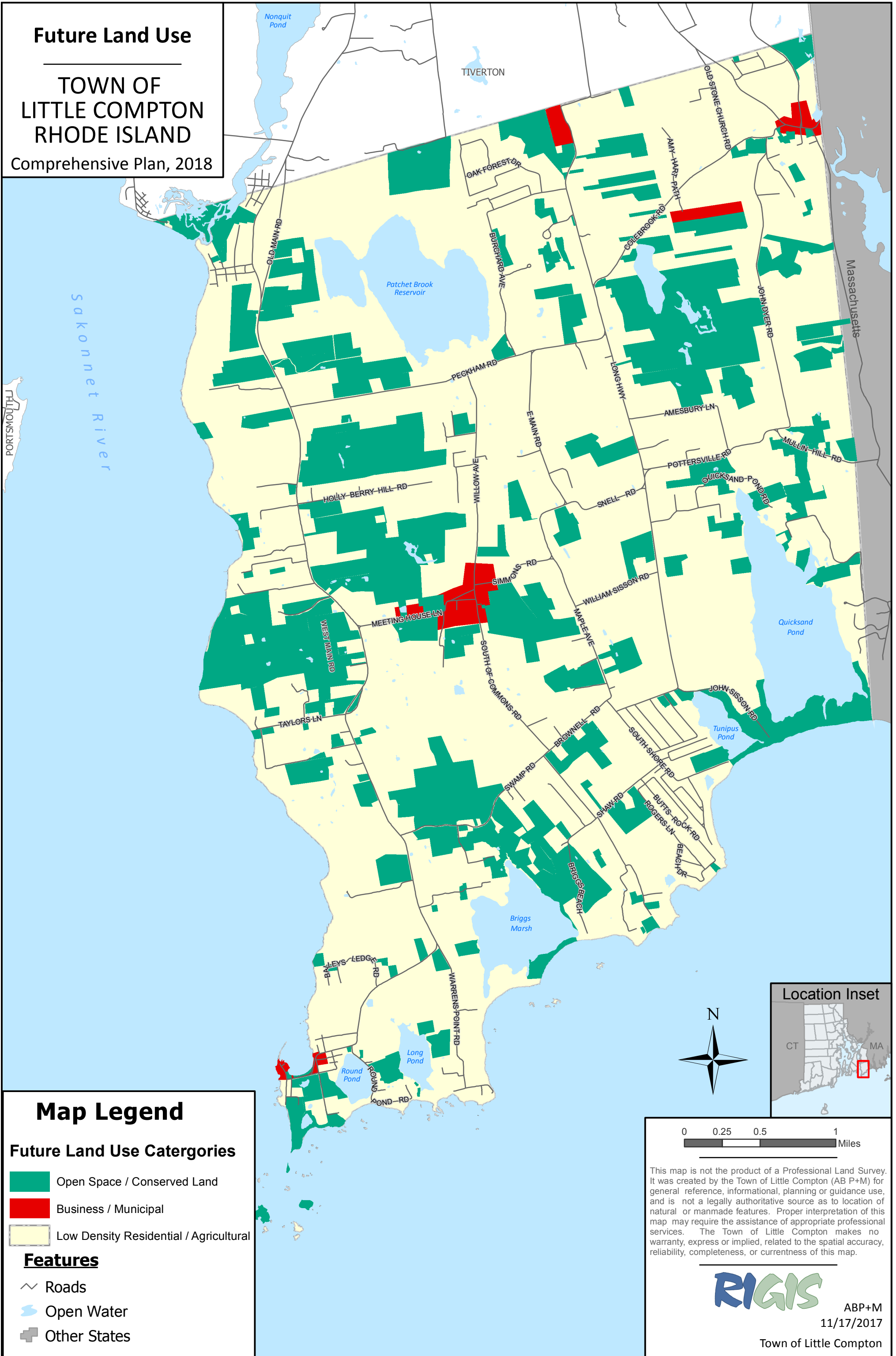


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Future Land Use

TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON RHODE ISLAND

Comprehensive Plan, 2018



Map Legend

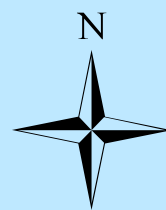
Future Land Use Categories

- Open Space / Conserved Land
- Business / Municipal
- Low Density Residential / Agricultural

Features

- Roads
- Open Water
- Other States

Location Inset



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

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ABP+M
11/17/2017

Town of Little Compton