



Regional Naugatuck River Greenway Routing Study Executive Summary



TOWN OF
THOMASTON
CONNECTICUT

OCTOBER 2010

PREPARED BY:

Alta Planning + Design

IN ASSOCIATION WITH:

Fuss & O'Neill

Fitzgerald & Halliday

PREPARED FOR:

Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley



COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY



FUSS & O'NEILL
Disciplines to Deliver



Naugatuck River Greenway Committee

Thomaston

Peter Kisselburgh, Chairman Thomaston Greenway Committee
Maura Martin, Thomaston Greenway Committee

Watertown

Chuck Berger, Town Engineer
Lisa Carew, Director Watertown Recreation Department

Waterbury

Kathleen McNamara, City of Waterbury Grants Administrator
Theresa A. Caldarone, Counsel to the Mayor

Naugatuck

Jim Stewart, Director of Public Works
Wayne Zirolli, Borough Engineer
Keith Rosenfeld, Borough Planner
Kevin Zak, Naugatuck River Revival Group

Beacon Falls

Anita Goerig, Beacon Falls Conservation Commission
Tony San Angelo, Beacon Falls Economic Development Commission
Rich Minnick, Beacon Falls Conservation Commission

State and Federal Agency Representatives

Laurie Giannotti, Greenways Coordinator, CTDEP
Susan Peterson, Watershed Manager, CTDEP
Gerard Milne, Forester, CTDEP
David Balzer, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, CTDOT
John Monroe, Rivers and Trails, National Parks Service
Vincent Gualtieri, Thomaston Dam, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Kenneth Curran, U.S. Representative Chris Murphy's Office
Lou Mangini, U.S. Representative Rosa DeLauro's Office

Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley

Peter Dorpalen, Executive Director
Virginia Mason, Assistant Director
Samuel Gold, Senior Planner / Project Manager

Study Team

Jeff Olson, Principal, Alta Planning + Design
Phil Goff, Project Manager and Planner, Alta Planning + Design
Robin Wilcox, Project Designer, Alta Planning + Design
Don Lussier, Civil Engineer, Fuss & O'Neill
Marcy Miller, Public Outreach Planner, Fitzgerald & Halliday



TOWN OF
THOMASTON
CONNECTICUT



COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY



The preparation of the study was financed through grants from the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration; a grant from the Connecticut Department of Transportation; and by the contributions from member municipalities of the Central Naugatuck Valley Region.

*For more information, contact: Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley
60 North Main Street, 3rd Floor, Waterbury, Connecticut 06702-1403 • 203-757-0535 • www.cogcnv.org*

Cover image: A scenic stretch of the Naugatuck River in Beacon Falls

1. Overview of the Study

The Regional Naugatuck River Greenway Routing Study recommends a feasible routing for the Naugatuck River Greenway (NRG) trail through Thomaston, Watertown, Naugatuck and Beacon Falls, connecting to Waterbury. The NRG will provide residents throughout the region with a safe multi-use path that connects to neighboring municipalities. It is envisioned that this greenway will ultimately extend 44 miles from Torrington to Derby.

The two primary goals of the Naugatuck River Greenway (NRG) are:

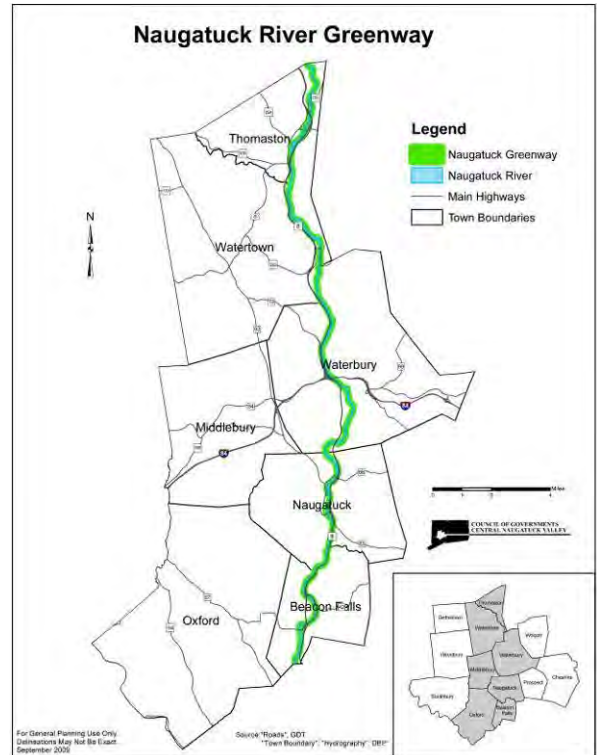
- 1) To develop a non-motorized transportation facility for walkers and cyclists.
- 2) To provide public access to the Naugatuck River.

The Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley (COGCNV) and a consultant team led by Alta Planning + Design studied, analyzed and developed routing recommendations for the Naugatuck River Greenway trail. Five study reports were created, one for each study municipality and a regional report that covers the 22-mile river corridor through the Central Naugatuck River Region. The study reports make recommendations for the trail and related improvements such trailheads, parking areas, canoe/kayak landings, as river access for fishing, on-street bike improvements, equestrian uses and spur connections. Cost estimates and phasing recommendations for the greenway trail are also included.

The year-long routing study effort included community workshops, site walks, stakeholder meetings, GIS-based data analysis and review of aerial photography. The study was overseen by the Regional Naugatuck River Greenway Committee (RNRGC), which included municipal officials, representatives from state and federal agencies, and COGCNV staff. Committee meetings were open to the public. A study website (<http://www.cogcnv.org/greenway/>) was created to keep the public informed about the study and to solicit public comment on draft documents and maps.



One of the break-out group tables at the community meeting held in Thomaston on November 18, 2009



Map showing the five municipalities affected by this Study, though the alignment through Waterbury was determined separately

2. Recommended Greenway Routing

Early on in the planning process, the consulting team analyzed the opportunities and challenges of establishing a trail along the Naugatuck River. Some of the primary opportunities include existing unpaved service-vehicle access roads, roadways with wide lanes and shoulders (that could be narrowed), existing or funded sections of trail currently along the river and large parcels of public land. The most significant challenges to creating a greenway trail within the river corridor include an active railroad line, the Route 8 expressway, privately owned properties along the river, steep slopes and wetlands. The resulting analysis was incorporated into the development of recommendations for the routing of the trail and is summarized below:

Thomaston

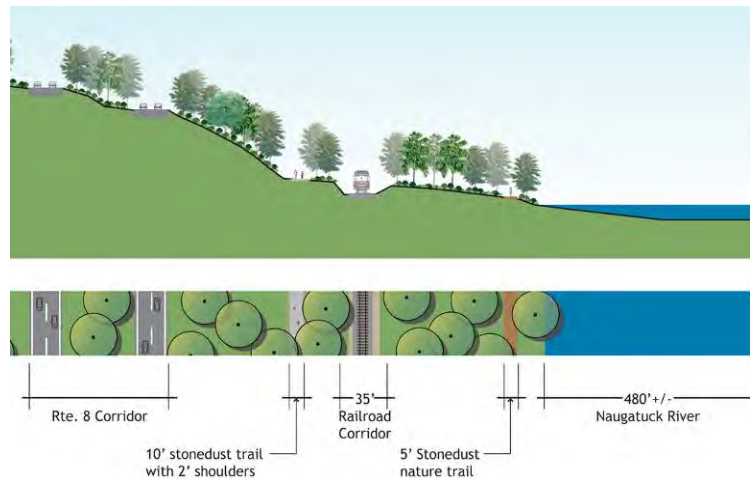
The NRG within Thomaston will provide a diverse experience for walkers, runners and cyclists. The 4.5 mile trail includes portions set adjacent to existing roadways, soft-surface pathways close to the river, a short “rail-with-trail” portion, and streets shared with low-speed vehicle traffic. The route will provide connections to many attractions in town: Thomaston Dam, Railroad Museum of New England, Clock Walk, Thomaston Opera House and Blue-Blazed Mattatuck Trail at the Watertown line. Trail-side amenities will be provided along the route, including: small parking lots, picnic areas, small boat launches (for canoes and kayaks), rest stops, seating, water fountains, public art, and interpretive signage and kiosks.



Proposed view looking southwest to the new NRG at-grade crossing of Hill Road

Watertown

In Watertown, the 3.4 mile long NRG will consist primarily of a multi-use path that runs in between Route 8 and the rail line adjacent to the west bank of the Naugatuck River. In some locations, the trail alignment is relatively close to the tracks—separated by a buffer of 25’—whereas in others locations, it is separated from the rail line by a wider vegetated buffer. The stretch of greenway between the Thomaston Town Line at Branch Brook and Frost Bridge Road is a two-mile stretch of pathway unbroken by cross streets or roads. It runs through a very scenic section of the Naugatuck River valley. From Frost Bridge Road to the Waterbury line, the trail will run alongside the rail line with occasional sections affording closer access and views to the river. A new pedestrian/bike bridge connects the trail on the west bank to the northern terminus of Waterbury’s portion of the Naugatuck River Greenway just south of the intersection of Thomaston Avenue and Spruce Brook Road.



Trail cross-section north of Frost Bridge Road (Route 262) showing the greenway trail’s relationship to the Naugatuck River, the Naugatuck Railroad and Route 8

Waterbury

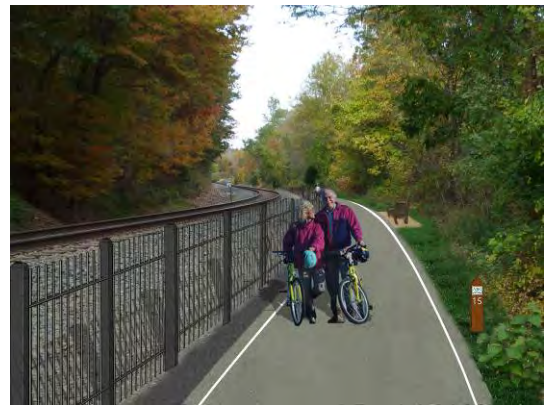
Completed in February 2010, the Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway Routing and Feasibility Study developed recommendations for the city's seven-mile section of greenway trail. The proposed trail will include ten trailheads, six small parking areas, four new paddlecraft put-ins, four new river bridges and the rehabilitation of three existing rail trestle bridges. It also includes recommendations for trail spurs and on-street connections to link the Waterbury NRG to the Steele Brook path, downtown Waterbury and the train station. Though completed in a separate planning process, the proposed alignment was intended to incorporate the trail's extension to the north and south as part of the regional Naugatuck River Greenway.



Chase River Road's wide shoulders will be narrowed to accommodate the NRG

Naugatuck

The NRG in Naugatuck will take various forms including portions set adjacent to existing roadways, soft-surface pathways adjacent to the river (in the short term), "rail-with-trail" portions adjacent to Metro-North and a multi-use path running through Borough parks adjacent to the river. The 3.3 mile route will incorporate the already planned greenway trail through Linden Park to the Maple Street Bridge and provide connections to many destinations and attractions such as the Green, the railroad station, the Historical Society Museum and a number of open spaces including Linden Park, Breen Field, the Naugatuck State Forest and a future recreation area on the former Uniroyal site. Trail-side amenities will include small parking lots, picnic areas, boat launches, rest stops, water fountains, public art, seating, interpretive signage and kiosks.



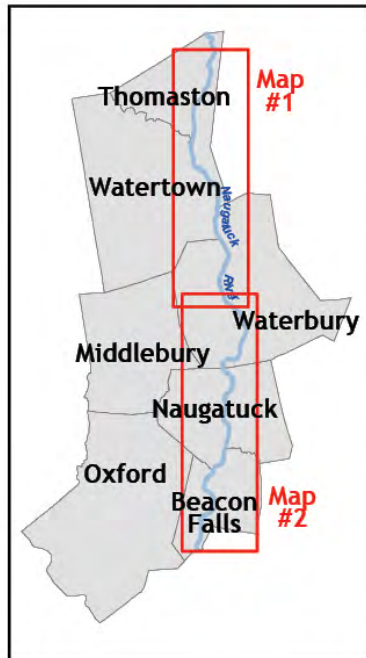
Future NRG trail alongside the active commuter rail line in Naugatuck

Beacon Falls

In Beacon Falls, the NRG will be a 4.3 mile trail that includes a nearly two-mile stretch through the Naugatuck State Forest, in the short term as an improved system of existing trails. In the long term, the greenway will include catwalks, structured portions and potentially a new bridge over the river to connect the downtown area to the existing trails behind the Murtha Industrial Park. From North Main Street, the trail will connect to the section of greenway currently planned and funded along South Main Street from the Depot Street Bridge to the intersection with Rte. 42. The route will provide important connections to numerous public open spaces, including the State Forest, Veterans Park, Volunteer Park and to Toby's Pond and Recreational Park. Like other municipalities, trail-side amenities will be provided along the route as well.



The connection through the State Forest could include a trail section similar to the Catwalk Trail in New Mexico's Gila National Forest



Naugatuck River Greenway

Regional Naugatuck River
Greenway Routing Study

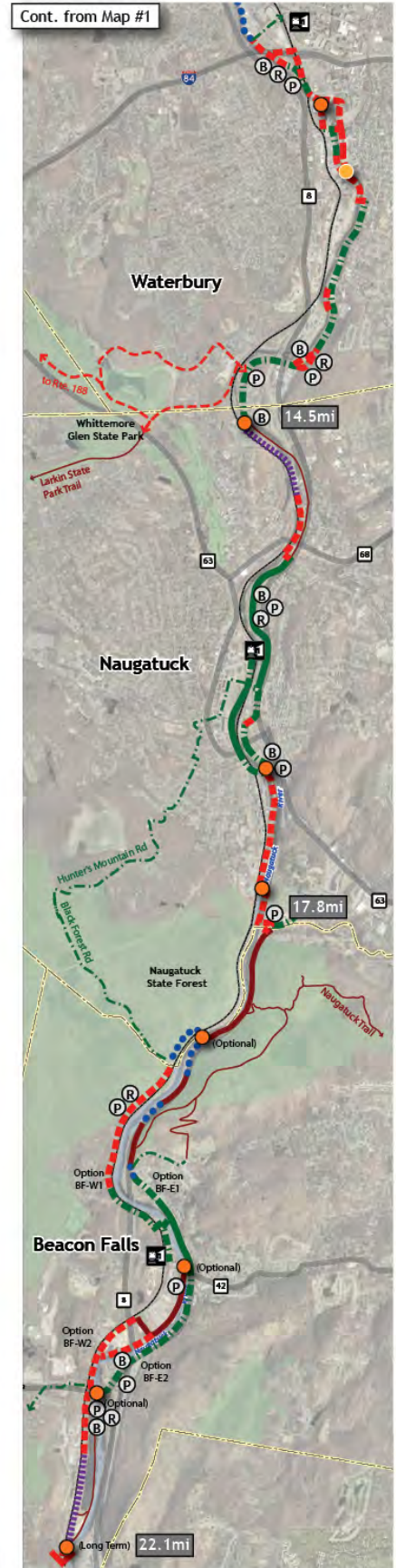
**Recommended Greenway
Routing Concept**

COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY



0 1,000 2,000 Feet

Source:
GIS data obtained from
Council of Governments
Central Naugatuck Valley



Recommended Greenway Routing Concept from Thomaston to Beacon Falls

3. Trail Section Prioritization

Most likely, financial constraints will require the Naugatuck River Greenway to be completed in multiple phases. For Thomaston, Watertown, Naugatuck and Beacon Falls, a recommended phasing plan was created by weighing seven criteria for each segment of the NRG trail. The criteria included Connectivity, Permitting Requirements, Construction Cost, Ease of Construction, Private Property Impacts, Momentum Building and Cultural Benefits.

The results of the evaluation show that one of the two or three NRG trail sections in each municipality stands out as the clear priority project. This quartet of phased projects should help to chart a course for a regional strategy that looks at funding portions of the greenway in an effective manner, one that will introduce portions of the greenway to Thomaston, Watertown, Naugatuck and Beacon Falls at approximately the same time period. North of Waterbury, the phasing evaluation highlights the potential of two adjoining phases in Thomaston and Watertown running from downtown Thomaston to Frost Bridge Road. South of Waterbury, the priority projects extend the linear length of the previously-funded NRG projects in downtown Naugatuck and Beacon Falls, respectively.

Although connecting all four towns to each other and to Waterbury's portion of the NRG will be a long-term endeavor but one that will bring tremendous rewards for the residents of the region.

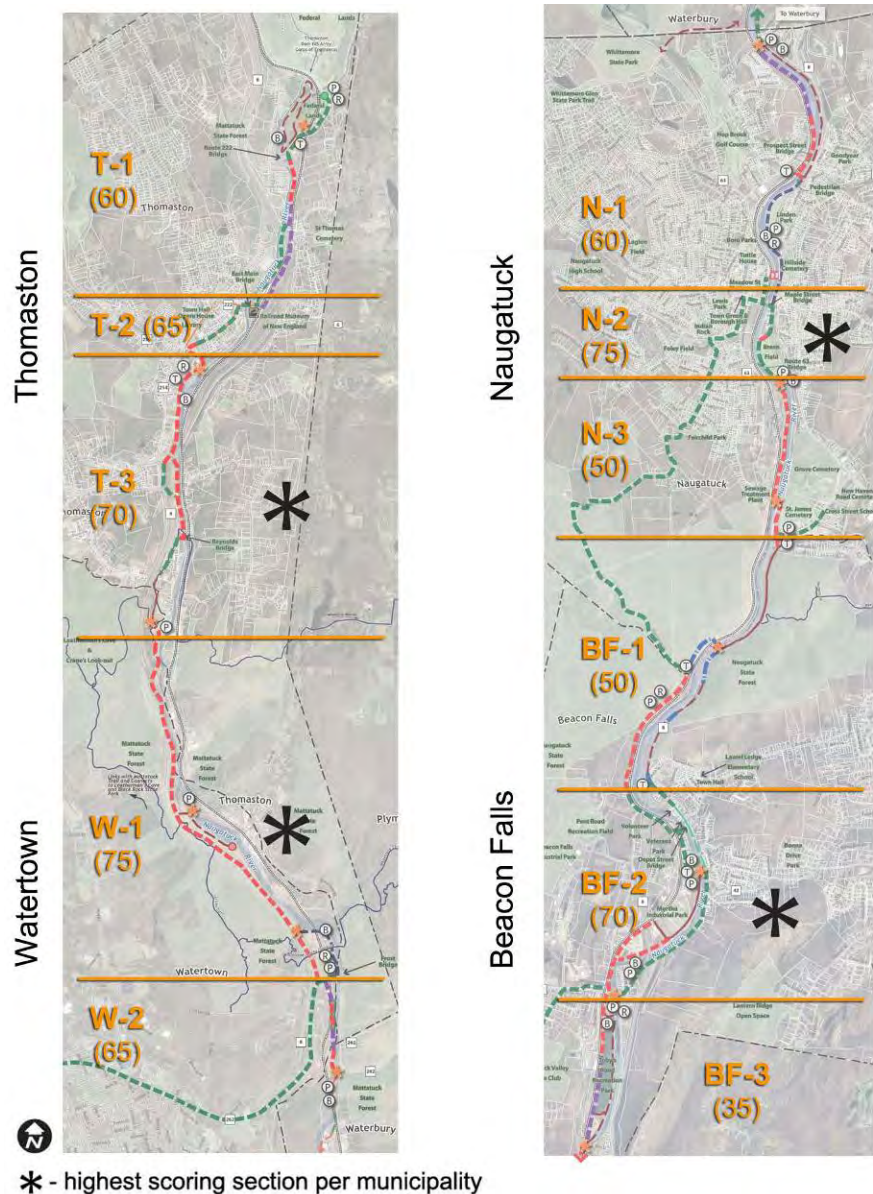


Diagram illustrating Regional NRG Trail Priority Sections

4. Community Phasing Plans and Cost Estimates

The following tables provide a description of phase limits, phase lengths, recommended construction priority, and estimated cost for the four municipalities in the corridor, not including Waterbury. The tables are also broken down into “Primary” and “Secondary” portions, i.e. trail elements that are necessary for the completion of the primary portion of the NRG trail vs. secondary elements such as spurs, loops and streetscape improvements that are not integral to the full completion of the trail within the municipal limits.

Table 1: Thomaston

Section	Description	Length (miles)	Phase	Total Cost
T-1	Thomaston Dam to Railroad Museum	1.5	3	\$1,716,000
T-2	East Main Street Bridge and Elm Street	0.5	2	\$1,913,000
T-3	Seth Thomas Factory to Watertown Line	1.9	1	\$1,900,000
Total Construction Cost - Primary		3.9		\$5,529,000
Total Construction Cost - Secondary				\$372,000

Table 2: Watertown

Section	Description	Length (miles)	Phase	Total Cost
W-1	Thomaston Line to Frost Bridge Road	2.7	1	\$1,847,000
W-2	Frost Bridge Road to Waterbury Line	0.7	2	\$917,000
Total Construction Cost - Primary		3.4		\$2,764,000
Total Construction Cost - Secondary				\$1,970,000

Table 3: Naugatuck

Section	Description	Length (miles)	Phase	Total Cost
N-1	Waterbury Line to Pulaski Bridge	1.1	2	\$1,140,000
N-2	Maple Street Bridge to Breen Field	0.8	1	\$1,192,000
N-2	Breen Field to Beacon Falls Line	1.4	3	\$2,044,000
Total Construction Cost - Primary		3.3		\$4,376,000
Total Construction Cost - Secondary				\$888,000

Table 4: Beacon Falls

Section	Description	Length (miles)	Phase	Total Cost
BF-1	Naugatuck Line to Main Street	1.8	2	\$2,744,000
BF-2	Main Street to Toby's Pond	1.8	1	\$1,357,000
BF-3	Toby's Pond to Seymour Line	0.7	3	\$681,000
Total Construction Cost - Primary		4.3		\$4,782,000
Total Construction Cost - Secondary				\$910,000

Conclusion / Next Steps

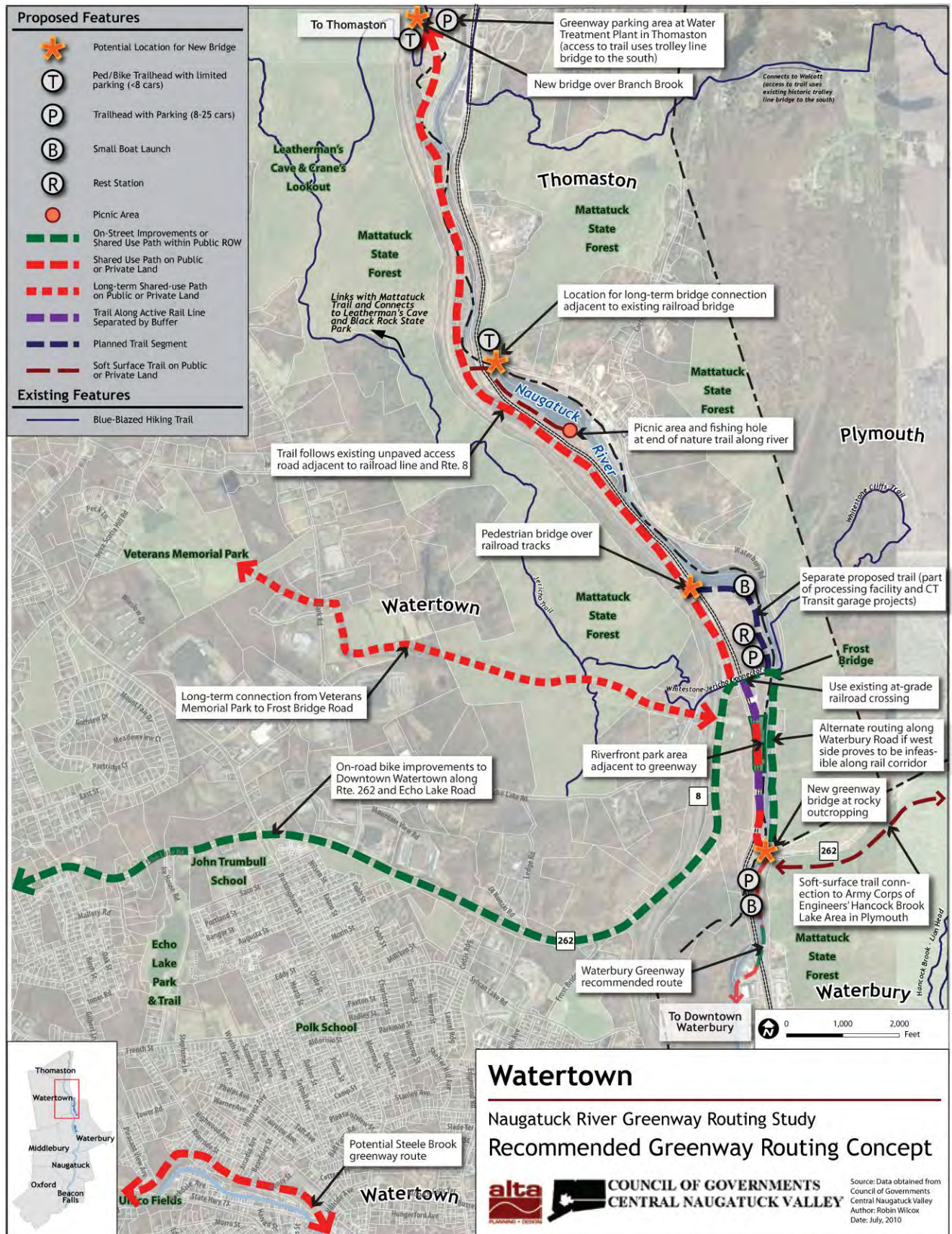
The Regional Naugatuck River Greenway Routing Study is just the first step in the development of the Naugatuck River Greenway (NRG). The NRG will be a long-term, multi-phase project led by the municipalities, in cooperation with state and federal agencies. It will require the continued involvement of members of the public, elected officials at all levels of government and community groups in order to support and guide the implementation effort. The following ‘next steps’ are recommended in order to move the effort forward in a sustainable fashion:

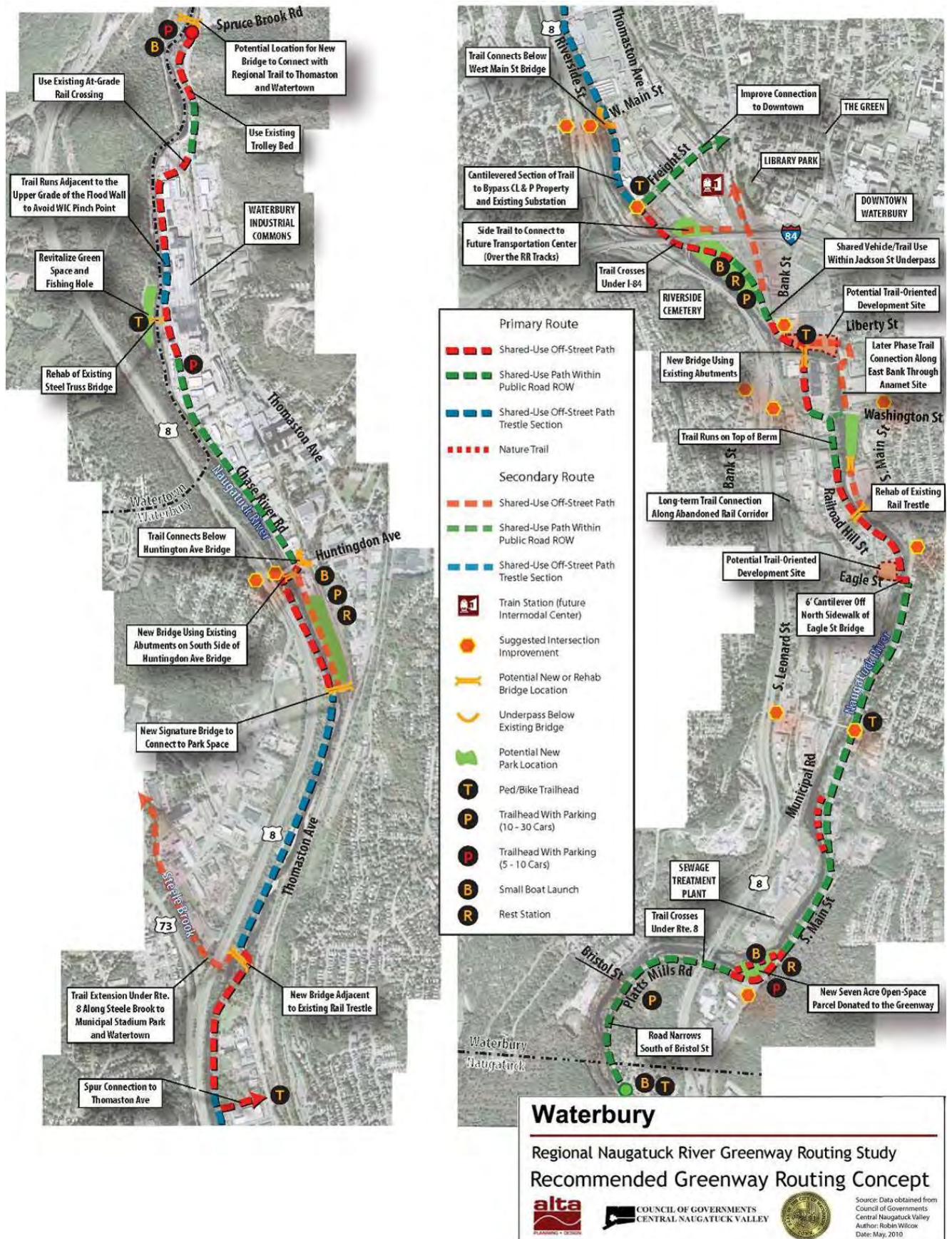
- **Adopt the Study:** Thomaston, Watertown, Naugatuck and Beacon Falls could amend their Plans of Conservation and Development to incorporate the greenway alignment.
- **Create the Right-of-Way:** This will ensure that the proposed alignment for the trail is gradually assembled and made available for public access. This can be accomplished by using:
 - **New zoning regulations** to ensure that the greenway is accommodated into redevelopment proposals along the proposed greenway alignment.
 - **Solicitations of easement or outright ownership** should also be considered when key privately-owned parcels are on the market.
 - **Begin permitting process** to ensure that all necessary approvals and permits are completed, including Inland Wetlands, CTDEP and Army Corps of Engineers.
- **Find Project “Champions” to Raise Awareness and Money:** Each municipality should identify an individual, commission or committee to oversee subsequent steps in the design, funding and implementation process for the greenway.
- **Establish a Public-Private-Non-Profit Partnership:** Establishment of a “Friends of the NRG” non-profit organization can be an effective advocate and fundraiser for the project.
- **Find “Early Win” Projects:** Support for continued action at the local level will grow out of small successes that move the project or individual pieces of the project forward.
- **Negotiate with the Connecticut Department of Transportation** to ensure that the needs of the railroad corridor are met while designing the rails-with-trails sections. Also coordinate with the highway division on the use of state highway rights-of-way.
- **Incorporate the greenway alignment into the Thomaston Dam master plan** to allow for future partnerships with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

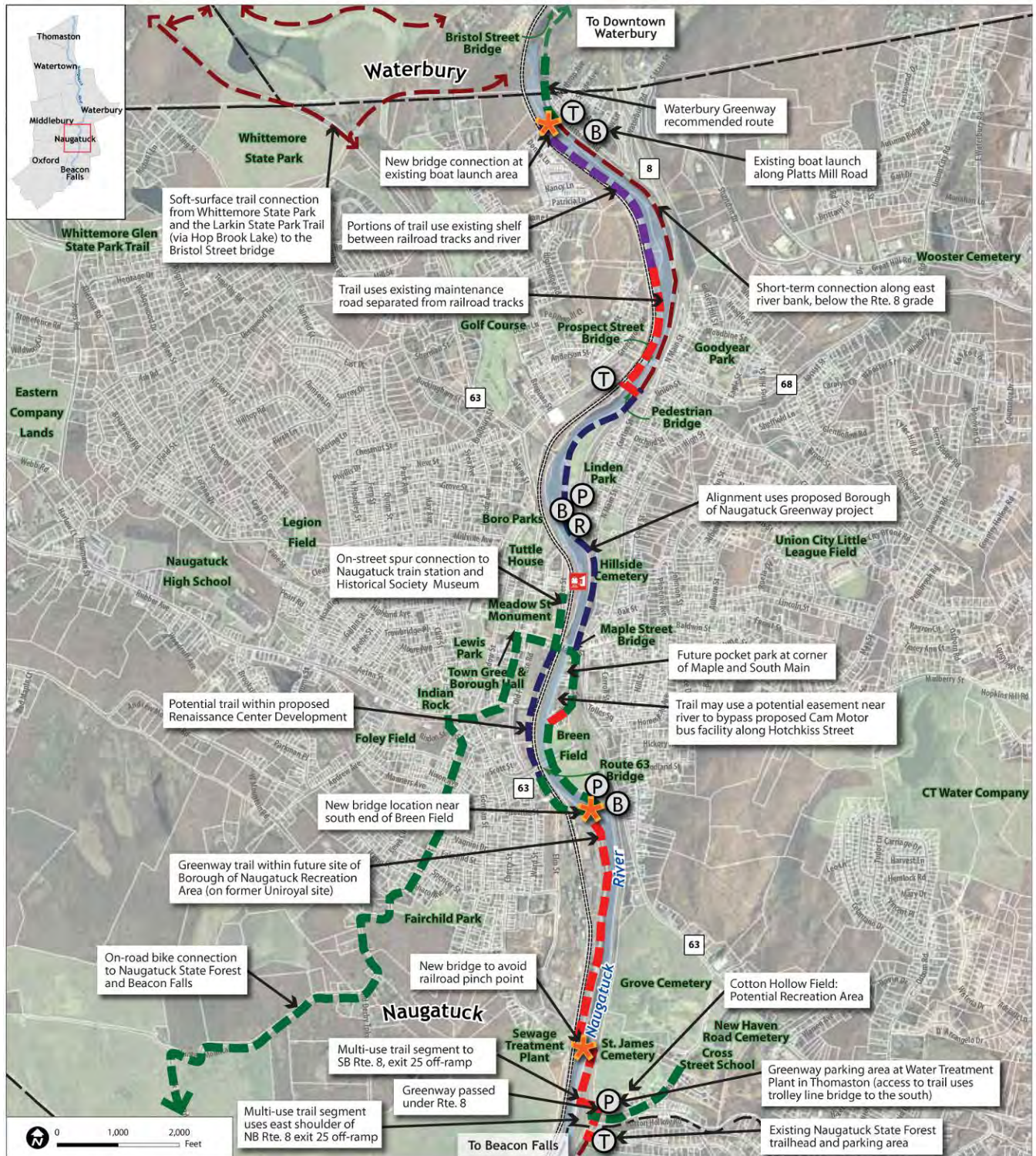
With these actions moving forward, the Naugatuck River Greenway will become a regional asset for residents, businesses and visitors. The trail will enhance non-motorized transportation opportunities and bring a recreational amenity that rivals any within the state of Connecticut.



Future view of the NRG trail adjacent to the active railroad tracks between the O&G wash plant and Toby's Pond and Recreational Park in Beacon Falls







Naugatuck

Naugatuck River Greenway Routing Study

Recommended Greenway Routing Concept

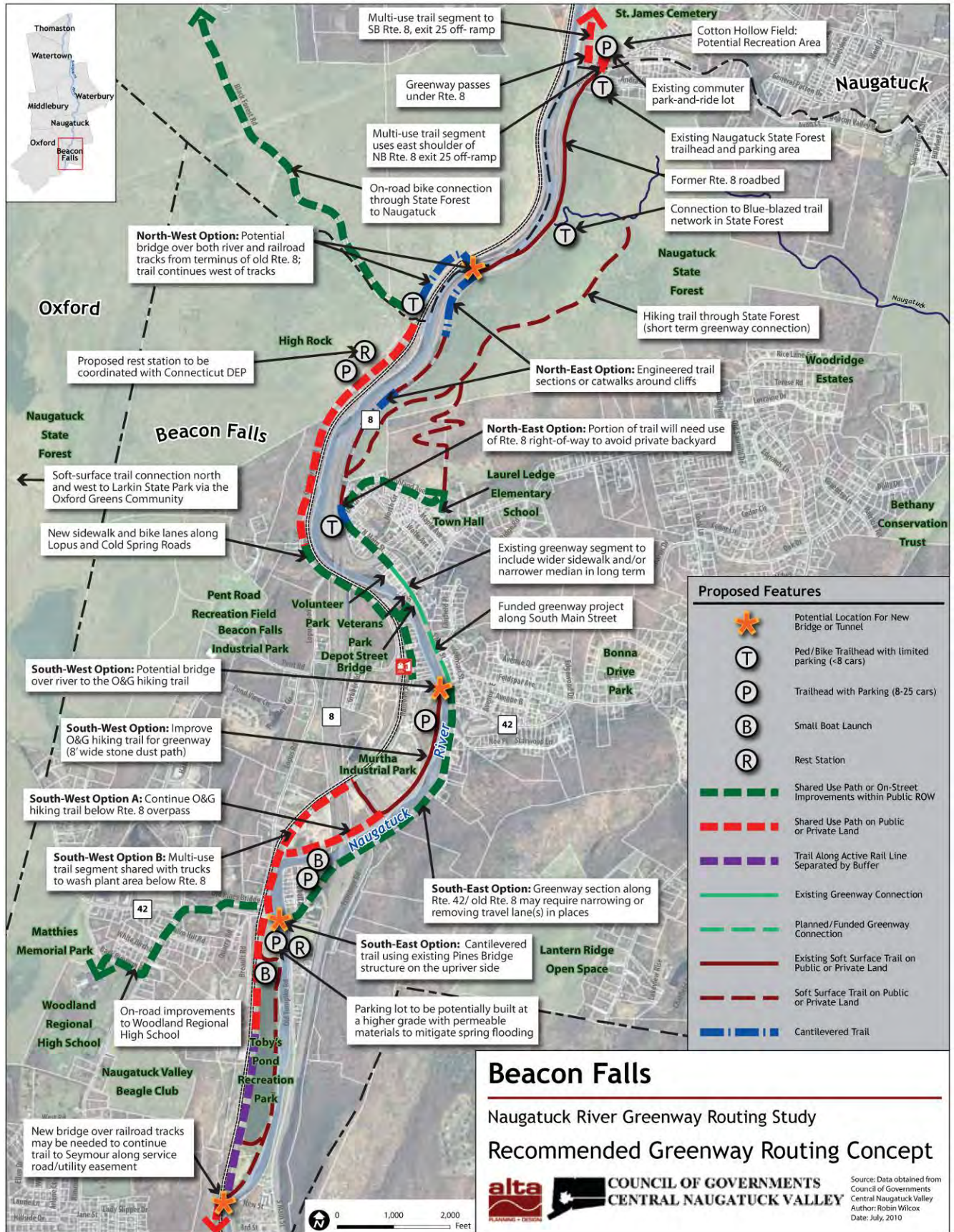


COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY

Source: Data obtained from
Council of Governments
Central Naugatuck Valley
Author: Robin Wilcox
Date: July, 2010

Proposed Features

	Potential Location For New Bridge		Shared Use Path or On-Street Improvements within Public ROW
	Ped/Bike Trailhead with limited parking (<8 cars)		Shared Use Path on Public or Private Land
	Trailhead with Parking (8-25 cars)		Trail Along Active Rail Line Separated by Buffer
	Small Boat Launch		Planned Trail Segment
	Rest Station		Soft Surface Trail on Public or Private Land





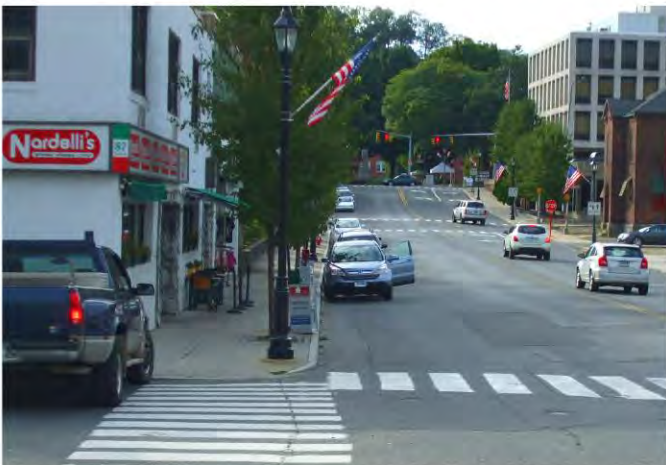
The NRG will connect to the Clock Walk through downtown Thomaston



Most of the trail's alignment in Watertown offers wonderful views of the surrounding hills



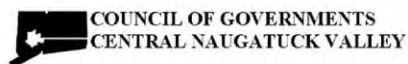
The greenway will bring a recreational amenity into the former industrial landscape of parts of Waterbury



Streetscape improvements along Maple Street will help to link the river with the Naugatuck Green



A welcome terminus at the south end of the NRG is Toby's Pond and Recreation Park (photo credit: Anita Goerig)



For more information, contact: Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley
60 North Main Street, 3rd Floor, Waterbury, Connecticut 06702-1403 • 203-757-0535 • www.cogcnv.org



COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY

