

# Weymouth Fore River Trail Feasibility Study

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Phase 1	December 20, 2019
Phase 2	January 22, 2020
Phase 3	July 29, 2020
Summary	July 29, 2020

Town of Weymouth  
Mayor Robert Hedlund

Weymouth Department of Planning & Community Development  
Robert Luongo, Director

Idlewell Improvement Association  
Mathew Tallon, President

## Weymouth Fore River Study

Weymouth Landing to Cadman Conservation Area

20 December 2019

### Memo

KZLA was hired by the Town of Weymouth to review the feasibility of creating a new pedestrian trail which would connect the Town's Fore River Canoe Launch (adjacent to the MBTA's Weymouth Landing parking area) to the existing conservation land at the Cadman Conservation Area.

### The Vision

Residents of the Idlewell neighborhood, led by Matt Tallon, have asked the Town to consider a trail along the Fore River similar to what has been planned (and partially installed from the Kibby property along Great Esker Park to Osprey Overlook Park) along the Back River on Weymouth's northeast border. The vision would eventually create a trail that extends from the Weymouth Landing Fore River Canoe Launch to King's Cove Park north of Route 3A/Bridge Street.

Matt Tallon's proposal to connect the Fore River Canoe Launch to Cadman Conservation Area uses the following routes:

- Connect to the Monatiquot-Fore River walkway at the Fore River Canoe Launch
- Egress the canoe launch property and follow the Commercial Street sidewalk until Regina Road (a private way with no sidewalk, but limited traffic).
- Gain access to the NStar Electric Co. (now Eversource) parcel under the MBTA railroad tracks at the end of Regina Road (currently gated to both pedestrian and vehicular access)
- Utilize the existing access drive which follows the bank of the Fore River towards the center of the NStar parcel
- Follow the existing access drive eastward, on upland, to the salt marsh
- Connect over the salt marsh creek using existing the concrete bridge which has subsided
- Follow the existing access drive to the north where it ends at the west end of Hibiscus Avenue
- Use sidewalks through the Idlewell neighborhood (Pleasant view Avenue, Biscayne Avenue, Piedmont Street, and Narragansett Avenue) to connect to Newell Playground to the north and the salt marshes surrounding Tide Mill Brook to the east
- Connect to Edison Street from Narragansett Avenue
- From the end of Edison Street gain access to the privately held parcels in Block 156 which are currently intended (though not permitted) for a high-density development
- Create a pathway along the bank of the Tide Mill Brook. A substantial portion of the bank through the wider portion of parcel 13-156-5 is gradual enough



- Create a boardwalk along Tide Mill Brook out to Commercial Street near Essex Street on the privately held parcels (13-156-38 and 13-156-5)

This proposal does make some assumptions that need to be addressed; these include:

1. Requires permission for the public to access the NStar parcel and use it for passive recreation
2. Requires the use of privately-owned land which is currently intended for development. The understanding is that the developer has suggested that a portion of these parcels could have an easement or conservation restriction applied to allow public use in the areas that are steep and within wetland areas and buffer zones.
3. Requires a boardwalk along Tide Mill Brook to connect the trail to the Commercial Street sidewalk. (Approximate boardwalk length is 325 linear feet.) There is also a grade change to be made from the marsh level to the street level.

Based on the kick-off meeting with various Town representatives (December 3<sup>rd</sup>) on a site walk conducted with Idlewell resident Matt Tallon Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, permitting review, and study of the Town's Atlas of streets and properties, the following alternatives are outlined:

- A. Short-term alternative using land currently owned by the Town, sidewalks, and the NStar Electric/Eversource parcel, if permissible.
- B. Alternative with boardwalk connections (requires permitting) and land acquisitions and/or easements/conservation restrictions.

#### Discussion

- A. Short-term alternative using land currently owned by the Town, sidewalks, and the NStar Electric/Eversource parcel, if permissible

The route essentially follows the same as that proposed by the Idlewell resident, however it deviates by using only the lands currently held by the Town of Weymouth, plus the NStar parcel just to the southwest of the Idlewell neighborhood. Because it relies only on Town-owned parcels, the reliance on sidewalks is substantial. This alternative also does not propose any boardwalks, as they require environmental permitting and significant construction costs. This also means that this Alternative is a shorter trail which terminates in the Idlewell neighborhood. This alternative is a short-term solution which would require less funding than alternative B and no permitting.

Several key points need to be addressed for this alternative to be feasible. All of which are focused on the same parcel: the 16.3-acre NStar Electric parcel (16-151-1). The NStar Electric/Eversource parcel is the key connector to the parcels at the Landing and those of the Idlewell neighborhood. Without permission to use this land for passive recreation, the trail system will rely nearly entirely on sidewalks. Critical points to be considered include:

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- On this site are several steel stanchions supporting high-voltage transmission lines. While there is certainly precedent for municipal trail networks on land owned by private utilities and under high-transmission lines, the appetite for NStar Electric/Eversource is unknown. (It is understood that there has been a history of trespassing on the property and the steel stanchions have been adapted to an attempt to prevent the public from climbing on the structures.)
- Included in this parcel is a substantial amount of marshland. On the day of the site walk, December 12, 2019, we visited the site during a high tide around the full moon. A substantial portion of the site was impassable given the tide, and even flooded up to 18 inches. This means that several times each month the trail would be unpassable if existing conditions are not improved.
- While it is understood that the old concrete bridge that crosses the tidal channel is normally passable, during the full moon high tide, it was not. The condition of the bridge is reported to be very poor and appears as though it would not meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines for trails in its current condition.
- This alternative requires reliance on sidewalks to make connections, including existing sidewalks on Commercial Street. Unfortunately, very few of the streets within the Idlewell neighborhood have sidewalks (save for the east side of Pleasantview Avenue; the east side of Piedmont/Narragansett Avenues; and sporadic portions of the west side of Idlewell Avenue. All the sidewalks proposed to be incorporated into the trail should be improved. Many are narrow, in very poor condition, and often are randomly terminated parcel-to-parcel.

Designating the connection between the Landing and the Cadman Conservation Area using land currently owned by the Town and the 16.3-acre NStar Electric parcel is only feasible if the Town can negotiate an understanding with NStar to allow the public on their land. There is a concern that without adding new structures (i.e. boardwalks) or elevating grades of the existing access drives to accommodate hightides, pedestrians may be choose to walk along the MBTA rail line when the tides are too high to cross the marsh rather than walking back out to commercial street.

The use of sidewalks and private roads is feasible, especially in short-term planning. Wayfinding signage will be essential in all options, but especially when using sidewalks and the intended direction of the trail network is not obvious.

For this alternative to be feasible, the following issues will have to be addressed:

1. Permission for the public to access the NStar parcel and use for passive recreation for pedestrian access. This is critical to the development of the trail network.
2. Removal of the gate at the end of Regina Road.
3. Pedestrian access on Regina Road – currently a private way – with sidewalks for pedestrian safety and wayfinding signage.

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4. Improved sidewalk along Idlewell Avenue from Commercial Street to Chandler Street
5. Pedestrian access (i.e. sidewalk and signage) on Chandler Street and on Pleasantview Avenue from Chandler Street to Biscayne Avenue.
6. Improved sidewalk along Pleasantview Avenue from Biscayne Avenue to Idlewell Avenue.
7. Pedestrian access (i.e. sidewalk and signage) on Idlewell Avenue from Pleasantview Avenue to Newell Park.

Without additional land acquisitions or easements, the trail would likely be terminated in the Idlewell neighborhood.

B. Alternative with boardwalk connections (requires permitting) and land acquisitions and/or easements/conservation restrictions

This alternative would follow the same route as Alternative A above, with some notable exceptions, which include land acquisition and/or easements/conservation restrictions and the inclusion of boardwalk segments. The boardwalk segments would provide the trail to continue further to the northeast, as well as allow the trail system to follow the river, rather than sidewalks.

Chapter 91 has jurisdiction over flowed tidelands: "Any project located in, on, over or under tidal waters seaward of the present mean high water (MHW) shoreline. Jurisdiction in this case extends seaward three miles, to the state limit of territorial jurisdiction." Structures – in the case a boardwalk – would fall under the MassDEP Waterways License. Pedestrian and waterfront walkways are considered a public benefit under Chapter 91 and would likely be seen as a favorable public amenity. However, the MassDEP Waterways License is a lengthy process which can take from 4 to 9 months. In addition to state permitting, a Notice of Intent for likely work in a Coastal Resource Area (salt marsh), Land Subject to Coastal Storm Flowage, and possibly a Bordering Vegetated Wetland, would need to be filed with the Town's Conservation Commission.

In order to bypass the Commercial Street sidewalk, a boardwalk could be installed from the Fore River Canoe Launch to the NStar parcel near the intersection of Commercial Street and the MBTA rail line. The segment from the Fore River Canoe Launch to the NStar/Eversource parcel is located in a fairly wide portion of the Fore River but it is an area that is currently used as a marina on both the Weymouth and the Braintree sides of the river. There are two potential challenges to this: (1) the conflict with the floats/docks at Thayer's Landing Marina, and (2) Massachusetts Public Waterfront Act, Chapter 91 permitting for navigable waterways and tidelands.

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The Cadman Conservation Area – where a boardwalk could cross the salt marsh to provide access to Laudervale Road and Norton Street – is also a flowed tideland subject to Chapter 91 permitting.

This alternative is not dependent upon both boardwalks being implemented in order to be viable. The priority would be for the boardwalk that connects the Cadman Conservation Area as this would open more of the landscape to public access. For this alternative to be feasible, the following issues will have to be addressed:

1. Permission for the public to access the NStar/Eversource parcel and use for passive recreation.
2. Creation of a boardwalk from the Fore River Canoe Launch to the NStar parcel on the river's edge. Approximate boardwalk length is 1,300 linear feet.  
  
OR, Continued use of the sidewalk along Commercial Street, plus pedestrian access (i.e. sidewalk and signage) on Regina Road and removal of the gate at the end of Regina Road.
3. Improved sidewalks and signage through the Idlewell neighborhood, as described above
4. Pedestrian access (i.e. sidewalk and signage) on Biscayne Avenue from Piedmont Street to Trefton Avenue. This portion of Biscayne Avenue is a private way.
5. Pedestrian access (i.e. sidewalk and signage) on Trefton Avue and Montcalm Street – both are private ways. The center portion of Tefton is still a paper road and has not been developed as a road to connect the two ends.
6. Land acquisition or easement/conservation restriction for public use of some combination of the following parcels 13-131-4, 13-131-3, 13-131-2, 13-131-1, (privately held, but undeveloped parcel) and/or 13-131-17-0 (undeveloped parcel held by National Grid as Mass. Electric Co.). Access to some combination of these parcels would provide access from Tefton Avenue. The more ideal situation would be an easement across, or acquisition of, the National Grid parcel which could provide access to the salt marsh from the end of Montcalm Street.
7. Creation of a boardwalk across the salt marsh near the end of Montcalm Street. A boardwalk could follow the existing sewer easement which connects across the marsh to another National Grid/Mass Electric Co. parcel (10-130-10) and a privately held, but undeveloped parcel (10-130-19) which would provide direct access to Laudervale Road and then Norton Street. Approximate boardwalk length is 1,150 linear feet.
8. Laudervale Road is a very narrow private way which should also be improved with pedestrian access (i.e. sidewalk and signage) should it be incorporated into a trail network. This would provide access to Norton Street and its sidewalk.

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Additional notes:

1. Providing a sidewalk on Ledge Hill road/Summit Street and/or Gibbens Street would allow the connection of Webb Park and the neighborhood that surrounds it access to the Fore river trail from Commercial Street as well. Crosswalks would have to be introduced on Commercial Street to make the connection complete and safe.
2. Trail connections along Commercial Street can also be made to Cranberry Pond Park to the west, the William A. Connell, Sr. Recreation Center and the adjacent Central Park to the east, if permission is granted for the public to use the high-voltage transmission lines which continue south through Weymouth.
3. There is a small privately held parcel (12-147-9) in the midst of the Town of Weymouth parcels which sit between the Idlewell neighborhood and the NStar/Eversource parcel. This parcel is not critical for the trail to connect, but it would provide more flexibility for the trail alignment and grading, if necessary.
4. Most of the area is included in the FEMA National Flood Hazard Zone. The revised FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map, dated September 26, 2016, shows that that entire feasibility study is included in special Flood Hazard Areas, save for some uplands in the NStar/Eversource parcel and the interior of the Idlewell neighborhood. (Some of this upland area is classified as a 0.2% Chance Flood Hazard.) Most of the area in question is zoned "VE" while some salt marsh areas are "AE". These categories are defined as having "at least a 1 in 4 chance of flooding" during a 30-year period and are defined as high risk. "VE" is further defined as "coastal areas with a 1% or greater chance of flooding and an additional hazard associate with storm waves. The "VE" area have been given a flood elevation of 12 or 13 and the "AE" has a flood elevation of 10 or 11. (See attached map.)

Additional mapping on the Massachusetts Sea Level Rise & Coastal Flooding Viewer from the State's Office of Coastal Zone Management includes most of the coastal areas of the study site in the Mean Higher High Water (MHHW, the average height of daily highest tide) modeling from NOAA. Many areas, including the salt marsh of the Cadman Conservation Area and between the NStar/Eversource parcel and the Idlewell neighborhood, are included with portions of Newell Playground, Cadman Conservation Area, and the NStar/Eversource parcel are included in the mapping for the MHHW plus increasing levels of sea level rise, up to 6 feet. Any structures or trail segments designed for the proposed trail network, should take these factors into consideration.

**End of memo**



### Weymouth Fore River Walking Path Study

Cadman Conservation Area to King's Cove (Phase 2)

9 March 2020

### Memo

KZLA was hired by the Town of Weymouth to review the feasibility of creating a new pedestrian trail which would connect the existing conservation land at the Cadman Conservation Area to King's Cove north of Route 3A. This is an extension of the study completed in December 2019 which covered the landscape from the Fore River Canoe Launch to Cadman Conservation Area.

### The Vision

Residents of the Idlewell neighborhood, led by Matt Tallon, have asked the Town to consider a trail along the Fore River similar to what has been planned (and partially installed from the Kibby property along Great Esker Park to Osprey Overlook Park) along the Back River on Weymouth's northeast border. The vision would eventually create a trail that extends from the Weymouth Landing Fore River Canoe Launch to King's Cove Park north of Route 3A/Bridge Street, and could also connect through the North Weymouth neighborhood north of Route 3A to the Back River Trail at the Kibby Property.

I spoke with Matt Tallon on Friday, February 28<sup>th</sup> to discuss how he envisioned the continuation of the Fore River Trail beyond Cadman Conservation Area to the north of Route 3A. Matt's proposal to continue the Fore River Trail focuses more on connecting the Town's open space parcels between King's Cove and Webb Memorial State Park (including Leo Madden Field, Wessagusett Woods, Great Hill Park, James O'Sullivan field) and southeast to the Kibby Property, than following the shoreline of the Fore River. For this study area (Cadman Conservation Area to King's Cove), from Matt has proposed the following route:

- Using sidewalks along Norton Street from the Abigail Adams Birthplace/Old North Cemetery to connect from Cadman Conservation Area and head to the north (with traffic calming and additional parking along Norton Street).
- Norton Street turns into Pearl Street. Just to the north is a stream (Philip's Creek) which drains to the march to the west, and to the east parallels Pearl Street towards North Street. The stream follows along the property line between the Town-owned lot for the Johnson Early Childhood Center (#7-100-15) and a National Grid parcel at 120 Pearl Street (#10-123-1).
  - Potential spur to Pratts Meadow across North Street
- North of Philip's Creek, cross Pearl Street to continue west on Evans Street.

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- From Evans Street, turn south onto Brewster Road to reach the Fore River.
- There are three small, Town-owned, undeveloped parcels between Gilmore Street and Stratford Road (#10-8-16, #10-80-9, and #10-79-3) that could serve as a canoe/kayak launch and a walking/biking trail. The paved roads disintegrate and connect along shore with a gravel road.
- Head north on Woronoco Road; cross Evans Street to Delorey Avenue.
- Delorey Avenue connects to Leo Madden Fields behind the Bicknell School residences.
- The proposal includes a perimeter walking path around the fields, to connect from the park extension between 16 and 22 Delorey Avenue, as well as the parking area that extends from the Bicknell School residences drive near 43 Lochmere Avenue.
- Egress at Sea Street to cross Route 3A at Bicknell Square or return towards the south.
  - Potential to continue trail to north of Route 3A and connect to other Town-owned properties.

This proposal relies on the following:

1. Creating a trail along Philip's Creek would require an easement from the owner of a 4-acre parcel at 311 North Street (#10-102-10), and potentially others on North Street (315 and 321 North Street). Much of this area is wetland. Access from Pearl Street to Philip's Creek and its marshes would have to be from either the Johnson Early Childhood Center property north of the private residence at 88 Pearl Street (#7-100-18) or the National Grid parcel at 120 Pearl Street (#10-123-1) as there is a long stretch of guardrail along the Pearl Street sidewalk with a drop in elevation due to the creek. The access onto the Johnson ECC would likely occur across from Evans Street, and connect to the east behind the residence and to the creek.
2. The Bicknell School residences at 90-136 Sea Street have parking, utility, drainage, and access easements. The access easements extend to Lochmere Avenue to the south (to the west of the parking easement) and following the driveway from the entrance at Sea Street around towards the parking. There is a potential to utilize this easement for the walking/biking trail.

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## Discussion

Similar to the Phase 1 study, the land that the Town currently owns, including sidewalks and roadways that are currently without sidewalks, provides an opportunity for a walking/biking route which can include signage to direct users to intended destinations. Wayfinding signage will be essential, especially when using sidewalks and the intended direction of the trail network is not obvious.

This phase of the trail study contains fewer Town-owned parcels than the initial phase, and fewer parcels of potential partners, like Eversource or National Grid. The shoreline from Cadman Conservation Area to Route 3A is well populated with riprap banks, seawalls, private piers, docks, and floats. These structures make access along the shoreline nearly impossible as it currently exists.

A proposed route for Phase 2 would be similar to what is proposed above, with some key infrastructure improvements for public safety:

- Cadman Conservation Area (east of the Tide mill Brook) to Laudervale Road – This portion of the Cadman Conservation Area has upland areas that are already used as trails and even in most high tides, pedestrians can reach the damaged Tide Mill Creek bridge near the MBTA railroad tracks. Laudervale Road is a private road with no sidewalk.
- Norton Street/Pearl Street north to Evans Street – There is the potential for this street cross-section to be wide enough to accept a bike lane. Sidewalks already exist on both sides of the street.
- Access to the Johnson Early Childhood Center fields and playground – From the east side of Pearl Street access to the Johnson ECC is easy. From the west side, if coming from the south, you must cross Evans Street and Pearl Street as there is no crossing south of the Evans Street intersection. For students/families walking to school and, especially if the trail is realized and a connection to the Old North Cemetery and the Abigail Adams Birthplace are to be included on the trail, an additional crossing should be created south of the intersection.
- Philip's Creek – If the creek corridor is to be included as a trail spur, an easement would be required for the parcels at 311 North Street (#10-102-10), and potentially others on 315 and 321 North Street (#10-102-12 and #10-1-2-13).
- Heading west on Evans Street – Evans Street has sidewalks on both sides of the street, but based on the route below, a crossing south of the intersection would be advisable.
- South on Brewster Road to the Fore River – Brewster Road is a Town road but has no sidewalks. It ends are Brewster Place which runs along Mill Cove and connects to Gilmore Street.
- Along Brewster Place to the Town-owned uplands at the end of Gilmore street and across to Woronoco Road – Improvements should be considered here, either in the

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paving of the existing gravel drive that is used by the neighborhood to drive from Woronoco Road to Stratford Road, or the installation of a permanent trail segment or boardwalk segment to connect Woronoco Road to Stratford Road. Either option would require permitting, but a trail segment is likely the cheapest to design/install and be the easiest to permit. It is possible that this area is used more for parking than a vehicular connection between the two roads.

The parcels at the end of Gilmore Street, Woronoco, and Strafford Roads (#10-8-16, #10-80-9, and #10-79-3) provide an opportunity for improvement and another access point onto the Fore River for a small craft boat launch.

- North on Woronoco Road with two options:
  - Cross Evans Street and continue north on Delorey Avenue to the Leo Madden Fields – The parking area at the Bickenell School/residences that extends towards 43 Lochmere Road does not egress on Lochmere. It has a chain link fence and has a wooded buffer. At a minimum, it should be considered to have a pedestrian gate in the fence at this point. The assessor maps show both an access easement and a parking easement on the Bicknell School residences at this location.

This would require a new crossing on Evans Street at Delorey Avenue.
  - Head west on Evans Street to reach Route 3A
- Using Evans Street to connect to Route 3A also presents two options:
  - Continuing all the way north on Evans Street to Route 3A at the lighted intersection with an existing crosswalk. This would allow access to King's Cove Park and beach.
  - Turning north on Johnson Road at the intersection of Evans Street and Wachusett Road – This would require a new crossing on Evans Street at Johnson Road.

Pedestrians could then reach Route 3A at the lighted intersection with an existing crosswalk at Birchbrow Avenue.
- Connect west/north on Evans Street to Route 3A with sidewalk on both sides
- Crossing at the lighted intersection with access to Kings Cove Park (a conservation restriction on Calpine Fore River Energy parcel #6-63-3.
- East/north along King's Cove beach and Kings Cove Beach Road (a private way with no sidewalk; gravel roadbed)
- South on Birchbrow Avenue (no sidewalk) to connect back to Route 3A and points south.

**End of memo**

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**Weymouth Fore River Walking Path Study**

Route 3A/King's Cove to the Kibby Property (Phase 3)

29 July 2020

**Memo**

KZLA was hired by the Town of Weymouth to review the feasibility of creating a new pedestrian trail which would connect the existing Town-owned parcels from King's Cove north of Route 3A to the Kibby Property at the eastern end of Route 3A. This is an extension of the studies previously conducted for Phase 1 (Weymouth Landing Fore River Canoe Launch to Cadman Conservation Area) and Phase 2 (Cadman Conservation Land to Lovell's Grove/King's Cove Park).

**The Vision**

The town requested that KZLA continue the study to connect existing Town-owned properties through the North Weymouth neighborhood north of Route 3A to the Kibby Property. From here the trail would effectively connect to the Back River Trail through Great Esker Park.

North of Route 3A, the Town owns and provides access to a collection of properties managed by the Conservation Department, the School Department, and the Recreation Department. There are also two significant State Park properties north of Route 3A (Abigail Adams State Park and Webb Memorial State Park). Connecting these properties together by means of trails and or sidewalks gives them greater access to the residents of Weymouth without relying on cars to access them. These connections would allow residents to walk, bike, or use a combination of MBTA bus routes and walking/biking. It makes these Town-owned spaces more available and accessible to everyone.

This proposal connects the following Town-owned properties and State Park facilities which provide natural, scenic, and historic resources, as well as opportunities for recreation:

- King's Cove Park
- Lovell's Grove
- The beach at Fore River Avenue
- Wessagussett Wetlands & Woodlands
- Wessagussett Elementary School
- Great Hill Park
- O'Sullivan Playground
- Wessagussett Beach
- George E. Lane Beach
- Kibby Property
- Webb Memorial State Park
- Abigail Adams State Park



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and steep approach. The steep gradient of Baylee and the overgrowth make it difficult and uncomfortable to walk up.

Consider creating a pedestrian trail which can access the top of Great Hill Park so that visitors can enjoy the spectacular views of the Boston skyline, the Harbor Islands Quincy Bay, Hingham Bay, and Boston Harbor. The two existing roads follow what appear to be the more gradual slopes up to the top of the hill, but the west side provides ample room for a switchback path despite the steeper grades on this side of the hill. An alternative trail possibility would be to connect off the parking lot on the shelf of Wessagussett Road up the hill, but a trail from this location would have to be studied to ensure that pedestrians egressing the trail do not distract from the viewshed once atop Great Hill.

3. When sidewalks do not exist, but destinations cannot be reached other than walking in the road, sidewalks should be installed for pedestrian safety. If sidewalks with curbs are undesirable, a striped walking lane, similar to what was installed at Osprey Overlook Park, could be considered, with the understanding that if this striped walking lane is adjacent to residences, these lanes could often be blocked by parked vehicles if there is no vertical curb to prevent it. Streets, or segments thereof, that meet these categories include:
  - Babcock Avenue from Bayview Street to King's Cove
  - Fore River Avenue
  - Pilgrim Road
  - Wessagussett Road from Pilgrim Road to Regatta Road
4. A public access point into the Kibby Property from Neck Street would better connect Kibby and Abigail Adams State Park to the rest of the properties in the study area. The Town owns parcel #5-13-46 which is just to the north of the Saltwater Creek residences, however, the Saltwater Creek property is clearly labeled no trespassing despite being one of only two pedestrian access points to the Kibby Property.

To gain access from this parcel to Kibby would require a bridge over the creek outlet, a boardwalk, and an access easement from the Saltwater Creek residences property.

An alternative to using parcel #5-13-46 would be to gain an access easement/conservation restriction from the U-Haul property (parcel #5-13-7) at the rear of the facility which is currently undeveloped (more than 2 acres of undeveloped land.) The property lines and development of the Saltwater Creek residences and the U-Haul facility are quite tight to the wetland at the northwest corner of this parcel but further study can show the ability to create a trailhead at this location, if the owners of the parcel are amenable.

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5. King's Cove Road could be considered as a trail given that it is a private road, not paved, and occasionally impassable at storm tides.
6. Crosswalks are recommended at all road crossings included along the identified pedestrian route.

**End of memo**

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**Weymouth Fore River Trail Feasibility Study**  
**29 July 2020 (REV 13 August 2020)**

**Study Summary Memo, Phases 1 - 3**

This study is, in part, based on the vision of Weymouth resident Matt Tallon and other Idlewelll neighborhood residents who approached the Town to develop a Fore River Trail that balances the Back River Trail on the eastern border of Weymouth. The vision was originally to create a trail connecting the Town-owned Weymouth Landing Boat Launch near the MBTA commuter rail station along the Fore River to the Cadman Conservation Area. However, as the study progressed, it was easy to see how a larger network could be created using existing Town-owned resources (park lands, conservation lands, and sidewalks).

Interconnecting these properties essentially turns the destinations into one large resource which provides diverse recreational, natural, and cultural opportunities to the residents of Weymouth while reducing reliance on personal vehicles to access these sites. On a smaller scale, this network reflects the community connectivity that Frederick Law Olmsted designed for the City of Boston with the Emerald Necklace. The Town of Weymouth has several fantastic resources, but many of them are unknown to residents who live in different parts of Town. This network, with well published mapping, can make these resources more available, better appreciated, and more accessible to all the residents of Weymouth.

This summary memo combines the proposals of the three phases of study and creates a short-term strategy and a long-term strategy. The short-term strategy assumes that the Town will utilize only the existing public lands and public roadways in combination with private roadways only when other options are not available. The short-term strategy does also propose infrastructure improvements such as updated sidewalks and new crosswalks, as well as points for water access or trail improvements. The long-term strategy looks at parcels which the Town might consider acquiring or obtaining conservation restrictions or access easements. Of particular interest to the long-term planning are those parcels currently owned by utility companies. Many of these small parcels have no existing infrastructure or development and may be readily available for acquisition, and and/or National Grid or Eversource may have an interest in allowing or formalizing public access onto their properties. Many communities in Massachusetts have combined conservation land with utility infrastructure.

**Study Area**

The study includes both the northwestern edge of the Town along the Fore River, and the natural, recreational, and cultural properties of North Weymouth and the Landing. The eastern border along the Back River already has Great Esker Park and the Back River Trail which is nearly completed from the Kibby Property to Osprey Overlook Park. Therefore, connections between the lands along these two rivers and those in between them would greatly benefit the residents of Weymouth.

(Given that this summary is being produced after the publication of the 2020 Open Space & Recreation Plan (dated, April 7, 2020; and, hereafter “the Open Space plan”) prepared for the Town by Horsley





\*Pratt's Meadow is signed on Donnellan Circle as Howard Evirs Conservation & Wildlife Sanctuary

## Short-term Planning

### Goals

1. A goal for the short-term should be to provide residents access to existing parks, playgrounds, natural resources, etc. without relying on vehicles to get there, but – where feasible and not at a detriment to the resource – provide limited parking, especially for those with mobility impairments.
2. Prioritize the use of existing sidewalks for safety and only Town-owned land in the short-term, to develop the trail network with limited funding.
3. Focus trail routes on roads with existing sidewalks but consider other streets where sidewalks do not exist when no other potential access is available. (Such roads included on the trail route are relatively low-volume side roads.) Despite the fact that several of the roads proposed for access do not have existing sidewalks, this recommendation has made the assumption that the Town does not want to take on liability of encouraging pedestrians to walk in the street without designated lanes. Therefore, it is recommended that sidewalks, or designated walking lanes (similar to the connection between the two parking areas at Osprey Overlook Park) be installed for pedestrian safety.
4. Provide new facilities for fishing/boating and/or for access to water's edge at coastal locations. In the study area there is currently only one town-owned boat access point: the Fore River Canoe Launch in the Landing. Water access should be a priority in the study area.
5. Any recommended road crossings that do not currently have crosswalks, should be updated for safe pedestrian crossing.
6. When possible, create new off-road connections that do not use sidewalks to allow residents to access Town-owned lands.
7. No land acquisitions or easements
8. Support trail connections with online mapping and simple, but clear wayfinding signage.

### Streets/sidewalks proposed for trail connections

As the Town sidewalks will make-up a substantial portion of the trail network in the short-term, they should be improved as necessary to be safe and universally accessible. Bearing in mind the Town's design standards and the available right-of-way of the roads listed below, sidewalks should meet the following guidelines: (a) be clear of obstacles and intrusions (fire hydrants, utility poles, street signs, etc.) to meet ADA Standards/ MAAB Guidelines for accessible routes; (b) have ADA/MAAB-compliant curb ramps and crosswalks; (c) consider vertical curbs to discourage residents from parking on and blocking sidewalks forcing pedestrians to walk in the roadway; (d) surfaces should be consistent and graded to meet ADA Standards/MAAB Guidelines for materials and maximum allowable slopes; and, (e) some sidewalks will need to have some vegetation management to keep the walkway clear.

Keep in mind, not all of these streets/sidewalks need to be included in the trail network, but they more that are, the most inclusive the network becomes. Each street and sidewalk should be individually

assessed for sidewalk condition, for cost to upgrade, and should be ranked for their potential to enhance the bigger network.

ROAD STREETS WITH SIDEWALKS ELIGIBLE FOR PROPOSED TRAIL CONNECTIONS

<u>Street</u>	<u>Public/Private</u>	<u>Sidewalk quality</u>
• Babcock Street*	Public	Good to n/a
• Bayview Street	Public	Fair to poor
• Biscayne Avenue	Public	Fair
• Bradley Road*	Public	Fair to n/a
• Brewster Road*	Public	n/a
• Bridge Street/Route 3A	Public	Good
• Chandler Street*	Public	n/a
• Commercial Street	Public	Good
• Church Street	Public	Good
• Delorey Avenue	Public	Poor
• Evans Street	Public	Fair
• Fore River Avenue*	Public	n/a
• Idlewell Boulevard*	Public	n/a
• Idlewell Street	Public	Fair
• Johnson Road	Public	Fair
• Leonard Road	Public	Fair
• Litchfield Road	Public	Fair
• Lovell Road	Public	Good
• Narragansett Avenue	Public	Good
• Neck Street	Public	Good
• North Street	Public	Good to fair
• Norton Street	Public	Fair
• Pearl Street	Public	Good to fair
• Piedmont Street	Public	Good to fair
• Pilgrim Road*	Public	n/a
• Pleasantview Avenue	Public	Fair
• Regatta Road**	Public	Fair
• River Street	Public	Good
• Sea Street	Public	Fair
• Wadaga Road	Public	Fair
• Wessagussett Road**	Public	Good to n/a
• Woronoco Road*	Public	n/a

\*Priority sidewalk need based on lack of another safe pedestrian access to access specific property

\*\* Wessagussett Road from North Street to Regatta Road will be less essential once the Wessagussett Walkway has been constructed and provides an accessible pedestrian connection between Wessagussett Beach and George E. Lane Beach.

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connectivity potential for the trail will be made way to Town-owned street for public access at the following streets:

<u>Street</u>	<u>Connectivity potential</u>
• Baylee Road	Access to Great Hill Park
• Kings Cove Beach Road	Access to beach & views
• Laudervale Road	Access to Cadman Conservation

## Recommended improvements in short-term:

- Boat launch and minimal parking at Woronoco Road/Gilmore Street. Requires permitting. Order of magnitude cost: \$20,000-30,000 depending on size. (It has been noted that since the Fore River is tidal and the fluctuations of grades, this will need to be carefully studied to determine if it is feasible.)
- Trail connection between Woronoco Road and Gilmore Street at the Fore River. Requires permitting. Order of magnitude cost: \$2,500-\$7,500 depending on trail material and alignment. It has been noted that since the Fore River is tidal and the fluctuations of grades, this will need to be carefully studied to determine if it is feasible.)
- Trail connection from North Street and/or Wessagussett Road to Great Hill Park. No permitting required. Order of magnitude cost: dependent on route followed. Consider volunteer efforts and/or grants for funding.
- Crosswalks should include striping of the street and ADA curb ramps at either end. No permitting required. Order of magnitude cost (assumes public bid contractor but could be undertaken overtime by Weymouth DPW): \$3,000 per crossing.
- Wayfinding signage and mapping will be especially important for sidewalk connections when the intended trail connection is not obvious. Wayfinding signage can incorporate online mapping and need only include small trail network maps at key locations combined with regular blazing of trail routes. Markers can be simple: a 3" diameter trail marker with a clear logo can be posted on utility poles and/or street signs, or even simple spray-painted logo made with a simple pattern on the sidewalks themselves. No permitting required. Order of magnitude cost: dependent on materials, medium, spacing, etc.

## Long-term planning

### Goals

- Expand the off-road opportunities for recreation and connectivity between those parcels identified on page 2 of this memo.
- Work with utility companies to secure access through easements or conservation restrictions or acquire land parcels without infrastructure to provide additional off-road opportunities and to expand the trail system.
- Provide enhanced infrastructure (i.e. boardwalks) to improve connectivity and pedestrian experience through the network.

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Appendix F of the 2020 Open Space plan is a “Draft Land Acquisition Criteria”. This recommends a ranking system for the consideration of the Town acquiring parcels. Most of the parcels listed below for consideration meet several of the criteria, including (1) providing access to coastline, river, or waterfront; (2) containing floodplains; (3) abutting other permanently protected or Town-owned land; (4) wildlife corridor; (5) contains significant scenic landscapes or vistas; (6) contains existing trails or other recreational features; (7) provides means of public access; (8) contains historical, cultural, and archaeological significance; (9) connects areas of recreational interest; and, possibly other criteria.

Consider land acquisitions on the following properties:

<u>Property</u>	<u>Parcel</u>	<u>Use potential</u>	<u>Connectivity potential</u>
• Privately-owned (Red Pier)	12-140-5	Boat launch	n/a
• MECo/National Grid parcels	12-133-4, 8	Trails	Idlewell to Cadman
• MECo/National Grid parcels	13-132-3, 7, 10	Trails	Idlewell to Cadman
• Privately-owned	13-132-21	Trails	Idlewell to Cadman
• MECo/National Grid parcel	13-130-17	Conservation/trails	Idlewell to Cadman
• Privately-owned	13-131-1,2,3,4	Conservation	n/a
• Privately-owned	12-147-9	Trails	Hibiscus to NStar plot
• NStar parcels	12-145-1, 146-1	Conservation	n/a
• Privately-owned	10-130-19	Conservation	n/a
• MECo/National Grid parcel	10-130-10	Conservation/views	Norton to Cadman

Consider easements, restrictions or assessments on the following properties:

<u>Property</u>	<u>Parcel</u>	<u>Use potential</u>	<u>Connectivity potential</u>
• NStar parcel	16-151-1	Trails	Access to Fore River
• NStar parcel (transmission lines)	16-215-3	Trails	Access to Cranberry Pond Park
• Privately-owned*	13-156-5, 28, 38	Trails	Access to Cadman
• Privately-owned*	13-155-28	Trails	Access to Cadman
• Privately-owned (Bicknell School)**	7-84-2	Trails	Access to Route 3A
• Privately-owned (UHaul)	5-13-7	Trails	Access to Kibby property

\*Existing sewer easement on these properties which are slated for development

\*\*Existing parking, utility, drainage, and access easements on this property

Consider sidewalks included for proposed trail connections (in addition to those listed for short term):

<u>Street</u>	<u>Public/Private</u>	<u>Sidewalk quality</u>
• Hibiscus Avenue	Public	n/a
• Idlewell Boulevard	Public	n/a

Consider converting from private way to Town-owned street and add a sidewalk for public access:

<u>Street</u>	<u>Connectivity potential</u>
• Regina Road*	Access to NStar parcel from Commercial Street

# 1a

- Edison Road Access between Idlewell & Commercial Street
- Biscayne Avenue Access to Cadman Conservation from Idlewell
- Montcalm Street Access to Cadman Conservation from Idlewell
- Trefton Avenue\*\* Access to Cadman Conservation from Idlewell
- Laudervale Road Access from Cadman Conservation to Norton Street

\*Regina Road currently has a gate where the road dead ends at the NStar parcel under the railroad tracks which restricts both pedestrian and vehicular access. If access is permitted for recreation on the NStar parcel, pedestrian access at this point is critical so that visitors do not have to cross the railroad tracks.

\*\*Trefton Avenue has not been developed completely and is still a paper road towards the center. It does not currently connect through.

## Recommended improvements in long-term:

- a. Repair/remove dilapidated concrete bridge structure. Possibility that NStar would have interest in repairing bridge structure as this is part of their access. Requires permitting. Order of magnitude cost: highly dependent on structural assessment, condition of existing structure, and proposed method of repair/replacement.

The replacement of the bridge, if no longer required for vehicular access, the bridge could be replaced with a boardwalk/trail system where floods in hightide. Approximate boardwalk length is 325 linear feet with grade change for accessibility. Requires coordination with property owner. Required permitting. Order of magnitude cost: dependent on permitting and design variables, assume \$125,000-\$175,000 + design costs (assume 10%).

Trail improvements should include upgrade to access drives similar to what was completed at Osprey Overlook Park. Approximate length of trail improvement is 2,000 linear feet of. The parcel is included in FEMA National Flood Hazard Zone. Permitting required. Order of magnitude cost: dependent on permitting and design variables, \$15,000- \$20,000 + design costs (assume 10%).

- a. Creation of a boardwalk across the salt marsh near the end of Montcalm Street. A boardwalk could follow the existing sewer easement which connects across the marsh to another National Grid/Mass Electric Co. parcel (10-130-10) and a privately held, but undeveloped parcel (10-130-19) which would provide direct access to Laudervale Road and then Norton Street. Approximate boardwalk length is 1,150 linear feet. Permitting required. Order of magnitude cost: highly dependent on permitting and design variables, assume \$500,000-\$625,000 + design costs (assume 10%).
- b. Parking/access at Bicknell School residences. Requires opening gate on Lochmere and clearing of existing vegetation. Parking area is already paved. Requires coordination with property owner. No permitting required. Order of magnitude cost: \$5,000.
- c. Trail along National Grid parcels connecting Chandler Street/Pleasantview Avenue to Trafton Avenue/Mountcalm Street. Approximate length of trail is 925 linear feet. Requires coordination with property owner. No permitting required. Order of magnitude cost: \$7,500.
- d. Formalize trail from Hibiscus to NStar property. Much of this alignment is passable during non-storm tides, but it should be formalized and made accessible for all. Approximately length of trail is 985

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linear feet. Consider acquiring parcel #12-147-9 for flexibility with design and layout. Permitting required. Order of magnitude cost: \$10,000, not including land acquisition.

- e. Trail from Neck Street to Kibby Property. A trail from Neck Street to the Kibby property line is approximately 550 linear feet. And alternative is to create a boardwalk over the wetland area. The boardwalk would be approximately 215 linear feet, reducing the trail to only 275 linear feet. The boardwalk would have greater cost and permitting implications but may also provide greater recreational and scenic opportunities. Requires coordination with property owner. Permitting required for either option. Order of magnitude cost: highly dependent on design variables, assume \$10,000-\$100,000 + design costs (assume 10%).
- f. Crosswalks should include striping of the street and ADA curb ramps at either end. No permitting required. Order of magnitude cost (assumes public bid contractor but could be undertaken overtime by Weymouth DPW): \$3,000 per crossing.
- g. Wayfinding signage and mapping will be especially important for sidewalk connections when the intended trail connection is not obvious. Wayfinding signage can incorporate online mapping and need only include small trail network maps at key locations combined with regular blazing of trail routes. Markers can be simple: a 3" diameter trail marker with a clear logo can be posted on utility poles and/or street signs, or even simple spray-painted logo made with a simple pattern on the sidewalks themselves. No permitting required. Order of magnitude cost: dependent on materials, medium, spacing, etc.

#### CONCLUSIONS

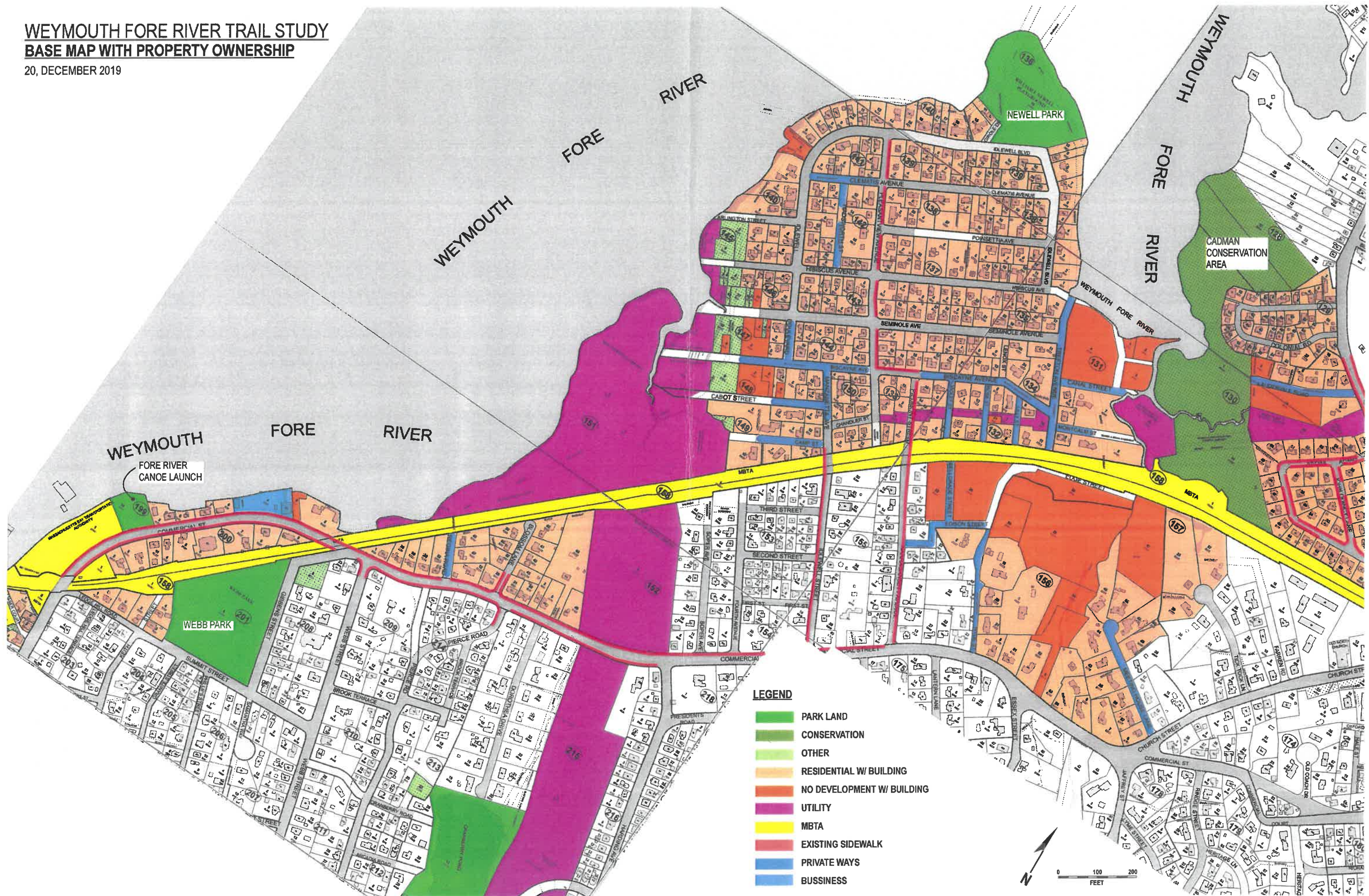
1. If pedestrian access could be granted from National Grid on the transmission lines, there could be access to Cranberry Pond Park.
2. There is a potential to create a trail spur along Philip's Creek which would connect to Pratt's Meadow. However, as this would require an easement or conservation restriction on privately-owned residential property (parcel #10-102-10, and potentially parcels #10-102-12 and/or 10-102-13, as well) this seems to be less desirable spur that may be difficult to obtain.
3. Certain of the streets included in the study area are wide enough to potentially accommodate bike lanes, for example Norton Street/Pearl Street. The arterial roads should be further studied to see if bike lanes would be desirable to enhance the trail system. They may also be eligible for grant funding.
4. The study area was intended to stay contained north of Commercial Street and the MBTA tracks and in North Weymouth. But once the mapping of the various Town-owned properties and highlighting existing sidewalks, it is difficult to stop making the connections. It would be easy to connect Commercial Street to King Hill Oak Park to Legion Field to Town Hall and the Abigail Adams School and East Street to Wharf Street to Osprey Overlook Park. The walkability of much of Weymouth would make so many of these parcels available to many of the residents.

**End of memo**

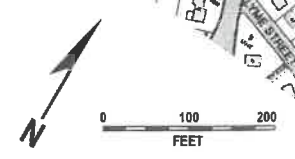


**WEYMOUTH FORE RIVER TRAIL STUDY  
BASE MAP WITH PROPERTY OWNERSHIP**

20, DECEMBER 2019



- LEGEND**
- PARK LAND
  - CONSERVATION
  - OTHER
  - RESIDENTIAL W/ BUILDING
  - NO DEVELOPMENT W/ BUILDING
  - UTILITY
  - MBTA
  - EXISTING SIDEWALK
  - PRIVATE WAYS
  - BUSSINESS





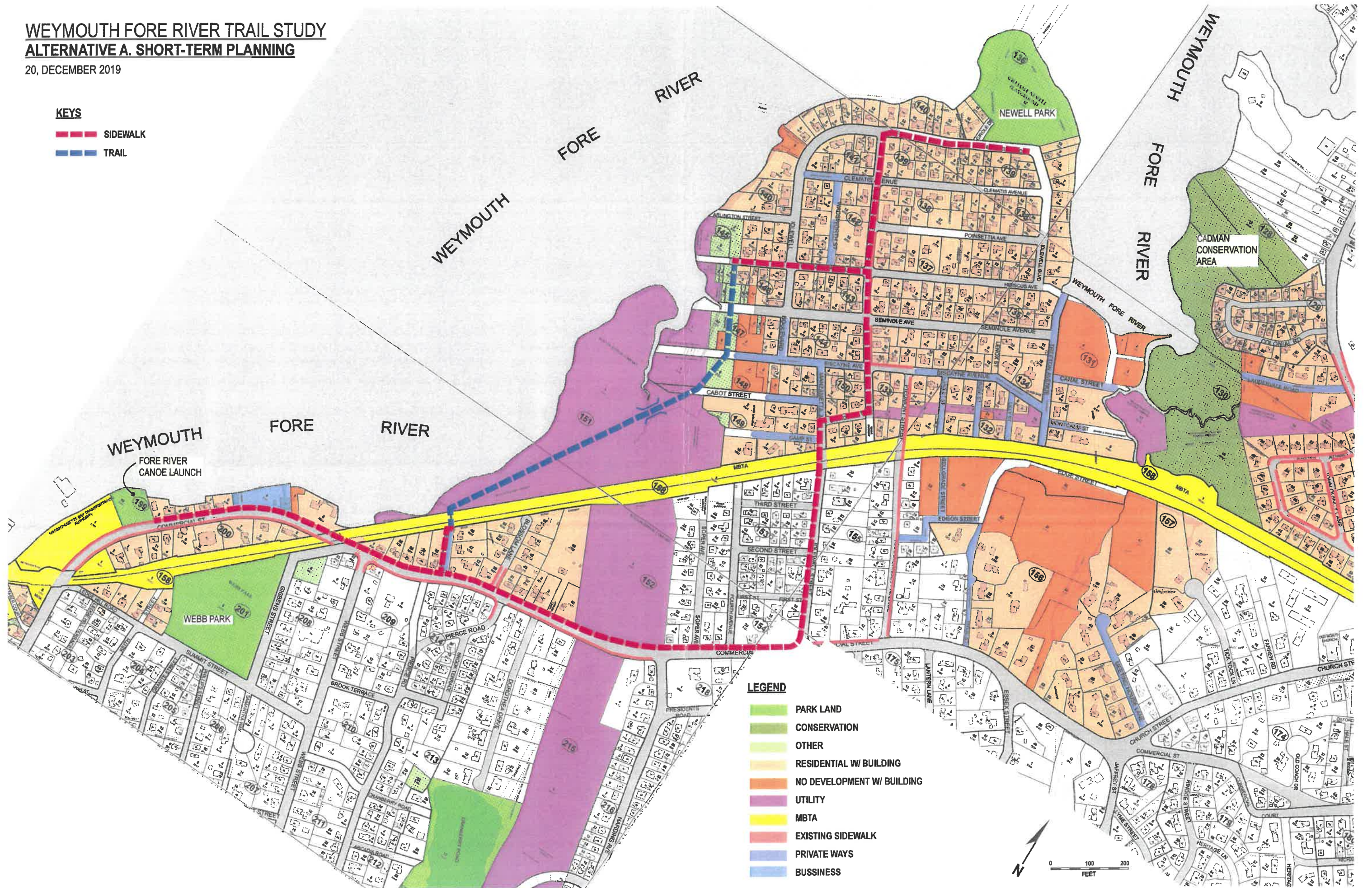
# WEYMOUTH FORE RIVER TRAIL STUDY

## ALTERNATIVE A. SHORT-TERM PLANNING

20, DECEMBER 2019

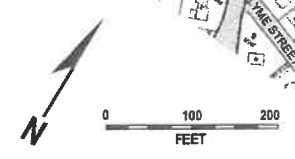
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- SIDEWALK
- TRAIL



### LEGEND

- PARK LAND
- CONSERVATION
- OTHER
- RESIDENTIAL W/ BUILDING
- NO DEVELOPMENT W/ BUILDING
- UTILITY
- MBTA
- EXISTING SIDEWALK
- PRIVATE WAYS
- BUSSINESS



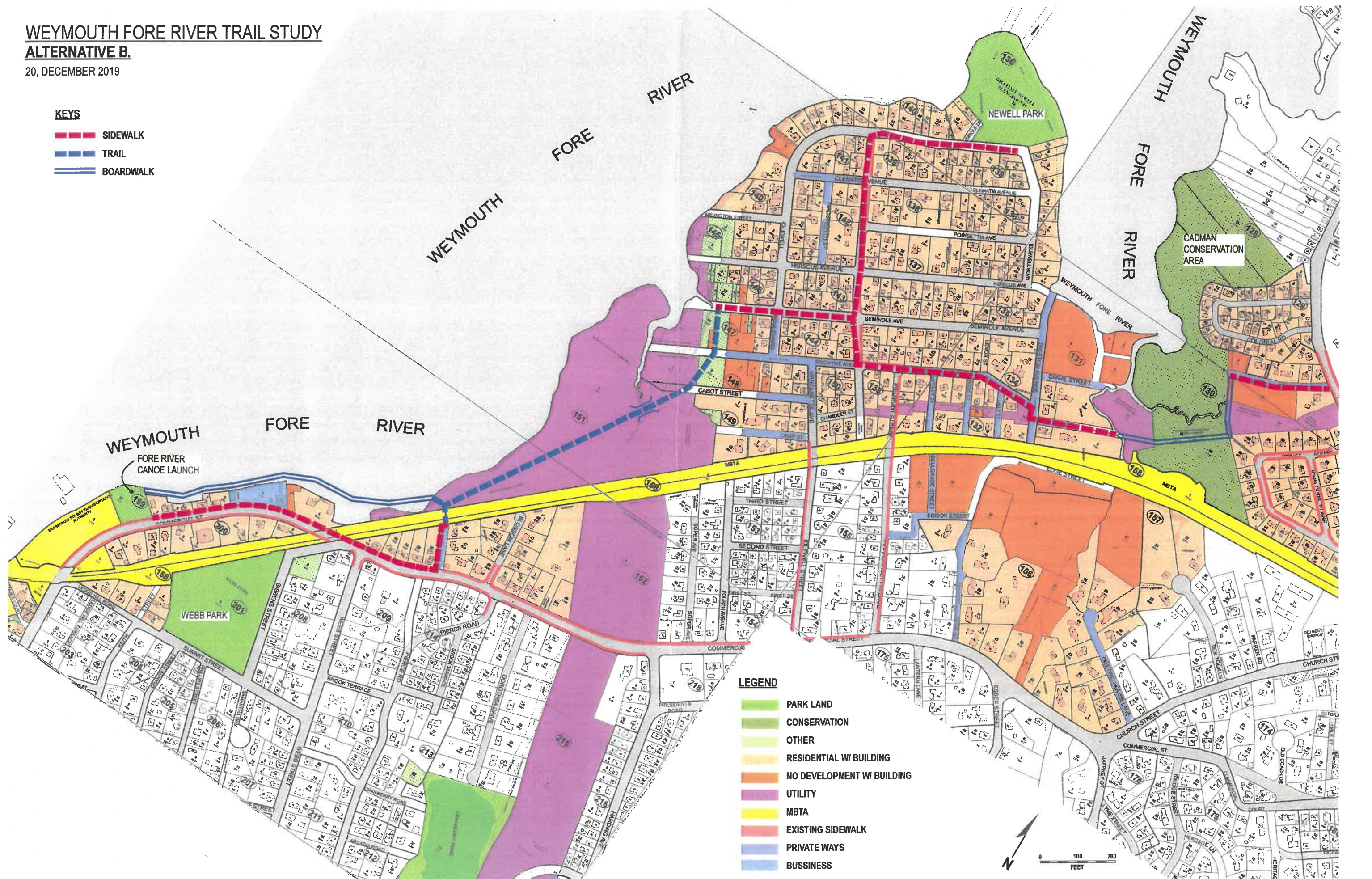


# WEYMOUTH FORE RIVER TRAIL STUDY ALTERNATIVE B.

20, DECEMBER 2019

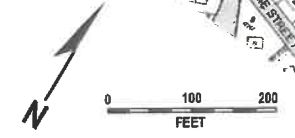
## KEYS

-  SIDEWALK
-  TRAIL
-  BOARDWALK



## LEGEND

-  PARK LAND
-  CONSERVATION
-  OTHER
-  RESIDENTIAL W/ BUILDING
-  NO DEVELOPMENT W/ BUILDING
-  UTILITY
-  MBTA
-  EXISTING SIDEWALK
-  PRIVATE WAYS
-  BUSSINESS



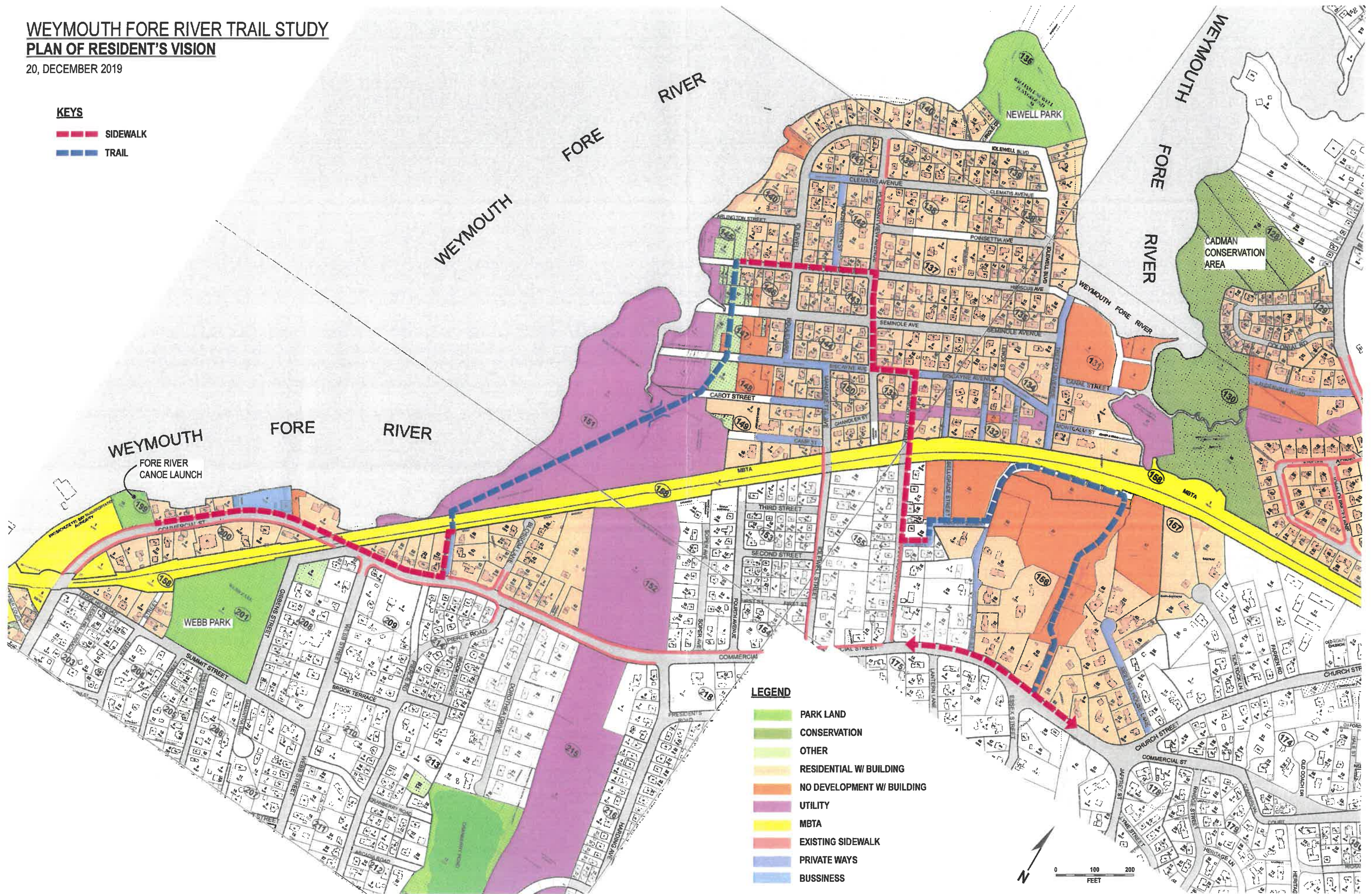


# WEYMOUTH FORE RIVER TRAIL STUDY PLAN OF RESIDENT'S VISION

20, DECEMBER 2019

## KEYS

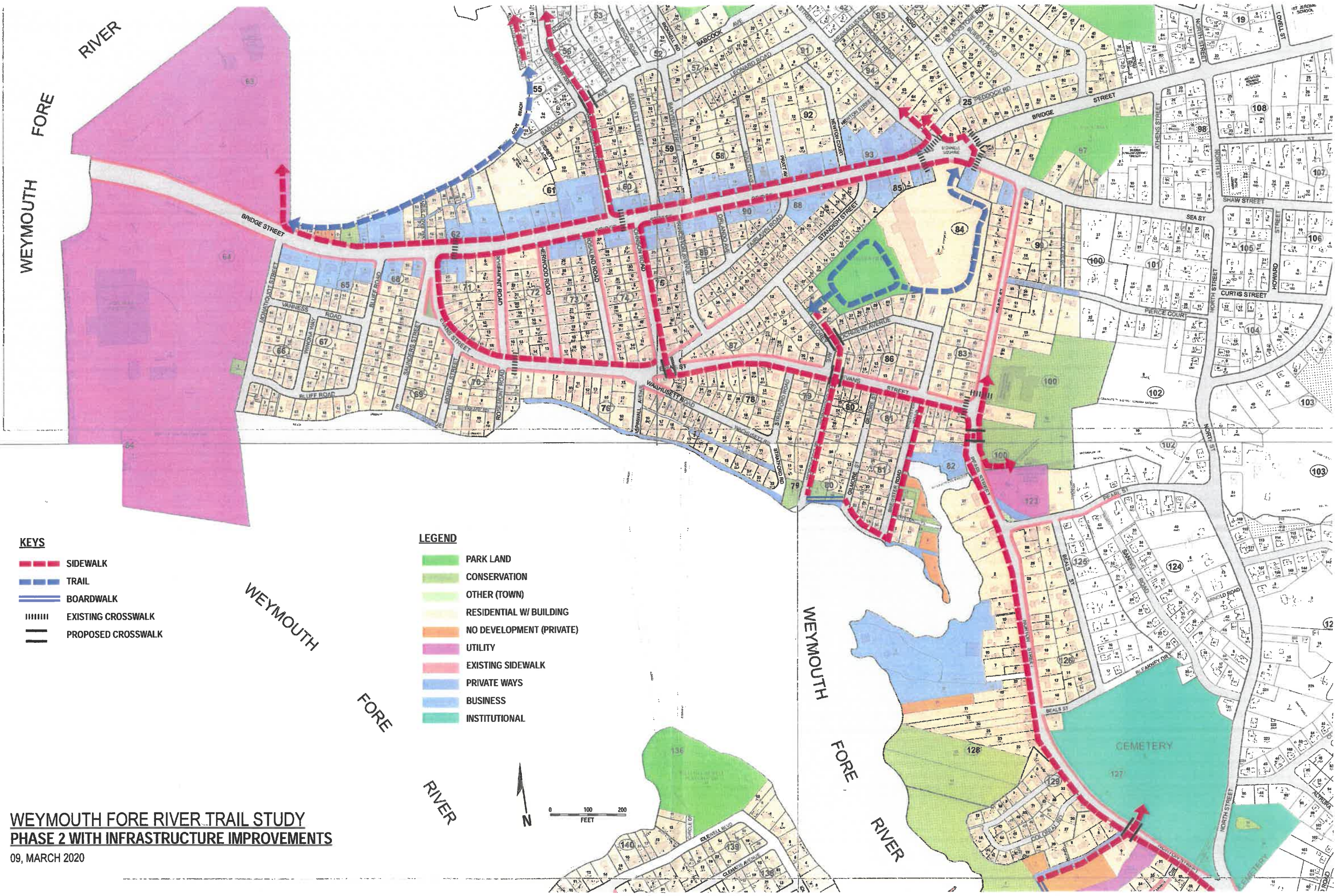
- — — SIDEWALK
- — — TRAIL



## LEGEND

- PARK LAND
- CONSERVATION
- OTHER
- RESIDENTIAL W/ BUILDING
- NO DEVELOPMENT W/ BUILDING
- UTILITY
- MBTA
- — — EXISTING SIDEWALK
- — — PRIVATE WAYS
- — — BUSSINESS

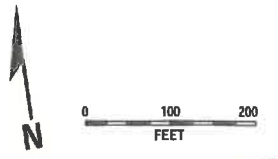




- KEYS**
- ▬▬▬▬ SIDEWALK
  - ▬▬▬▬ TRAIL
  - ▬▬▬▬ BOARDWALK
  - EXISTING CROSSWALK
  - PROPOSED CROSSWALK

- LEGEND**
- PARK LAND
  - CONSERVATION
  - OTHER (TOWN)
  - RESIDENTIAL W/ BUILDING
  - NO DEVELOPMENT (PRIVATE)
  - UTILITY
  - EXISTING SIDEWALK
  - PRIVATE WAYS
  - BUSINESS
  - INSTITUTIONAL

**WEYMOUTH FORE RIVER TRAIL STUDY  
 PHASE 2 WITH INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**  
 09, MARCH 2020



CEMETERY



**WEYMOUTH FORE RIVER TRAIL STUDY  
BASE MAP WITH PROPERTY OWNERSHIP**

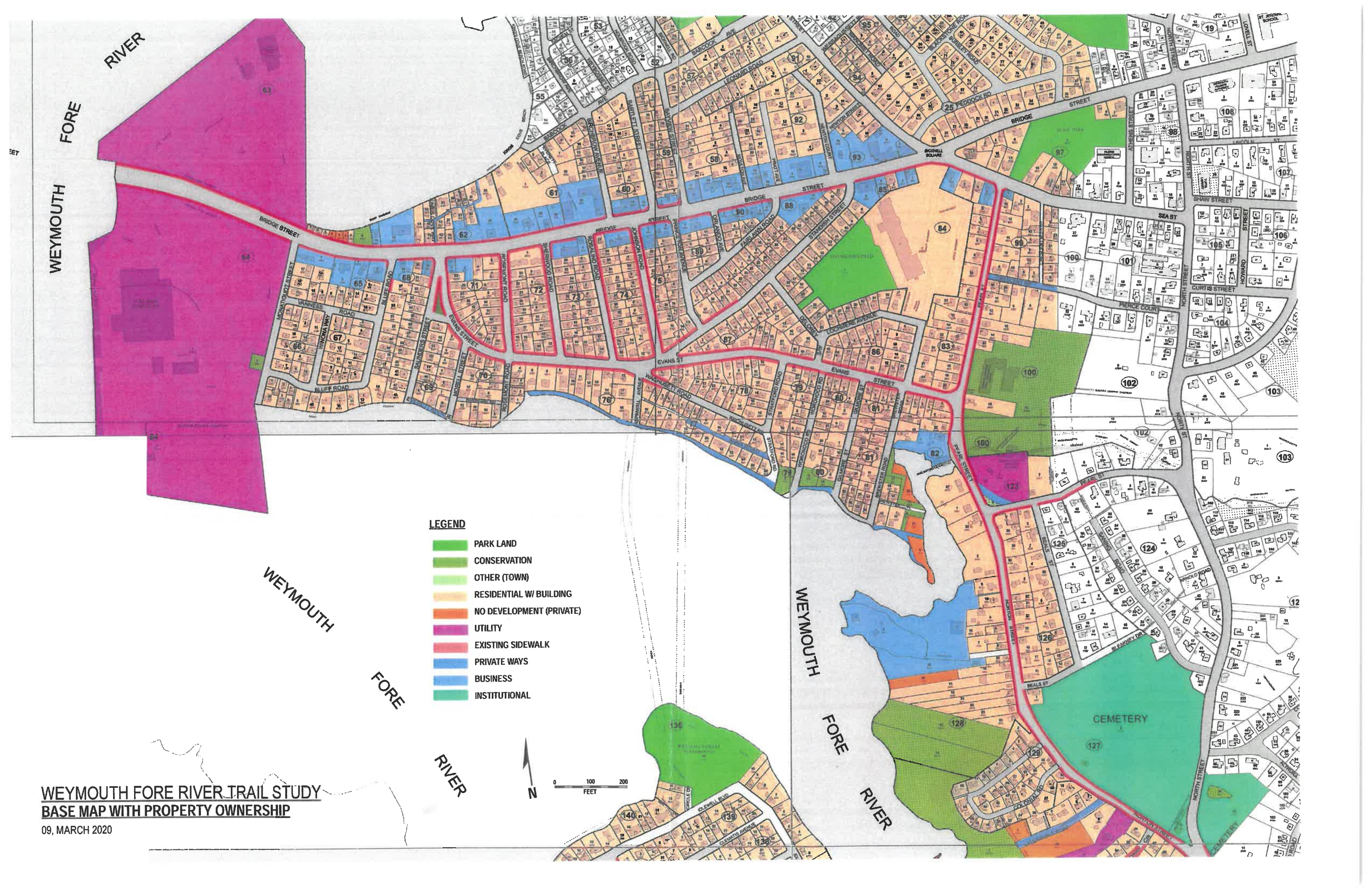
09, MARCH 2020

**LEGEND**

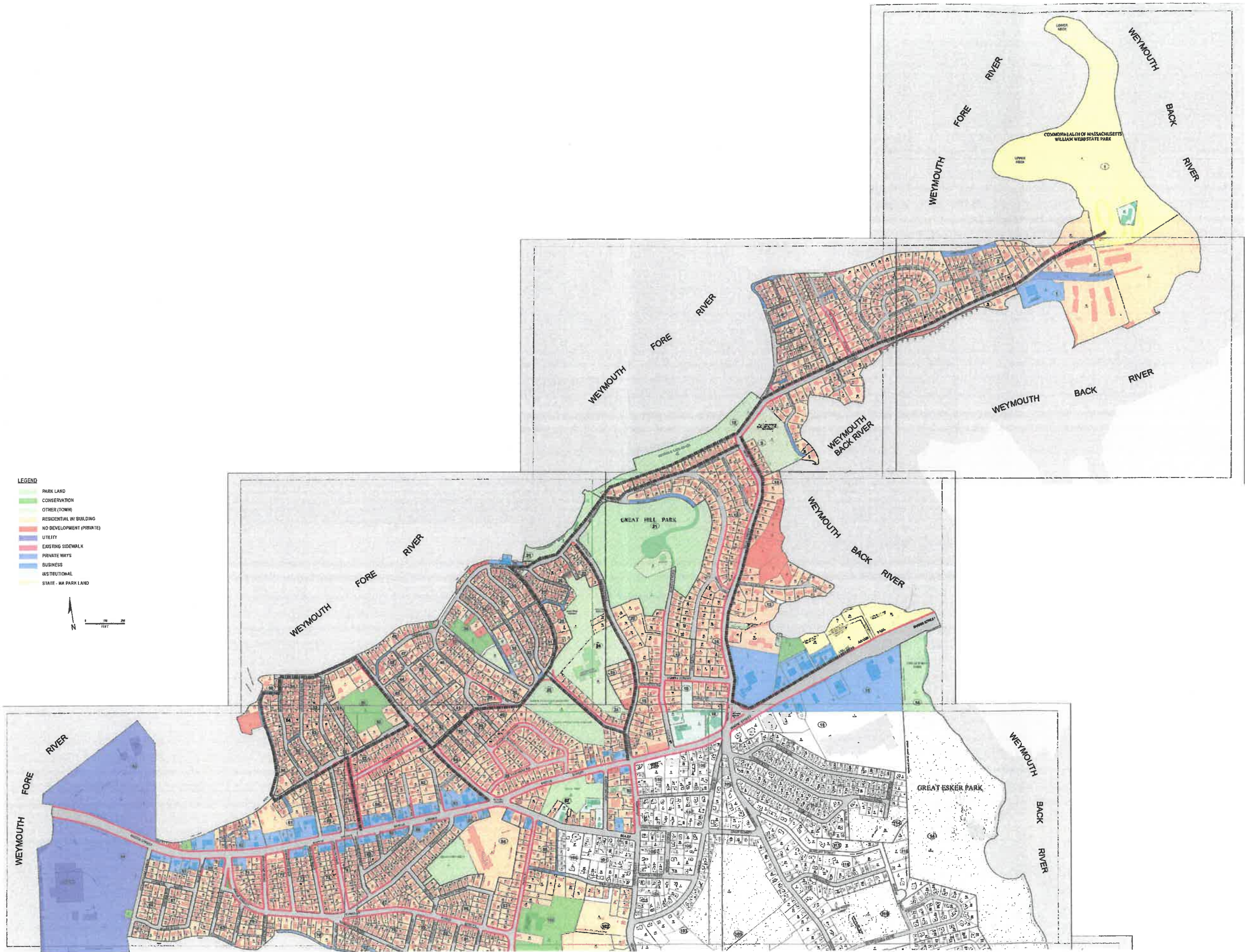
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-  CONSERVATION
-  OTHER (TOWN)
-  RESIDENTIAL W/ BUILDING
-  NO DEVELOPMENT (PRIVATE)
-  UTILITY
-  EXISTING SIDEWALK
-  PRIVATE WAYS
-  BUSINESS
-  INSTITUTIONAL



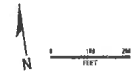
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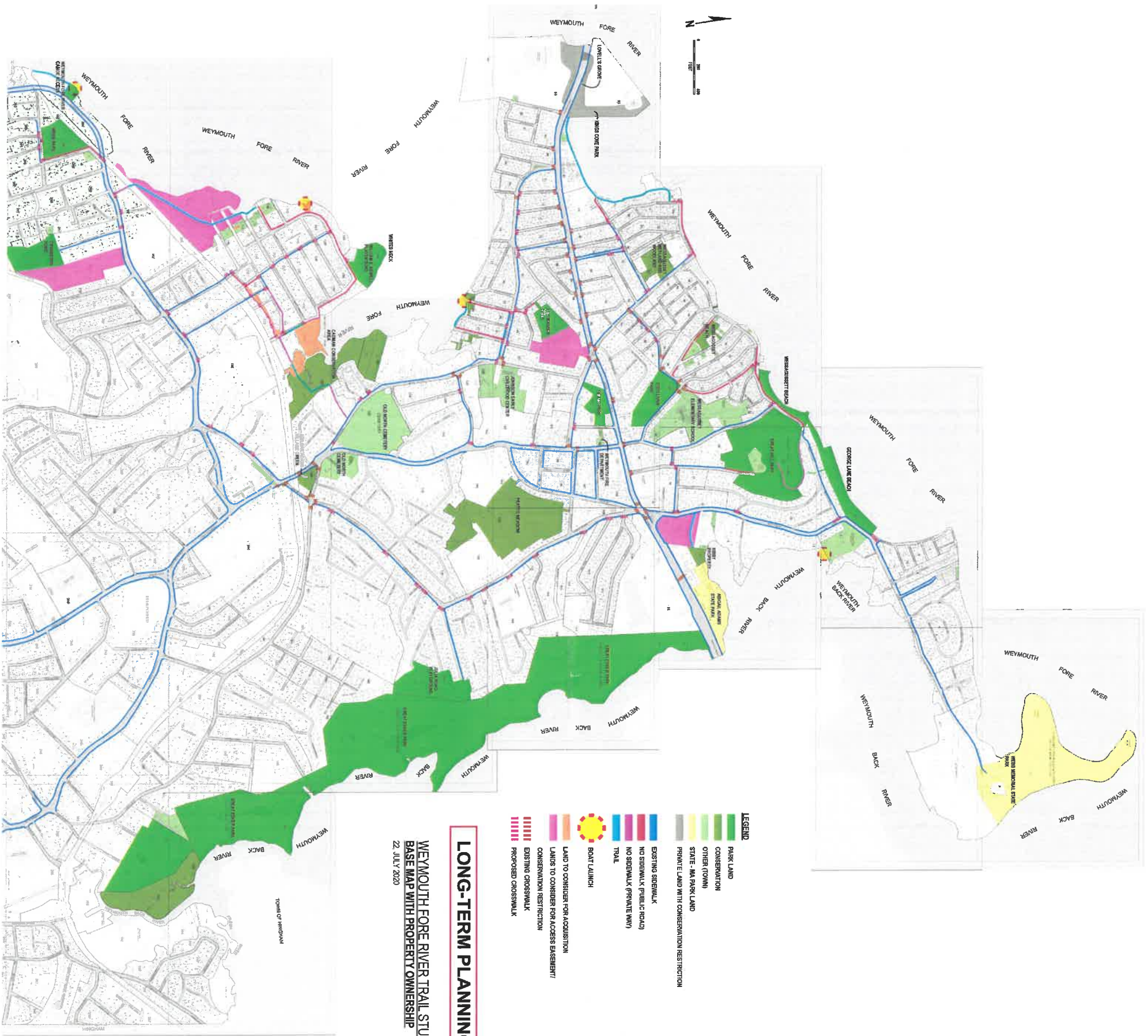




- LEGEND**
- PARK LAND
  - CONSERVATION
  - OTHER (TOWN)
  - RESIDENTIAL w/ BUILDING
  - NO DEVELOPMENT (PRIVATE)
  - UTILITY
  - EXISTING SIDEWALK
  - PRIVATE WAYS
  - BUSINESS
  - INSTITUTIONAL
  - STATE - MA PARK LAND





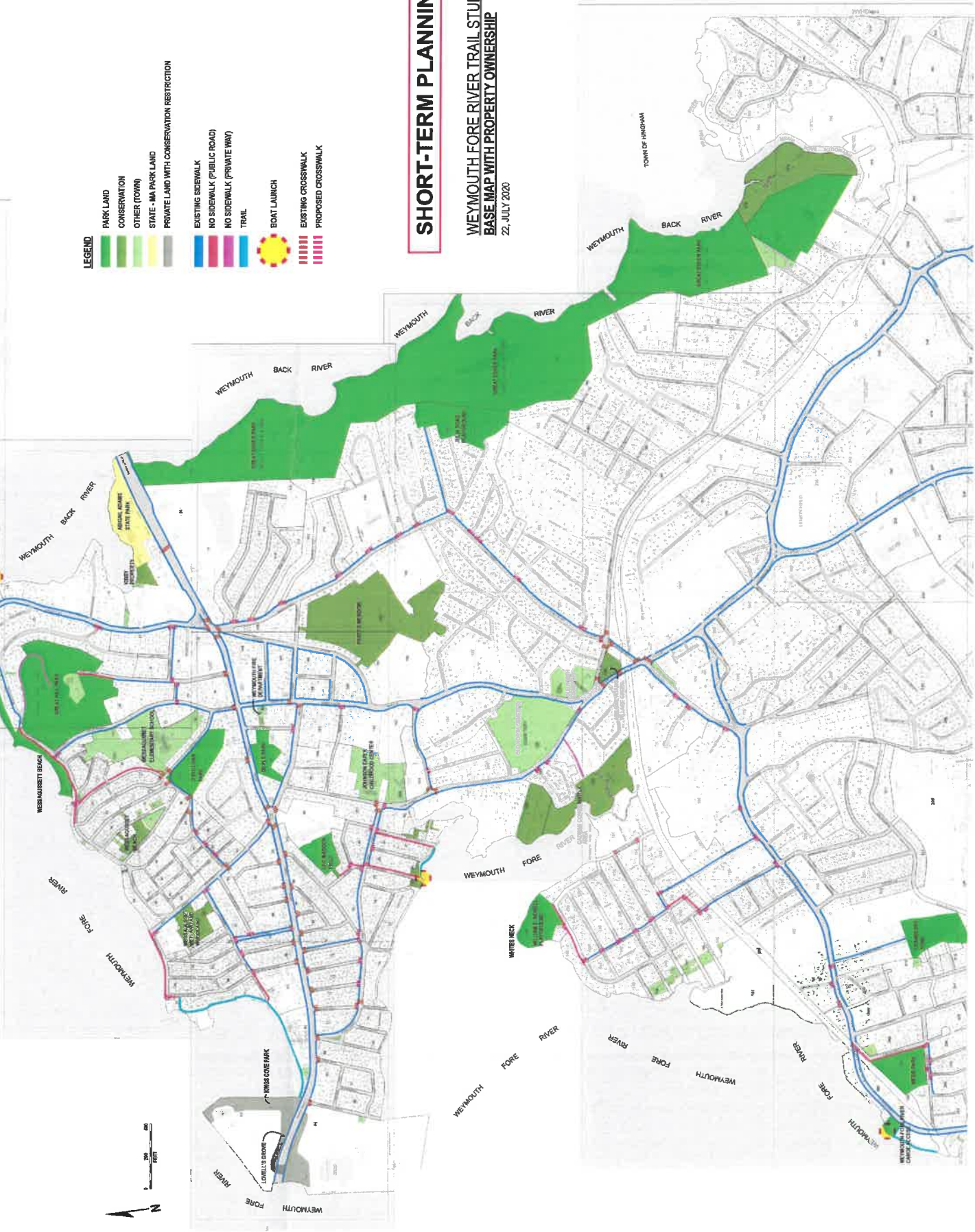
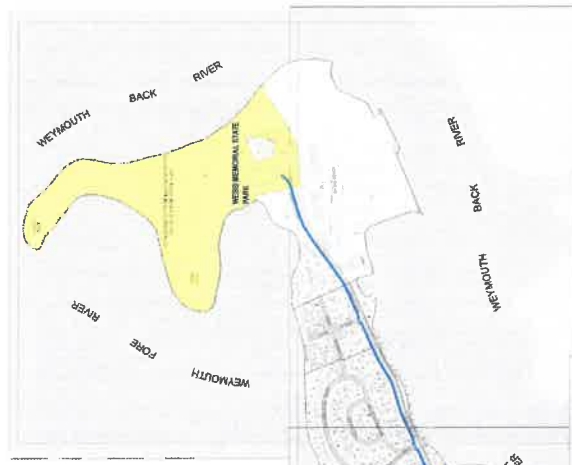


- LEGEND**
- █ PARK LAND
  - █ CONSERVATION
  - █ OTHER (OWN)
  - █ STATE - MA PARK LAND
  - █ PRIVATE LAND WITH CONSERVATION RESTRICTION
  - █ EXISTING SIDEWALK
  - █ NO SIDEWALK (PUBLIC ROAD)
  - █ NO SIDEWALK (PRIVATE WAY)
  - █ TRAIL
  - BOAT LAUNCH
  - █ LAND TO CONSIDER FOR ACQUISITION
  - █ LANDS TO CONSIDER FOR ACCESS EASEMENT/ CONSERVATION RESTRICTION
  - █ EXISTING CROSSWALK
  - █ PROPOSED CROSSWALK

**LONG-TERM PLANNING**

WEYMOUTH FORE RIVER TRAIL STUDY  
 BASE MAP WITH PROPERTY OWNERSHIP  
 22 JULY 2020





- LEGEND**
- PARK LAND
  - CONSERVATION
  - OTHER (TOWN)
  - STATE - MA PARK LAND
  - PRIVATE LAND WITH CONSERVATION RESTRICTION
  - EXISTING SIDEWALK
  - NO SIDEWALK (PUBLIC ROAD)
  - NO SIDEWALK (PRIVATE WAY)
  - TRAIL
  - BOAT LAUNCH
  - EXISTING CROSSWALK
  - PROPOSED CROSSWALK



**SHORT-TERM PLANNING**

WEYMOUTH FORE RIVER TRAIL STUDY  
 BASE MAP WITH PROPERTY OWNERSHIP  
 22, JULY 2020