



27 Somers

Community Overview

The rural town of Somers has a population of over 11,400, and covers a land area of 28.3 square miles. Elevation ranges from about 250 feet on the western side of town to over 900 feet in the hills on the eastern side. Somers lies in the Scantic River Watershed. Its major watercourses include the Scantic River and Abbey, Gillette, Gulf, Shady, Thrasher, Watchaug and Wrights Brooks, and Woods Stream. The main transportation routes through Town are north-south state routes 83 and 186, and east-west route 190. Somers hosts the State of Connecticut’s Osborn and Northern Correctional Facilities. Principal industries are agriculture and diversified industry. The largest employers are the state penitentiaries and Growers Direct, which has over 70 acres of greenhouses in town. Somers is also home to several tobacco farms, a handful of retail establishments, and a large horse farm. Somers also contains Sonny’s Place, an amusement park and concert venue, and portions of the Shenipsit State Forest.

The population in Somers has remained fairly static since adoption of the 2014-2019 Capitol Region Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Update (“2014 HMP”), and there has been limited new building or development. The Town notes that its population is aging, and the number of calls for first responders has been increasing. Most of the town’s properties are on private water wells and utilize private septic systems. The Town has only 4.5 miles of public sewer infrastructure which drains to a small septic system.

Critical Facilities

Critical Facilities throughout the Capitol Region are listed in Appendix B. In Somers these include the Somers Firehouse, Public Works, Police Station, Kibbe Fuller Community Center, Senior Center, Somers High School, Mabelle B. Avery Middle School, Somers Elementary School, Sewer Plant, Town Hall, Woodcrest Senior Housing, multiple group homes, the Library, Speech Academy, three large State Penitentiaries, Geissler’s Supermarket, two gas stations, and Soapstone Mountain.

Table 27-1: Critical Facilities, Somers

Facility	Shelter	Generator
Firehouse		Yes
Public Works		Partial
Police Station		Yes
Kibbe Fuller Community Center (EOC)		Yes
Senior Center		
Somers High School	X	Yes
Mabelle B. Avery Middle School		Minimal
Somers Elementary School		Minimal
Sewer Plant		Yes
Town Hall		
Woodcrest Senior Housing		Minimal

Facility	Shelter	Generator
Group Homes (multiple)		
Library		
Speech Academy		
3 Large State Penitentiaries		Yes
Johnson Memorial Hospital in Stafford		Yes
Geissler's Supermarket		Yes
2 gas stations		
Soapstone Mountain		

The Kibbe Fuller Community Center is the Town EOC. The Town shelter is the Somers High School.

The three large state penitentiaries, run by the state, have altogether about 3,000 prisoners and 300 staff on duty. They have their own water treatment plant, but Somers Fire and EMS respond to prison needs.

An important State and Federal communications tower is located on the peak of Soapstone Mountain and is considered by the Town to be a major critical facility. The facility is located within a State park, but the road is maintained by the Town. It is not normally cleared in the winter, but is plowed by the Town in cases of emergency.

There is no hospital in Somers, but Johnson Memorial Hospital, just over the border in Stafford, is the primary hospital used by residents, and the Town considers it a critical facility.

Capabilities

Hazard mitigation is incorporated into the Somers Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). The HMP document itself is cited. POCD actions specifically address natural hazards.

No new development or demolition in floodplains has occurred since 2008. A map modernization effort by FEMA is currently underway for Tolland County, but its full extent, and how much of Somers it will cover, is unknown.

The Somers DPW has the capacity to remove tree debris, and contracts out tree trimming and removal. Additionally, the Town has reported a positive relationship with the regional electricity provider, Eversource.

Somers has one solar farm, and is planning to add one more; additionally, many Town buildings (including the Police and Fire Departments, the Elementary School, and the DPW building) have solar panels on their roofs. There is some potential for development of microgrid systems utilizing these power sources.

Somers participates in a Town and County Fire Service Pact, which includes 25 agencies and covers both fire and EMS services.



The Town has a robust GIS system to assist with planning, and has a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

Challenges

Challenges Overview

The primary concern of Somers officials is tree damage and power outages. Following Winter Storm Alfred in October, 2011, power outages and tree debris were widespread. The Town is specifically concerned about increasing treefall problems caused by the diminishing health of its tree stock due to pests such as gypsy moths, emerald ash borer, and longhorn beetles. The Town also struggles with effective snow removal from the large flat roofs of the Town's school.

Flooding is another major concern for the Town of Somers. Areas prone to flooding include Gulf Road, Battle Street, Hamden Road, Mountain Road, Stebbins Road at Florida Road, King Road, Four Bridges Road, and Durkee Road. The two sources of flooding for these roads are Scantic River and Gillettes Brook.

Another site of flooding concern is at the former Somersville Mill on the Scantic River. On June 1, 2012, the mill burned down and building materials were deposited into the River. The mill site spans the river, is located in the floodplain and restricts flow in the river. The bricks which were deposited in the watercourse as a result of the fire further restrict the Scantic River flow. The Town has acquired the site and made progress on removing the debris and remediating environmental and flooding hazards here.

Hazard Losses

The economic losses faced by Somers from natural hazards can be estimated by reviewing historic, and modeling future, loss figures. Loss estimates are summarized below.

Historic FEMA Payments

FEMA reimburses communities for hazard losses through programs including Public Assistance (PA) and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Combining PA and private flood insurance payments can give an estimate for total losses to a community.

The NFIP has paid ten property damage claims in Somers totaling \$243,412 to-date. However, there have been no Repetitive Loss (RL) Property claims in Somers to-date.

Total PA reimbursements to the community were as follows:

- Flood Events: \$132,585 (\$6,978 annually)
- Hurricane Events: \$79,522 (\$4,185 annually)
- Winter Storm Events: \$1,757,835 (\$92,518 annually)

These are summarized in the tables below.



Table 27-2: Flood Event PA Reimbursements, Somers

Incident	Oct 2005
Declaration	12/16/2005
Disaster No.	1619
Entity	FEMA PA Reimbursement
State	\$1,664
Municipal	\$130,921
Nonprofit	\$0
Total	\$132,585
Annualized	\$6,978

Table 27-3: Hurricane Wind Event PA Reimbursements, Somers

Incident	Aug - Sep 2011 (T.S. Irene)	Oct - Nov 2012 (Storm Sandy)
Declaration	9/2/2011	10/30/2012
Disaster #	4023	4087
Entity	FEMA PA Reimbursement	
State	\$7,533	\$6,427
Municipal	\$35,555	\$30,007
Nonprofit	\$0	\$0
Total	\$43,088	\$36,434
Annualized	\$2,268	\$1,918

Table 27-4: Winter Storm PA Reimbursements, Somers

Incident	Mar 2003	Dec 2003	Jan 2005	Feb 2006	Jan 2011	Oct 2011	Feb 2013	Jan 2015
Declaration	3/11/03	1/15/04	2/17/05	5/2/06	3/3/11	11/17/11	3/21/13	4/8/15
Disaster #	3176	3192	3200	3266	1958	4046	4106	4213
Entity	FEMA PA Reimbursement							
State	\$11,620	\$12,019	\$22,484	\$19,286	\$25,064	\$35,724	\$21,293	\$45,216
Municipal	\$23,830	\$32,888	\$26,605	\$21,748	\$52,949	\$1,281,810	\$48,025	\$77,274
Nonprofit	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$35,449	\$44,907	\$49,089	\$41,034	\$78,013	\$1,317,534	\$69,318	\$122,490
Annualized	\$1,866	\$2,364	\$2,584	\$2,160	\$4,106	\$69,344	\$3,648	\$6,447

National Centers for Environmental Information Losses

The table below summarizes events in the National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) severe storm database that were specifically noted as having impacted the community since 2012.



Table 27-5: NCEI Database Losses since 2012, Somers

Date	Event	Property Damage
7/27/2014	Thunderstorm Wind Hail	\$10,000 \$0
7/28/2014	Thunderstorm Wind	\$10,000
Total		\$20,000

NCEI losses under other event categories (such as drought, high wind, flooding, and winter storms) were not specifically noted as impacting this community, though they did impact Tolland County and nearby towns. NCEI losses are reported in Section II of this Plan.

HAZUS-MH Losses

CRCOG used FEMA’s Hazus-MH model to analyze the risks that the community might face from flooding, hurricanes, and earthquakes. The model estimates economic losses due to damage to buildings and building contents, as well as other economic disruptions. Both residential and commercial structures are addressed. Losses from different hazards are summarized below. Where available, estimates from the previous and current versions of the HMP are provided side-by-side; differences between the two may have been caused by a combination of the following:

- Changes in methodology: such as hazard zone mapping
- Changes in data: such as population and property values
- Changes in the model: this HMP utilized Hazus-MH version 4.0 rather than 2.1
- Other factors: inherent in a complex software like Hazus-MH

More details are available in the Multi-Jurisdictional HMP. Ultimately, changes in the loss estimates reflect the reality that small differences in hazard event features can have a significant impact on losses incurred.

Table 27-6: Estimated Damages to Somers from a 1% Annual-Chance Flood

Loss Type	2014 Results	2018 Results
Households Displaced	157	139
People Needing Shelter	145	46
Buildings at Least Moderately Damaged	10	0
Residential Building & Content Losses	\$4,920,000	\$4,909,894
Other Building & Content Losses	\$7,770,000	\$4,810,995
Total Building & Content Loss	\$12,690,000	\$9,720,889
Total Business Interruption Losses	\$120,000	\$220,000
TOTAL	\$12,790,000	\$9,940,889



Table 27-7: Estimated Damages to Somers from a 1% Annual-Chance Hurricane

Loss Type	2014 Results (1938 event)	2018 Results (1% track)
Buildings at Least Moderately Damaged	301	1
Buildings Completely Damaged	20	1
Total Debris Generated	42,316 tons	9939
Truckloads (at 25 tons/truck) of building debris	126	398
Economic Losses		
Residential Building & Content Losses	\$30,160,000	\$7,053,044
Other Building & Content Losses	\$4,420,000	\$210,569
Total Building & Content Loss	\$34,580,000	\$7,263,613
Total Business Interruption Losses	\$3,630,000	\$194,981
TOTAL LOSSES	\$38,200,000	\$7,458,594

Losses were calculated from a modeled probabilistic earthquake (1% annual-chance of occurrence), as well as for four specific scenarios with epicenters around Connecticut.

Table 27-8: Estimated Damages to Somers from a Probabilistic Earthquake

Loss Type	2018 Results
Wage Loss	\$1,129
Rent Loss	\$803
Relocation Loss	\$1,600
Income Loss	\$839
Inventory Loss	\$89
Total Business Disruption	\$4,460
Structural Loss	\$3,658
Non-Structural Loss	\$11,492
Total Building Loss	\$15,151
Total Content Loss	\$4,336
TOTAL LOSSES	\$23,947

Table 27-9: Estimated Damages to Somers from Modeled Earthquake Scenarios

Epicenter Location	Magnitude	Estimated Total Losses
East Haddam	6.4	\$50,308.34
Haddam	5.7	\$9,817.67
Portland	5.7	\$18,248.26
Stamford	5.7	\$1,978.36

Average Annualized Losses

Average Annualized Loss (AAL) figures are useful tools for comparison of the risks faced from different hazards with different likelihoods of occurring in a given time period. AAL estimates were prepared for each natural hazard which may impact the community based on the methodologies discussed in Section II of the Multi-Jurisdictional HMP. Dam failure, drought, tornado, and wildfire losses were sourced from the 2014 Connecticut Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update, with dam failure data supplemented by the National Performance of Dams



Program and the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection. Earthquake and hurricane losses were calculated in HAZUS-MH. Losses for flooding came from NFIP claims, for winter storms from Public Assistance Reimbursements, and for thunderstorms from the NCEI database. These are presented in the table below in dollars per year. Note that Hurricanes and Tropical Storms represent the largest share of total annualized losses.

Table 27-10: Average Annualized Losses, Somers

Dam Failure	Drought	Earthquakes	Flooding	Hurricanes and Tropical Storms	Severe Winter Storms	Thunderstorms	Tornadoes	Wildfires	Total
\$703	\$0	\$23,947	\$13,384	\$775,518	\$92,518	\$4,166	\$3,326	\$3,723	\$917,284

Losses Summary

A review of the above loss estimates demonstrates that the Town of Somers has experienced significant expenses as a result of natural hazards, and is at risk for additional losses if some of the less-frequent events were to occur. These actual and potential losses justify hazard mitigation actions to reduce losses in the future.

Mitigation Strategies and Actions

Noted Hazard Mitigation Needs

Over the course of Plan development, multiple hazard mitigation needs were noted.

- Providing back-up power and sufficient sheltering capabilities during prolonged outages is a concern. The Town has discussed providing a secondary shelter/warming center that would both increase shelter capacity and allow classes to resume at the High School while meeting residents’ needs at another location. The Senior Center has been considered for this purpose and could also serve as a backup polling place in the event of a power outage.
- A roof-clearing plan to guide future snow removal efforts from school roofs may be beneficial.
- Somers is interested in the expansion of natural gas infrastructure in Town, especially with the goal of converting generators to run on natural gas.
- The Town would benefit from a Public Safety Complex that housed fire, police and an EOC; currently the EOC is too far away and the fire and police stations are inadequate in capacity.
- Backup generators are needed for the Town Hall, Public Works, and Senior Center. The Senior Center could serve as a warming center and shelter and is close to Woodcrest Senior Housing



Status of Previous Mitigation Strategies and Actions

The Town of Somers reviewed the mitigation actions proposed in the 2014 HMP and determined the status of each. That information is included in the table below.

Table 27-11: Status of Previous Mitigation Strategies and Actions, Somers

Action #	Action	Notes	Status
GOAL: REDUCE THE LOSS OF LIFE AND PROPERTY AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES AS A RESULT OF NATURAL DISASTERS.			
Objective 1: Reduce the likelihood of flooding.			
1.1	Implement the recommendations of the Somers Floodplain Management Study.	Town needs to hire a consultant to prioritize culvert improvements. Obtain ACOE & DEEP permits.	Carry Forward with Revisions
1.2	Continue to use the Floodplain Management Studies as a resource in determining the potential impacts of proposed development and town projects to be included in the Capital Improvements Program.	This is an established practice. This is a capability.	Capability
1.3	Work with the DEEP to improve the Camp Road dam.	Dam not yet improved, and cooperation with DEEP has been minimal due to staffing limitations.	Carry Forward
1.4	Improve drainage system through continued replacement and maintenance of older culverts.	Town replaces and maintains older culverts but wishes to prioritize these efforts. New action listed below. Town also has a list of catch basins and cleans on a 4-year cycle. That is a capability. Town wishes to have a specific action to improve Battle Street drainage.	Carry Forward with Revisions
1.5	Investigate participation in FEMA's Community Rating System program.	Town decided not to pursue participation during the previous planning period.	Carry Forward with Revisions
Objective 2: Reduce the likelihood of damage from wind and severe storms.			
2.1	Continue preventive tree maintenance.	Town maintains tree trimming inventory and hires private contractors to trim. Done an average of three times per month.	Capability
2.2	Acquire emergency generators at Town Hall and Senior Center to ensure continuity of government and provide additional sheltering capacity.	Generators not yet acquired due to funding limitations. Town has identified Senior Center as a preferred site for a secondary shelter.	Carry Forward with Revisions
2.3	Educate residents on having a personal family disaster safety plan and emergency supply kit.	This is an established practice but needs website and social media. Some training completed at Senior Center. Advertisements through Facebook and Town Website.	Carry Forward with Revisions
2.4	Encourage new developments housing special needs populations to include generators for sheltering on site.	Town intends to review ordinance proposals to require generators for such new developments.	Carry Forward with Revisions
Objective 3: Reduce the likelihood of damage from forest fires.			
3.1	Continue installation of dry hydrants and cisterns in needed areas of Town.	Installed 2 hydrants, in need of one more.	Carry Forward



Active Mitigation Strategies and Actions

The Town proposed to initiate several new mitigation actions for the upcoming five years. Additionally, a number of actions from the previous planning period are being carried forward or replaced with revised actions. These are listed below.

Each of the following actions has been prioritized based on FEMA guidelines, listed from highest to lowest priority, and numbered.

Action #1

Enter the Sustainable CT program through Registration and review actions that can be undertaken to pursue Certification. Make progress with the actions related to hazard mitigation.

Goal	4. Increase the use of natural, "green," or "soft" hazard mitigation measures, such as open space preservation and green infrastructure.
Category	Natural Resources Protection
Lead	Planning
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	01/2019 - 12/2019
Priority	High

Action #2

Install one additional needed dry hydrant.

Goal	7. Improve the emergency response capabilities of the region and its communities
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Fire Department
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / CT DEEP
Timeframe	07/2019 - 06/2020
Priority	High

Action #3

Acquire generators for Town Hall, Public Works, and Senior Center.

Goal	7. Improve the emergency response capabilities of the region and its communities
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / DEMHS
Timeframe	01/2019 - 12/2020
Priority	High



Action #4

Hire a consultant to assist with implementation of the Somers Floodplain Management Study by prioritizing culvert improvements and obtaining necessary permits.

Goal	5. Improve the resilience of local and regional utilities and infrastructure using strategies including adaptation, hardening, and creating redundancies.
Category	Structural Projects
Lead	Public Works
Cost	\$50,000 - \$100,000
Funding	Grants
Timeframe	07/2021 - 06/2022
Priority	High

Action #5

Improve drainage system on Brattle Street.

Goal	5. Improve the resilience of local and regional utilities and infrastructure using strategies including adaptation, hardening, and creating redundancies.
Category	Structural Projects
Lead	Public Works
Cost	More than \$100,000
Funding	Grants
Timeframe	07/2022 - 06/2023
Priority	High

Action #6

Conduct outreach to local small businesses with the aim of preventing the accidental release and pollution from chemicals stored and used at their facilities during or following natural hazard events.

Goal	6. Improve public outreach, education, and warning systems
Category	Education & Awareness
Lead	Planning, in coordination with DEEP
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Materials & Resources Provided by CT DEEP
Timeframe	01/2019 - 12/2019
Priority	Medium



Action #7

Include in permitting requirements a review of potential impacts, based on the FMS, of proposed development and town projects.

Goal	2. Ensure Municipal Codes and Regulations support hazard mitigation
Category	Prevention
Lead	Planning
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	01/2020 - 12/2020
Priority	Medium

Action #8

Educate residents on personal disaster safety and supply kits, through the Town website and social media.

Goal	6. Improve public outreach, education, and warning systems
Category	Education & Awareness
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	01/2020 - 12/2020
Priority	Medium

Action #9

Establish an ordinance requiring generators for new special needs housing developments.

Goal	2. Ensure Municipal Codes and Regulations support hazard mitigation
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Planning
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	01/2020 - 12/2020
Priority	Medium



Action #10

Coordinate with NEMO and CROG to share resources and gain technical support for hazard mitigation actions involving stormwater management and public outreach, which have parallel benefits related to MS4 stormwater permit compliance.

Goal	1. Minimize the impact of natural hazards on physical buildings and infrastructure
Category	Prevention
Lead	Public Works
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	01/2020 - 12/2020
Priority	Medium

Action #11

Make information about available assistance for property acquisition or relocation available at Town Hall and on the Town website.

Goal	6. Improve public outreach, education, and warning systems
Category	Education & Awareness
Lead	Planning
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	07/2020 - 06/2021
Priority	Medium

Action #12

Participate in EMI courses or the seminars and annual conference held by the Connecticut Association of Flood Managers.

Goal	3. Improve institutional awareness and understanding of natural hazard impacts and mitigation within municipal governments and other decision-making bodies
Category	Education & Awareness
Lead	Planning
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	07/2019 - 06/2024
Priority	Medium



Action #13

Conduct an outreach campaign informing residents of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and encouraging public participation.

Goal	6. Improve public outreach, education, and warning systems
Category	Education & Awareness
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / DEMHS
Timeframe	07/2020 - 06/2022
Priority	Medium

Action #14

Expand emergency communication and notification methods to a variety of media, including radio, television, social media, and the Town Website.

Goal	6. Improve public outreach, education, and warning systems
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	\$25,000 - \$50,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / Grants / DEMHS
Timeframe	07/2021 - 06/2023
Priority	Medium

Action #15

Designate a secondary shelter (most likely the Senior Center, if sufficient backup generators are installed)

Goal	7. Improve the emergency response capabilities of the region and its communities
Category	Preparedness & Emergency Response
Lead	Emergency Management
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	01/2021 - 12/2022
Priority	Low



Action #16

Work with CT DEEP to improve the Camp Road dam.

Goal	1. Minimize the impact of natural hazards on physical buildings and infrastructure
Category	Structural Projects
Lead	Public Works
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget / CT DEEP
Timeframe	07/2021 - 06/2022
Priority	Low

Action #17

Complete an analysis of costs and benefits of joining the FEMA Community Rating System.

Goal	9. Minimize the economic impact of hazard damages
Category	Property Protection
Lead	Planning
Cost	\$0 - \$10,000
Funding	Town Operating Budget
Timeframe	07/2021 - 06/2022
Priority	Low

Action #18

Coordinate with CT SHPO to conduct historic resource surveys, focusing on areas within natural hazard risk zones (such as flood or wildfire hazard zones and areas near steep slopes), to support identification of vulnerable historic properties and preparation of resiliency plans across the state. This action leverages existing resources and best practices for protection of historic and cultural resources through an ongoing statewide initiative by CT SHPO.

Goal	8. Ensure community character and social equity are addressed in mitigation activities
Category	Property Protection
Lead	Planning, in coordination with SHPO
Cost	\$10,000 - \$25,000
Funding	SHPO
Timeframe	07/2021 - 06/2023
Priority	Low












Capitol Region Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Update




Somers, Connecticut

Flood Plains, Dams & Critical Facilities




Critical Facilities

-  Fire Station
-  Police Station
-  School
-  Healthcare Facility
-  State Facility
-  Town Facility
-  Waste Water Facility
-  Emergency Center
-  NRHP Buildings/Sites

Dam Hazard Class

-  BB, A, AA OR Unclassified
-  Class B - Significant Hazard
-  Class C - High Hazard

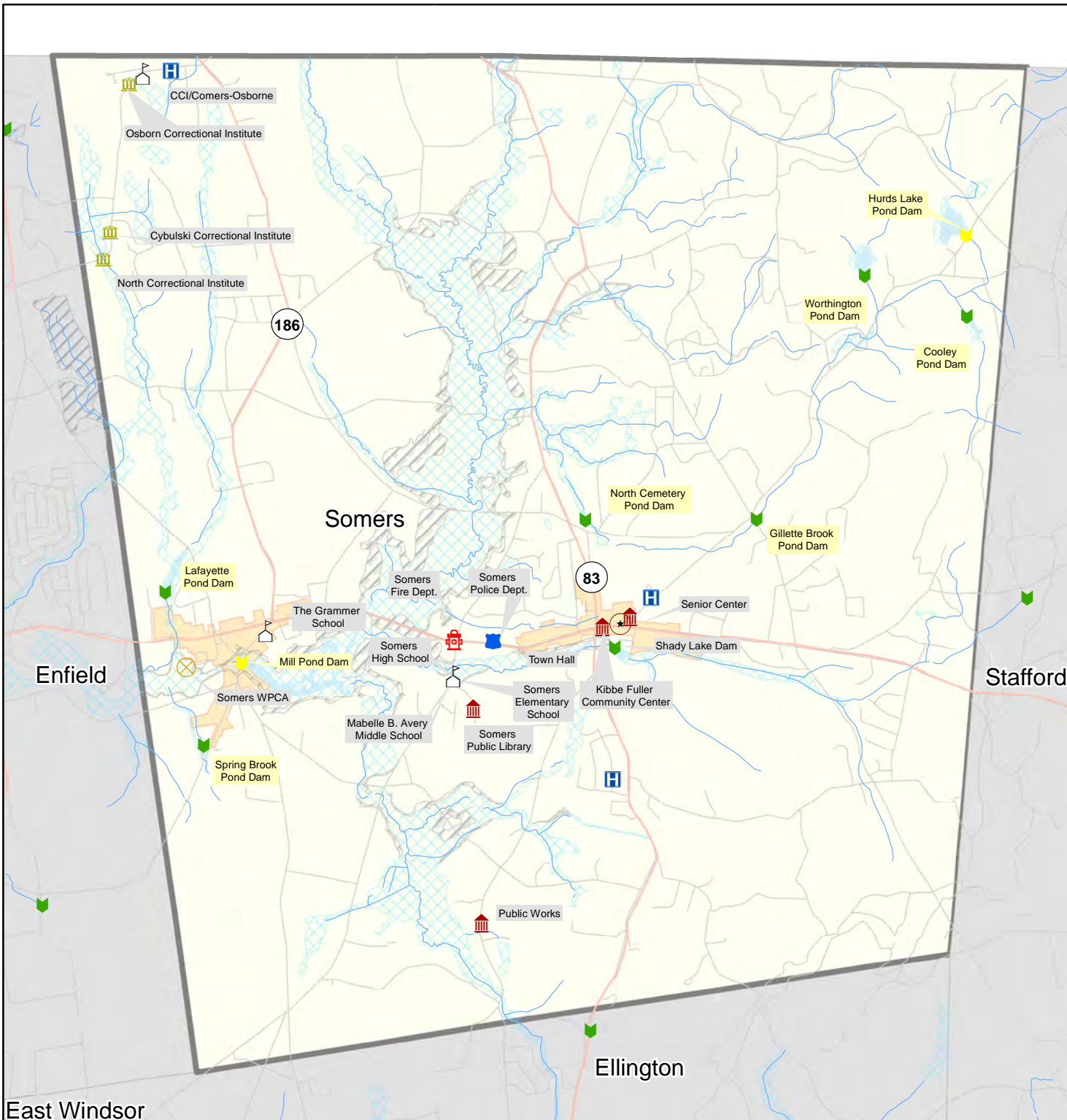
FEMA Flood Hazard Area

-  100 Year Flood Zone
-  500 Year Flood Zone
-  NRHP Districts/Areas

Data Sources: FEMA, National Register of Historic Places, CT DEEP, CRCOG, ESRI



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East Windsor

