

Nissequogue River State Park Master Plan

Focus Group: Ecology and the Environment

03.24.21



Parks, Recreation
and Historic
Preservation

NISSEQUOGUE RIVER STATE PARK MASTER PLAN

March 24, 2021



STARR WHITEHOUSE
Landscape Architects
and Planners PLLC



Agenda

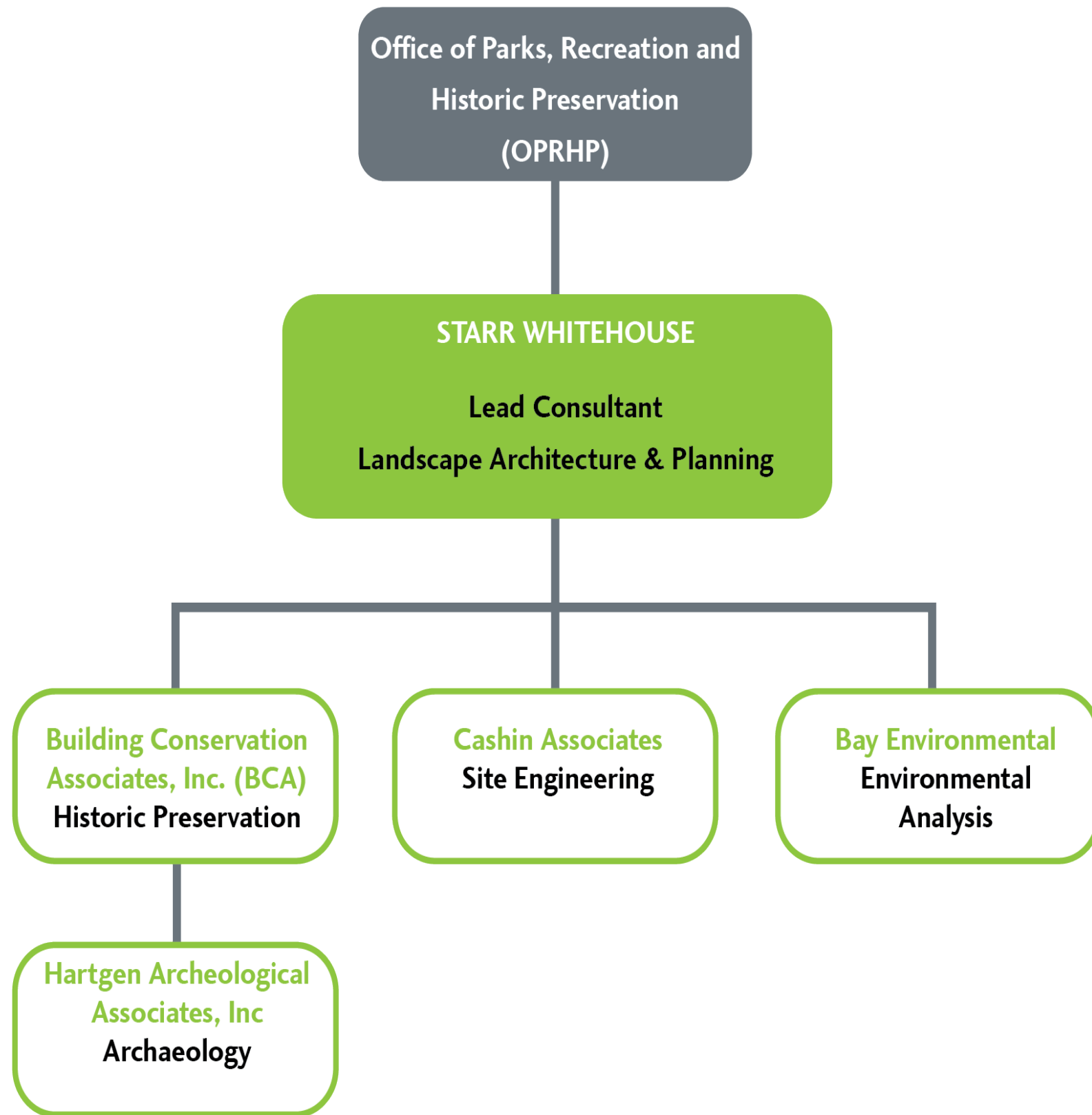
- Welcome and introduction of project team (5 minutes)
- Project presentation (15 minutes)
- Breakout Groups (40 minutes)
- Report back and closing (15 minutes)

ZOOM POINTERS

- Please list your name (and affiliation, if applicable) in your Zoom participant profile.
- Please remain muted, except during breakout group discussions

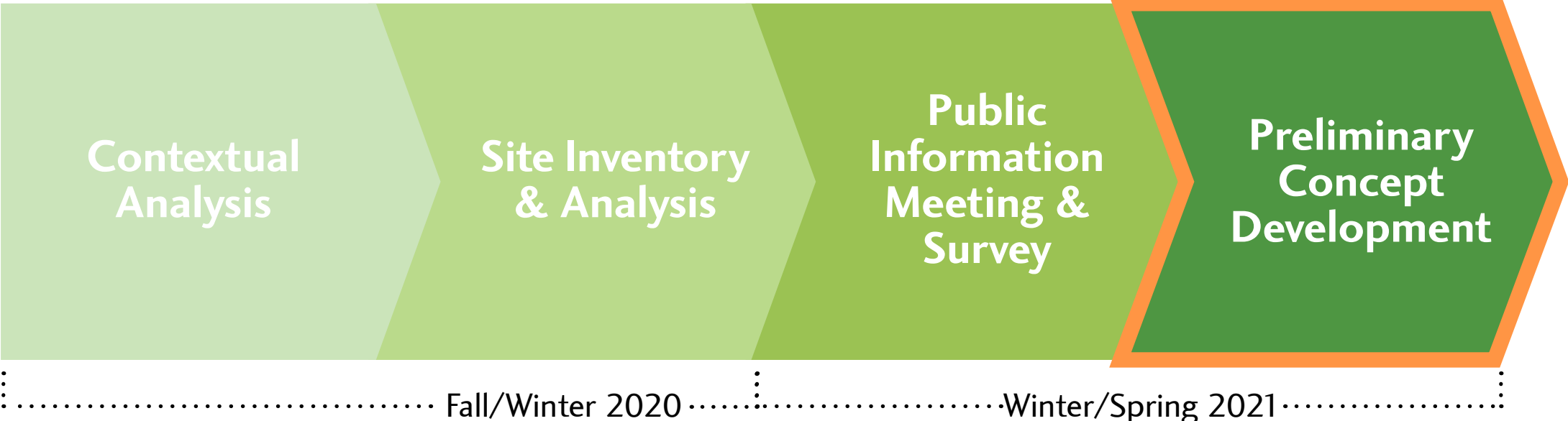


Project Team

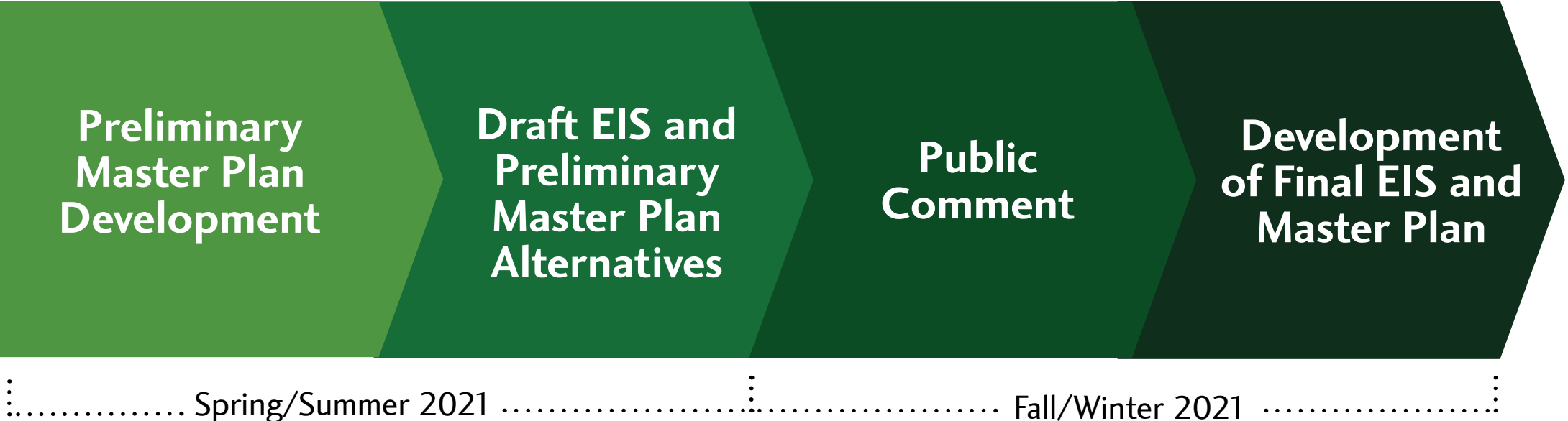


Project Timeline

PHASE I



PHASE II



Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) Goals

- Expand and protect natural connections between parks and open space.
 - Restore, conserve, and protect the State's biodiversity.
 - Connect children and adults with nature and recreation by improving access to outdoor recreation opportunities.
 - Build a 21st century green and resilient outdoor recreation system; repair and green aging infrastructure and open new facilities.
-
- Reinvent and redesign the State's outdoor recreation system.
 - Inform the public about outdoor recreation opportunities.
 - Engage the public through programming.
 - Expand historic preservation efforts across the State, at the local and regional level, and cultivate pride of place.



NEW YORK STATE
**Statewide Comprehensive
Outdoor Recreation Plan**
Improving our Visitors' Experience through
Inclusivity, Diversity and Resiliency

NEW YORK
STATE OF
OPPORTUNITY. | Parks, Recreation
and Historic
Preservation

2020-2025

Theme Goals: Ecology and the Environment at NRSP

- Control invasive species and prevent further spread
- Protect and enhance significant coastal habitat and wetlands
- Protect, maintain, and expand forested buffer around the exterior of the park
- Evaluate the expansion of the Bird Conservation Area (BCA)
- Expand and enhance meadow habitat
- Eliminate redundant trails to reduce impacts on fragile ecosystems
- Evaluation opportunities for blue/green stormwater infrastructure such as bioswales and rain gardens
- Support pollinator species through planting schemes
- Identify opportunities for connectivity to adjacent parks, creating trail connections that support habitat corridors

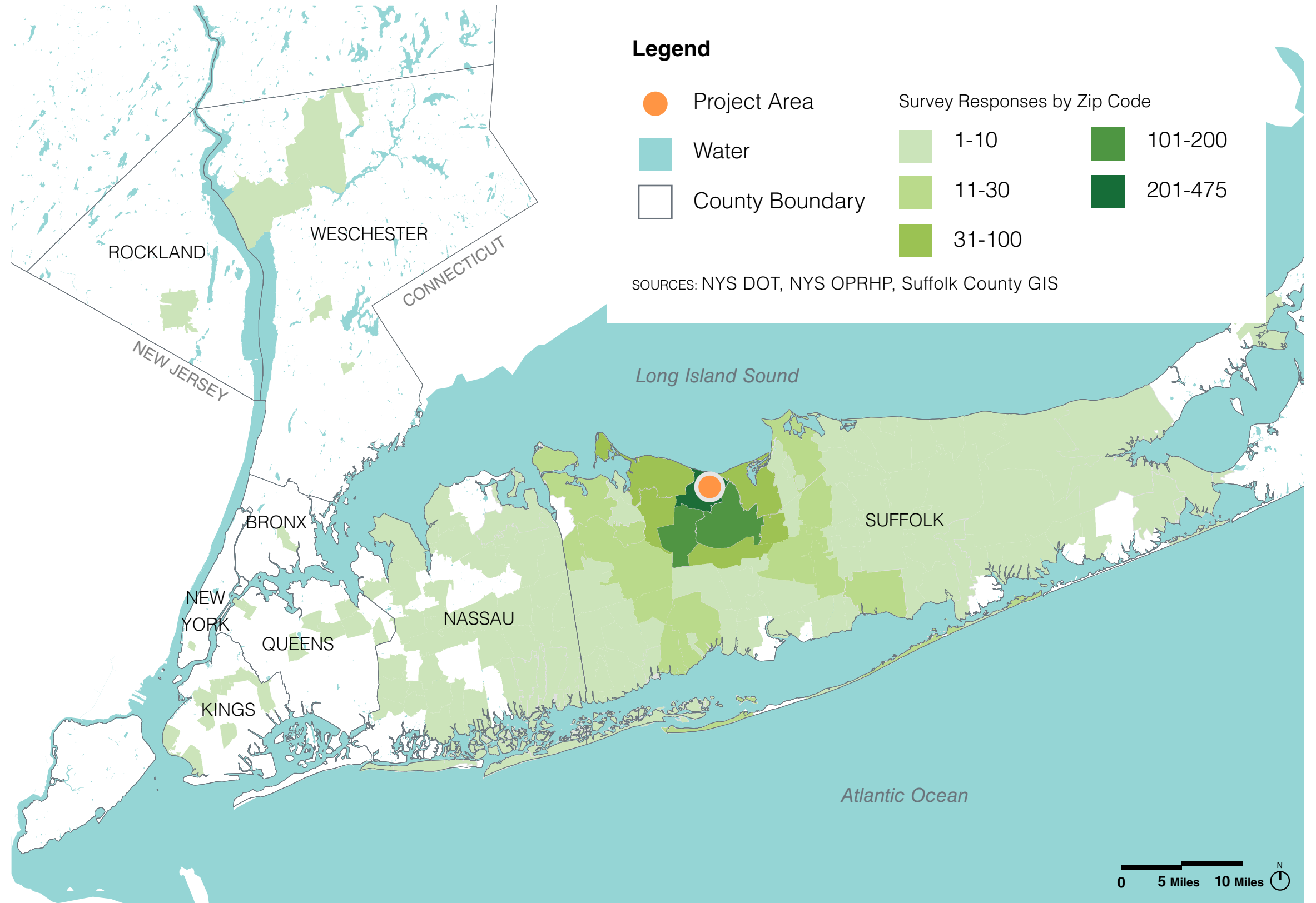


View north-courtesy of Smithtown Planning

Survey Results by Location

The recreational needs assessment survey was available online from February 3 - 17:

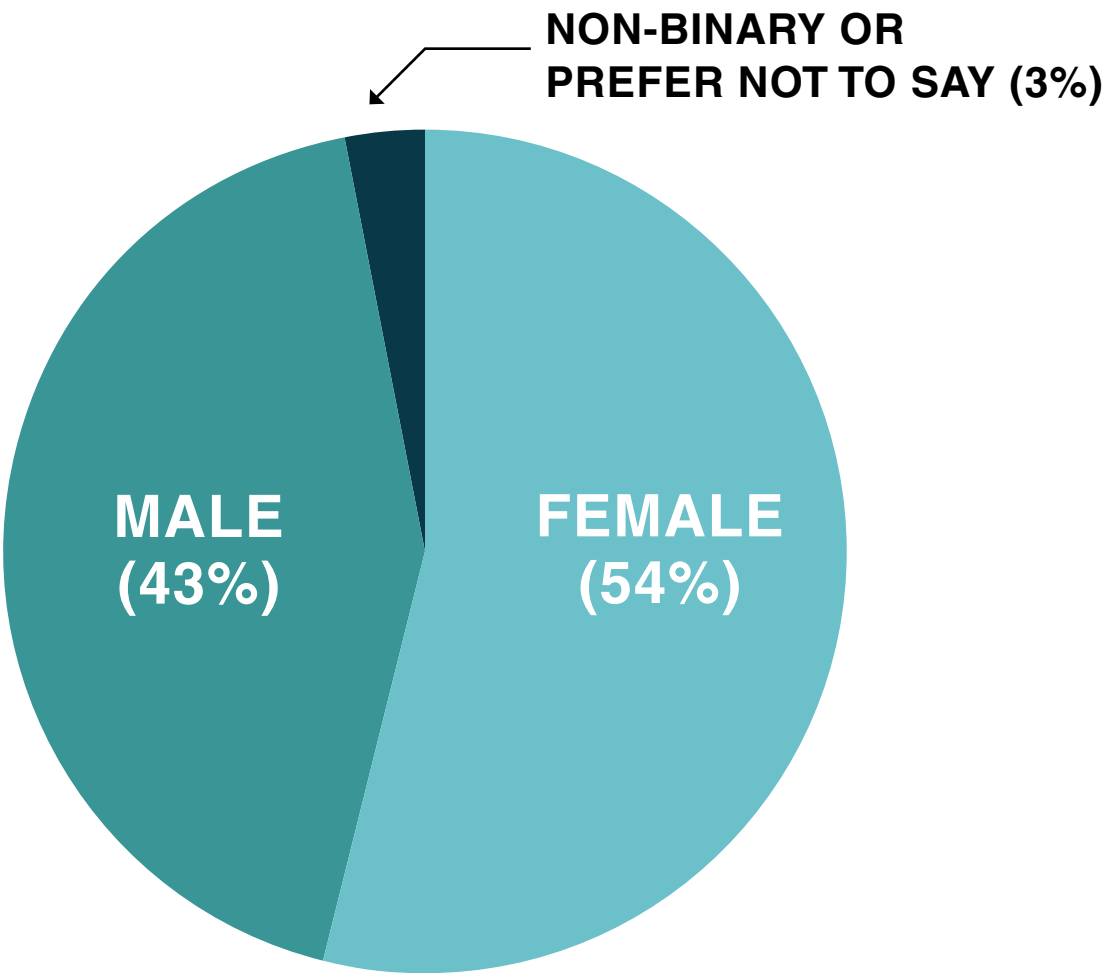
- 1653 people took the survey
- 51% of respondents live in Smithtown
- 76% of respondents live within 10 miles of the park
- Residents from 10 New York counties reported visiting the park in the past year:
 - Suffolk
 - Nassau
 - Queens
 - Kings
 - New York
 - Westchester
 - Rockland
 - Sullivan
 - Albany
 - Brockport



Recreational Needs Assessment Survey Respondent Profile

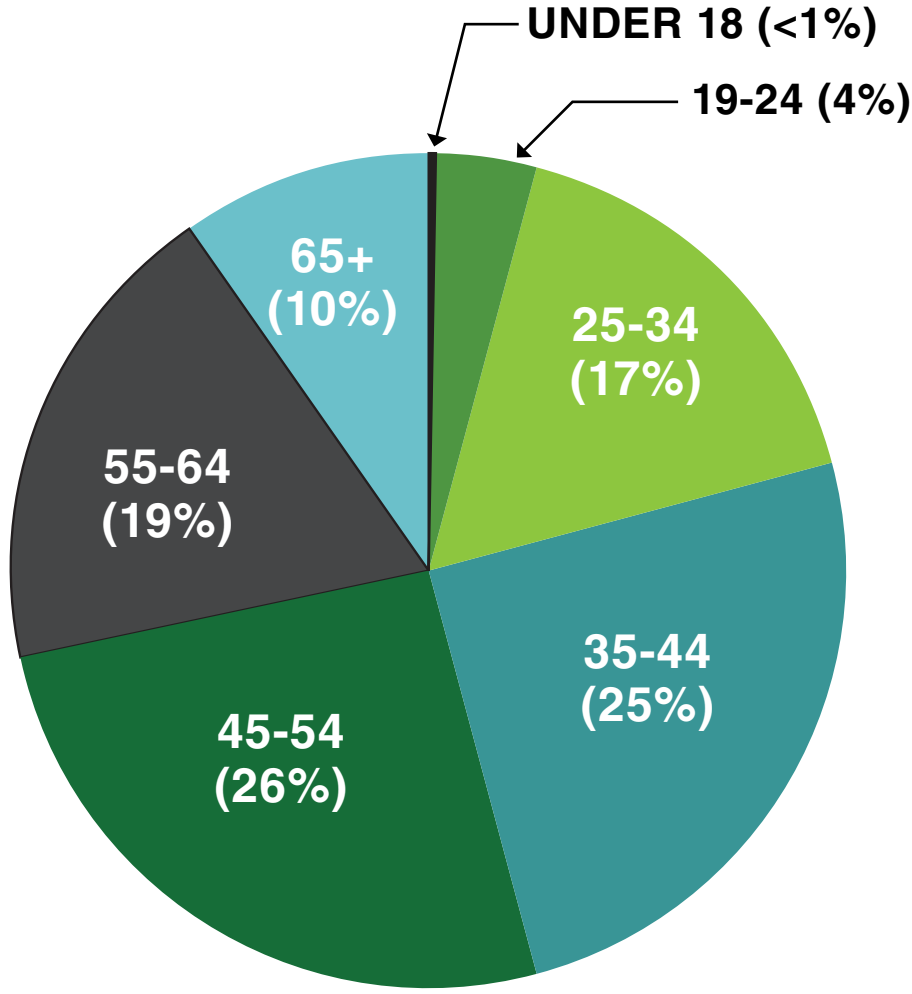
RESULTS BY GENDER

- Female: 886 (54%)
- Male: 706 (43%)
- Non-binary: 8 (<1%)
- Prefer not to say: 53 (3%)



RESULTS BY AGE

- Under 18: 6 (<1%)
- 18-24: 65 (4%)
- 25-34: 276 (17%)
- 35-44: 414 (25%)
- 45-54: 426 (26%)
- 55-64: 307 (19%)
- 65+: 159 (10%)



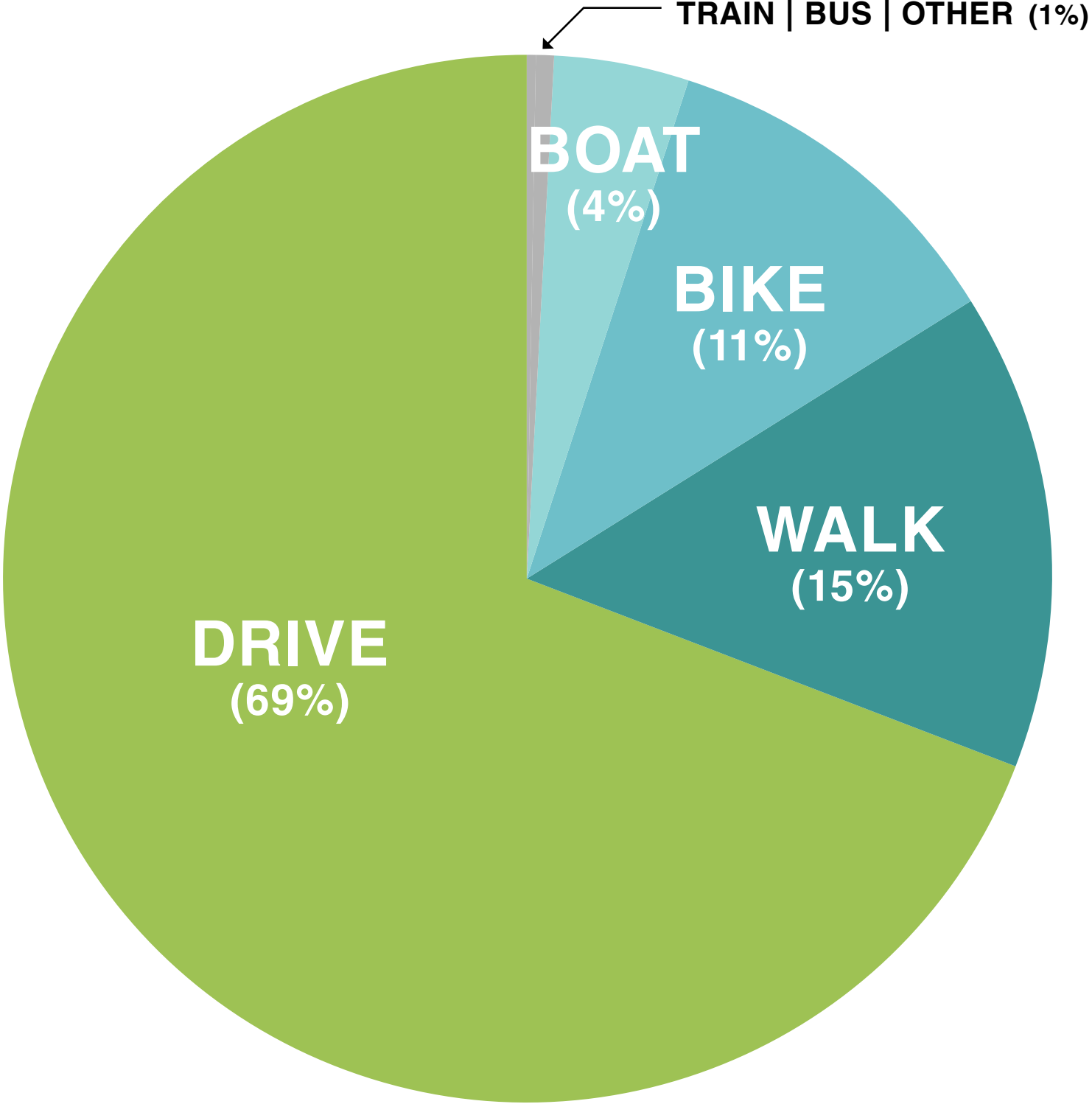
Recreational Needs Assessment Survey Results

How do you get to the park?

Total Respondents: 1,240

69% of respondents said they drive to the park.

14% of respondents walk to the park.



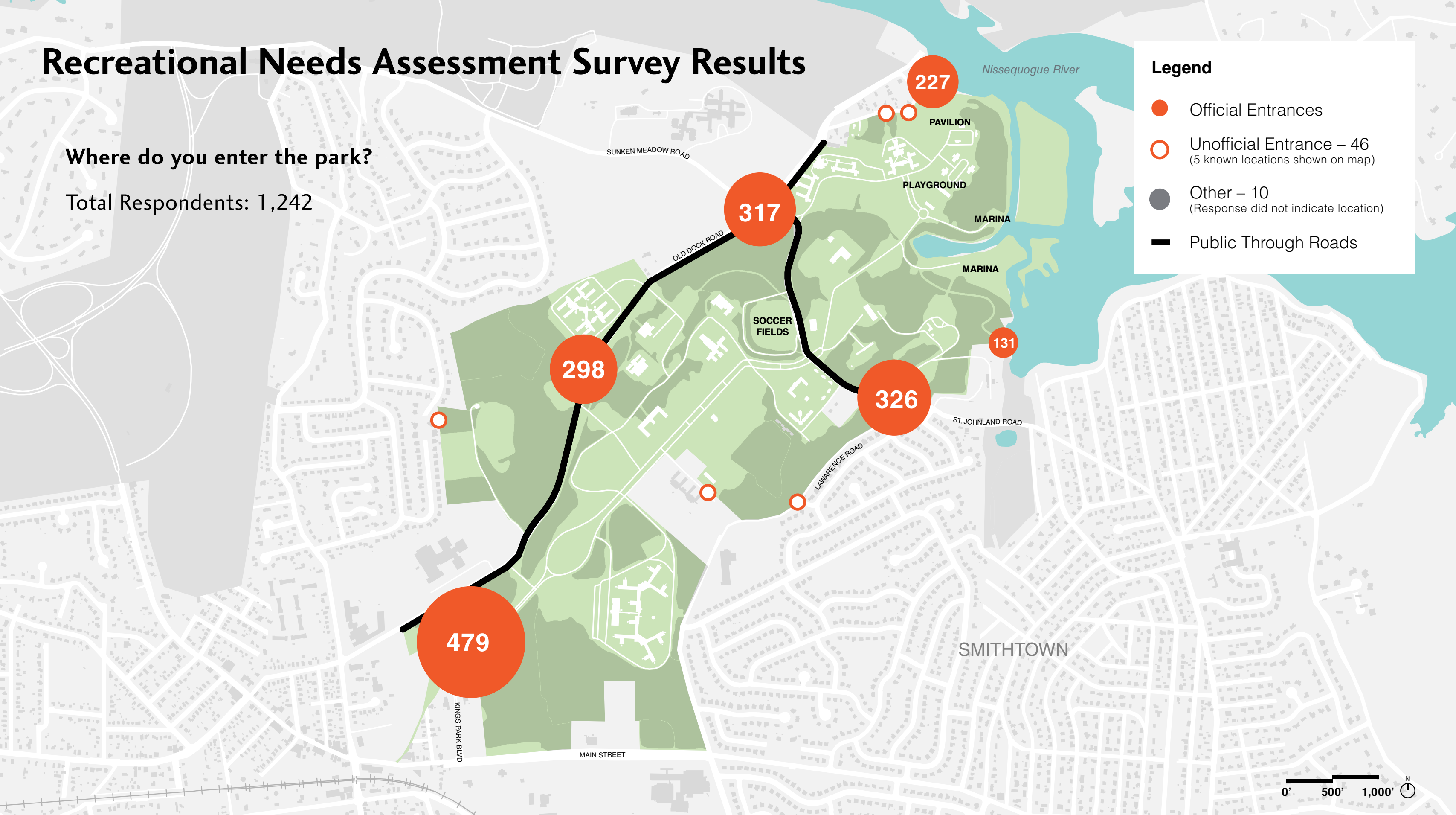
Recreational Needs Assessment Survey Results

Where do you enter the park?

Total Respondents: 1,242

Legend

- Official Entrances
- Unofficial Entrance – 46
(5 known locations shown on map)
- Other – 10
(Response did not indicate location)
- Public Through Roads



Recreational Needs Assessment Survey Results

What activities would you like to see at the park?

Total Respondents: 1,642

Top 5 Activities (% of respondents)

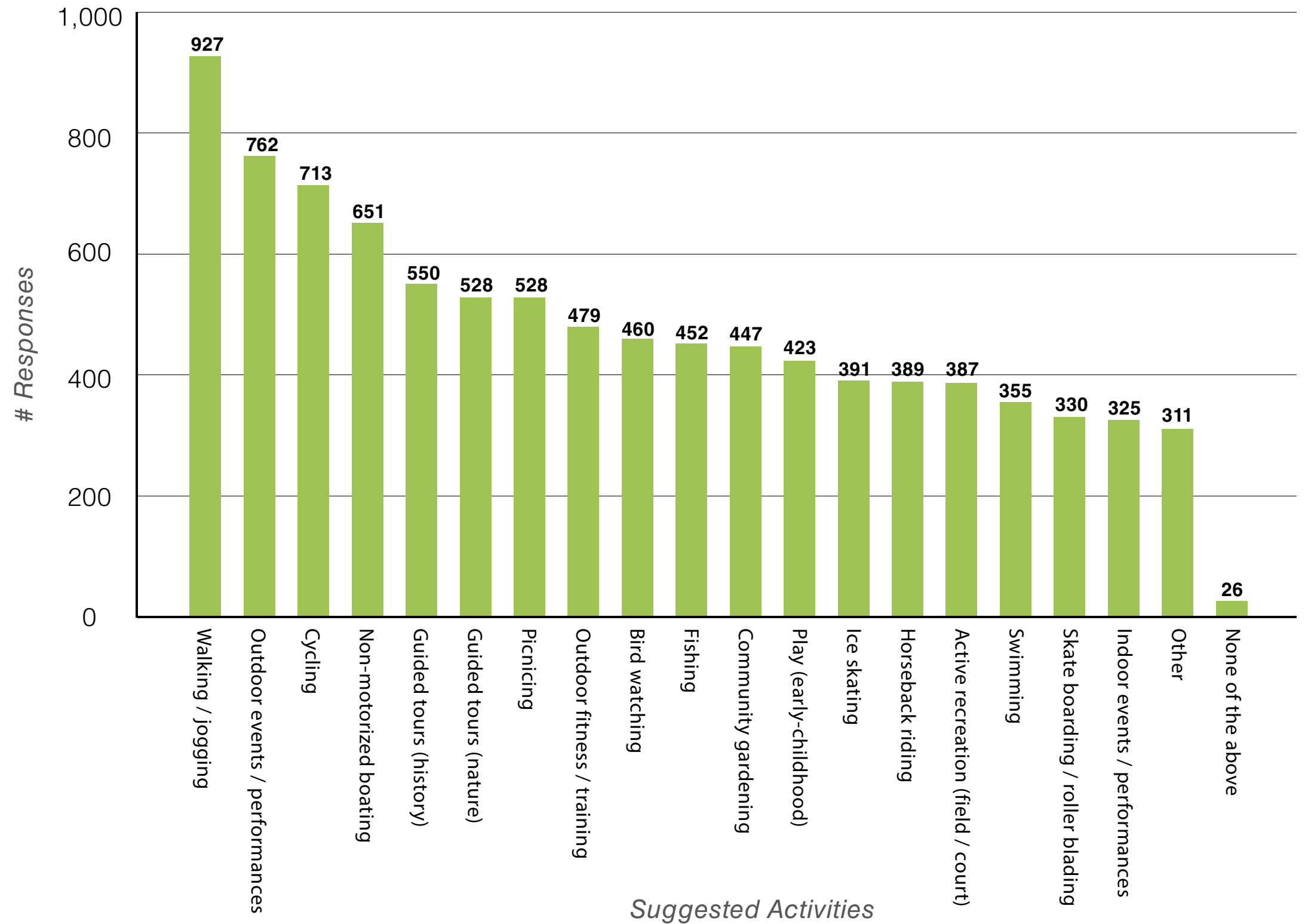
Walking / Jogging (56%)

Outdoor Events / Performance (46%)

Cycling (43%)

Non-motorized Boating (40%)

Guided Tours (33%)



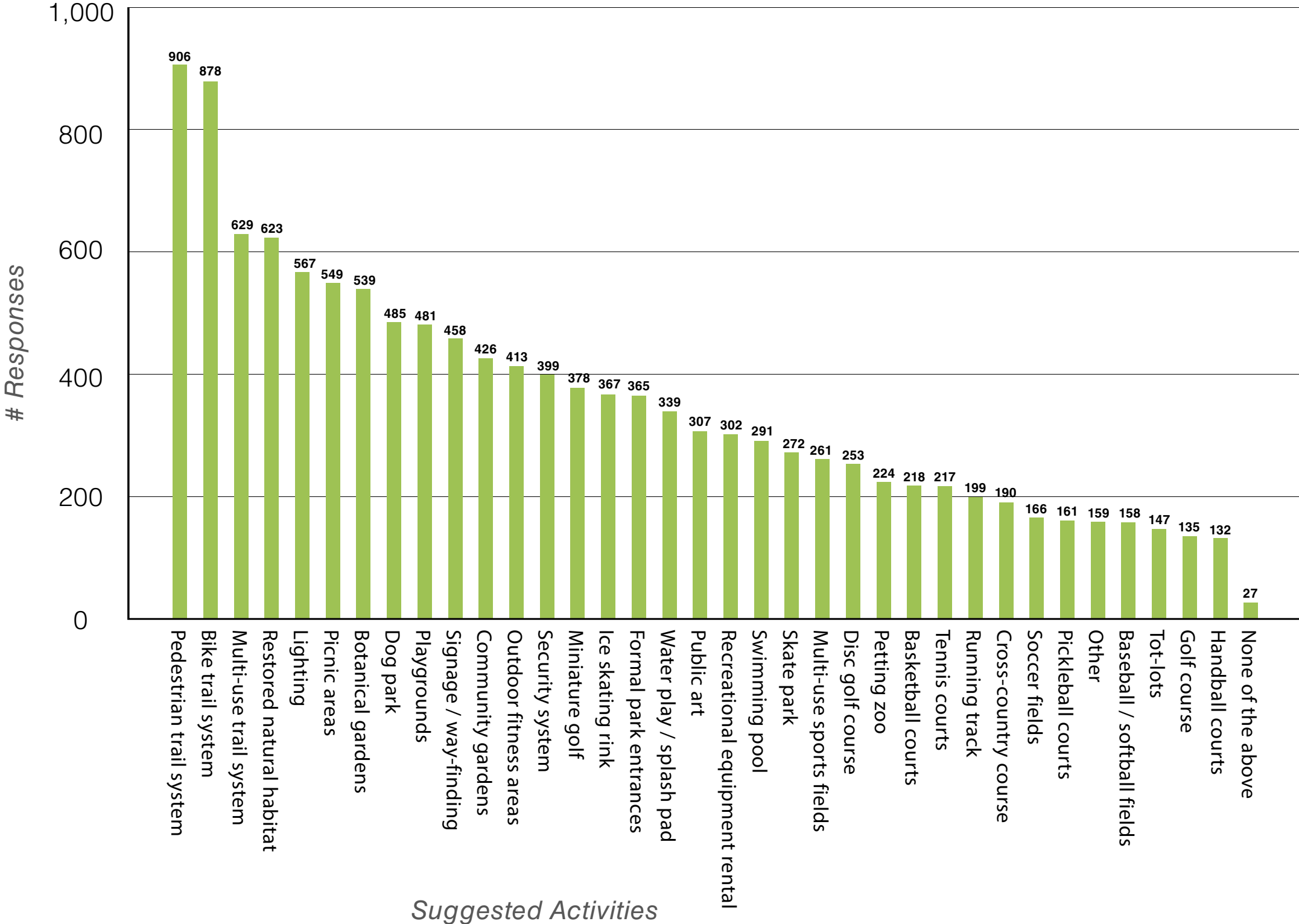
Recreational Needs Assessment Survey Results

What amenities would you like to see at the park?

Total Respondents: 1,643

Top 10 Amenities (% of respondents)

- Pedestrian Trail System (55%)
- Bike Trail System (54%)
- Multi-use Trail System (38%)
- Restored Natural Habitat (38%)
- Lighting (35%)
- Picnic Areas (33%)
- Botanical Gardens (33%)
- Dog Park (28%)
- Playgrounds (29%)
- Signage / Wayfinding (28%)

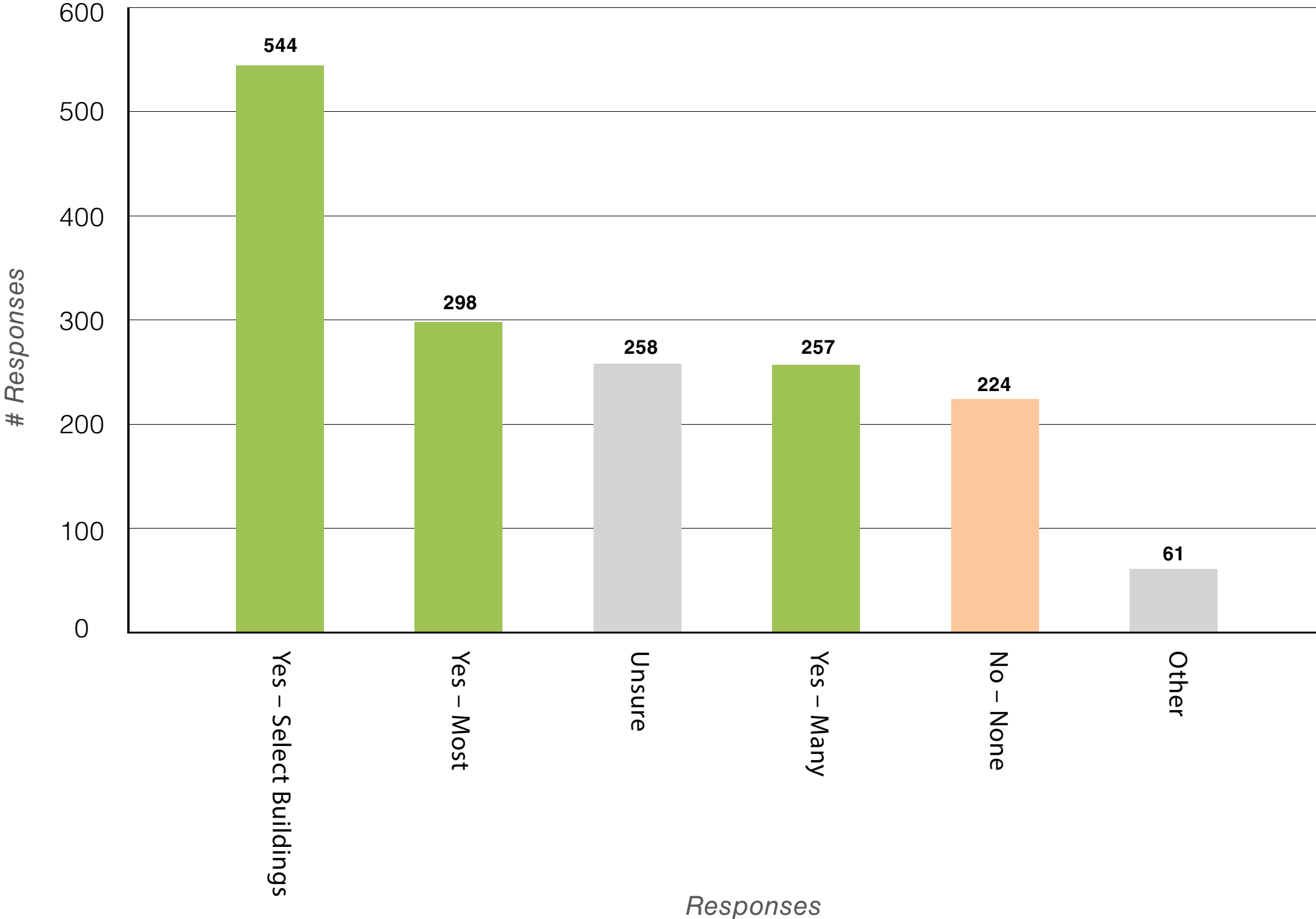


Recreational Needs Assessment Survey Results

Does your vision for the future of Nissequogue River State Park include keeping and reusing the existing buildings?

Total Respondents: 1,642

67% of respondents said that some number of existing buildings should be retained and reused.



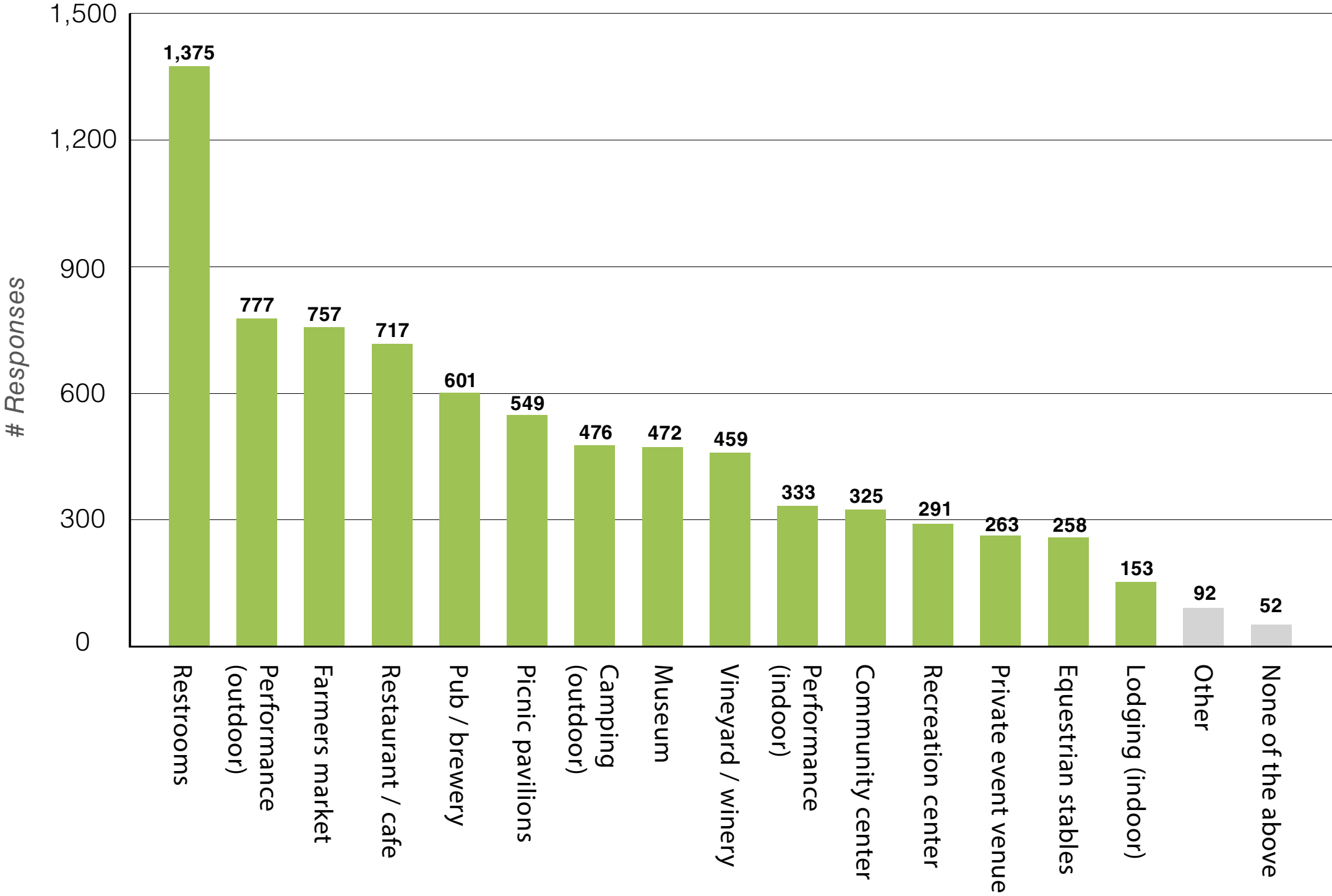
Recreational Needs Assessment Survey Results

What facilities would you like to see at the park?

Total Respondents: 1,640

Top 5 Facilities (% of respondents)

- Restrooms (84%)
- Outdoor Performance (47%)
- Farmers Market (46%)
- Restaurant / Cafe (44%)
- Pub / Brewery (37%)



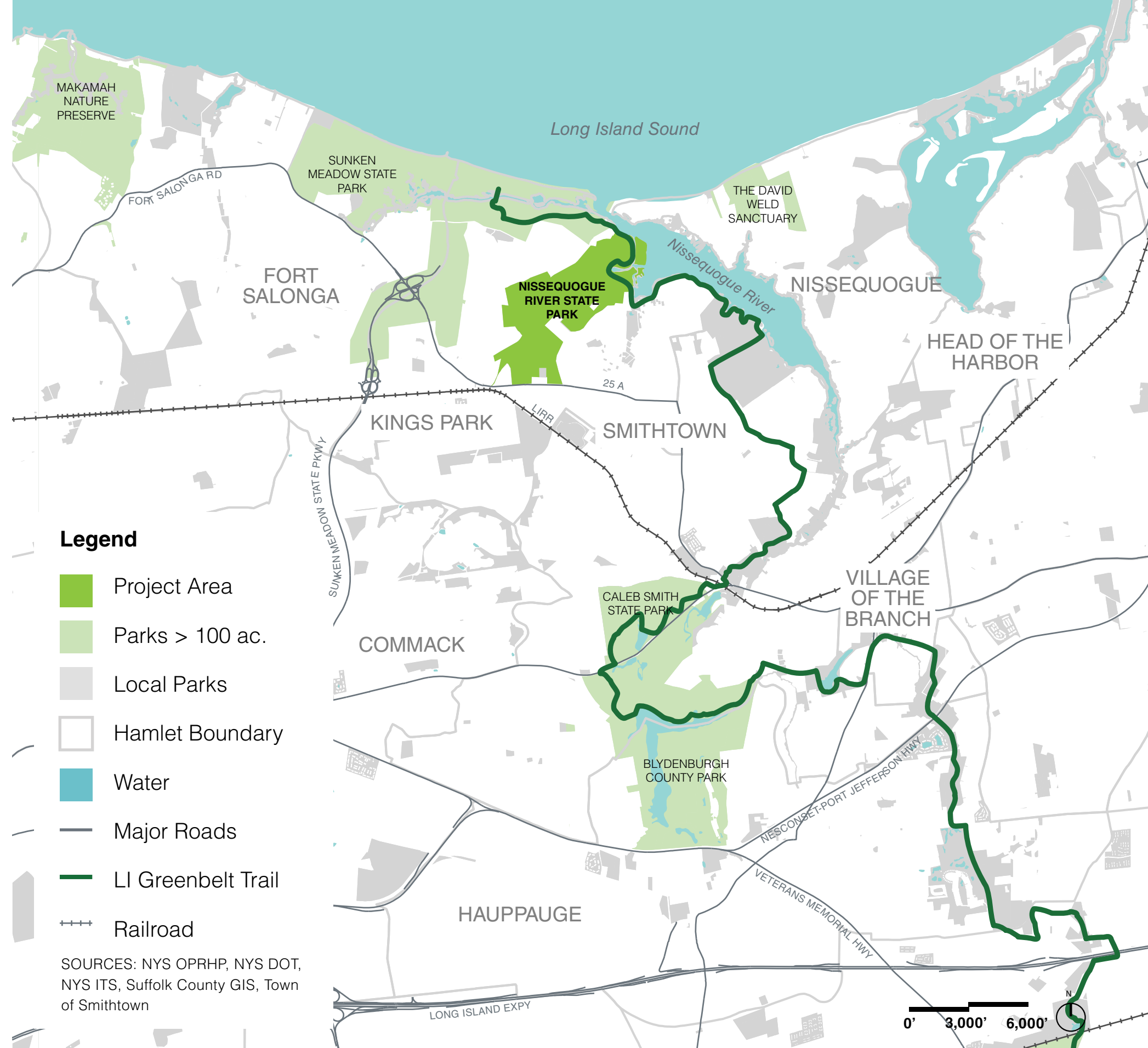
Suggested Amenities

Local Park Context

There are several 100+ acre parks and public open spaces located within 5 miles of Nissequogue River State Park.

These include:

- Sunken Meadow State Park (1,288 acres)
- Blydenburgh County Park (627 acres)
- Caleb Smith State Park (548 acres)
- Makamah Nature Preserve (160 acres)
- David Weld Sanctuary (125 acres)

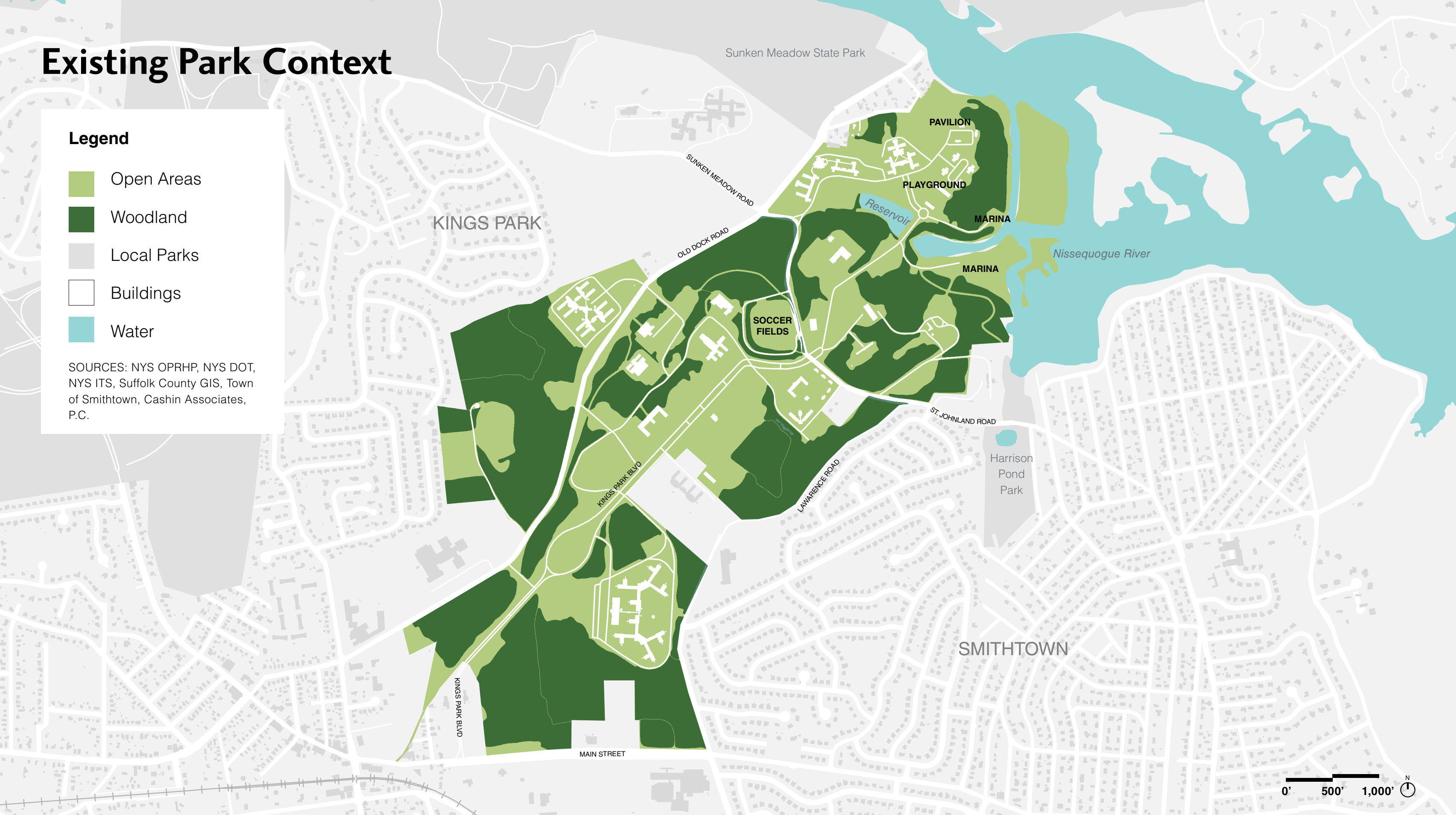


Existing Park Context

Legend






- Open Areas
- Woodland
- Local Parks
- Buildings
- Water

SOURCES: NYS OPRHP, NYS DOT, NYS ITS, Suffolk County GIS, Town of Smithtown, Cashin Associates, P.C.

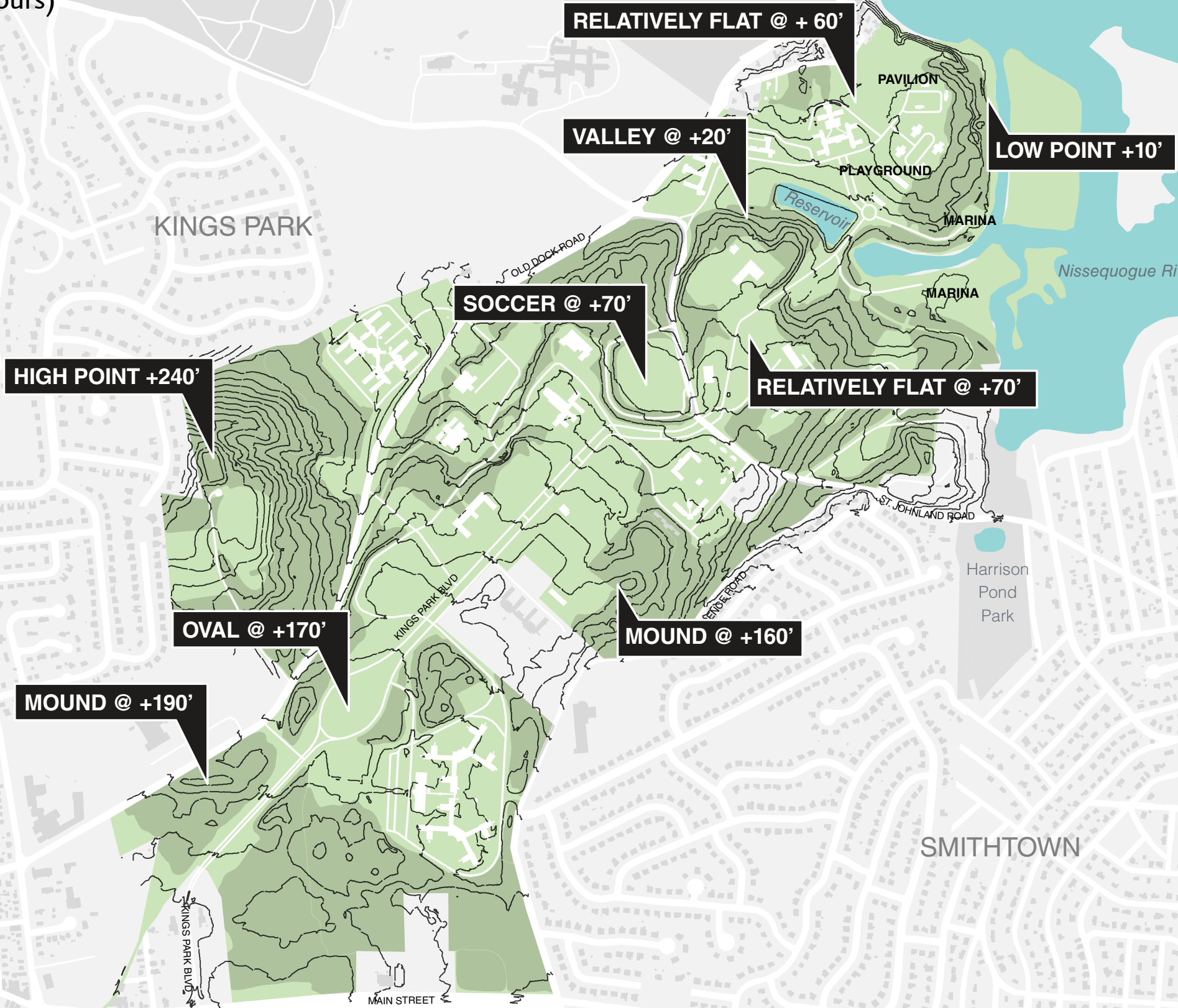


Topography (10' contours)

Legend

-  Open Areas
-  Woodland
-  Local Parks
-  Buildings
-  Water
-  10' Contours

SOURCES: NYS OPRHP, NYS DOT, NYS ITS, Suffolk County GIS, Town of Smithtown, Cashin Associates, P.C.

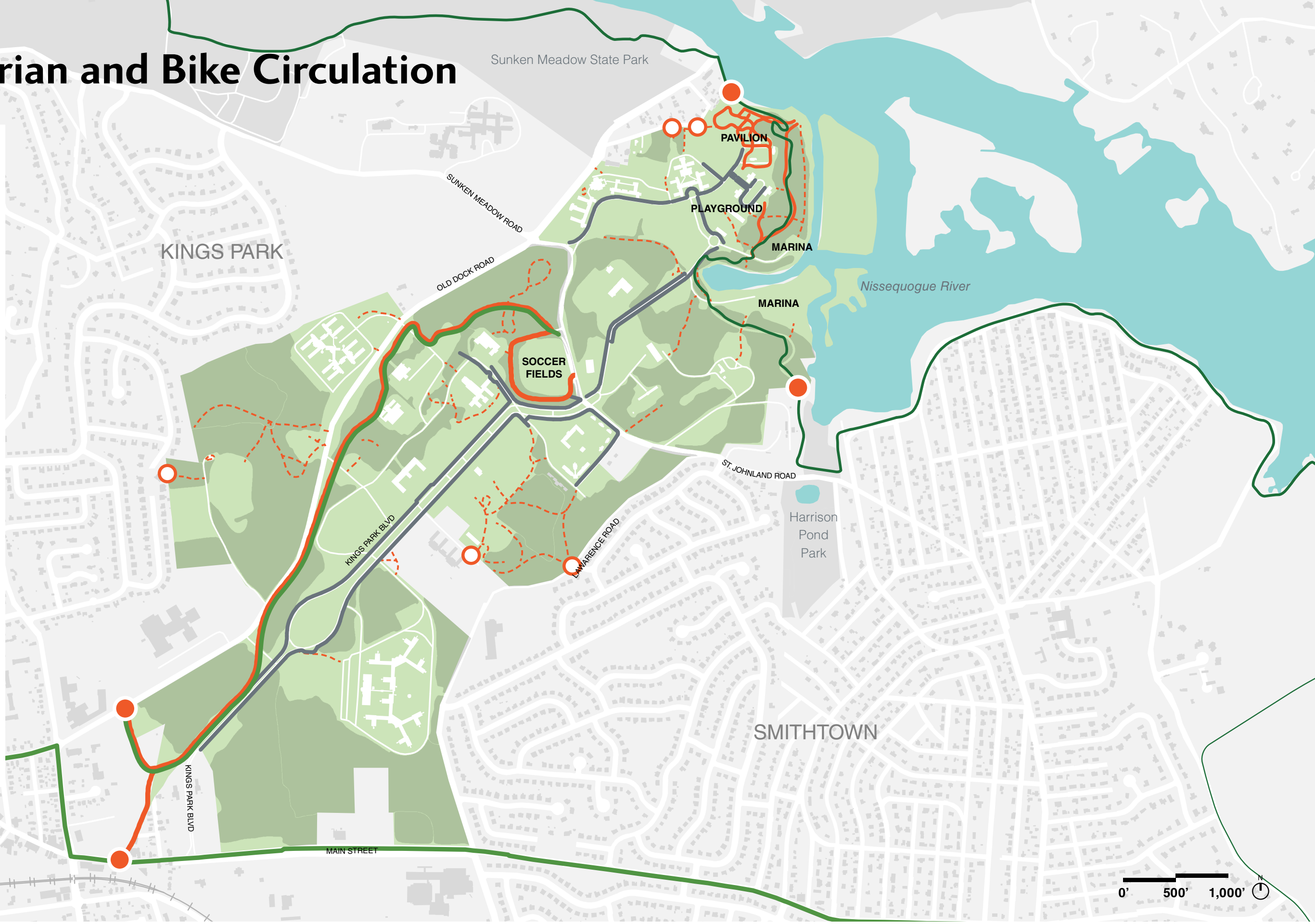


Existing Pedestrian and Bike Circulation

Legend

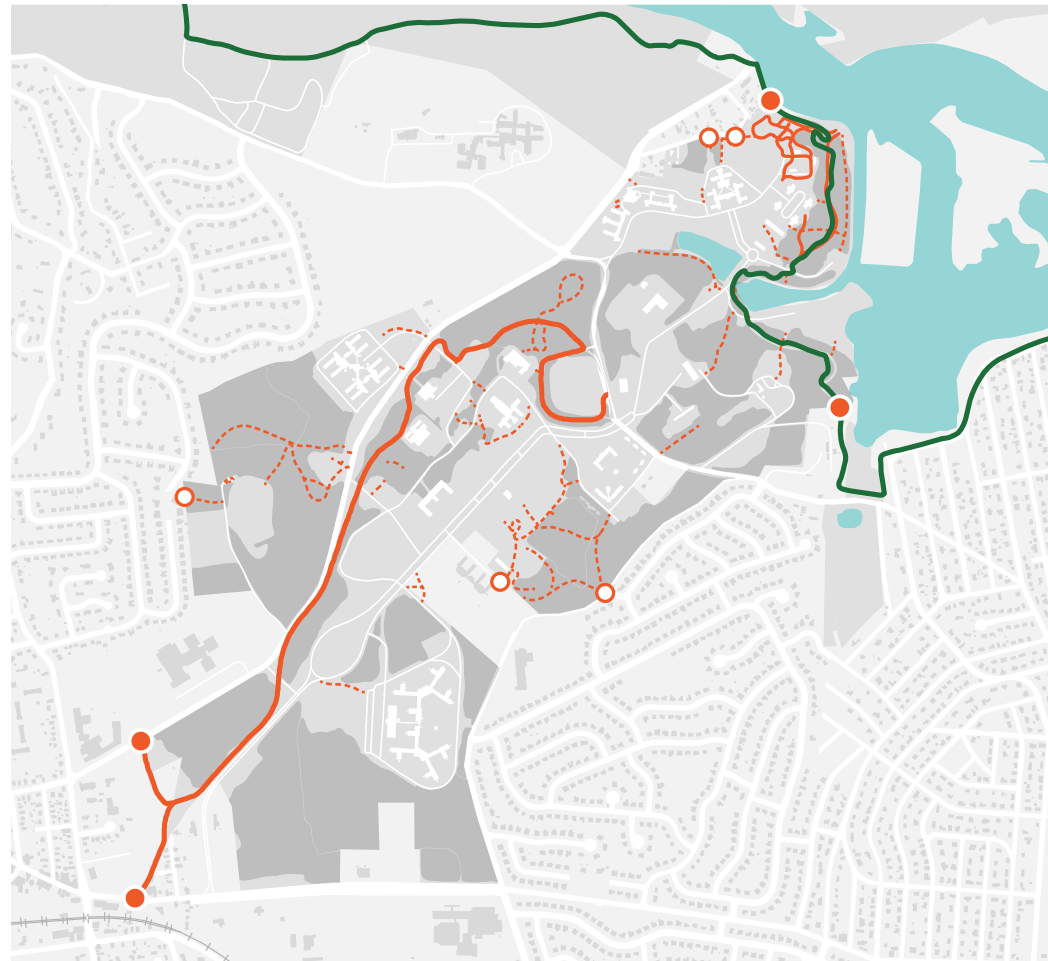
- Primary Trails
- Secondary Trails
- - - Old Trails
- Park Sidewalks
- Local Bicycle Routes
- LI Greenbelt Trail
- Open Areas
- Woodland
- Buildings
- Water
- Primary Entrances
- Secondary Entrances

SOURCES: NYS OPRHP, NYS DOT, NYS ITS, Suffolk County GIS, Town of Smithtown, Cashin Associates, P.C.

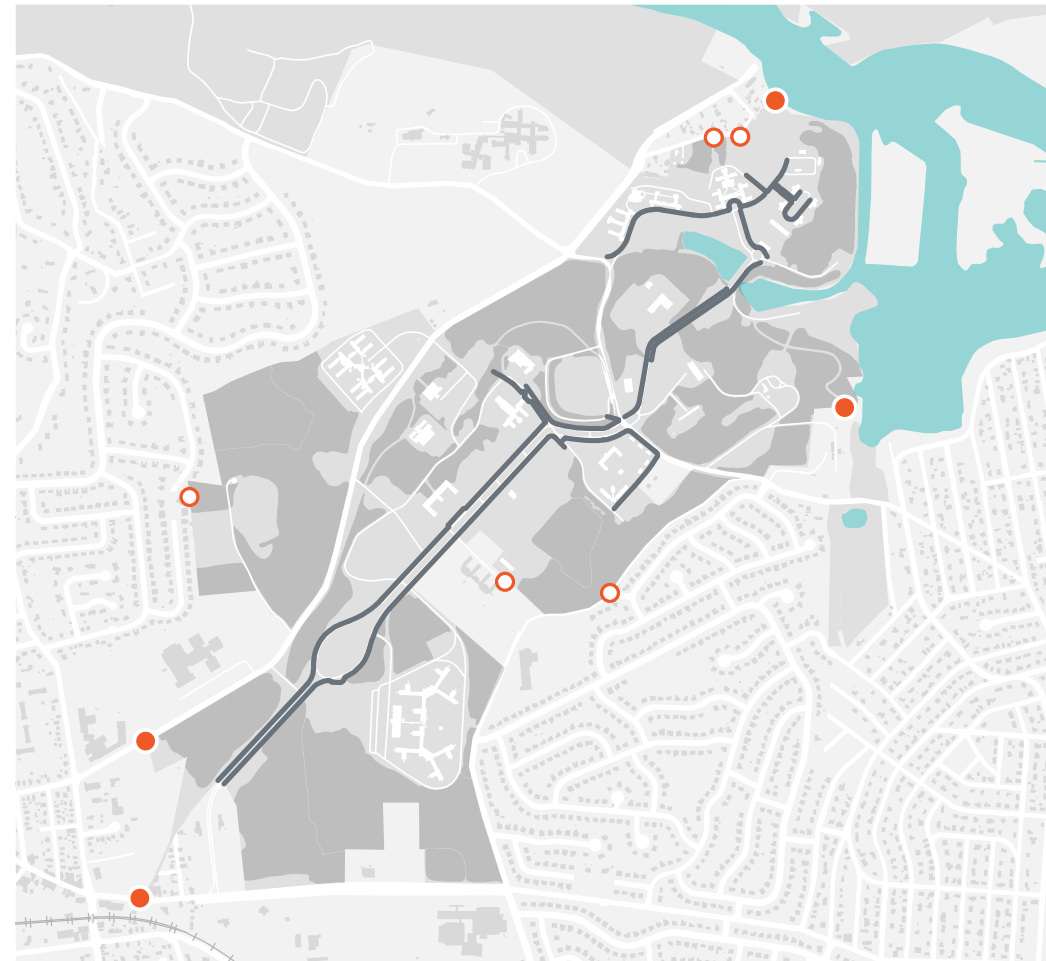


Existing Pedestrian and Bike Circulation

TRAILS



SIDEWALKS



BICYCLE PATHS



Legend

- Primary Trails
- - - Secondary Trails
- - - Old Trails
- Park Sidewalks
- Local Bicycle Routes
- LI Greenbelt Trail
- Primary Entrances
- Secondary Entrances





SOURCES: NYS OPRHP, NYS DOT, NYS ITS, Suffolk County GIS, Town of Smithtown, Cashin Associates, P.C.

Existing Pedestrian and Bike Circulation

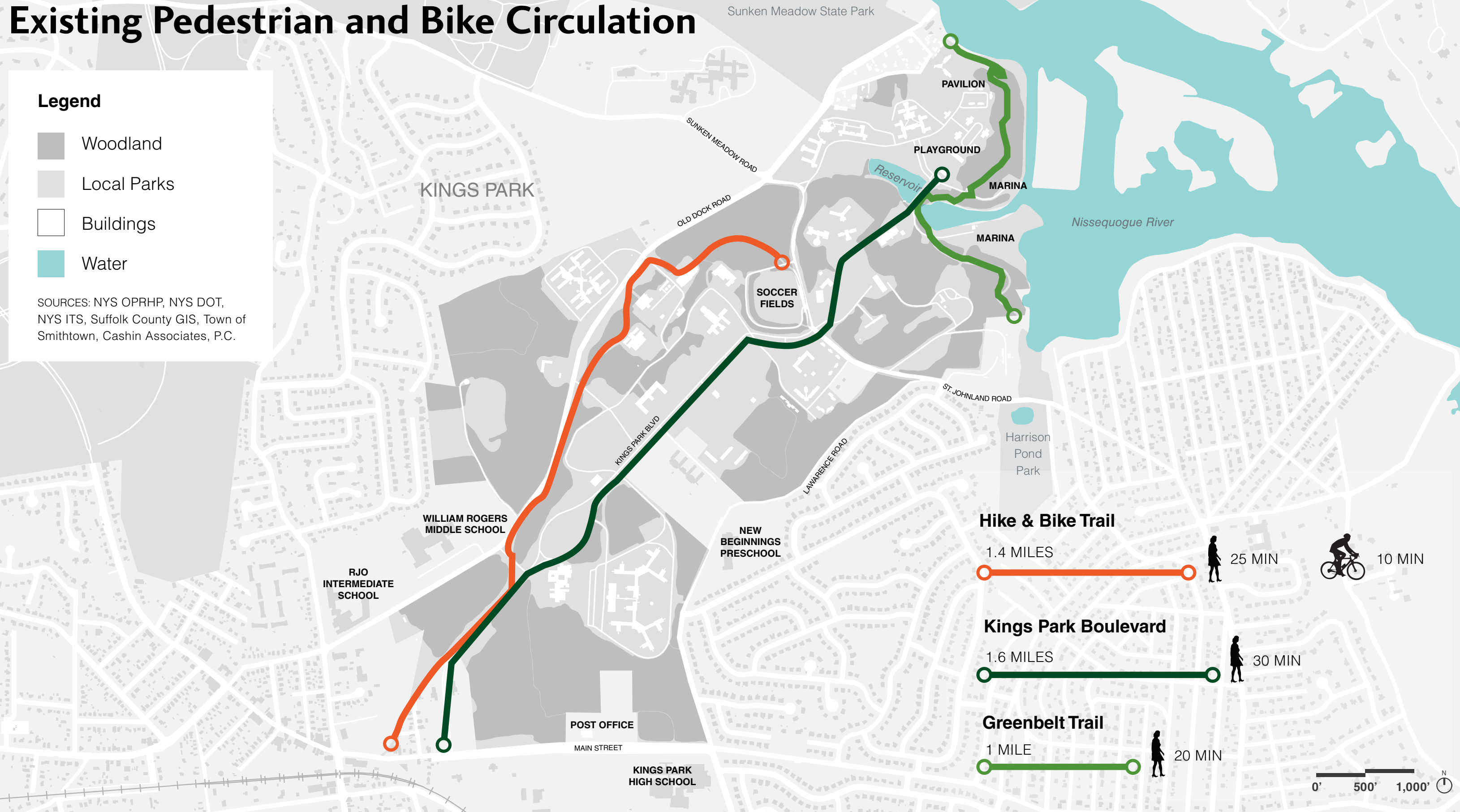


Existing Pedestrian and Bike Circulation

Legend

-  Woodland
-  Local Parks
-  Buildings
-  Water

SOURCES: NYS OPRHP, NYS DOT, NYS ITS, Suffolk County GIS, Town of Smithtown, Cashin Associates, P.C.



Hike & Bike Trail

1.4 MILES  25 MIN  10 MIN

Kings Park Boulevard

1.6 MILES  30 MIN

Greenbelt Trail

1 MILE  20 MIN

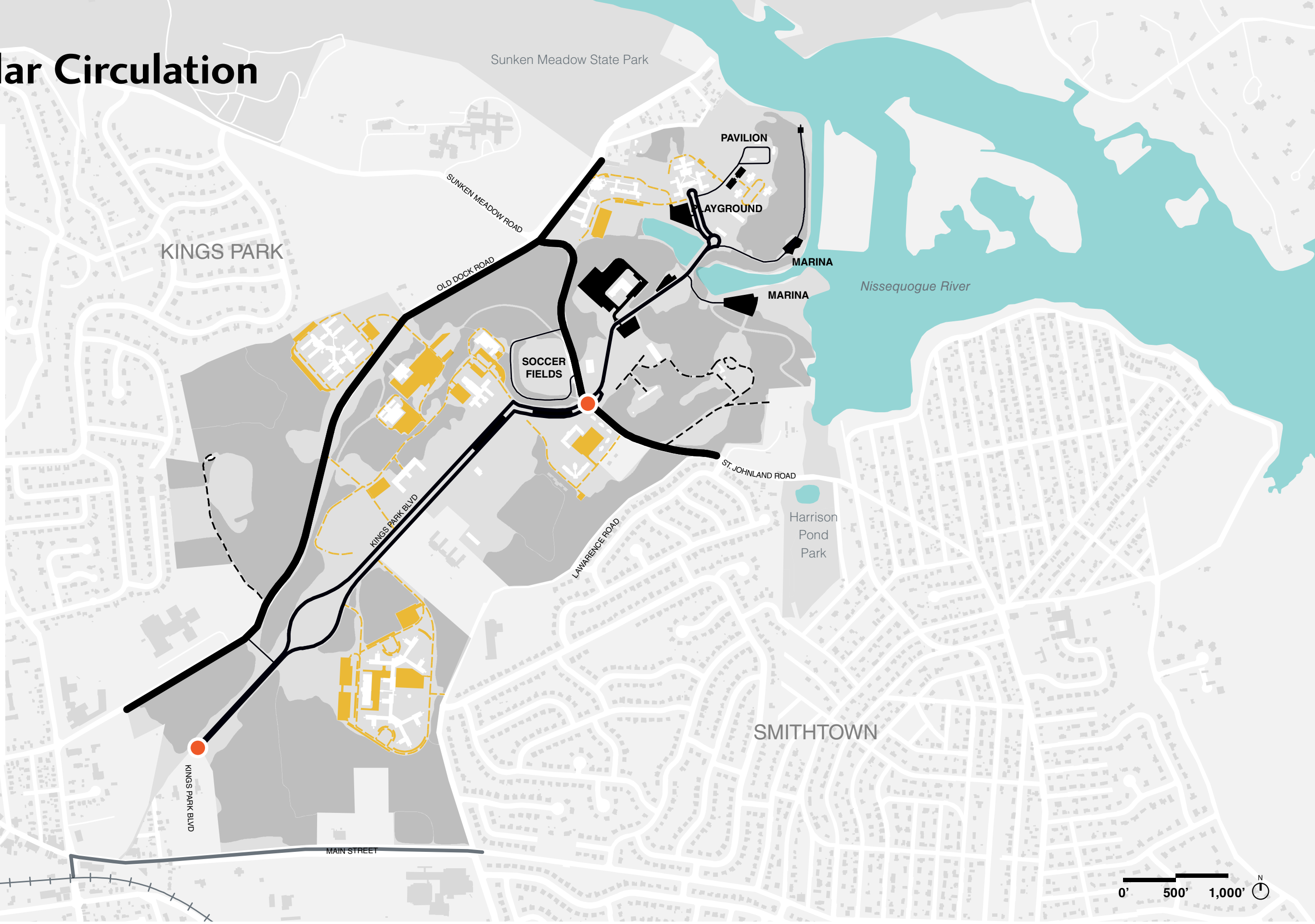


Existing Vehicular Circulation

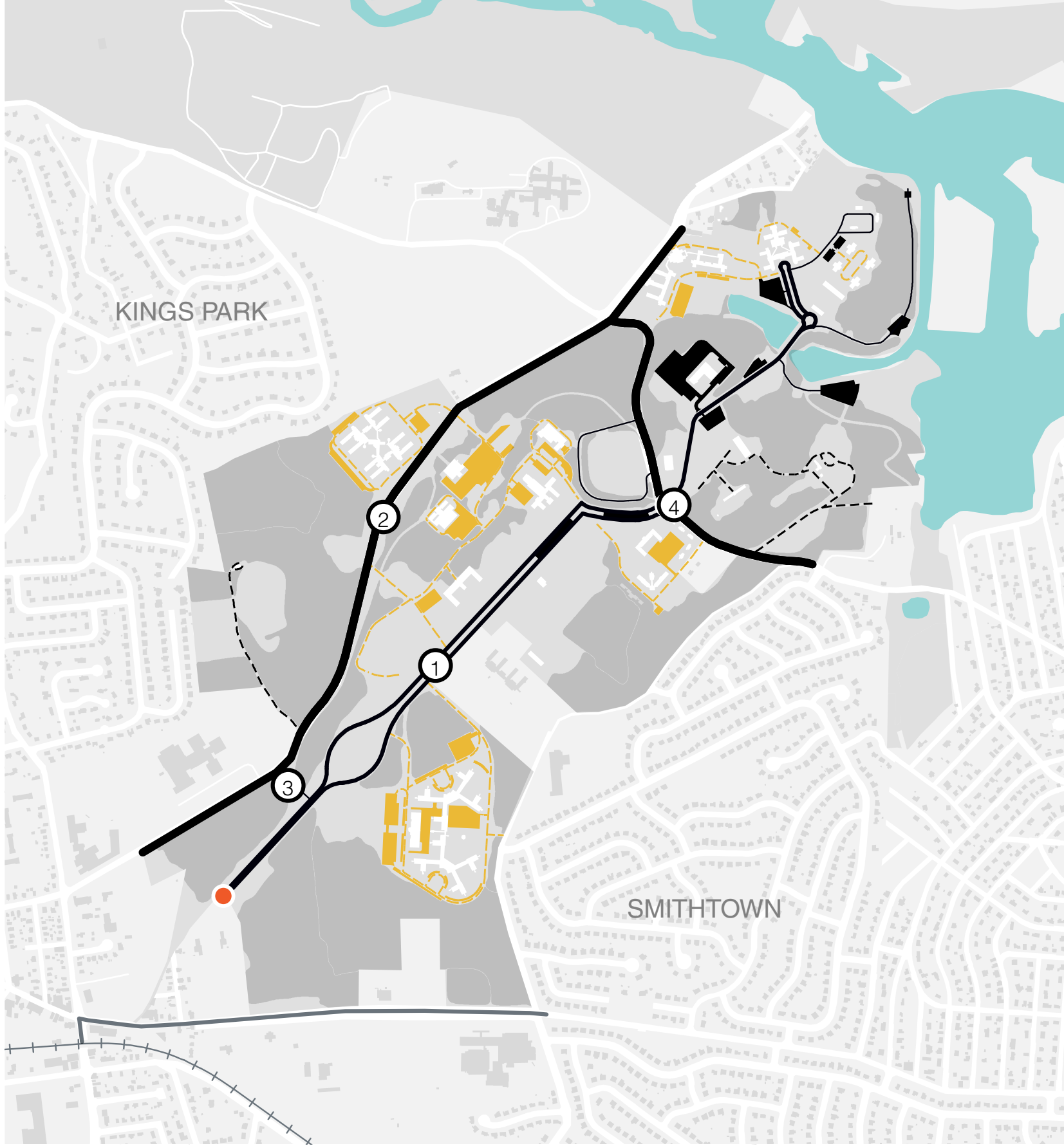
Legend

- Primary Entrances
- Public Through Roads
- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Maintenance Roads
- Active Parking Lots
- Closed Park Roads
- Inactive Parking Lots
- LIRR
- Bus Route
- Woodland
- Local Parks

SOURCES: NYS OPRHP, NYS DOT, NYS ITS, Suffolk County GIS, Town of Smithtown, Cashin Associates, P.C.



Existing Vehicular Circulation

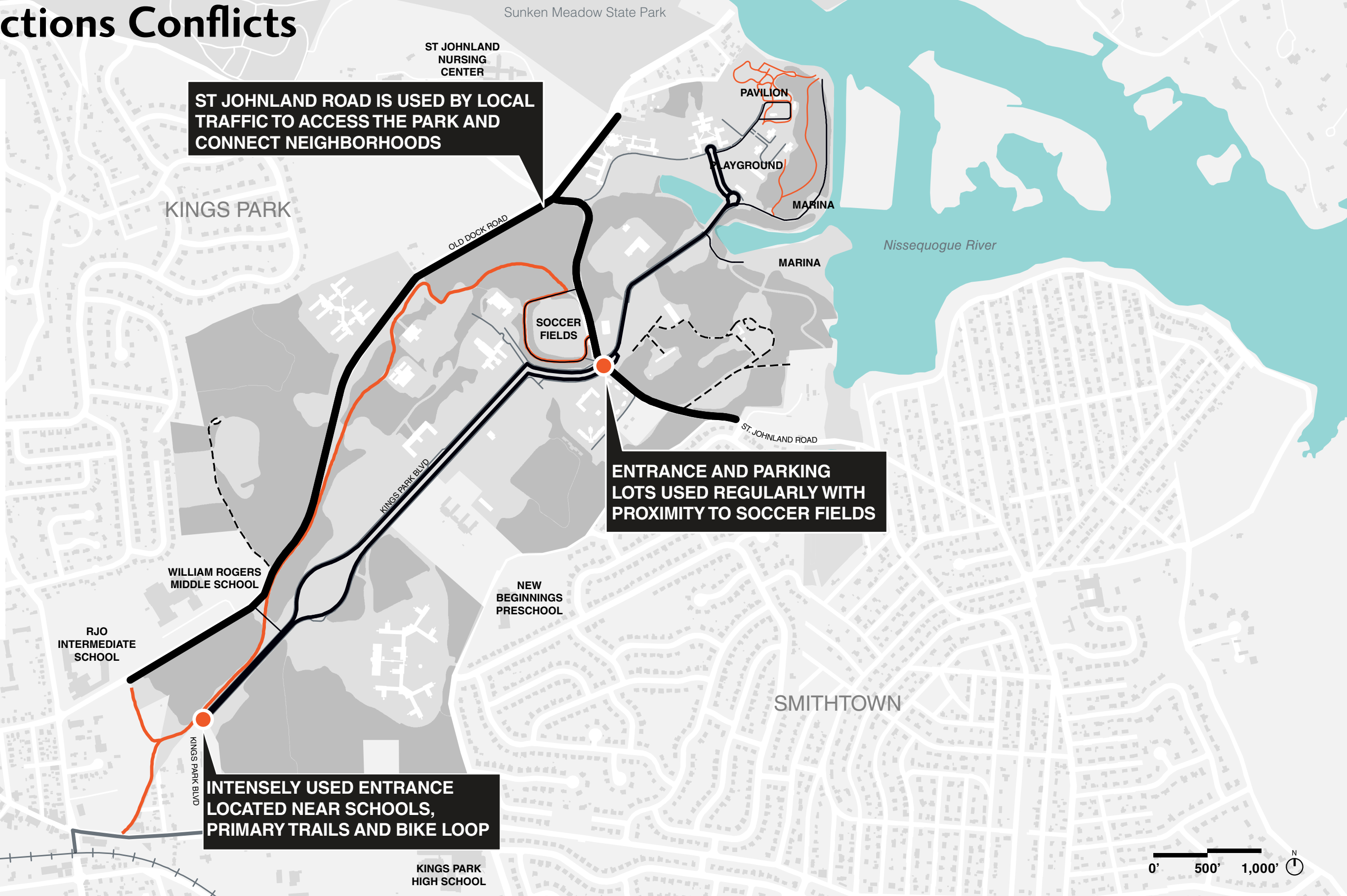


Existing Intersections Conflicts

Legend

- Primary Entrances
- Public Through Roads
- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Maintenance Roads
- Primary Trails
- Secondary Trails
- Park Sidewalks
- Woodland
- Local Parks

SOURCES: NYS OPRHP, NYS DOT, NYS ITS, Suffolk County GIS, Town of Smithtown, Cashin Associates, P.C.









Existing Ecological Communities

Legend



FOREST HABITATS

-  Successional Mesophytic Forest
-  Mesophytic Forest
-  Degraded Area
-  Successional Old Field

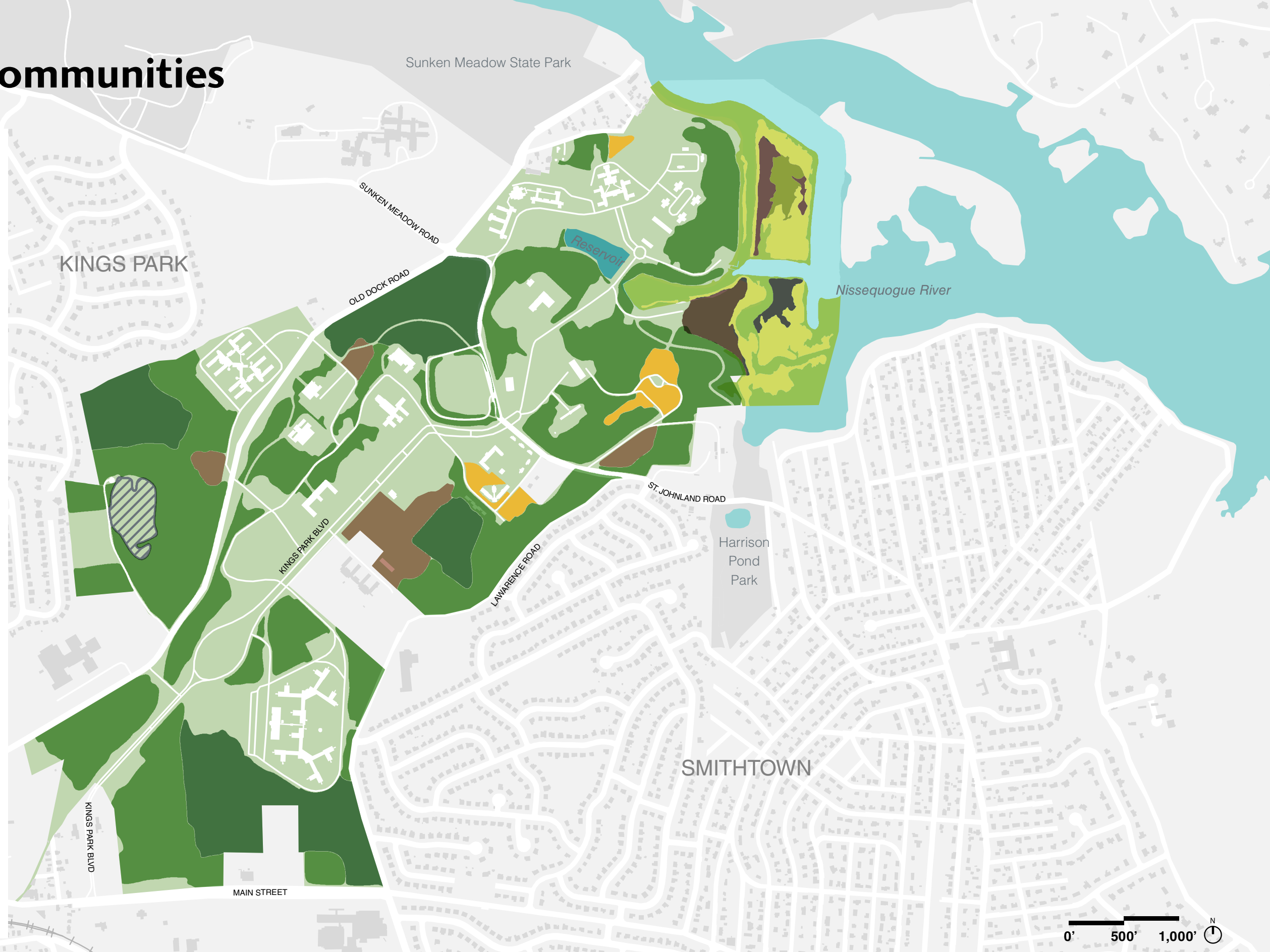
COASTAL HABITATS

-  Freshwater Pond
-  Littoral Zone
-  Coastal Shoals, Bar and Mudflats
-  Intertidal Marsh
-  High Salt Marsh
-  Dredge Soil

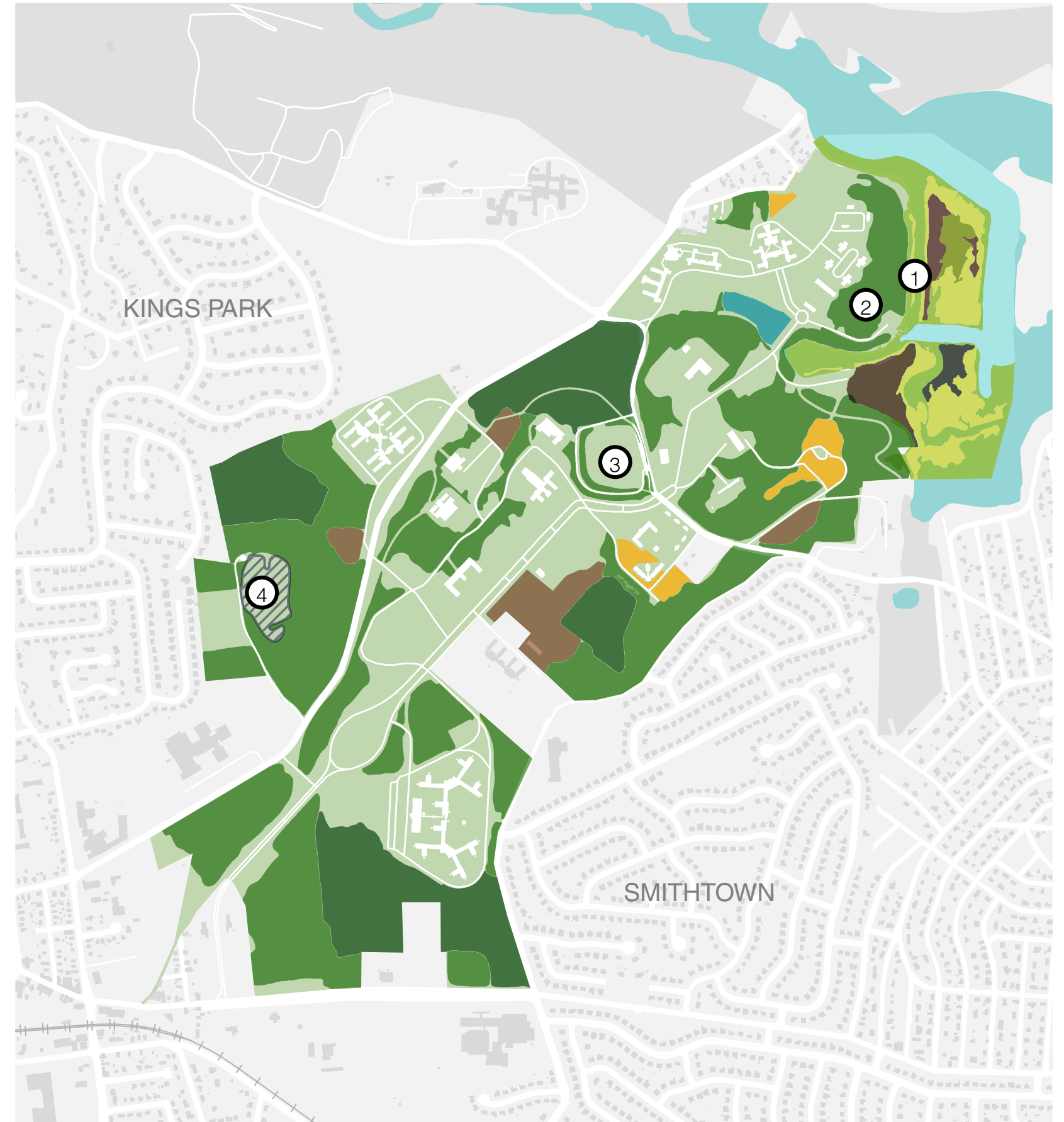
OTHER

-  Ashfield
-  Open Areas

SOURCES: NYS OPRHP, NYS DOT, NYS ITS, Suffolk County GIS, Town of Smithtown, Cashin Associates, P.C.



Existing Ecological Communities



Typical Invasive Species



Mugwort



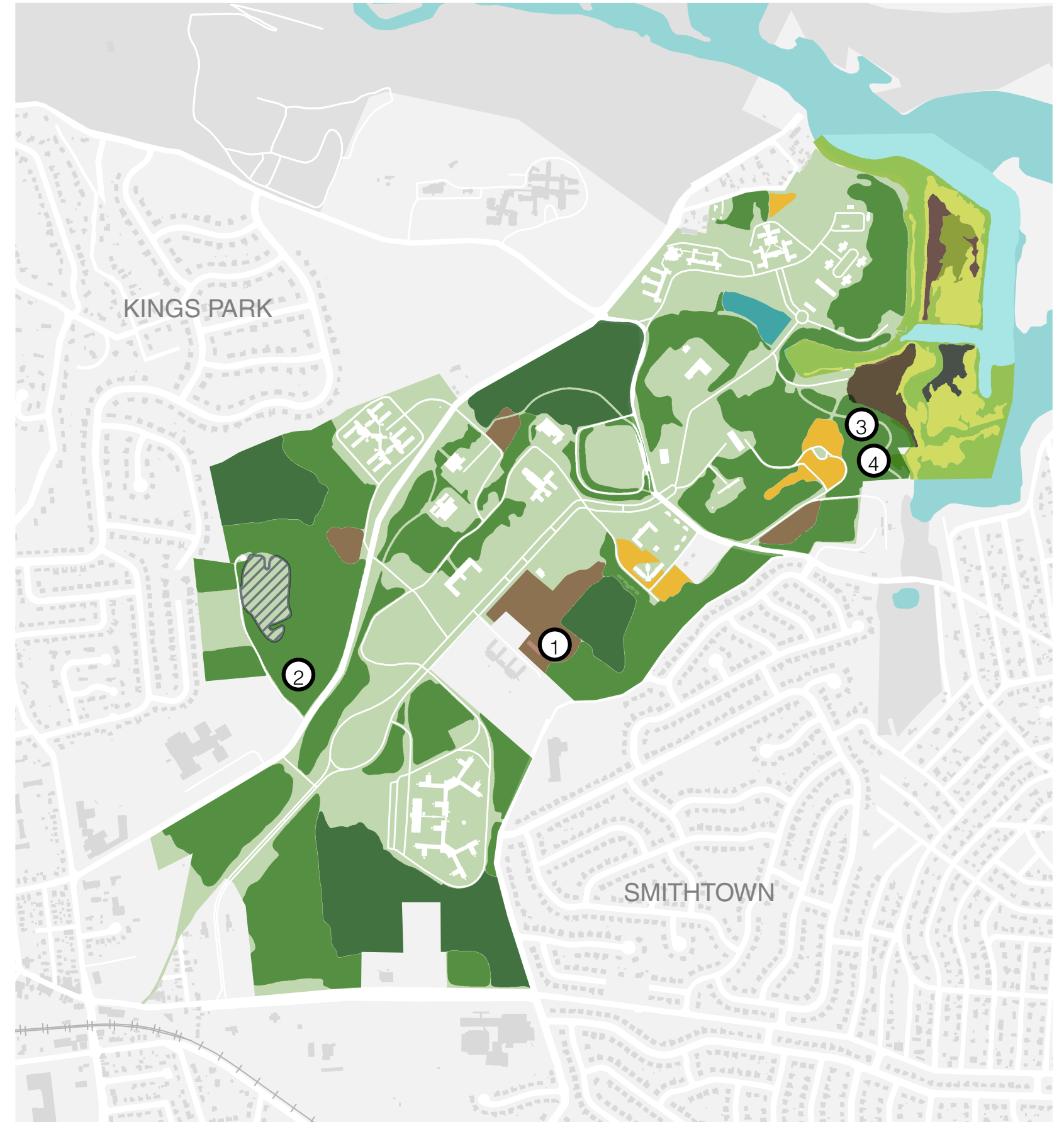
Japanese Knotweed



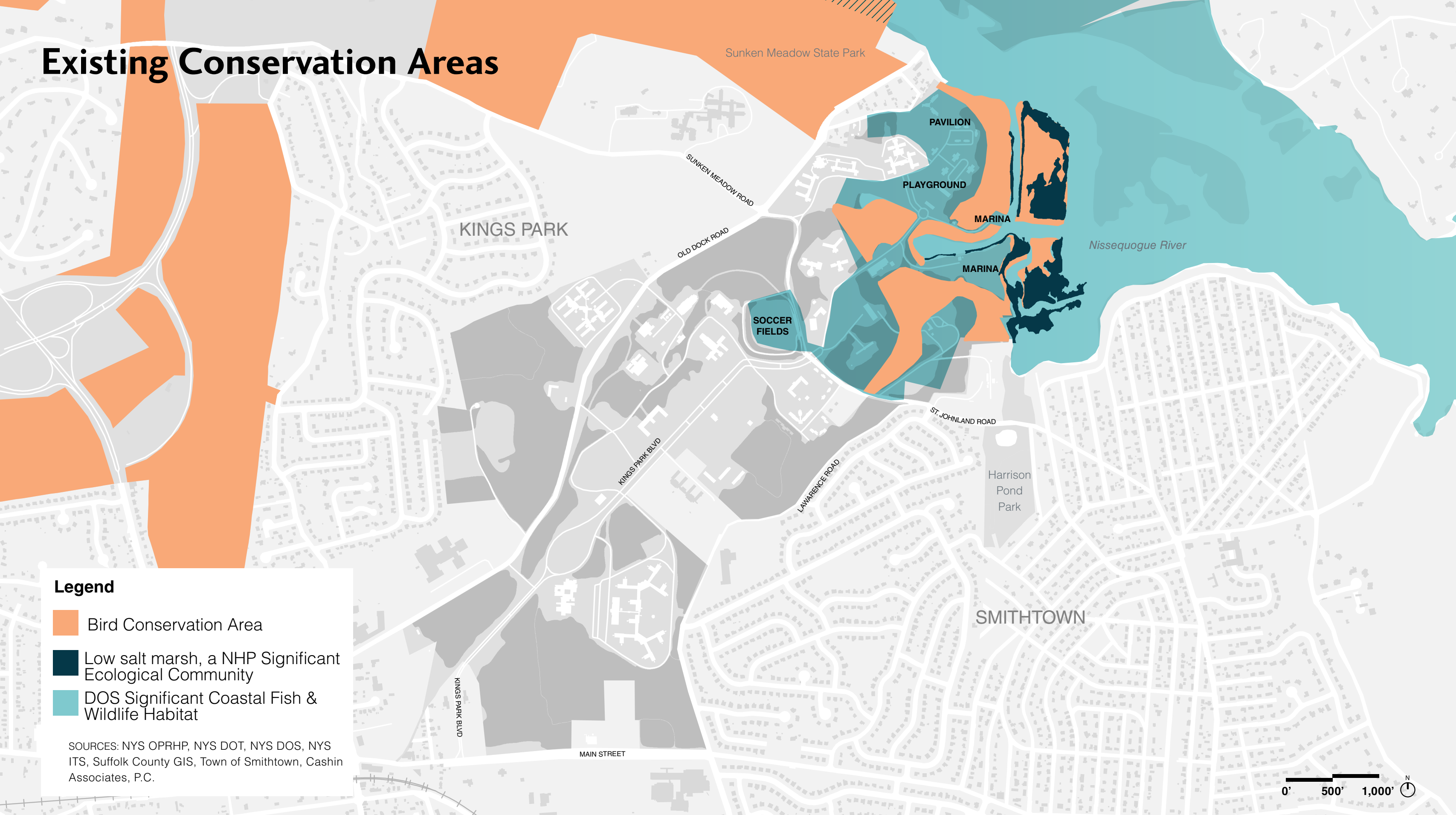
Oriental Bittersweet



Multiflora Rose



Existing Conservation Areas



Legend





- Bird Conservation Area
- Low salt marsh, a NHP Significant Ecological Community
- DOS Significant Coastal Fish & Wildlife Habitat

SOURCES: NYS OPRHP, NYS DOT, NYS DOS, NYS ITS, Suffolk County GIS, Town of Smithtown, Cashin Associates, P.C.



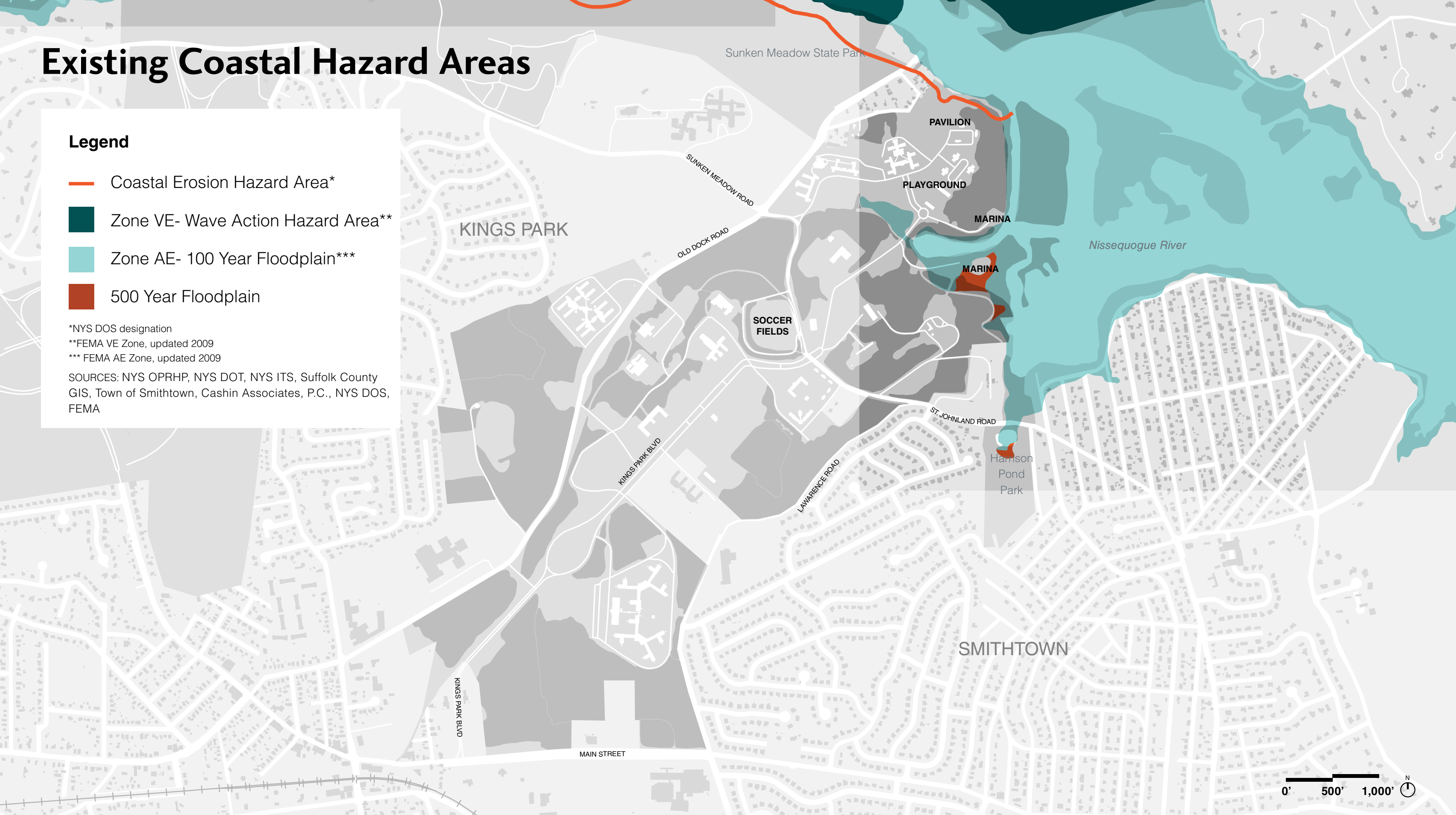
Existing Coastal Hazard Areas

Legend

-  Coastal Erosion Hazard Area*
-  Zone VE- Wave Action Hazard Area**
-  Zone AE- 100 Year Floodplain***
-  500 Year Floodplain

*NYS DOS designation
 **FEMA VE Zone, updated 2009
 *** FEMA AE Zone, updated 2009

SOURCES: NYS OPRHP, NYS DOT, NYS ITS, Suffolk County GIS, Town of Smithtown, Cashin Associates, P.C., NYS DOS, FEMA



Park Precedent Images (For discussion only)



Meadows



Pollinator gardens



Flexible open space



Birdwatching



Cycling trails



Woodland trails

Park Precedent Images (For discussion only)



Fishing



Orchard



Graded crossings



Interpretive signs



Boardwalks



Waterfront activities

Next Steps and Contact

- EIS scoping and comment period: May - June 2021
- Release of draft Master Plan and DEIS: Summer 2021

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Contact the project team at:

NissequogueRiver.Plan@parks.ny.gov

To access additional information about the Nissequogue River State Park Master Plan/EIS, visit:

<https://parks.ny.gov/inside-our-agency/master-plans.aspx>



Thank You!



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