

Project Overview



A Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) is a cooperative land use planning effort between local governments and military installations. It seeks to ensure the lasting compatibility of military installations and their neighboring communities. A JLUS creates a policy framework and recommends strategies that support a healthy economy, environment, and community, while safeguarding the military mission.

This JLUS is focused around Submarine Base New London (SUBASE) and its neighbors. The Department of Defense (DoD) Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA), with contributions from the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) and participating municipalities, funded this study.

PROJECT GOALS

Compatible community development. Encourage collaborative planning to ensure future development is compatible with military training and operations and supports waterfront economic development.

Reduced operational impacts on adjacent lands. Seek ways to reduce the installation's impact on its neighbors and protect the public health, safety, and welfare of those living near the military installation.

Who Guides the JLUS?

Two committees guided the JLUS. The Policy Committee (PC) was comprised of the SUBASE Captain and City, Town, and State electeds and executive staff. The Technical Committee (TC) was made up of City and Town planning staff, representatives from State and federal agencies, and other stakeholders. Community members provided input and guidance by submitting comments and feedback to PC and TC members, online through the project website, and in public workshops.

Study Area

This JLUS focuses on areas where SUBASE operations may impact its neighbors and where development and other civilian activities may impact the SUBASE. It includes the SUBASE and the municipalities surrounding it or in close proximity: Town of Groton, City of Groton, Ledyard, New London, Waterford, and Montville.

PROJECT SPONSOR/MANAGER

Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments

MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES

- City of Groton
- Town of Groton
- Town of Ledyard
- Town of Montville
- City of New London
- Town of Waterford

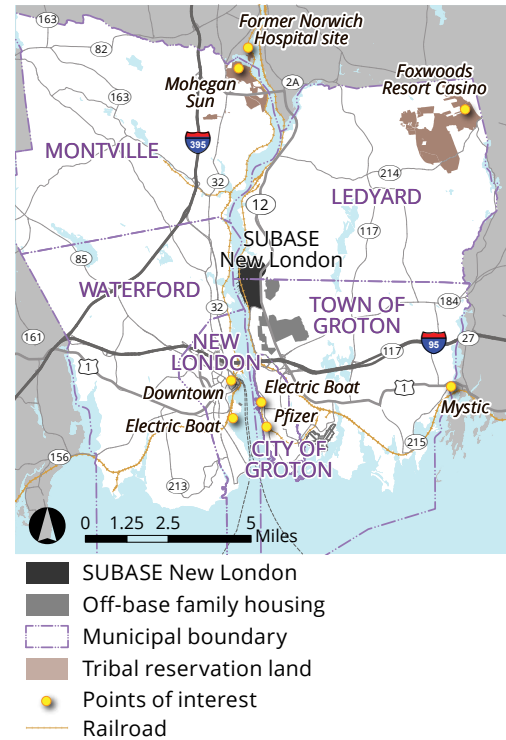


Figure 0.1. SUBASE New London JLUS study area (SCCOG, ESRI, FHI datasets)



Figure 0.2. The USS Nautilus, the first nuclear submarine, was christened and entered into the Thames River in 1954 (U.S. Navy).

SUBASE New London

SUBASE New London became the Navy's first Submarine Base in 1916, is considered "Home of the Submarine Force," and is a key component of a defense industry cluster in southeastern Connecticut. The SUBASE's primary missions are homeporting and deploying fast attack submarines and training the submarine force. A third of the Navy's Attack Submarine Force is located at the SUBASE.

The Naval Submarine School graduates nearly 40,000 submariner students annually. Nearly all U.S. Navy submariners are stationed at SUBASE New London for a portion of their careers.

The SUBASE has an annual payroll of approximately \$534 million, and its presence supports related industries, such as Electric Boat's thousands of employees working in submarine manufacturing, design, and engineering. Protection of the SUBASE is critical to national security and the region's economy.

Compatibility Issues and Strategies

TRANSPORTATION

ISSUES

Accessing the SUBASE. Around the SUBASE, congestion, a lack of transit, no turnaround area, and poor walking and bicycling conditions can make it challenging to get to and from the SUBASE.

ESQD arcs along Route 12. A short section of Route 12 near the SUBASE's North Gate is located within the SUBASE's explosive safety quantity distance (ESQD) arcs. The ESQD arcs outline a required safety area around weapons storage. Increased traffic congestion in the area may be an issue in the long term.

Electric Boat parking and truck traffic. Electric Boat employee parking is limited, and as new employees are hired, Groton's neighborhoods may be impacted. Likewise, residents are concerned about truck traffic using their neighborhood streets.

STRATEGIES

TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

- Develop a "Mobility Hub" on Crystal Lake Road to accommodate a bus stop and pick-up/drop-off area.
- Modify the SEAT Run 2 route to stop closer to the Main Gate, and increase its frequency.
- As needed, provide shuttle service between the SUBASE, Electric Boat, other employment centers, and housing.

CONGESTION RELIEF

- Develop a traffic management plan to relieve congestion along Crystal Lake Road.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

- Encourage bicycling to the SUBASE through a variety of measures.
- Implement a bike share between the SUBASE and Electric Boat.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

- Minimize transportation impacts through development review and enforcement.

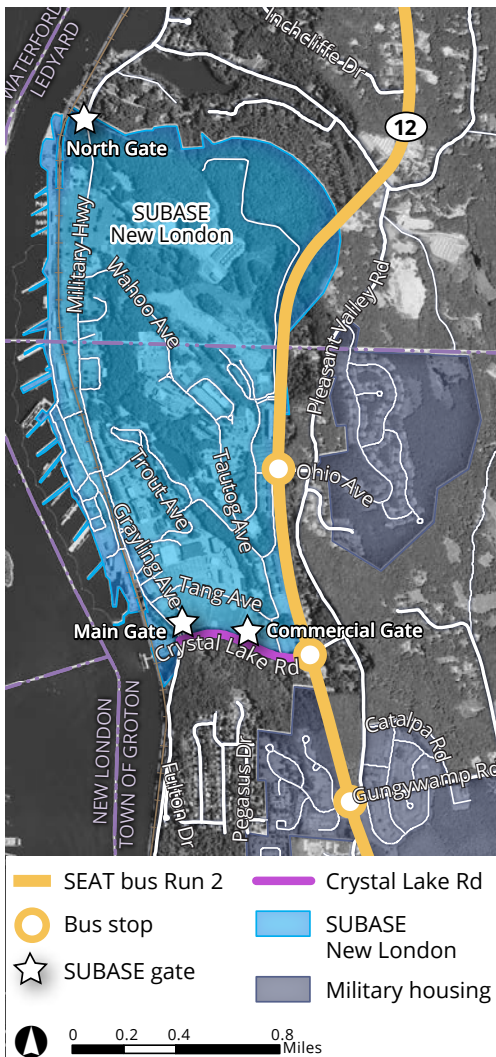


Figure 0.3. Transportation conditions at SUBASE (Google Earth)

THAMES RIVER

ISSUES

Submarine turning and in-water structures. The new Block V Virginia-class submarines requires a wider turning basin and dredging area in the Thames River. This may impact the vacant dock structures across the river from the SUBASE.

In-water traffic and base security. Development upriver could increase vessel traffic near the SUBASE. Fast moving vessels are of particular concern.

Dredged materials disposal. Continued cost-effective disposal of dredged material from the Thames River channel is critical for the SUBASE and local businesses.

Environmental protection and climate change. The SUBASE and municipalities are addressing, planning, and designing to minimize environmental impacts and adapt to climate change.

STRATEGIES

PLANNING

- Develop mutually beneficial solutions to turning movement/dredging/marina conflict.

BOATER AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

- Designate a no-wake zone and educate about proper boater behavior near the SUBASE.
- Raise awareness of the SUBASE's environmental efforts.

COORDINATION AND MONITORING

- For projects that will increase in-water traffic, coordinate with municipalities and developers to build awareness of security concerns.
- Support CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's (DEEP's) efforts to maintain in-water disposal sites for clean dredged material.
- Continue coordinating on climate change best practices.

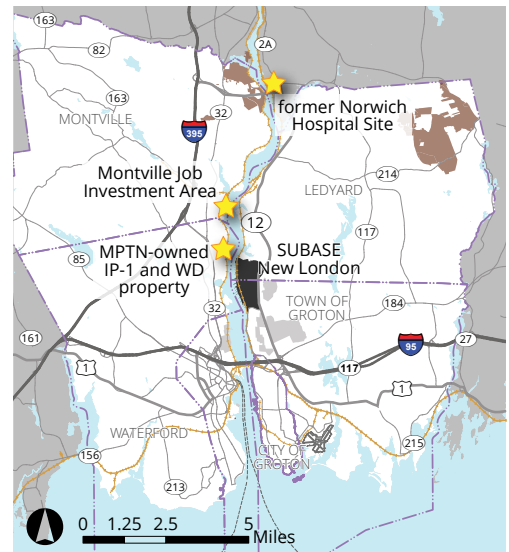


Figure 0.4. Sites that could redevelop and increase in-water traffic past the SUBASE



Figure 0.5. SUBASE biologists supporting wildlife management efforts (Secretary of Defense)

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

ISSUES

Crystal Lake Rd development. The SUBASE and neighbors would like to encourage development on the SUBASE's southern border that is visually appealing, serves SUBASE personnel and the surrounding community, and minimizes negative impacts.

Development with views into the SUBASE. Multistory development across the Thames River with views of the SUBASE's high value waterfront assets is a security concern for the SUBASE.

Operational impacts. Residents across the river from the SUBASE have noted impacts from light on the SUBASE piers, noise from generators, and other waterfront operations.

STRATEGIES

COMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT

- Update the Nautilus Memorial Design District regulations to encourage compatible development on Crystal Lake Rd.
- Coordinate planning efforts between the SUBASE and Towns of Waterford and Groton to ensure compatible development. Where views are a concern, consider purchasing property for open space or reducing the allowed development capacity.
- Provide a communication channel for residents to voice their concerns to the SUBASE about noise, light, and air quality impacts. Where possible, alleviate these issues.

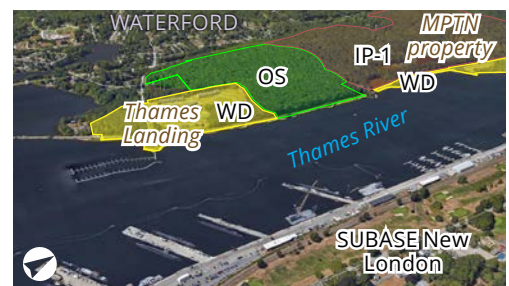


Figure 0.6. Key Waterford properties and zoning districts across the river from the SUBASE (Google Earth)

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT (CONTINUED)

ISSUES

Housing. Providing a variety of housing to accommodate SUBASE and Electric Boat workers is a local and regional challenge.

Community livability and economic development. The Navy and JLUS municipalities share an interest in supporting economic development, especially in a way that increases livability and attracts new Electric Boat employees to live locally.

STRATEGIES

HOUSING

- Update the JLUS municipalities' zoning regulations to encourage new housing development.

COMMUNITY LIVABILITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Plan and pursue funding to improve the livability (e.g., make more pedestrian friendly and mix uses better) of downtowns and neighborhood centers.
- Sustain and enhance communication between Electric Boat and associated municipalities regarding growth.



Figure 0.8. New London and Groton are building on their assets and working to increase their attractiveness to talented workers

COORDINATION AND COST SHARING

ISSUES

Integrated community. Community members expressed a desire for more interaction and integration between military and civilian community members.

Cost sharing. The SUBASE and municipalities have complex agreements and funding sources that pay for shared services, such as education, utilities, police, and parks. Community members expressed concern that the allocations are not always fair.

JLUS implementation. It can be unclear how the organizations participating in the JLUS will continue to work together to implement recommendations.

STRATEGIES

ENHANCED COORDINATION AND INTEGRATION

- Continue shared service arrangements (e.g., fire, water) and explore opportunities to enhance services and more efficiently allocate resources.
- Expand efforts to coordinate joint military and civilian activities and open on-base programs.
- Establish an MOU amongst JLUS parties to guide JLUS implementation steps.

EDUCATION COST SHARING

- Address issues with cost sharing for education by researching best practices, advocating for more Federal Impact Aid, and seeking additional funds for local school districts.



Figure 0.9. Volunteer service members help strengthen ties with their communities (U.S. Navy)



Figure 0.10. Allocation of fair fee payments, particularly to local schools, is an issue (theday.com)

QUESTIONS? CONTACT:

James S. Butler, AICP
 Executive Director
 Southeastern CT Council of Governments
 860-889-2324
 jbutler@seccog.org

View the full JLUS at www.seccog.org.

NEXT STEPS

Establishing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is likely to be JLUS participants' first step to coordinate implementation. Other next steps are highlighted in the JLUS report's "Short-term Actions" section on page 112. A JLUS Implementation Committee, comprised of select PC and TC members will initiate implementation, monitor progress, and encourage parties to revisit and update the strategies as needed.