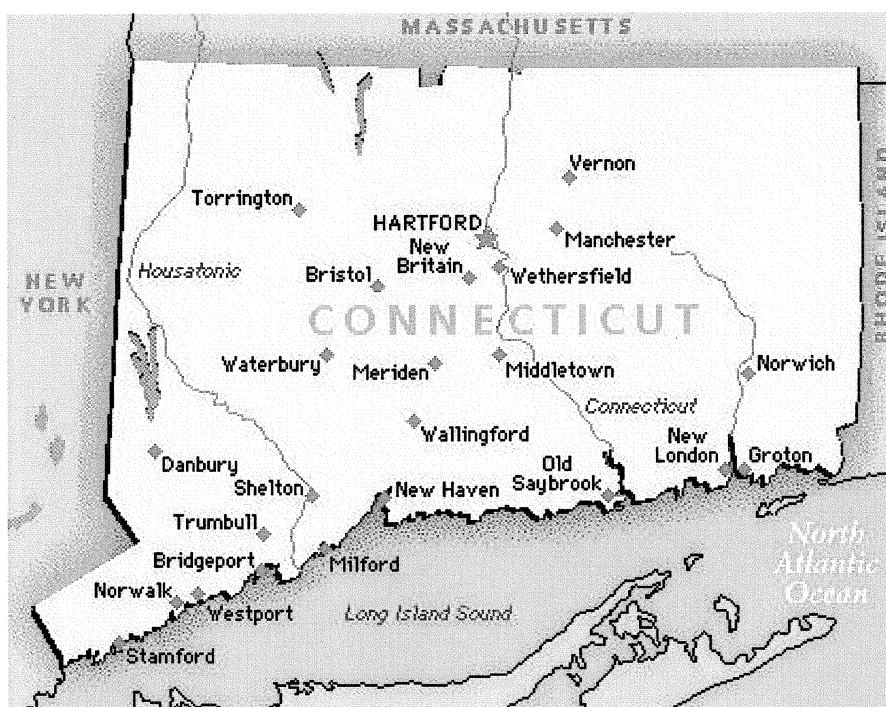


BRIDGING THE GAPS IN CAPACITY & COVERAGE



An Analysis of the Gap Between Food Distribution and Need in Connecticut

A report completed through a partnership
between the Congressional Hunger Center
and Connecticut Food Bank

October 2007 – January 2008

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Special Thanks
to
Kate Walton, Internship Supervisor

Connecticut Food Bank Staff
Nancy Carrington
Luray Buffard
Sherry Grant
Rich Tirado
And all others who were consulted on this project.

Again, thank you.

2008

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Introduction to Connecticut Food Bank (CFB)

Connecticut is the third wealthiest state in the United States but over half a million people are living 185% below the Federal Poverty Level with 241,408 of those people living in extreme poverty. Food insecurity and hunger affects about 14% of Connecticut's citizens including 94,908 children ("Connecticut"). Connecticut Food Bank began focusing on the issue of hunger 25 years ago and continues to address this growing problem. CFB is currently supplying supplemental food to over 600 agencies in six out of the eight counties in Connecticut including Fairfield, Litchfield, Middlesex, New Haven, New London and Windham.

CFB distributes food to qualified 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations including those with religious qualifications. Because such a large percent of the "emergency" food system is in fact provided by small faith based organizations who do not ordinarily report their activities to the state, CFB is able to get a more complete picture of who is providing nutritional assistance. Each program that CFB provides donated food to, is required to report how many unduplicated individuals it served each month and how many meals it has provided. These reports provide the most complete record available on a monthly basis of how many people in an area utilize food assistance. These utilization and distribution statistics enable CFB to estimate how much food is being distributed on an emergency basis in different Connecticut communities. However some people who are food insecure in a given area may visit several different programs within a given month and be counted by each program. So it is difficult or impossible to get an exact unduplicated client count. Also many nutrition programs obtain donated food from their own sources so CFB poundage reports may not include food from all sources that has actually been distributed.

CFB itself distributed over 15.9 million pounds of food in 2006 to its network of member agencies. These include open to the public "emergency programs" like food pantries, soup kitchens, and emergency shelters and "non-emergency programs" which have enrolled clients such as residential rehab centers, day programs, senior centers, AIC programs, and group homes.

In any given year CFB has a finite amount of food resources to distribute, which will be discussed more completely in a later section of this report. Because of this, CFB must try to ensure that the limited food resources it does acquire are going to the areas of greatest need. Yet CFB is functioning for the most part as the "middle man" and relies on its member service providers to get the food to the end recipients. In the past, without access to GIS information, CFB has afforded membership to programs based on their willingness and ability to meet standards in serving the target population – people in poverty.

Therefore it is possible that no agency has wanted to start an emergency food program in an area of high need, or that several organizations are meeting the needs of people in an overlapping area. The third possibility is that although a program wants to meet the needs of people in a given area, it does not have the capacities to do so efficiently. The goal of this report is to examine these possibilities through the use of GIS maps. Included in this study is also information from previous studies that have looked at food security in Connecticut.

Connecticut Food Security

In 2005 the Food Marketing Policy Center at the University of Connecticut completed a town-level assessment of the food security in each of Connecticut's 169 towns. To determine food security the researchers looked at 38 Indicators. Examples of these Indicators include but are not limited to:

- ❖ Square footage of supermarkets per capita
- ❖ Percent of households without a car
- ❖ Availability of public transportation
- ❖ Child poverty rate
- ❖ Acreage of preserved farmland per capita
- ❖ Median household income
- ❖ Monthly gross rent
- ❖ Distance to nearest WIC program office
- ❖ Participation rate in Food Stamp Program
- ❖ Percent of adults age 25+ with less than a high school diploma

The UCONN et al report released in 2005 gives a more complete picture at a town level of household food insecurity factors than the United States Department of Agriculture report released annually on a state by state basis (Tchumtchoua and Lopez, 1). Therefore, it has helped organizations like Connecticut Food Bank be able to focus its efforts more directly on the particular communities with the least food security.

The report ranked all 169 towns in Connecticut in ascending order and determined that those deemed worst for all indicators of food security include many in CFB's overall service area. An urban center like New Haven for example is ranked 168 for poverty and food production resources. Bridgeport, West Haven, Waterbury, Ansonia, Hamden etc. all fall in the bottom 25% along with many small rural towns in Windham county.

Key findings in the report state that food assistance programs and transportation accessibility are key in determining community food security. Based on these findings and other correlations the researches suggested that more state funding be spent on improving public transportation and more funding for food assistance programs. Also the researchers suggested that more efforts be focused on creating markets for local produce in the form of farmers' markets. Lastly, the researches specifically mention the idea that private food providers such as soup kitchens can alleviate hunger and thus improve food security to a certain degree, even if only on an emergency bases (Tchumtchoua and Lopez, 30).

This report has served as a catalyst for the current study. Although not all of the factors of the Food Security report could be researched in terms of Connecticut Food Bank's role in the emergency food system in Connecticut, the food security report can pinpoint special areas of interest for the current study to examine. Also, the food security report reinforces the importance of the safety net Connecticut Food Bank supplies. Although Connecticut is considered a very wealthy state, there is still a great need for the charitable food system supplied through the efforts of Connecticut Food Bank and its affiliates.

The Changing Face of Food Banks

Recently much attention has been given to the crisis food banks across the nation are facing. Articles in The New York Times, the Chicago Tribune, and USA TODAY, are reporting that food bank shelves are empty. Factors that contribute to the shortages include an increased demand for food, less farm commodities, and changing marketing techniques by supermarkets that leave less excess food for donations (Zezima; Sewell and Whitman; Jones).

The Emergency Food Assistance Program, TEFAP, is the name of the U.S Department of Agriculture program that allows for government purchased food commodities to be distributed to state organizations for distribution to populations in need free of charge. These state organizations are usually food banks. The amount of TEFAP that a state receives is based on their census, unemployment rates and the number of people living below the poverty level ("The Emergency Food Assistance Program"). The federal funding for TEFAP has not increased in many years but the price of food has risen dramatically thereby radically decreasing the government's buying power. A shortage of TEFAP food is one of the reasons nationally why food banks' shelves have been bare of late.

Supermarkets are also changing so that they are donating less food to food banks. The first significant change in supermarkets is that advancing technology makes it less likely that a store will over order products and thus will not be able to donate extra products to food banks. The second significant change is that supermarkets are finding innovative ways to make cut their losses on items that may not be desirable to their customers. Stores are selling their excess or unwanted merchandise to discount distributors (Zezima; Langston).

The type of donated food that food banks are receiving is also changing. Produce, Meat, and Dairy products are taking the place of shelf stable food. The perishable foods create new obstacles. If agencies that rely on the food bank do not have the proper refrigeration capacities they will not be able to fully utilize the food bank. My report specifically examines the cooler and freezer capacity of CFB programs in order to assess their ability to distribute these products.

What do all these changes mean? With a decrease and changes in available food and an increased need, it becomes imperative that the agencies that use the food banks have the capacity to handle the types of food available – which fortuitously is often the most nutritious. If Connecticut Food Bank continues to add programs or continues to give food based on existing capacities, the distribution will not be maximized or as equitable as it needs to be to ensure food security in our communities.

Methodology Used in this Study

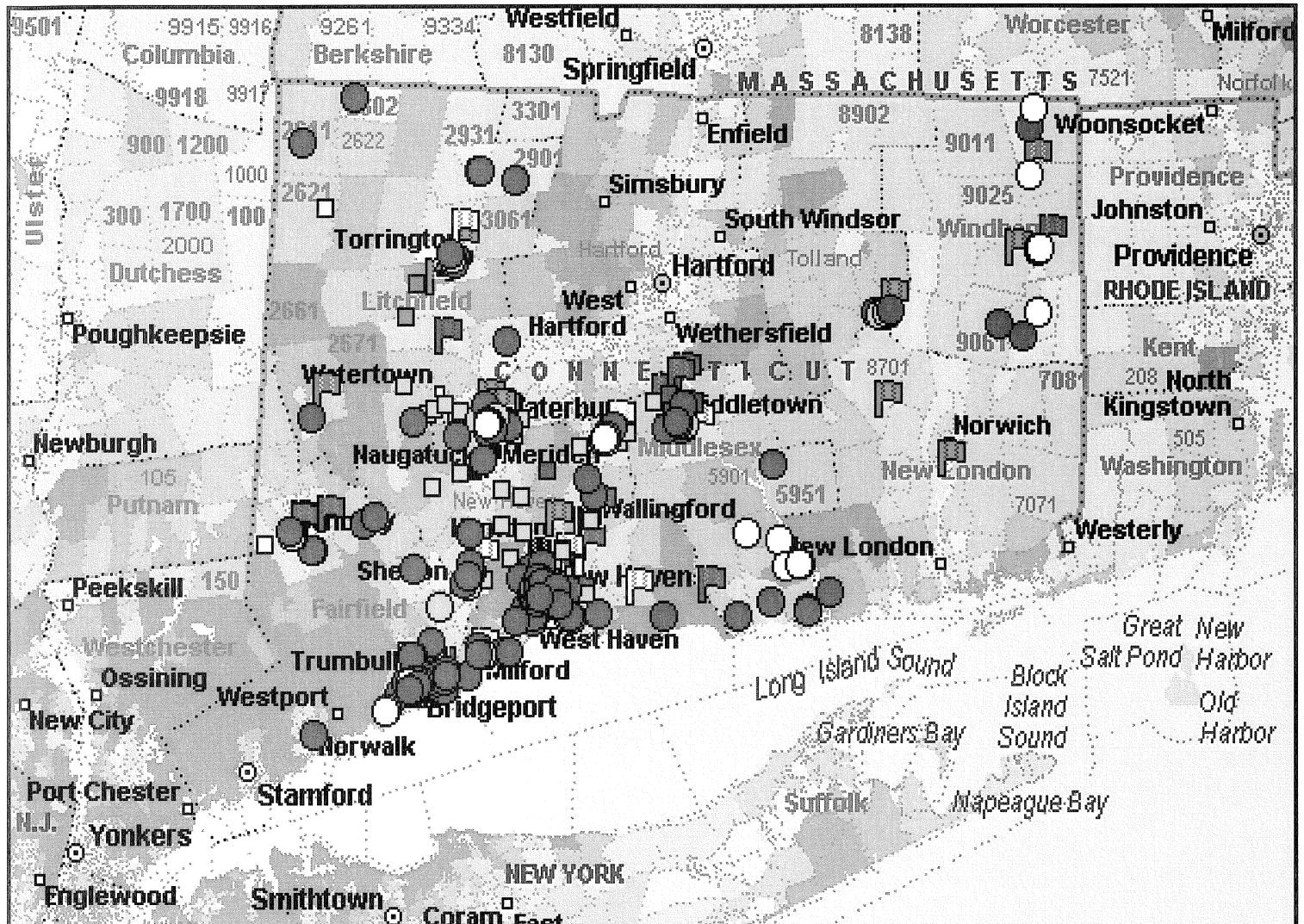
This report focuses on the agencies and programs in the six counties served by CFB. Geographical Information System (GIS) maps have been utilized to examine CFB's feeding program network. Each of these maps has the census tracts embedded in them. The census tracts are coded so that the lighter shading represents areas where the annual household income in 2004 goes as low as \$19,403.23 for an average family in Connecticut of 3.13 people. Darker shading of census tracts depicts higher levels of annual household income.

The symbols on the maps represent different programmatic capacities including number of pounds distributed from October 1, 2006, to September 30, 2007, freezer and cooler capacity by program, transportation, number of paid staff, and days open. To make the information on each map clearer, programs that serve as an emergency source of food were separated from programs that serve food only to enrolled clientele as noted on the title of the map. Information (data) for the maps came from several places. Addresses and names of programs as well as number of pounds distributed came from CFB's online database, CERES. Cooler capacity, freezer capacity, funding sources, number of paid staff, and open times were gathered from paper files kept on each program. The CFB Programs Department staff monitors every program location annually. At these site visits information is gathered or updated. Transportation capacity information was acquired through interviews.



















Each capacity studied was researched for a specific reason. Cooler and freezer capacity were researched to gain a better understanding of which programs could handle the increasing amount of perishable food that is available including meat, dairy, vegetable, and fresh fruit items. Funding sources were studied to assess what capacity programs have to fund their own food needs and to determine the sustainability of their funding. The transportation of each program was studied because programs for the most part must transport the food they need from Connecticut Food Bank warehouses. Information on the number of paid staff a program can support was gathered for emergency programs only since most non emergency programs rely paid staff and have operating grants. The current research determined that many emergency programs rely completely on volunteers to serve the public. As a result, many emergency programs operate solely because of a volunteer's hours of availability, and the number of days and times a program can be open is affected. The number of days a program is open was also researched to determine how accessible emergency food is to the general population.

After all the information was collected and entered into a Microsoft Excel format, it was imported into Microsoft MapPoint (2006). The maps were created with the intent of showing clearly the location and capacity of each program to meet the need for food assistance in Connecticut. Although the maps are interactive within the MapPoint software, for the purposes of display, maps showing each element of capacity were printed out for this report. For each capacity a 225 square mile radius was printed. Also maps focusing in on New Haven, Waterbury, and Bridgeport were also printed to accompany the state overview maps. Different symbols were used to represent each different set of information. Reference keys are located on the maps.





Connecticut Food Bank Programs



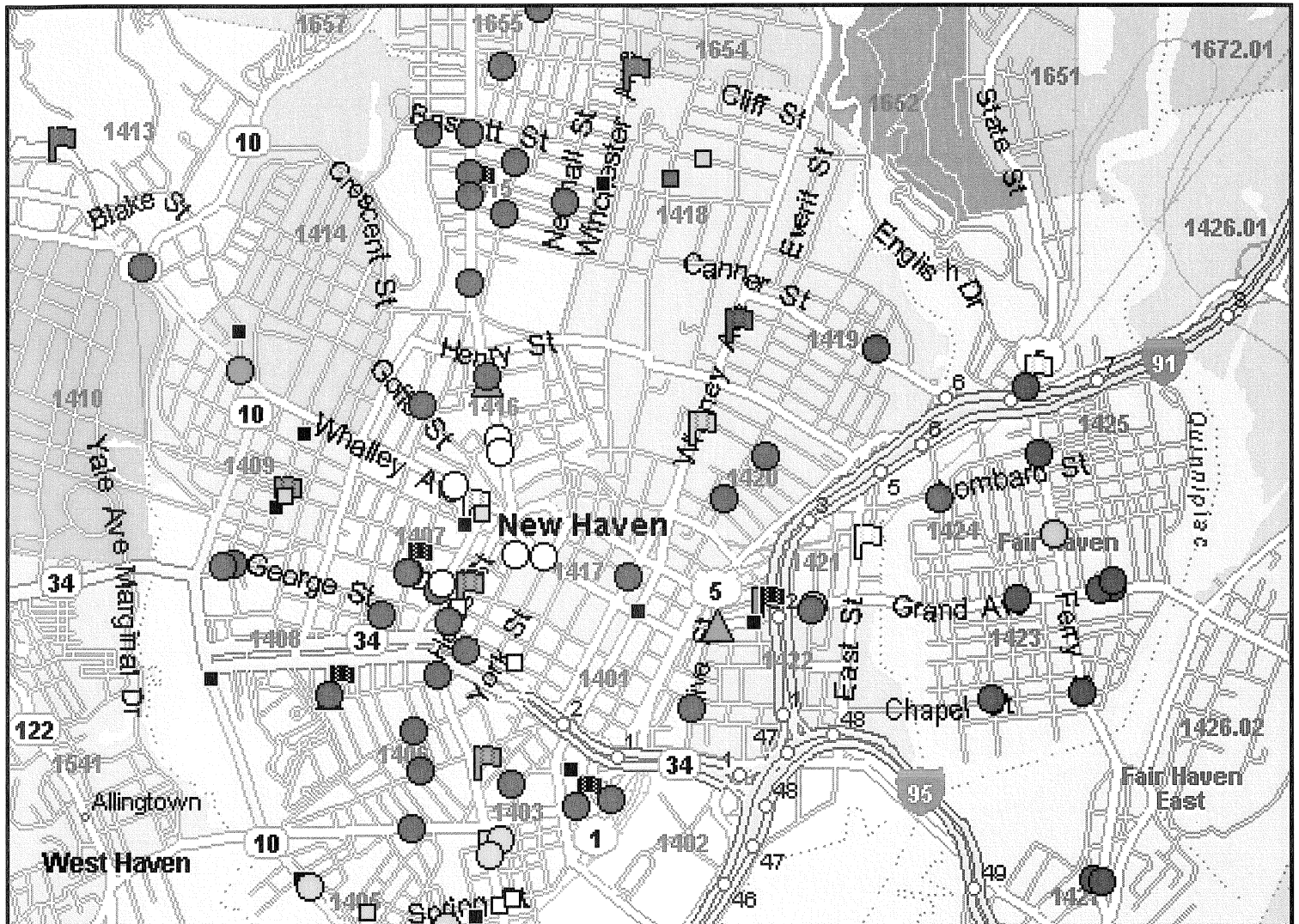
NON EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

- | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|---|----------------------|
|  | Day Rehabilitation Program |  | Residential Rehab |
|  | FRO |  | Residential |
|  | Day Program |  | Rehab Meal |
|  | AIC Residential |  | Kids Camp |
|  | Daycare |  | Residential School |
|  | Town Social Services |  | School |
|  | Group Home |  | Internal Pantry |
|  | After School |  | Transitional Shelter |
| | |  | Snack |
| | |  | Senior |

EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

-  Soup Kitchen
-  Emergency Shelter
-  Pantry
-  Mobile Soup Kitchen

Connecticut Food Bank Programs in New Haven



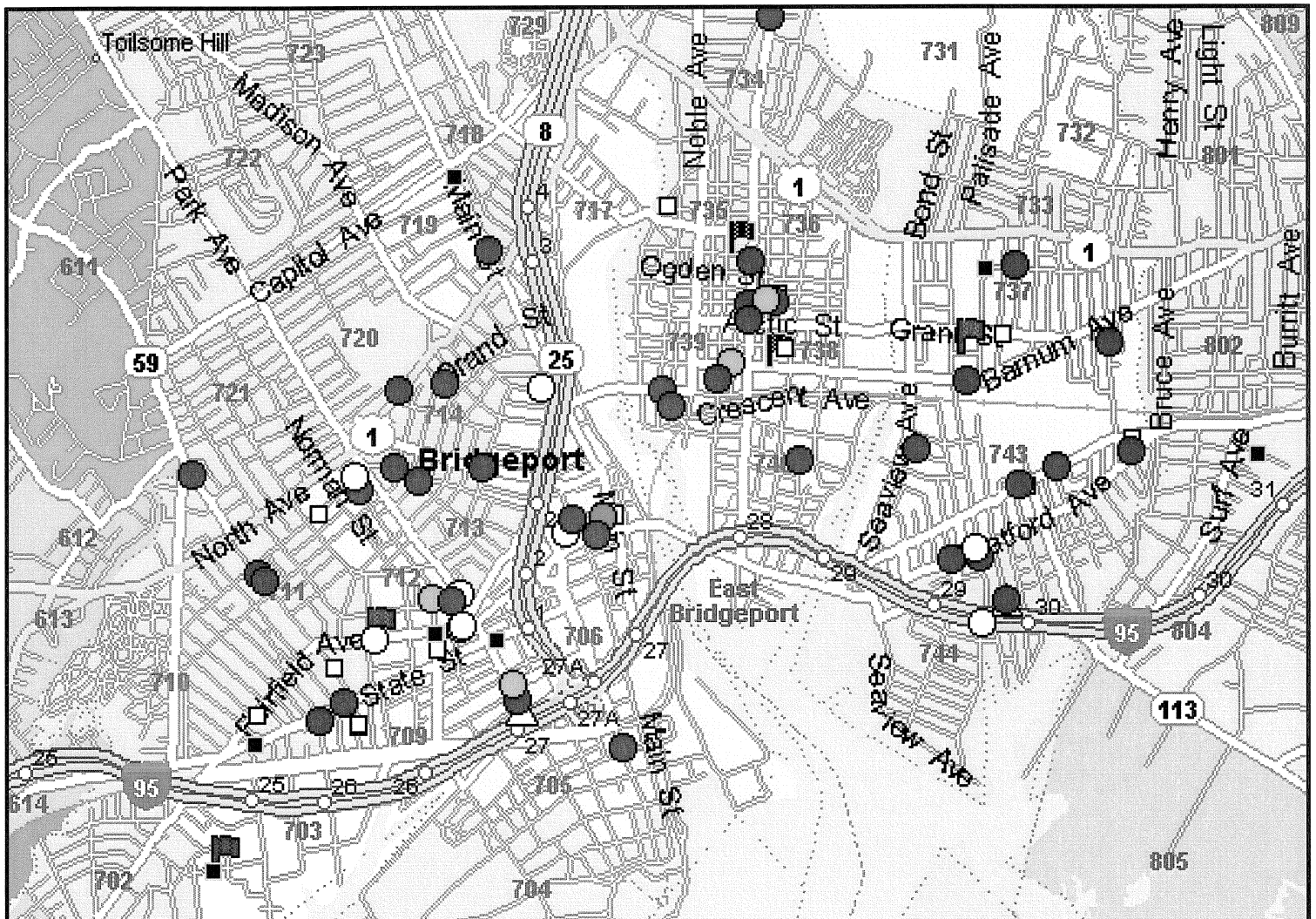
NON EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

	Day Rehabilitation Program		Residential Rehab
	PRO		Residential
	Day Program		Rehab Meal
	AIC Residential		Kids Camp
	Daycare		Residential School
	Town Social Services		School
	Group Home		Internal Pantry
	After School		Transitional Shelter
			Snack
			Senior



















EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

	Soup Kitchen
	Emergency Shelter
	Pantry
	Mobile Soup Kitchen





Connecticut Food Bank Programs in Bridgeport



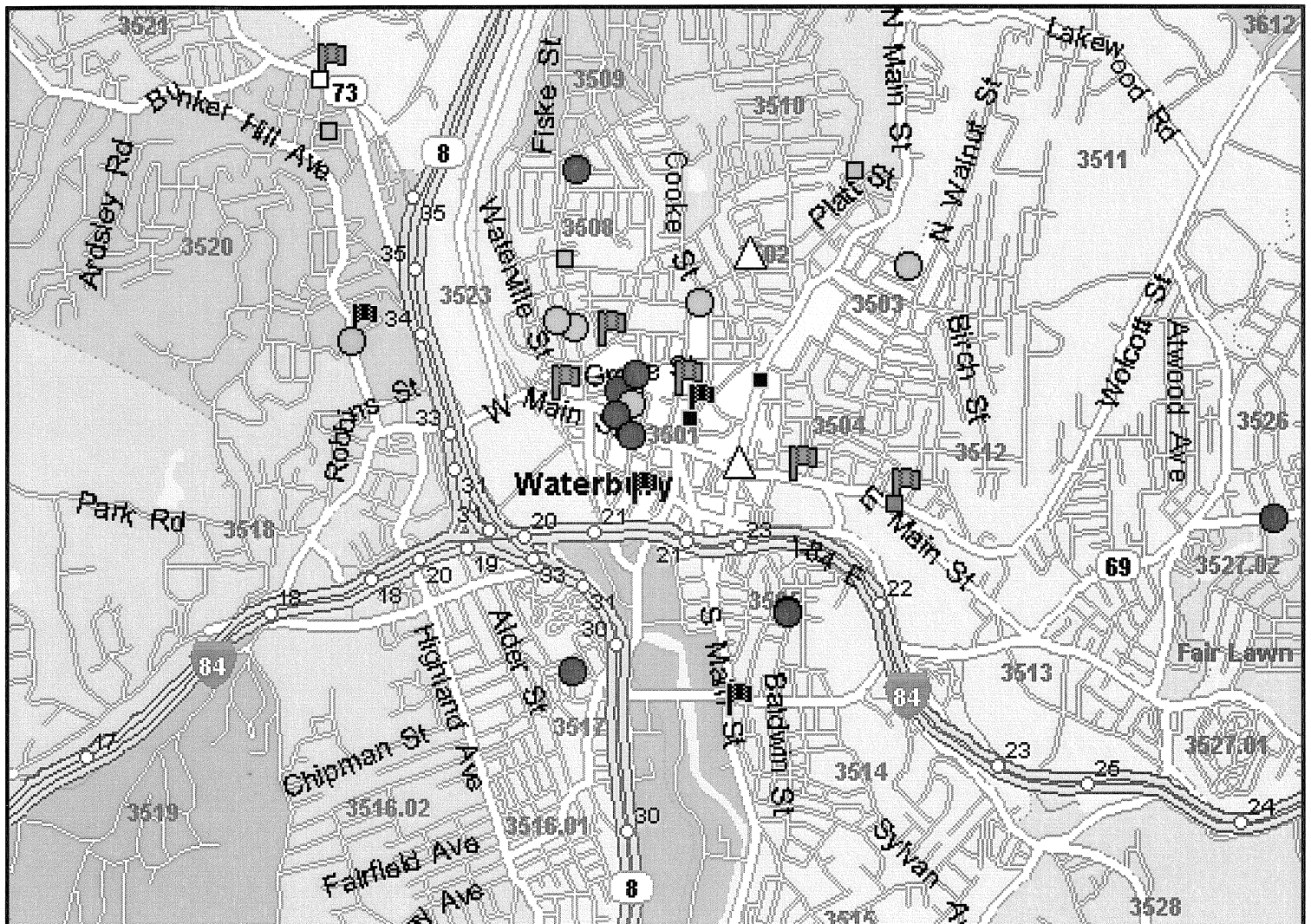
NON EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Day Rehabilitation Program |  Residential Rehab |
|  FRO |  Residential |
|  Day Program |  Rehab Meal |
|  AIC Residential |  Kids Camp |
|  Daycare |  Residential School |
|  Town Social Services |  School |
|  Group Home |  Internal Pantry |
|  After School |  Transitional Shelter |
| |  Snack |
| |  Senior |



















EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

-  Soup Kitchen
-  Emergency Shelter
-  Pantry
-  Mobile Soup Kitchen





Connecticut Food Bank Programs in Waterbury



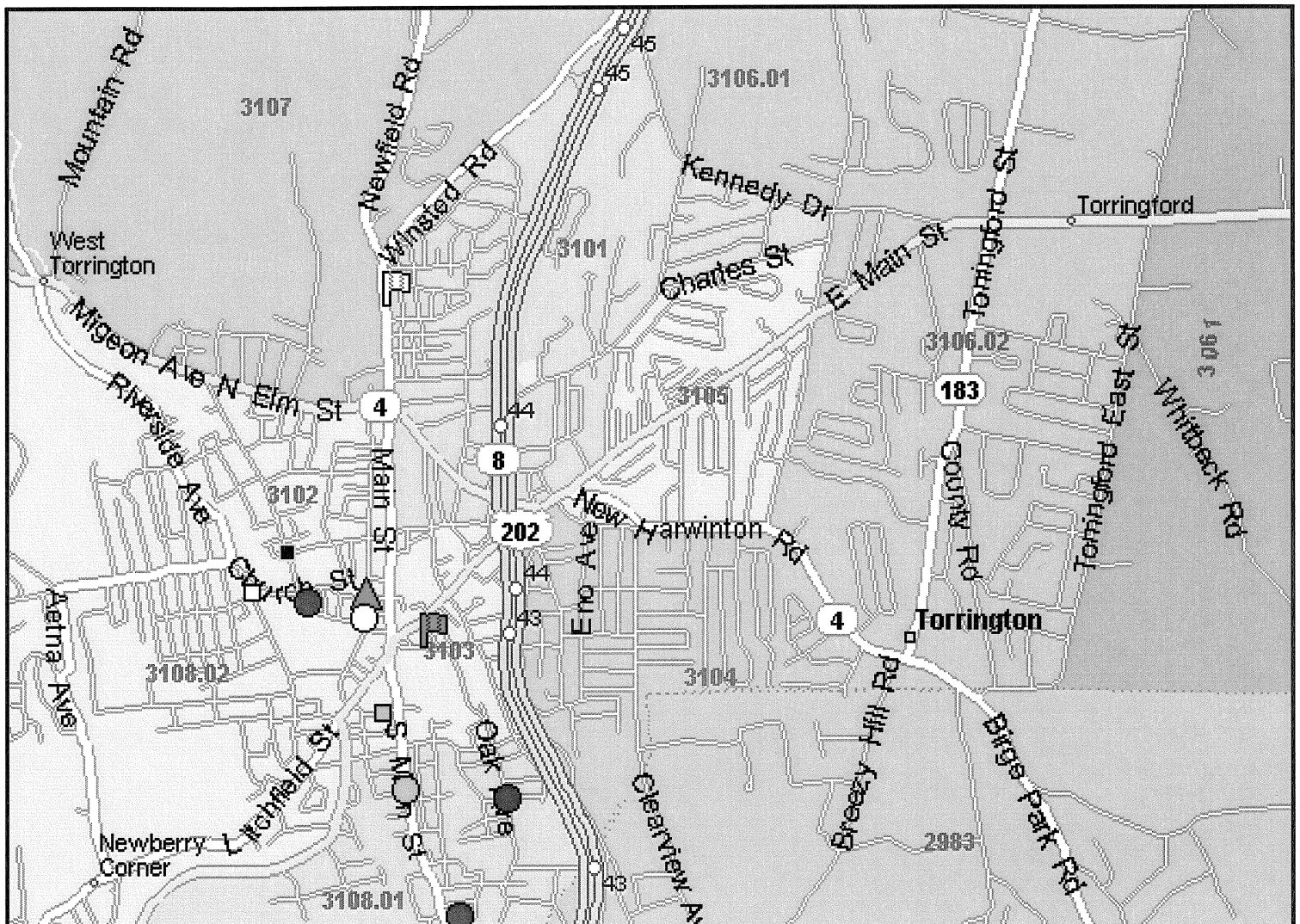
NON EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Day Rehabilitation Program |  Residential Rehab |
|  FRO |  Residential |
|  Day Program |  Rehab Meal |
|  AIC Residential |  Kids Camp |
|  Daycare |  Residential School |
|  Town Social Services |  School |
|  Group Home |  Internal Pantry |
|  After School |  Transitional Shelter |
| |  Snack |
| |  Senior |



















EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

-  Soup Kitchen
-  Emergency Shelter
-  Pantry
-  Mobile Soup Kitchen





Connecticut Food Bank Programs in Torrington



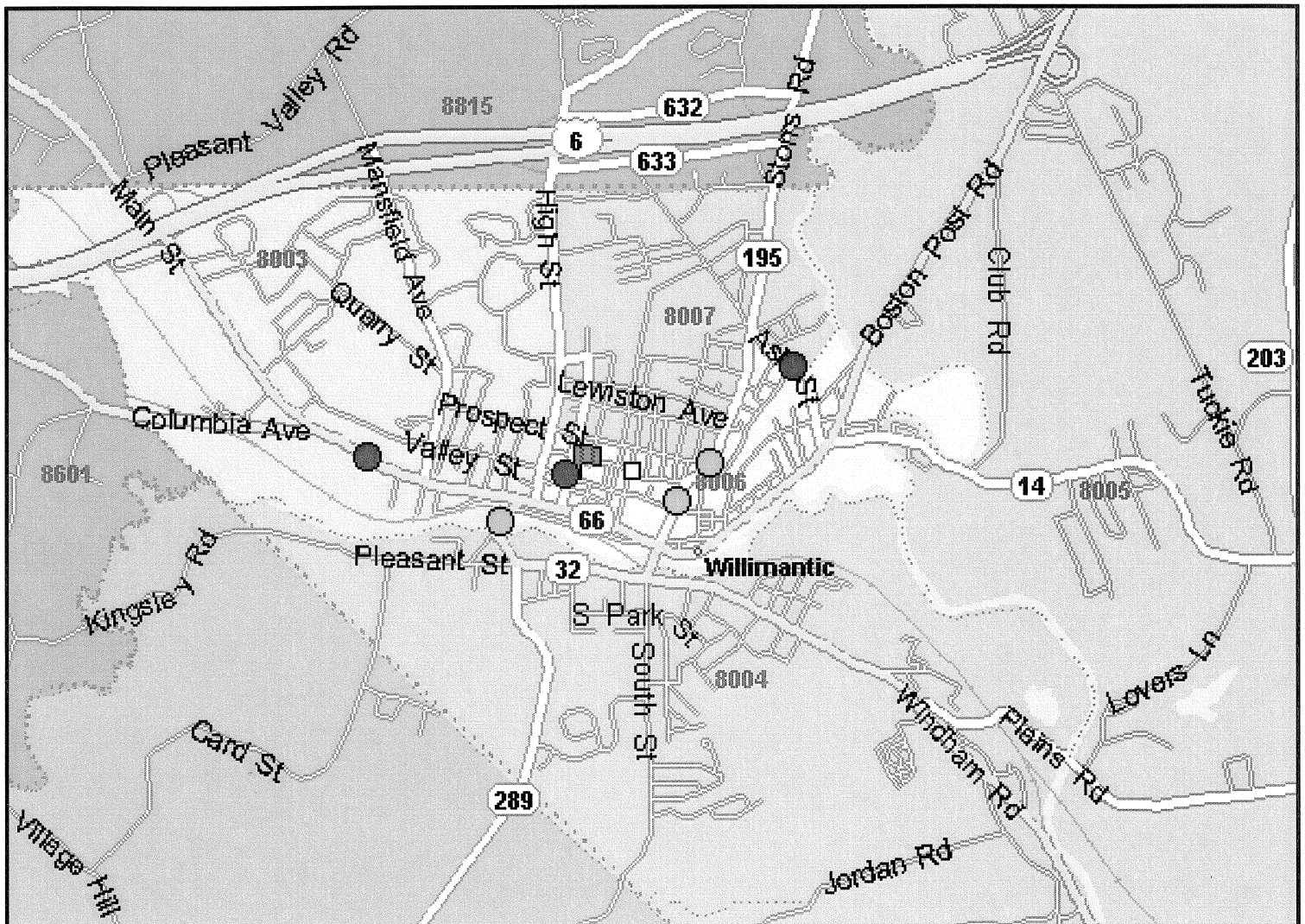
NON EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

- | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|---|----------------------|
|  | Day Rehabilitation Program |  | Residential Rehab |
|  | FRO |  | Residential |
|  | Day Program |  | Rehab Meal |
|  | AIC Residential |  | Kids Camp |
|  | Daycare |  | Residential School |
|  | Town Social Services |  | School |
|  | Group Home |  | Internal Pantry |
|  | Adoptive Support |  | Transitional Shelter |
| | |  | Snack |
| | |  | Senior |



















EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
|  | Soup Kitchen |
|  | Emergency Shelter |
|  | Pantry |
|  | Mobile Soup Kitchen |





Connecticut Food Bank Programs in Willimantic



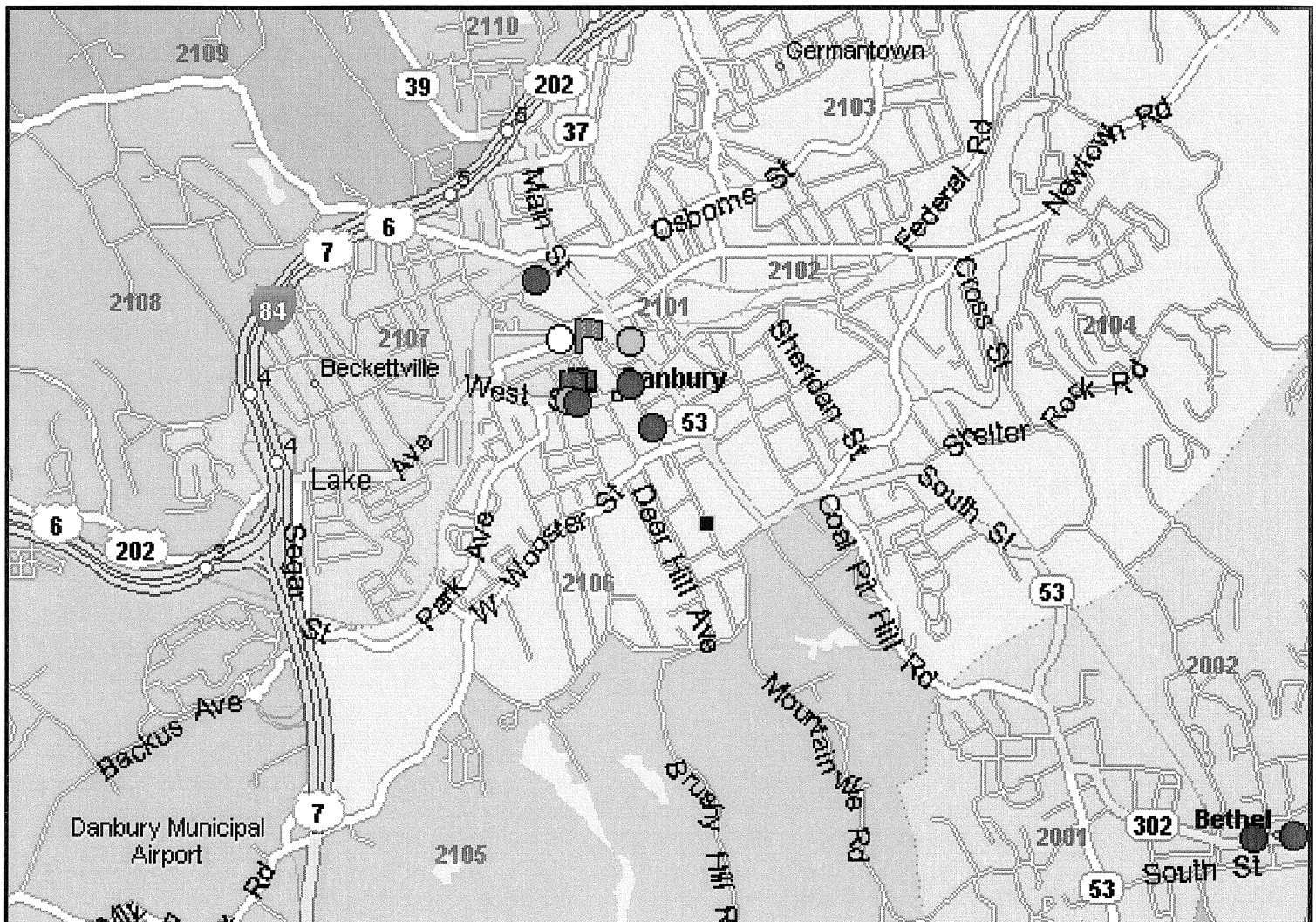
NON EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

- | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|---|----------------------|
|  | Day Rehabilitation Program |  | Residential Rehab |
|  | FRO |  | Residential |
|  | Day Program |  | Rehab Meal |
|  | AIC Residential |  | Kids Camp |
|  | Daycare |  | Residential School |
|  | Town Social Services |  | School |
|  | Group Home |  | Internal Pantry |
|  | After School |  | Transitional Shelter |
| | |  | Snack |
| | |  | Senior |


















EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
|  | Soup Kitchen |
|  | Emergency Shelter |
|  | Pantry |
|  | Mobile Soup Kitchen |





Connecticut Food Bank Programs in Danbury



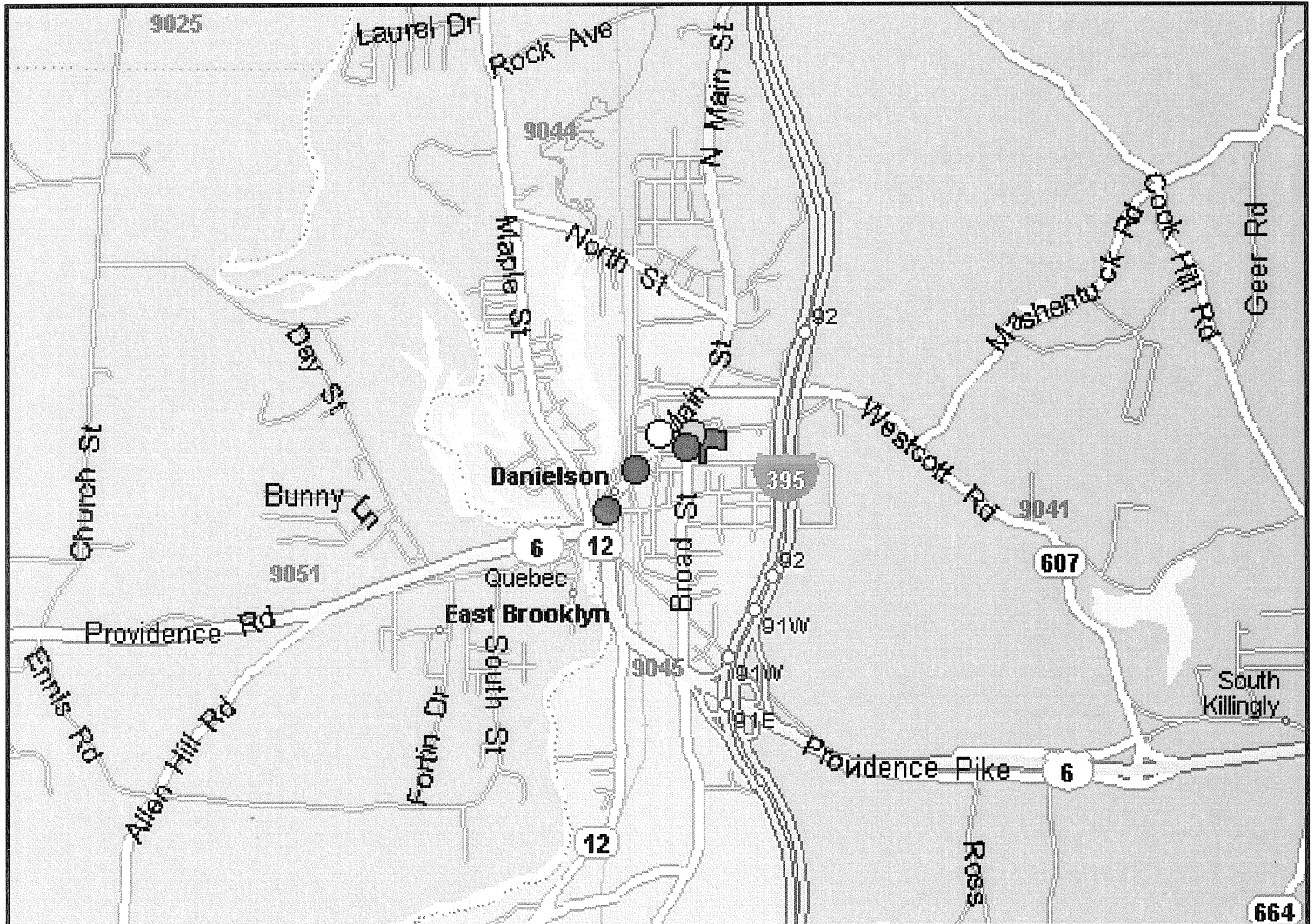
NON EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Day Rehabilitation Program |  Residential Rehab |
|  FRO |  Residential |
|  Day Program |  Rehab Meal |
|  AIC Residential |  Kids Camp |
|  Daycare |  Residential School |
|  Town Social Services |  School |
|  Group Home |  Internal Pantry |
|  Adult School |  Transitional Shelter |
| |  Snack |
| |  Senior |

EMERGENCY PROGRAMS









- | |
|---|
|  Soup Kitchen |
|  Emergency Shelter |
|  Pantry |
|  Mobile Soup Kitchen |

Connecticut Food Bank Programs in Danielson







NON EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

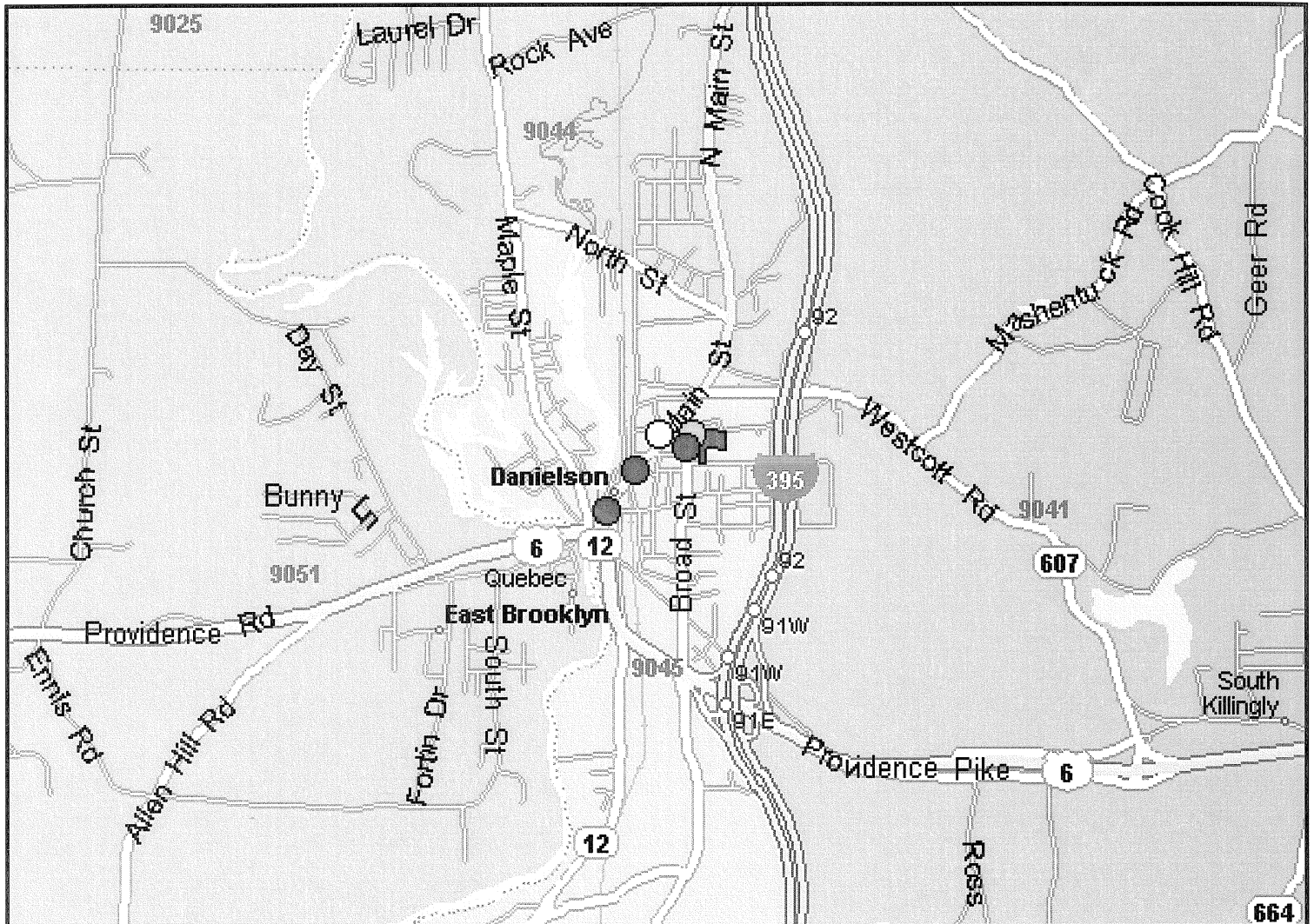
-  Day Rehabilitation Program
-  FRO
-  Day Program
-  AIC Residential
-  Daycare
-  Town Social Services
-  Group Home
-  After School

-  Residential Rehab
-  Residential
-  Rehab Meal
-  Kids Camp
-  Residential School
-  School
-  Internal Pantry
-  Transitional Shelter
-  Snack
-  Senior









EMERGENCY PROGRAMS











-  Soup Kitchen
-  Emergency Shelter
-  Pantry
-  Mobile Soup Kitchen

Connecticut Food Bank Programs in Danielson







NON EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

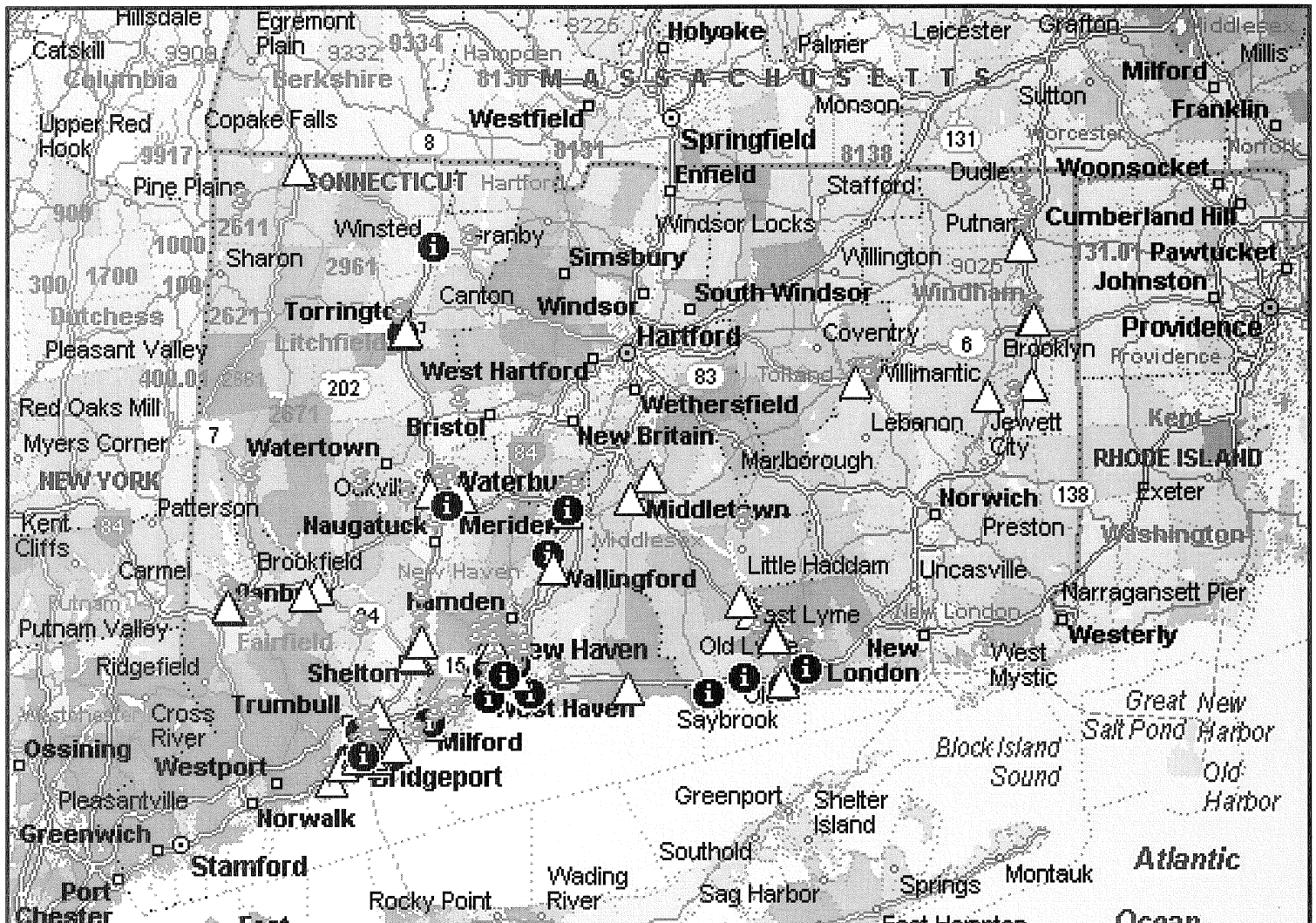
-  Day Rehabilitation Program
-  FRO
-  Day Program
-  AIC Residential
-  Daycare
-  Town Social Services
-  Group Home
-  After School

-  Residential Rehab
-  Residential
-  Rehab Meal
-  Kids Camp
-  Residential School
-  School
-  Internal Pantry
-  Transitional Shelter
-  Snack
-  Senior




EMERGENCY PROGRAMS

-  Soup Kitchen
-  Emergency Shelter
-  Pantry
-  Mobile Soup Kitchen

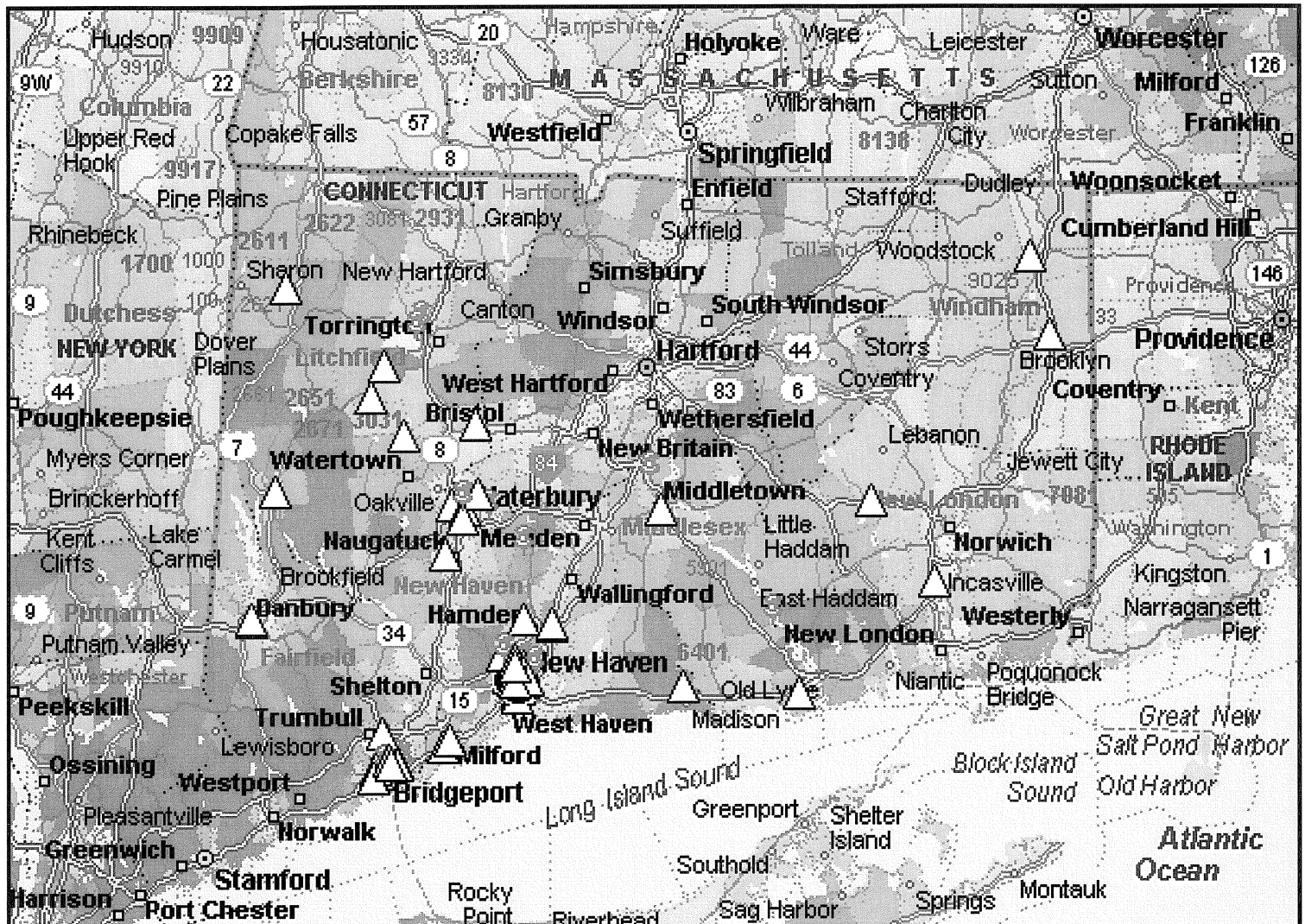
Pounds Distributed by Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs



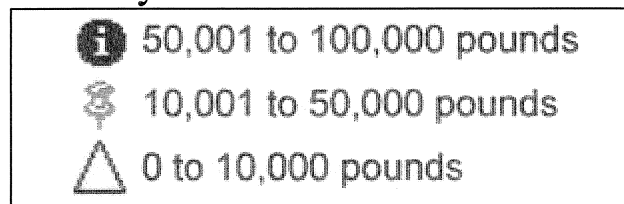
Key for Pounds Distributed

-  50,001 to 100,000 pounds
-  10,001 to 50,000 pounds
-  0 to 10,000 pounds

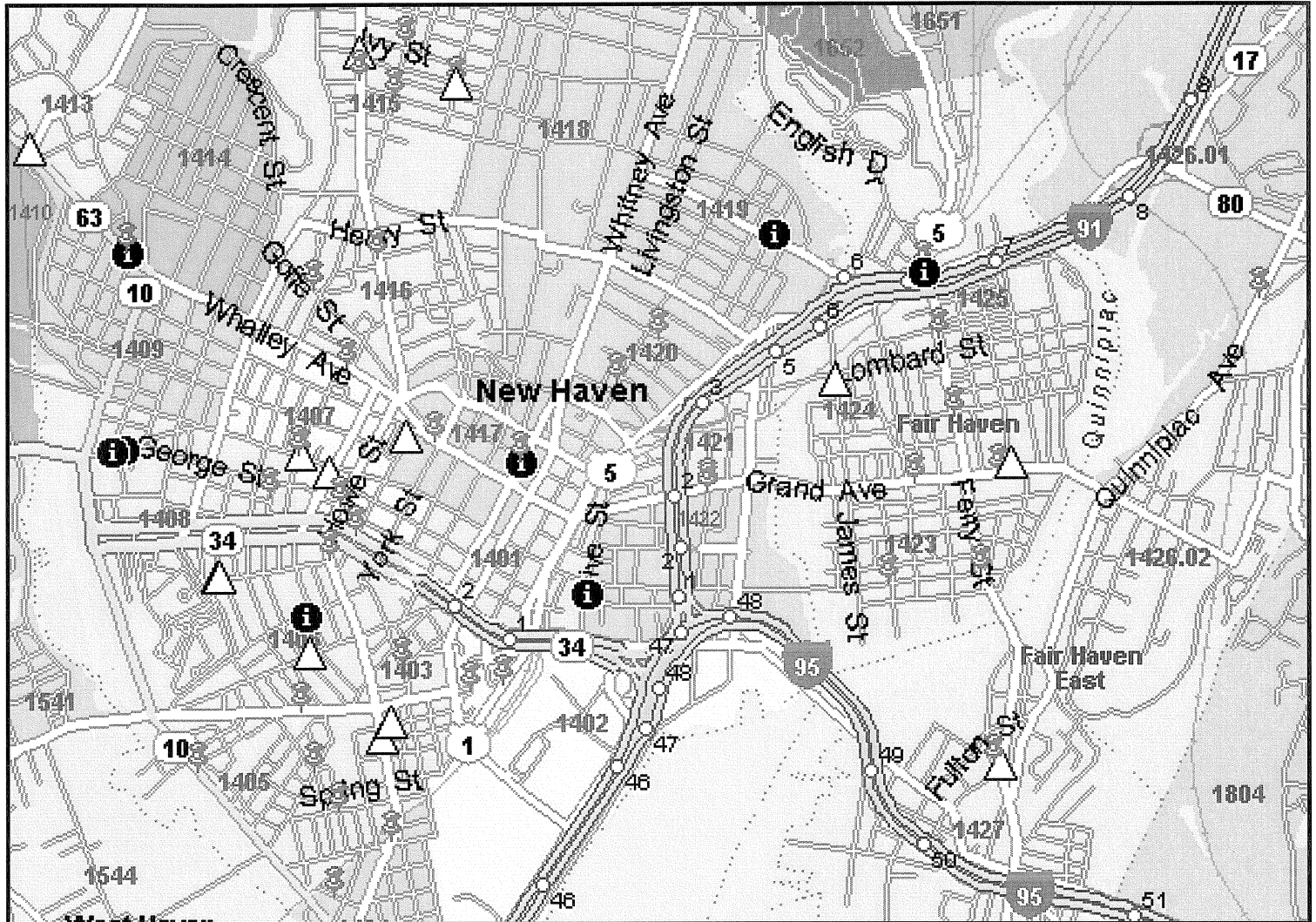
Pounds Distributed by Connecticut Food Bank's Non Emergency Programs



Key for Pounds Distributed



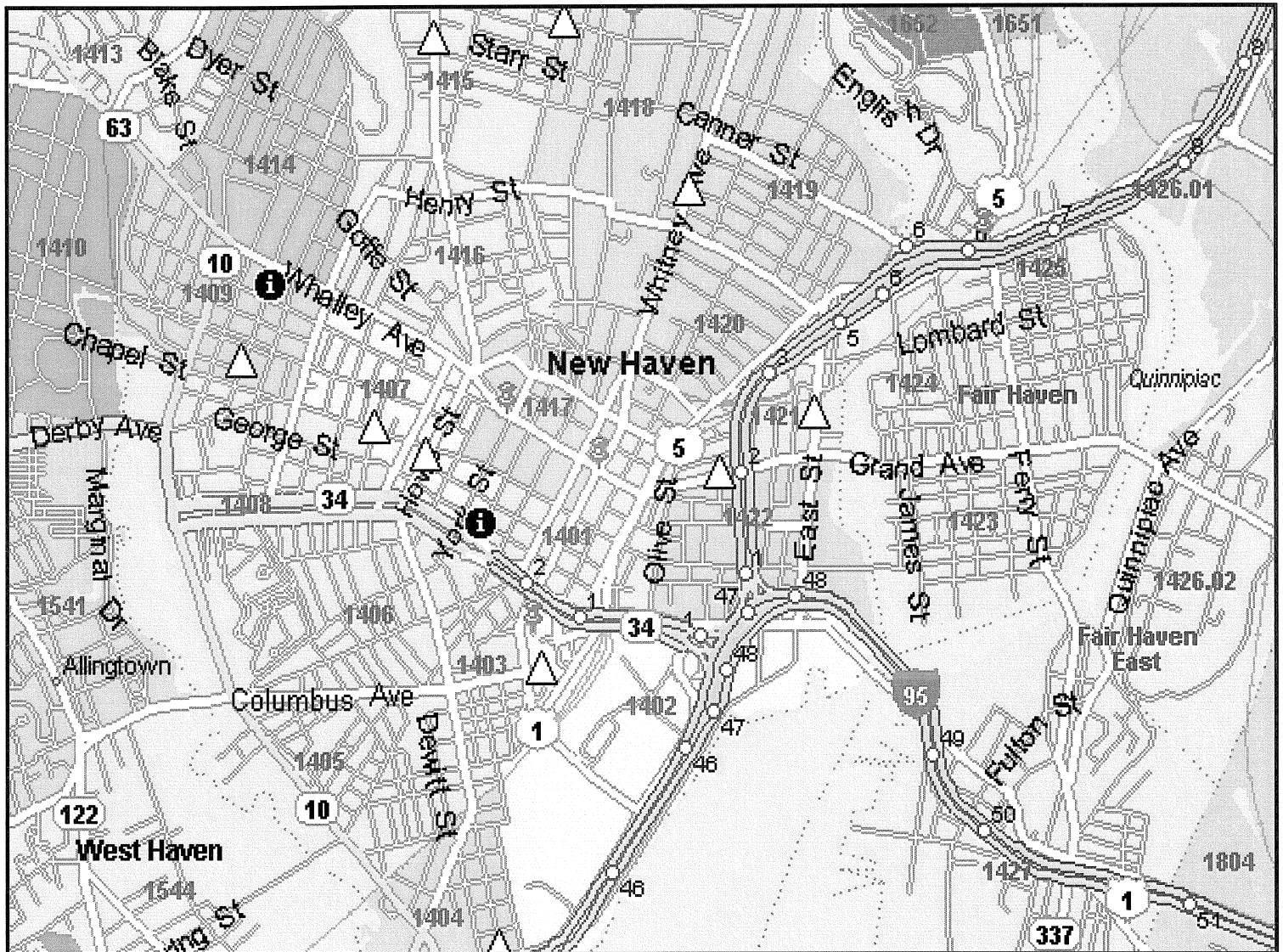
Pounds Distributed by Connecticut Food Bank's
Emergency Programs
in
New Haven



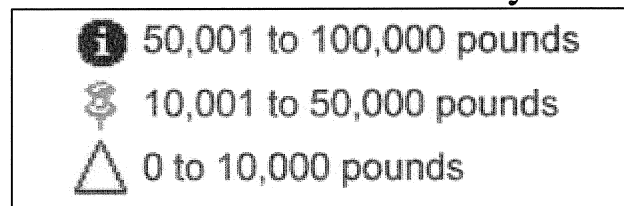
Key for Pounds Distributed

- i** 50,001 to 100,000 pounds
- ⊗** 10,001 to 50,000 pounds
- △** 0 to 10,000 pounds

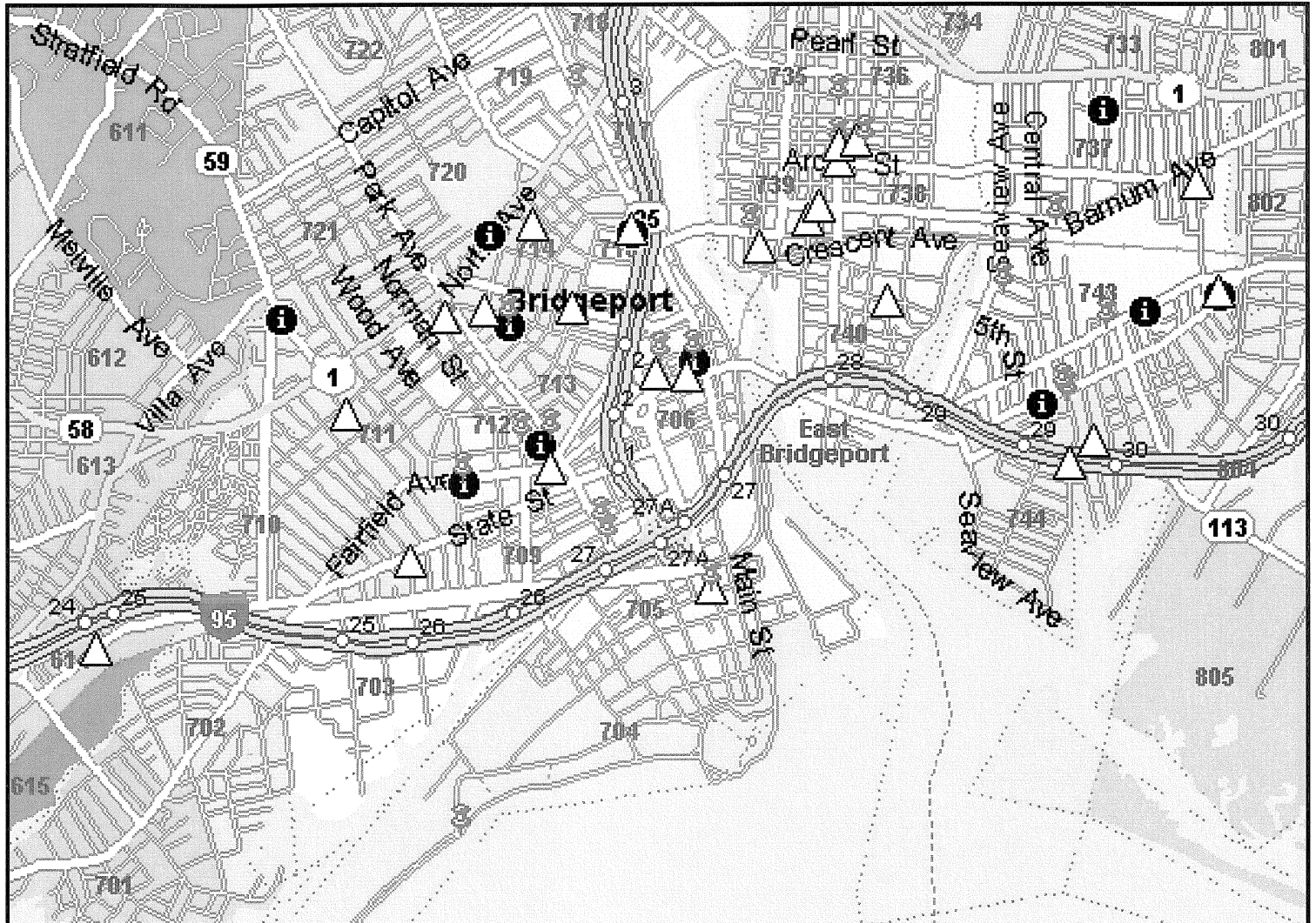
Pounds Distributed by Connecticut Food Bank's
Non Emergency Programs
in
New Haven



Pounds Distributed Key



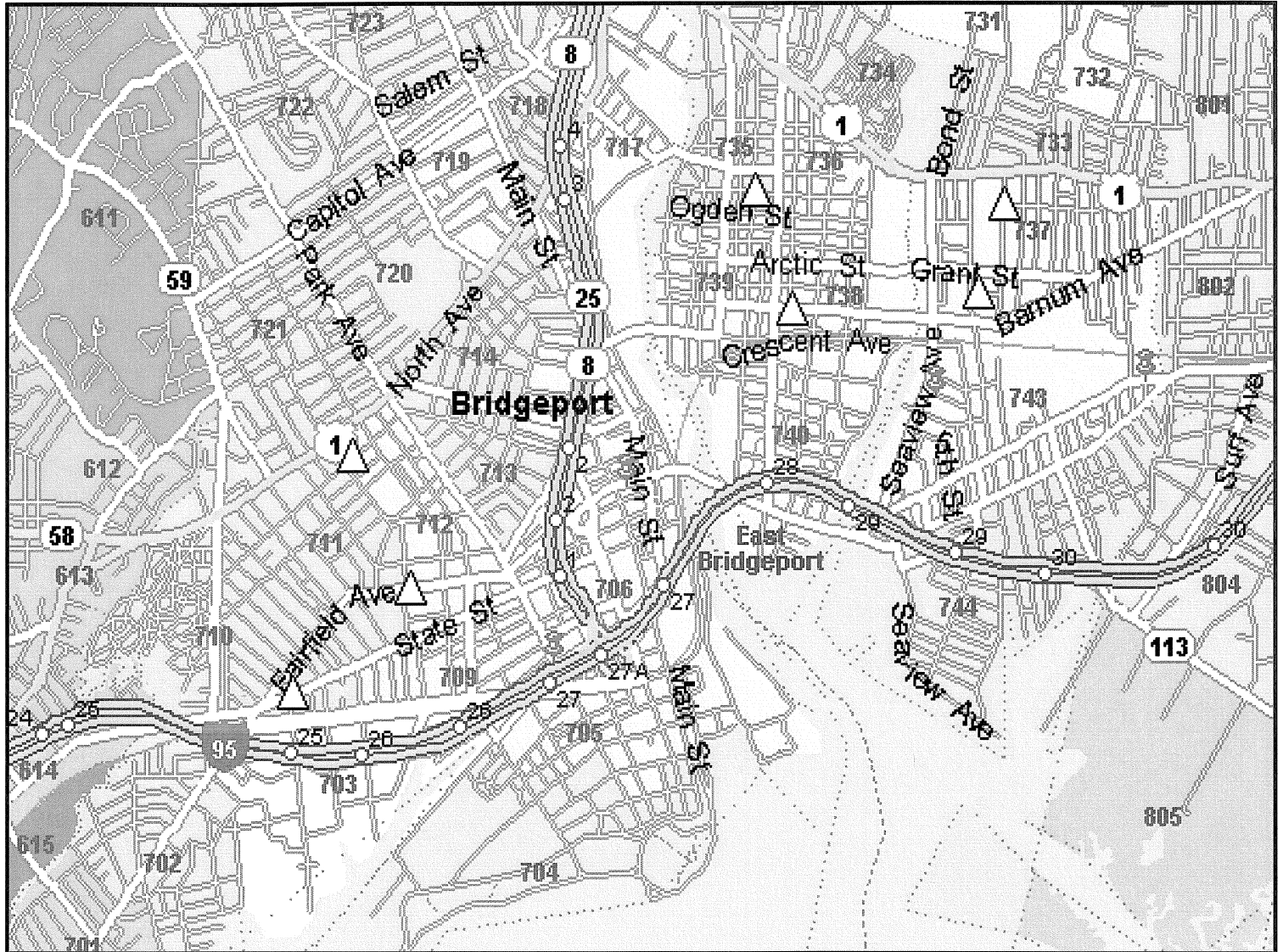
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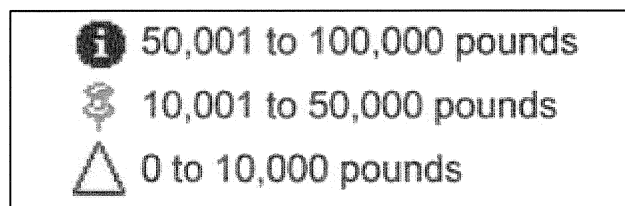
Key for Pounds Distributed

- i** 50,001 to 100,000 pounds
- \$** 10,001 to 50,000 pounds
- △** 0 to 10,000 pounds

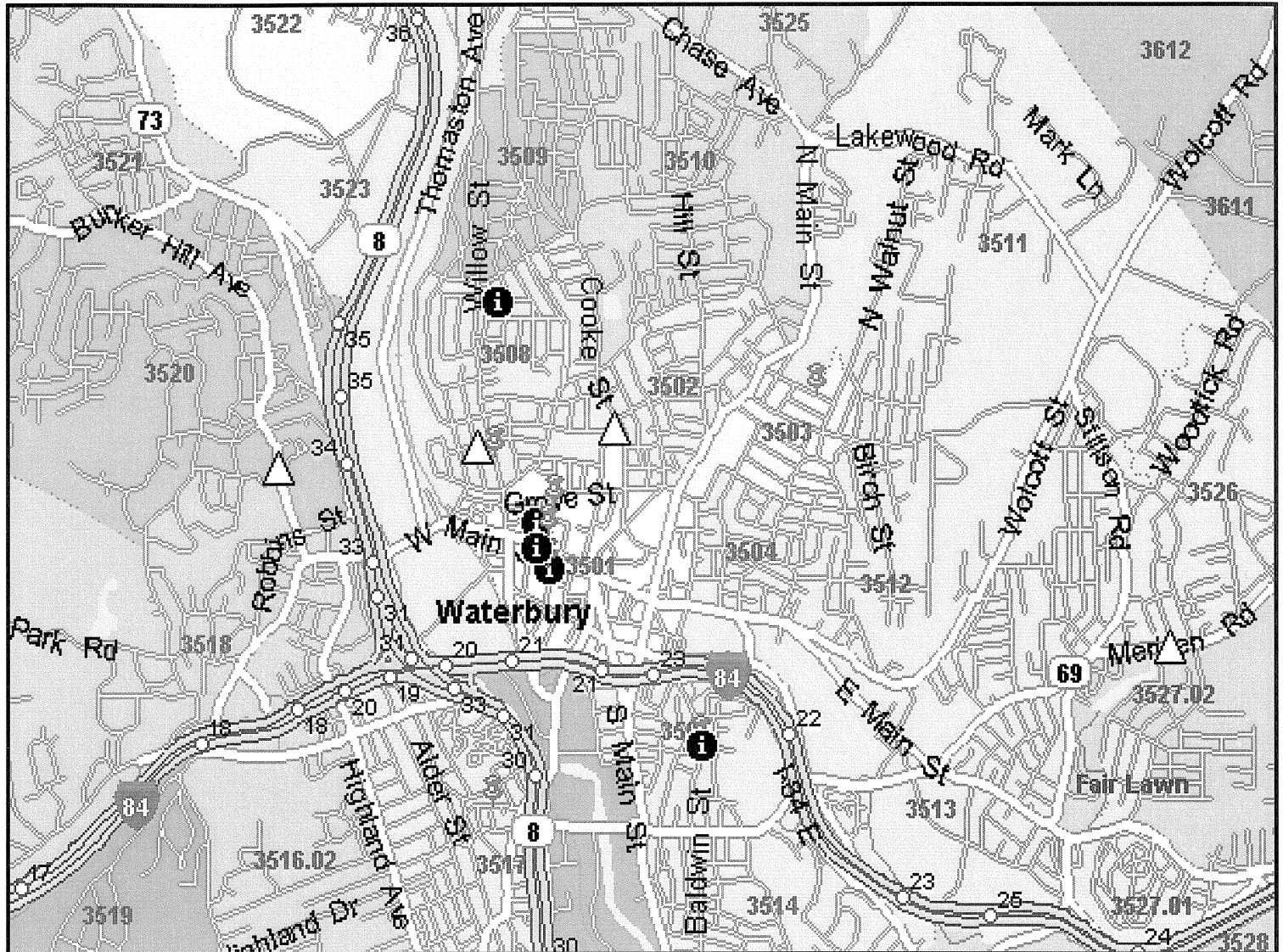
Pounds Distributed by Connecticut Food Bank's
Non Emergency Programs
in
Bridgeport



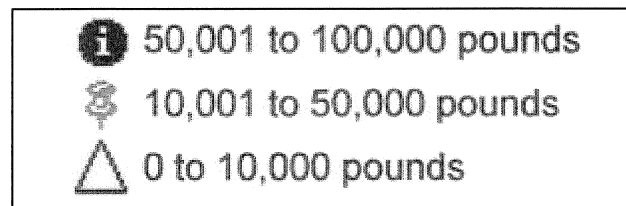
Key for Pounds Distributed



Pounds distributed by Connecticut Food Bank's
Emergency Programs
in
Waterbury



Key for Pounds Distributed



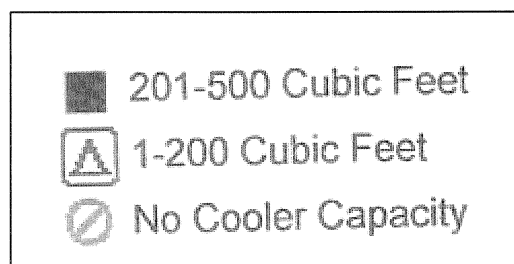
Waterbury



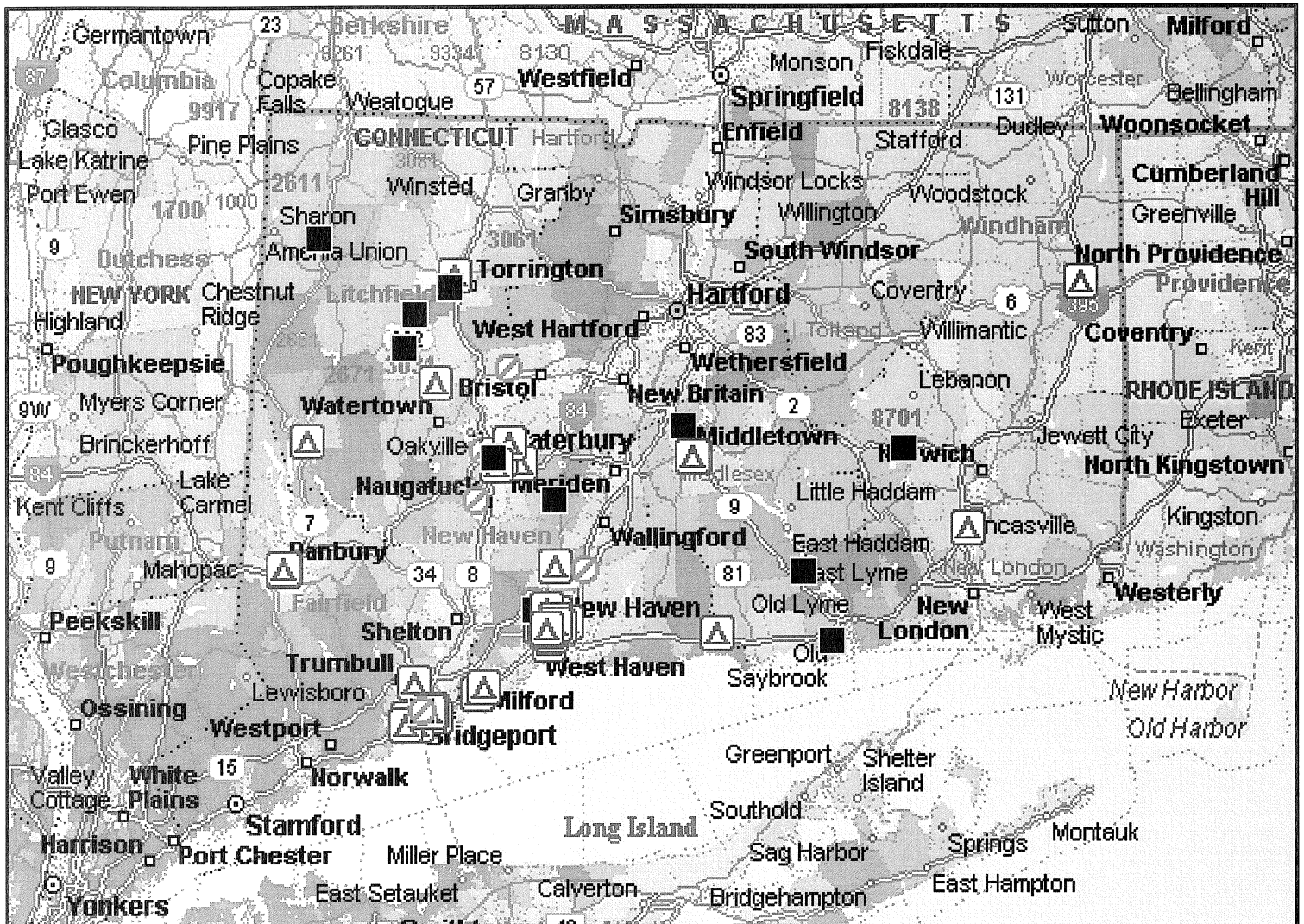
Cooler Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs



Key for Cooler Capacity



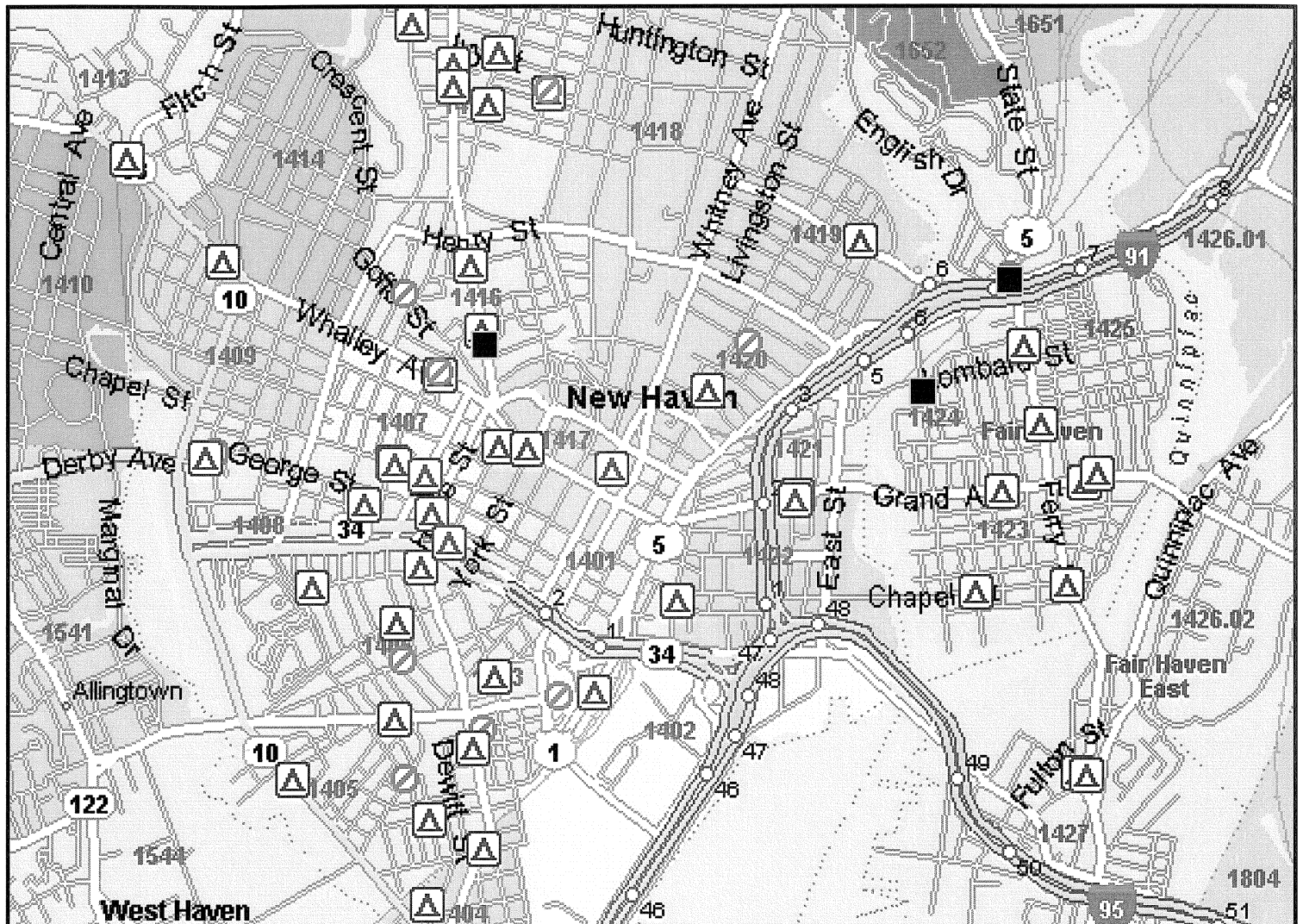
Cooler Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's Non Emergency Programs



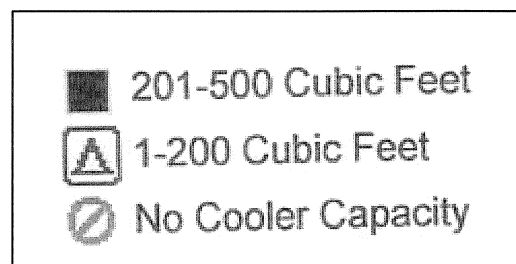
Key for Cooler Capacity

- 201-500 Cubic Feet
- △ 1-200 Cubic Feet
- ⊘ No Cooler Capacity

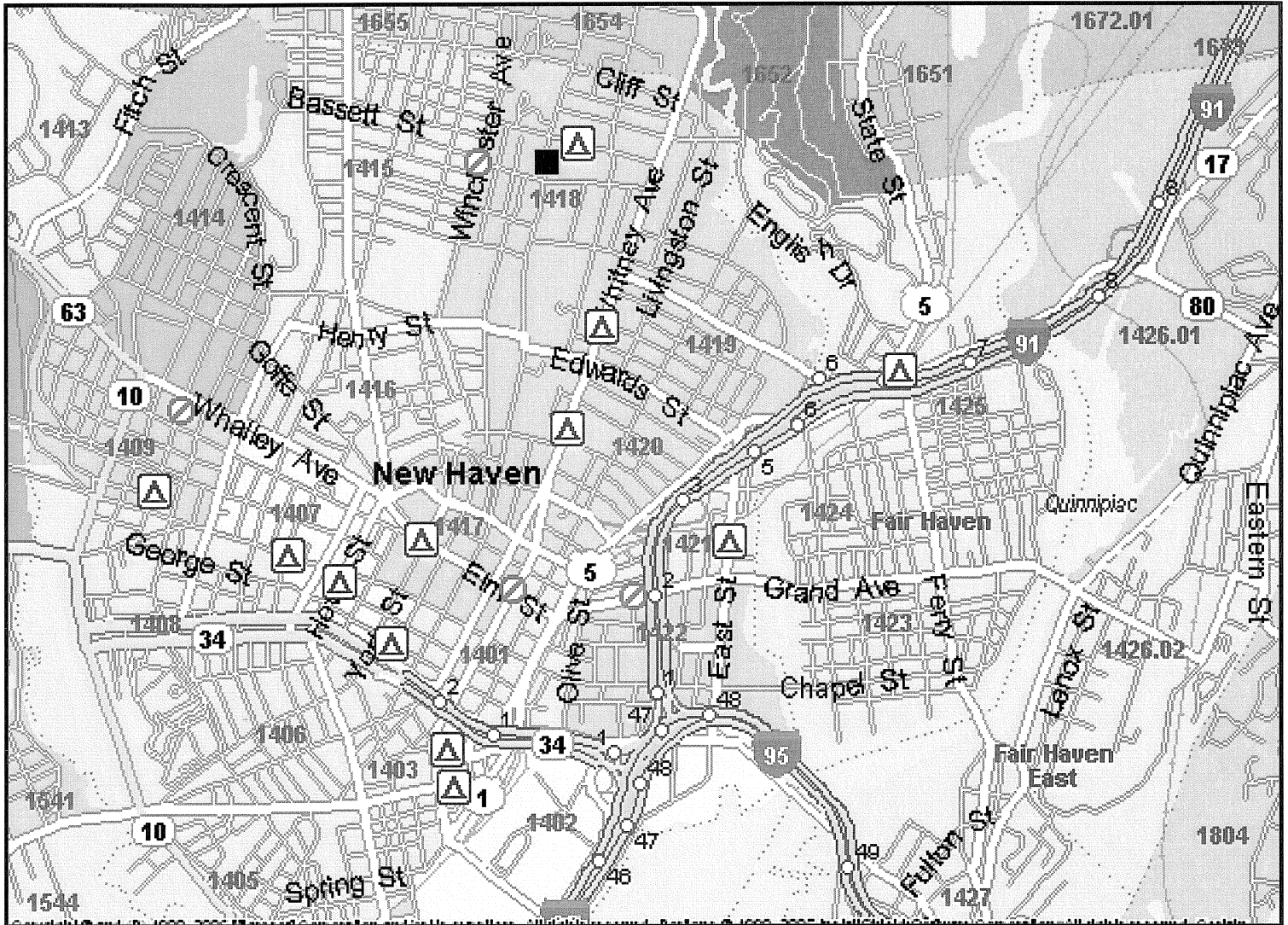
Cooler Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs in New Haven



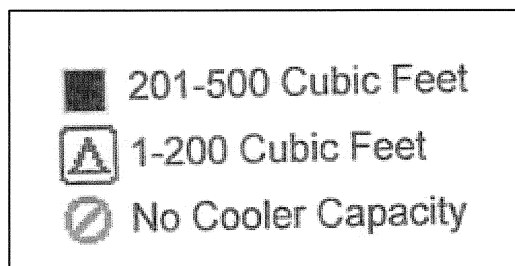
Key for Cooler Capacity



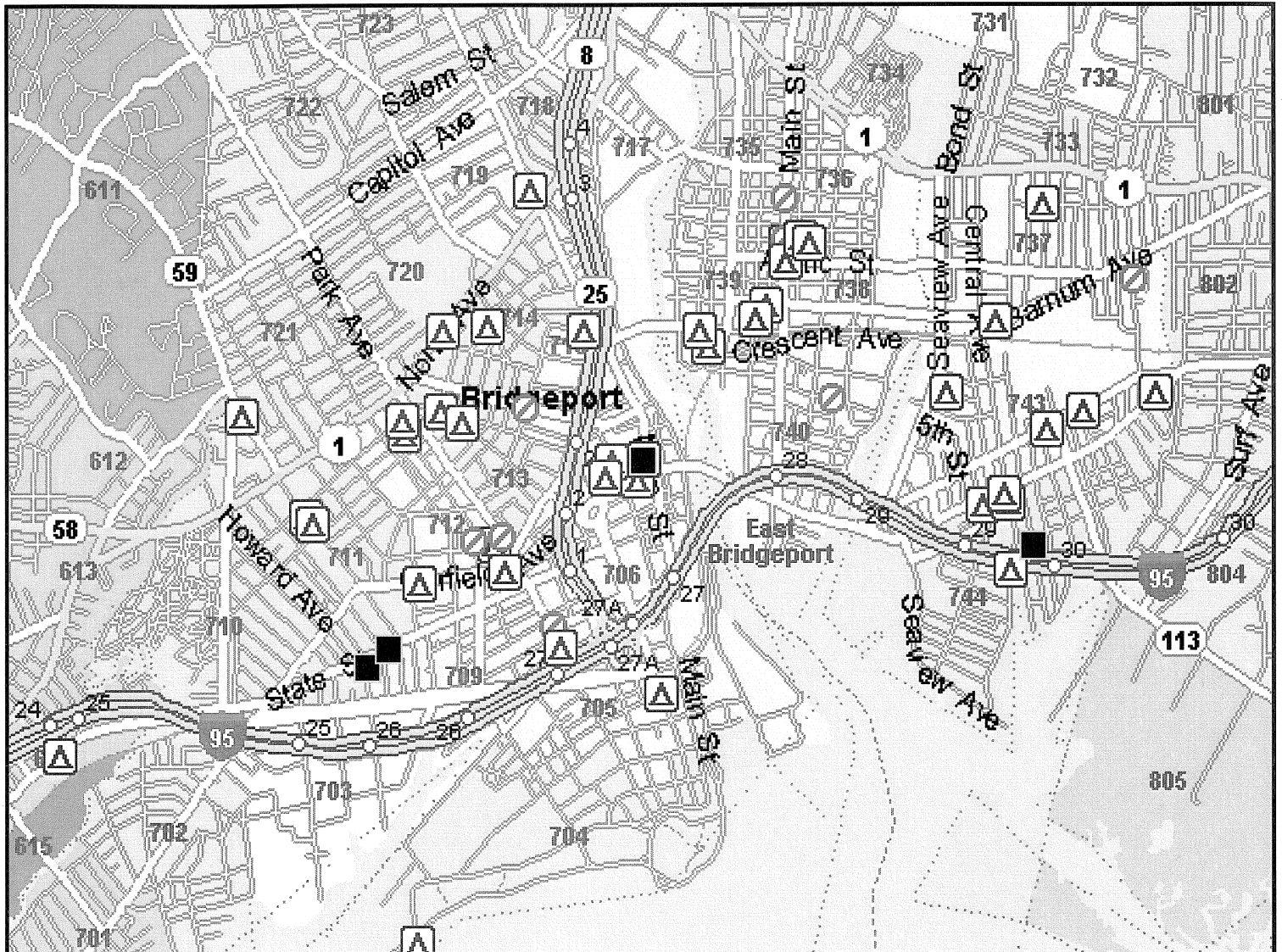
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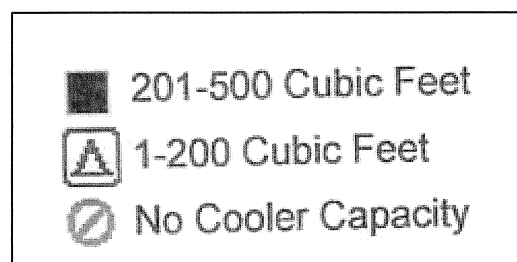
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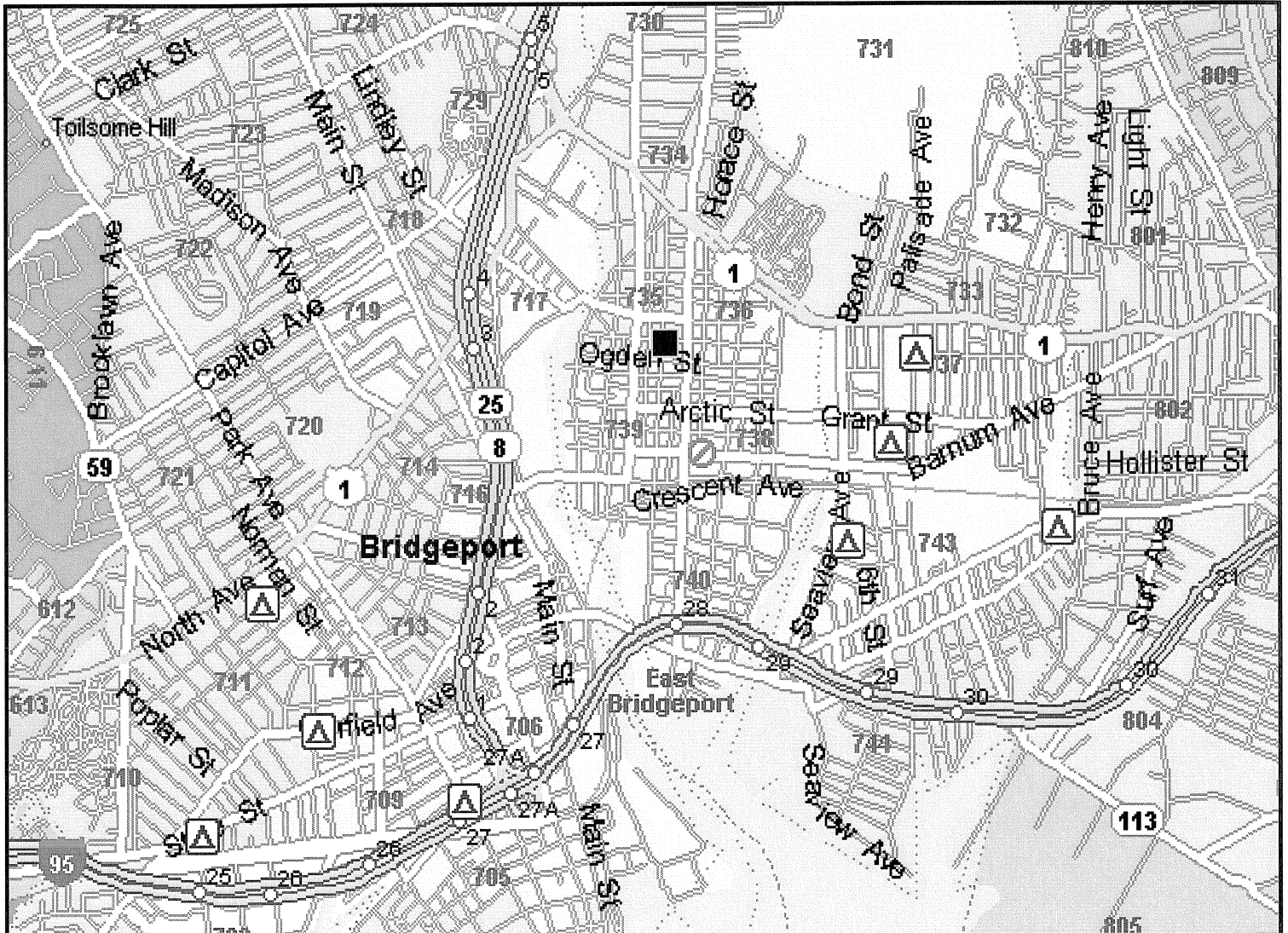
Cooler Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's
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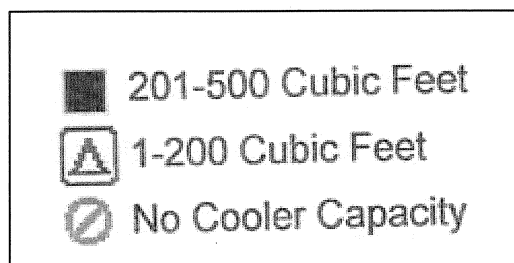
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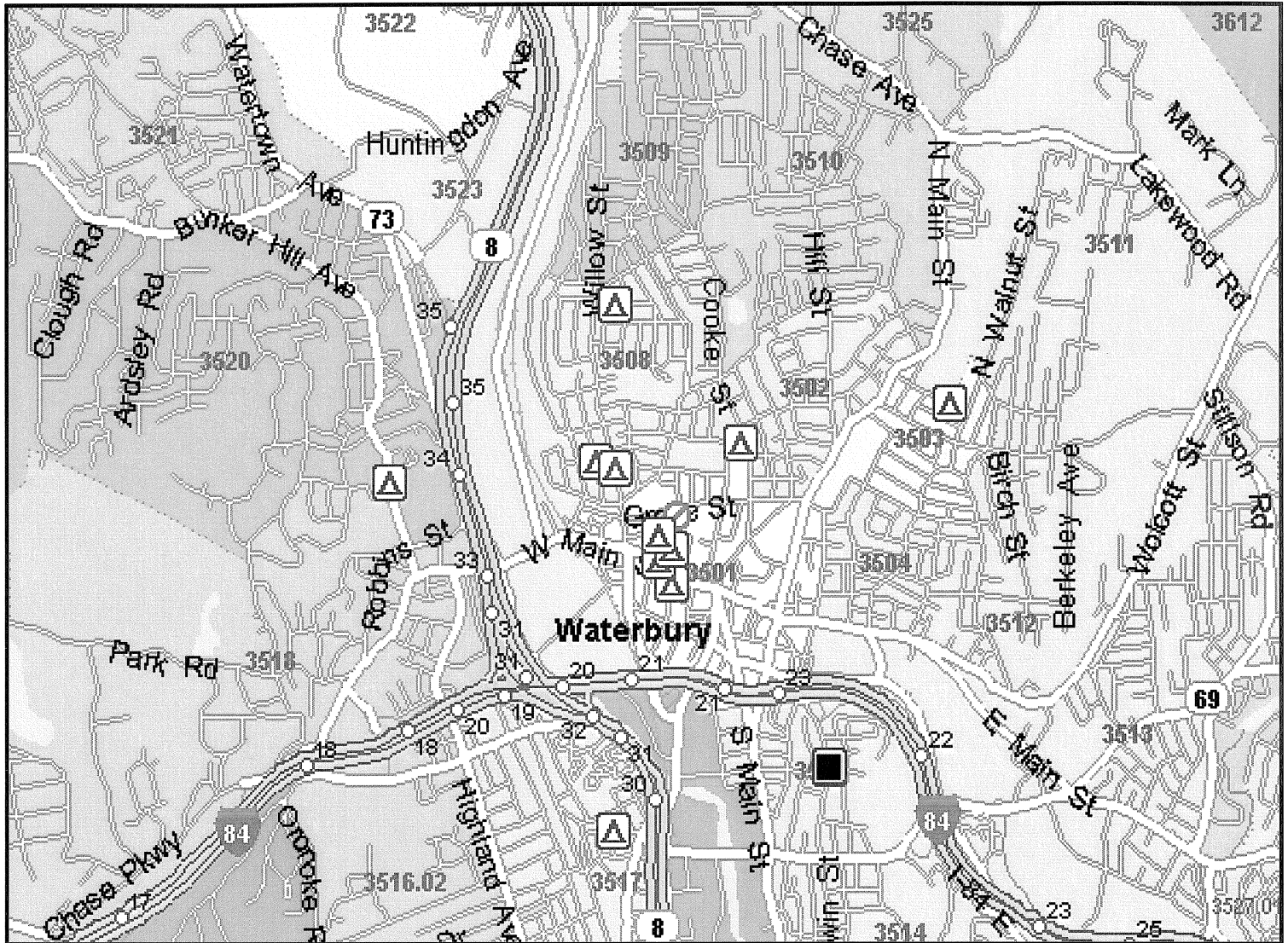
Cooler Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's Non Emergency Programs in Bridgeport



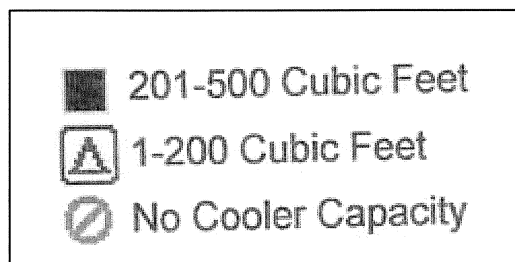
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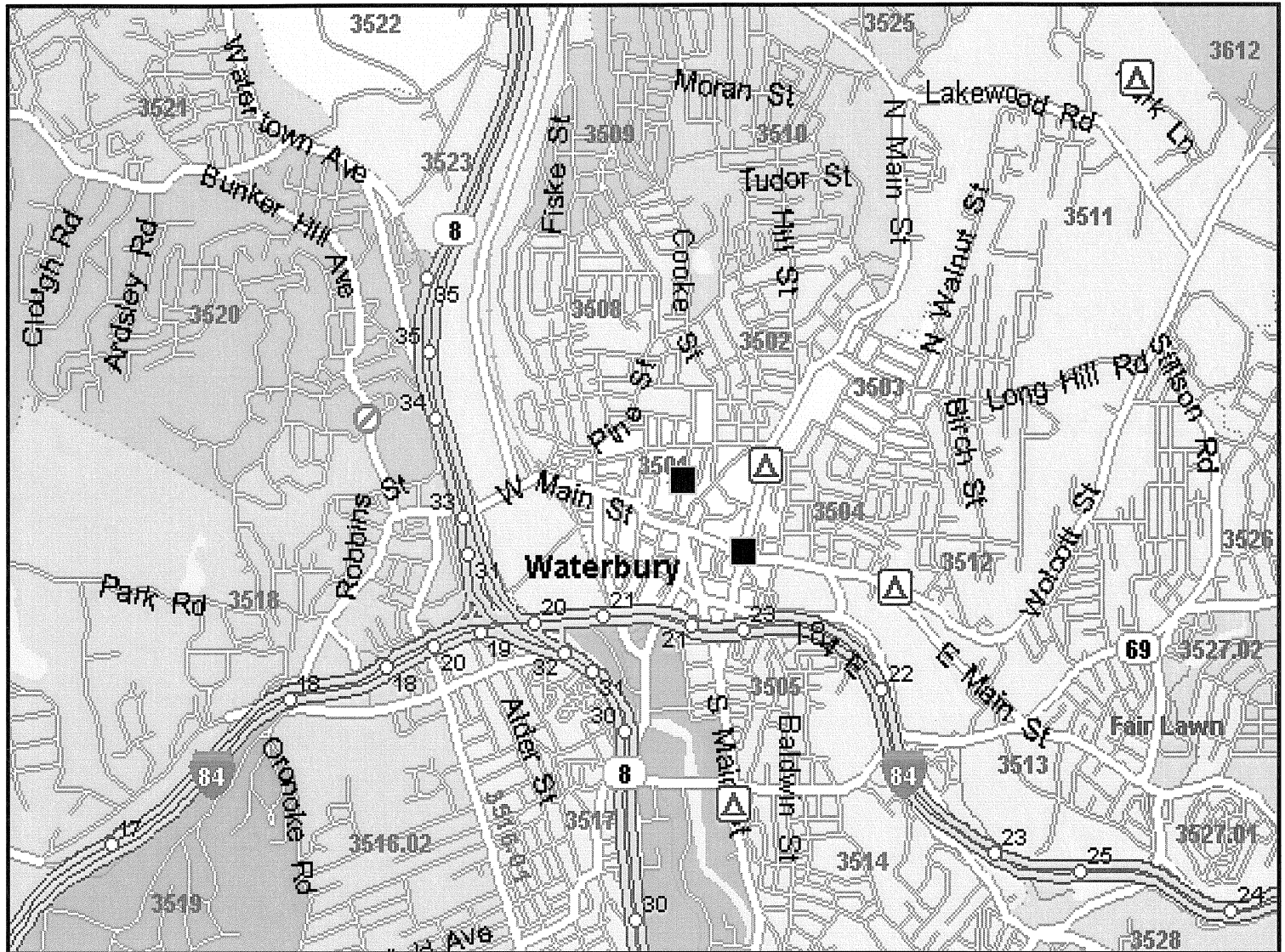
Cooler Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's
Emergency Programs
in
Waterbury



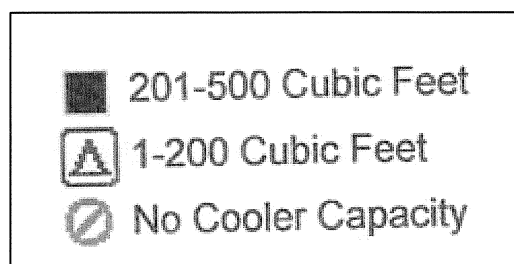
Key for Cooler Capacity



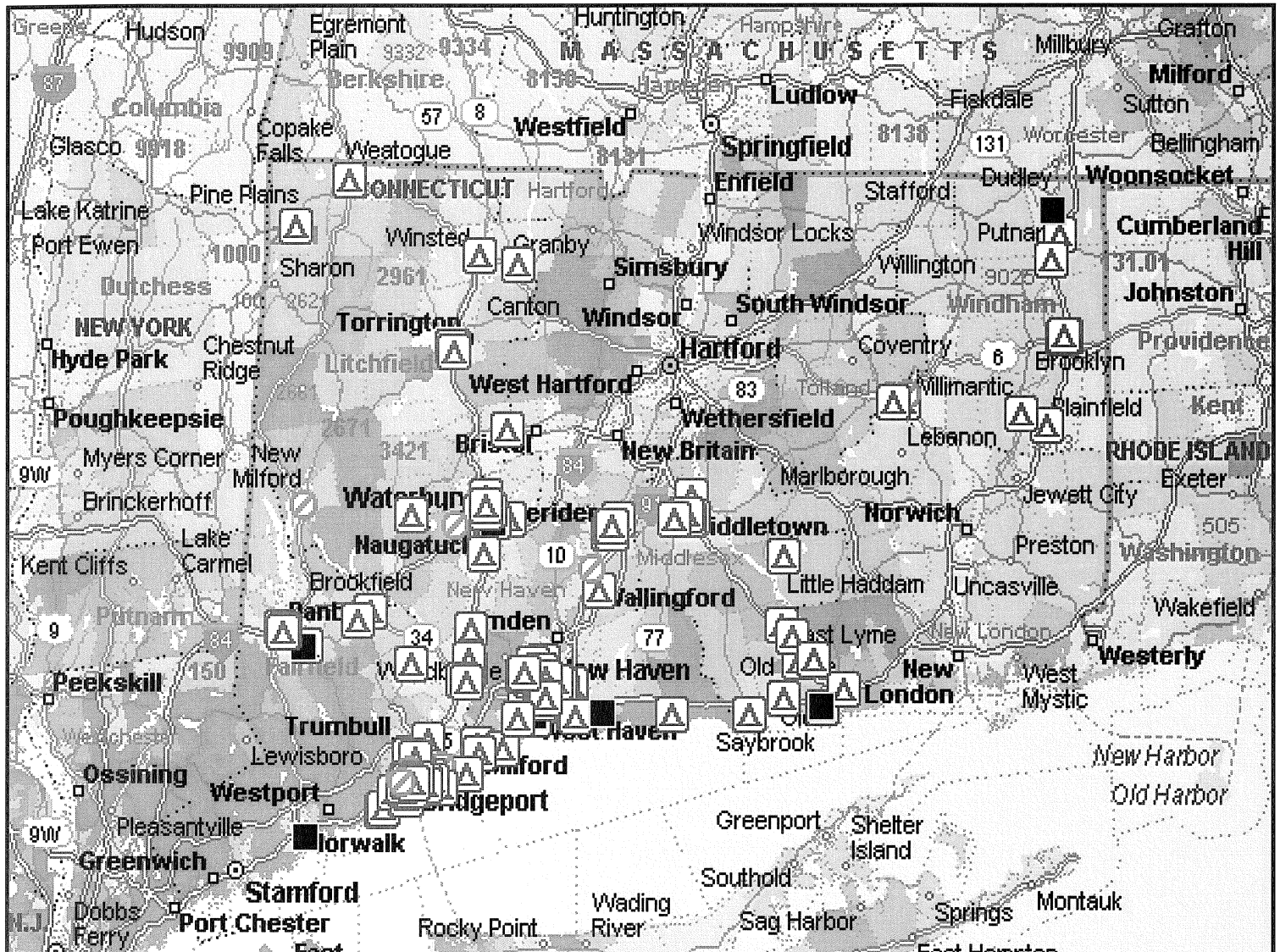
Cooler Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's
Non Emergency Programs
in
Waterbury



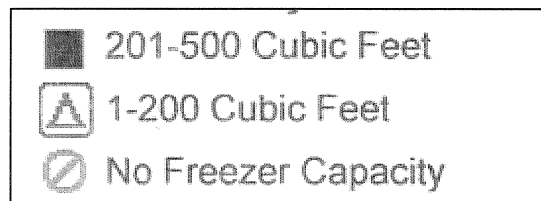
Key for Cooler Capacity



Freezer Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs



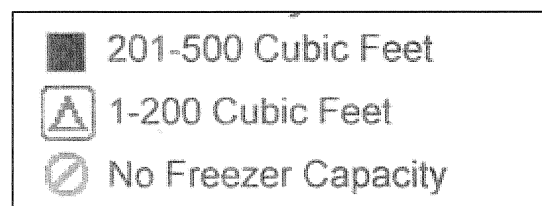
Key for Freezer Capacity



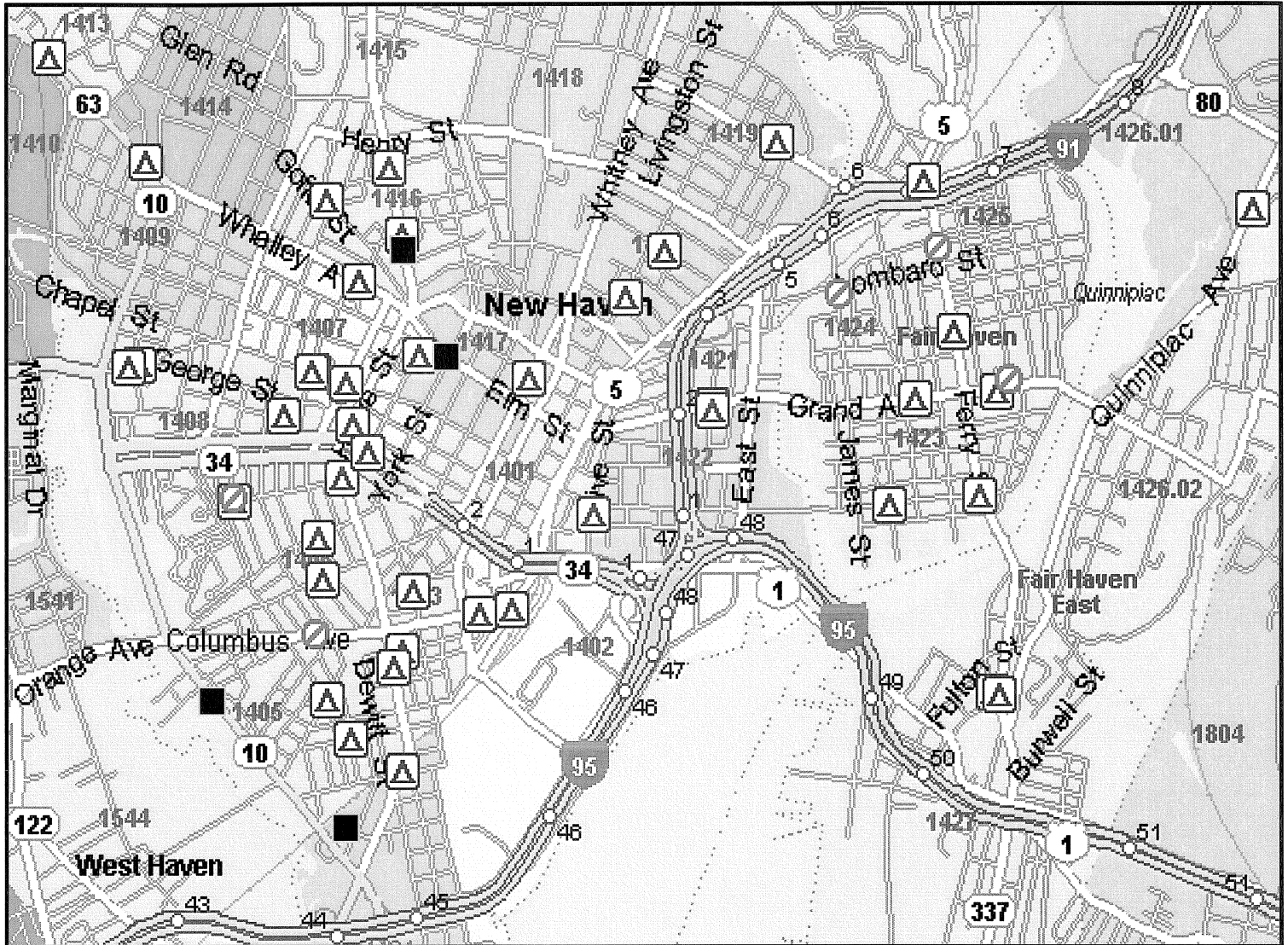
Freezer Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's Non Emergency Programs



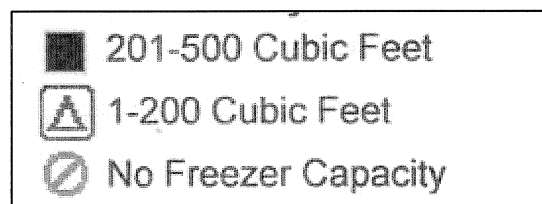
Key for Freezer Capacity



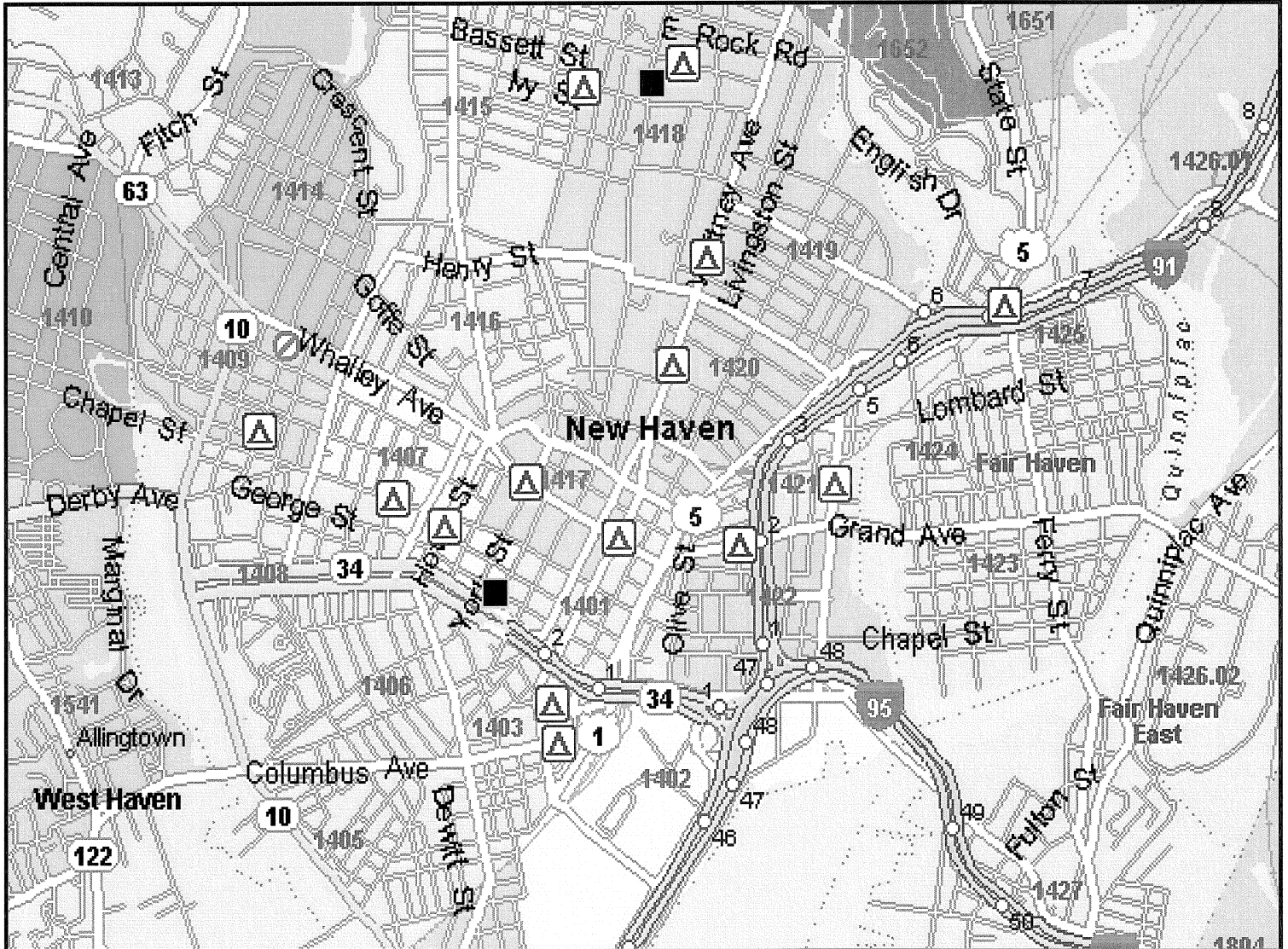
Freezer Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's
Emergency Programs
in
New Haven



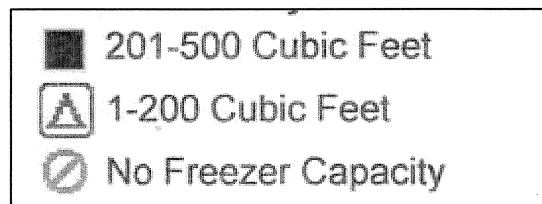
Freezer Capacity Key



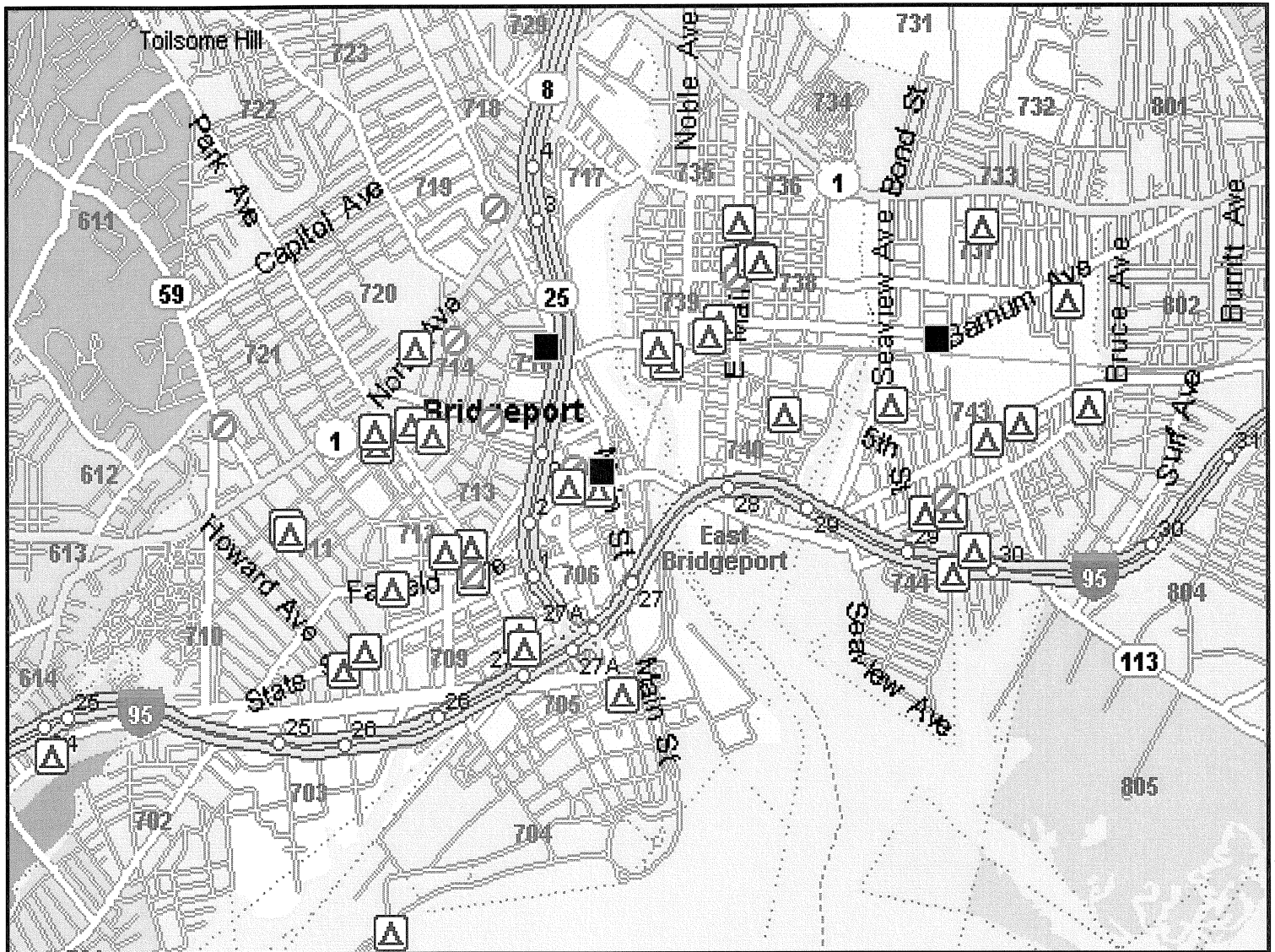
Freezer Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's
Non Emergency Programs
in
New Haven



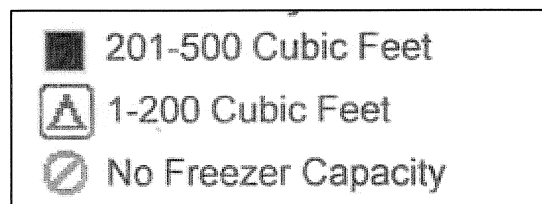
Key for Freezer Capacity



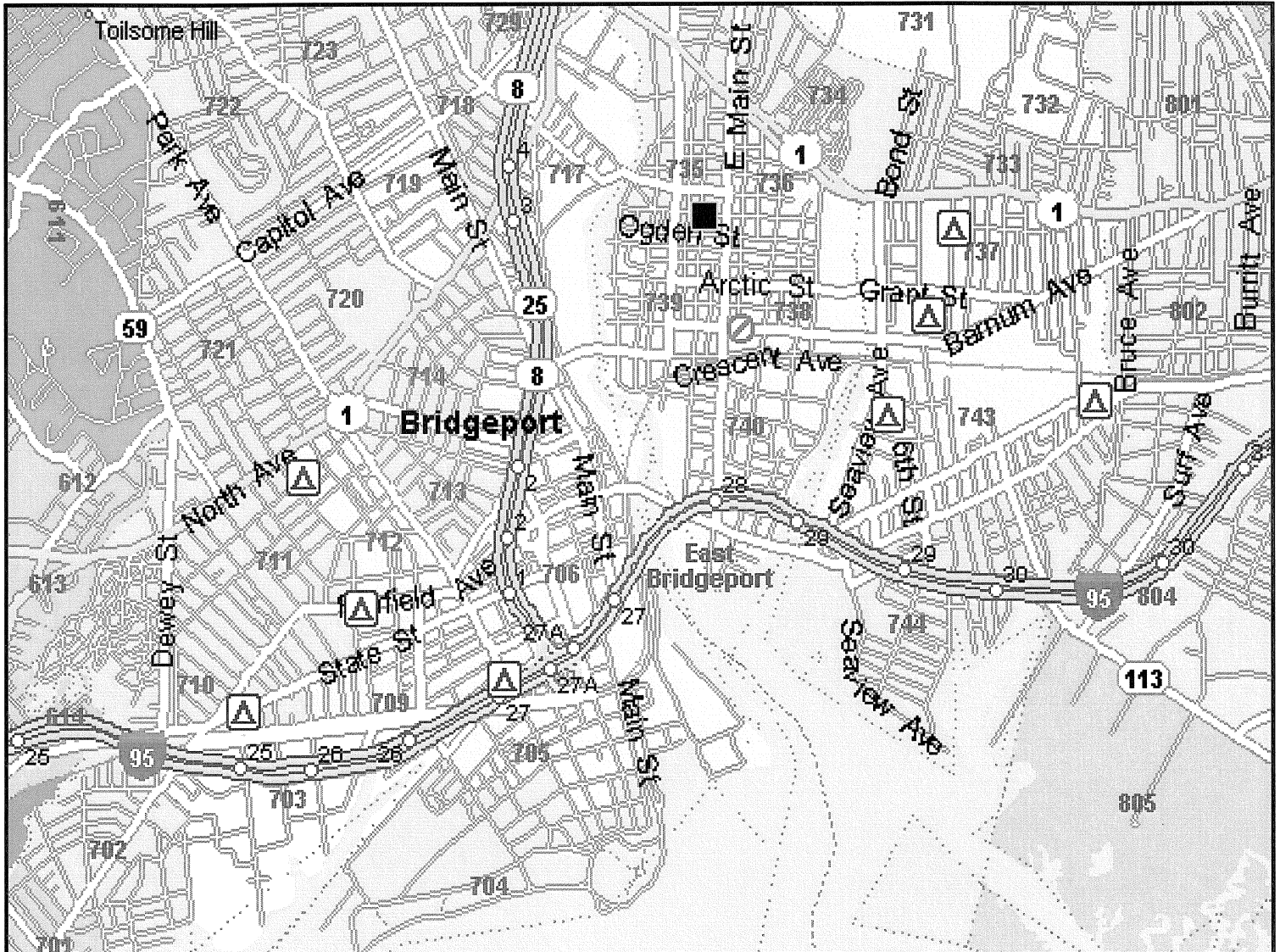
Freezer Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's
Emergency Programs
in
Bridgeport



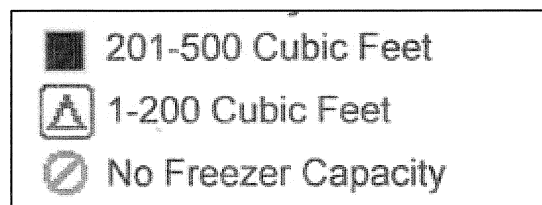
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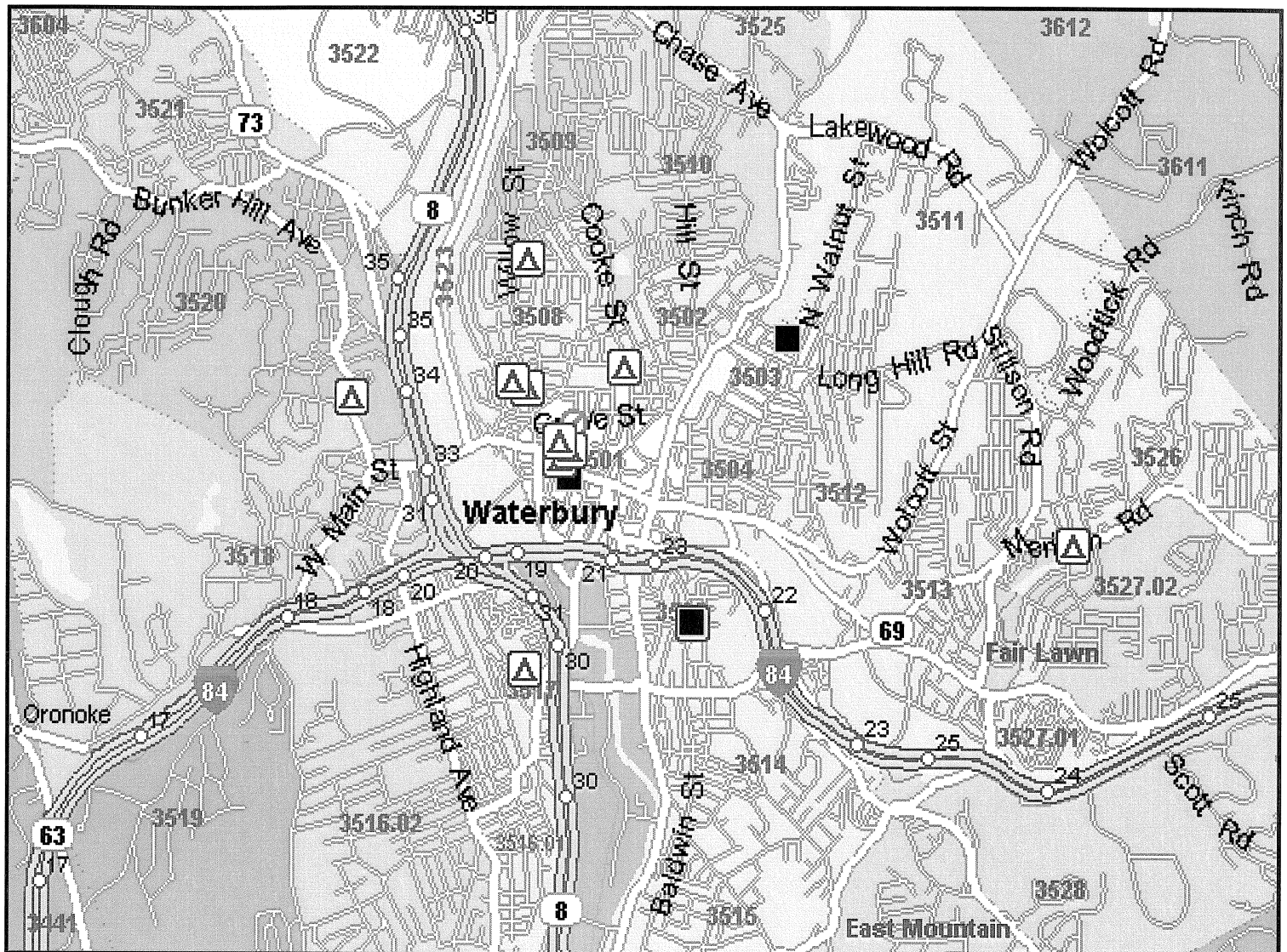
Freezer Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's
Non Emergency Programs
in
Bridgeport



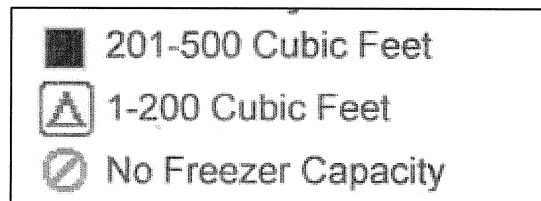
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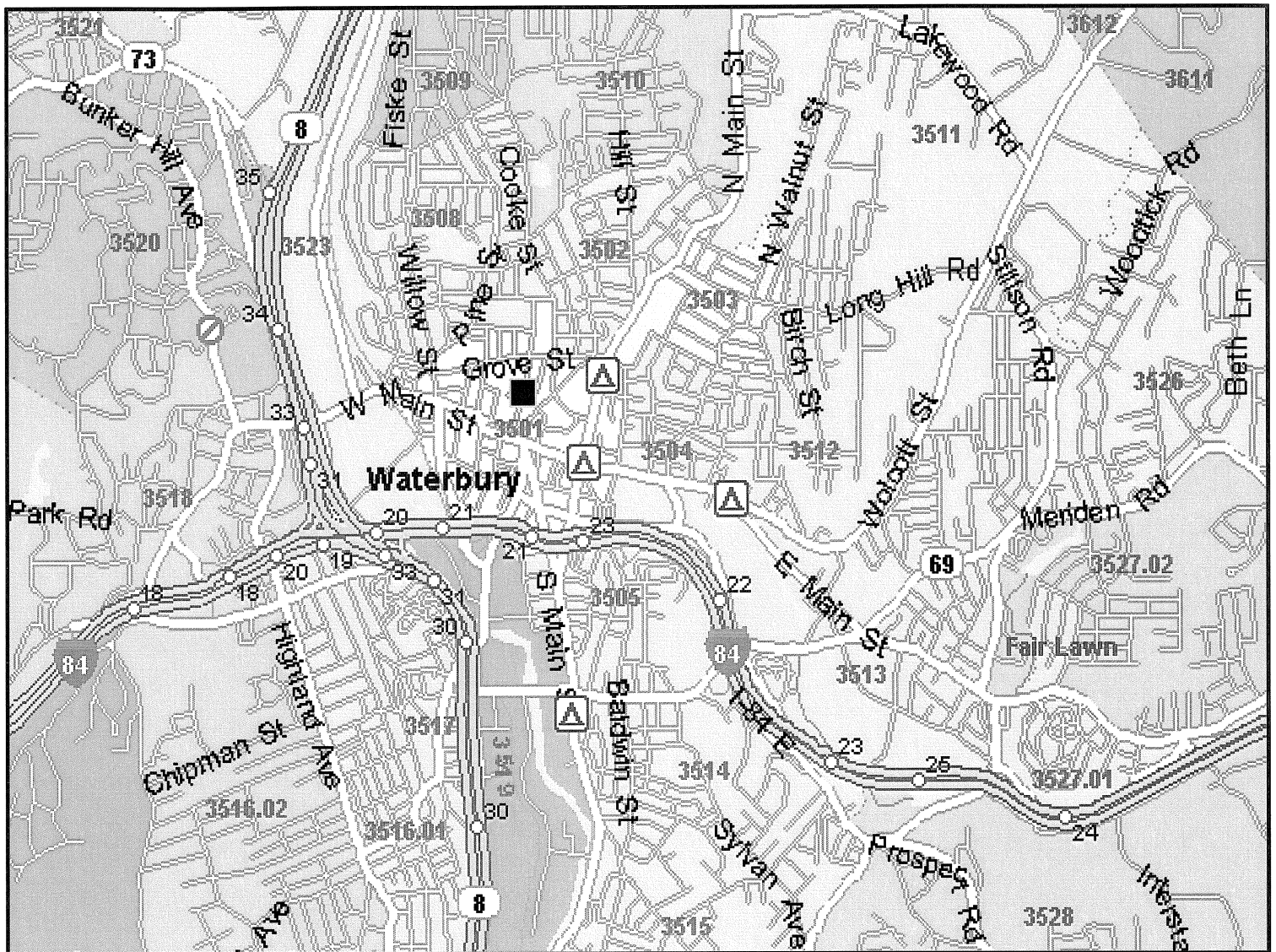
Freezer Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs in Waterbury



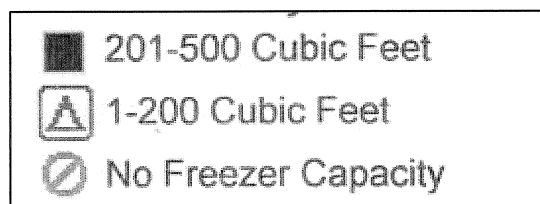
Key for Freezer Capacity



Freezer Capacity for Connecticut Food Bank's
Non Emergency Programs
in
Waterbury



Key for Freezer Capacity



Funding Sources for Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs



Key for Funding Sources

△	Secular Funding
⌘	Faith Based Funding
⌘	State, Fed, City Funding

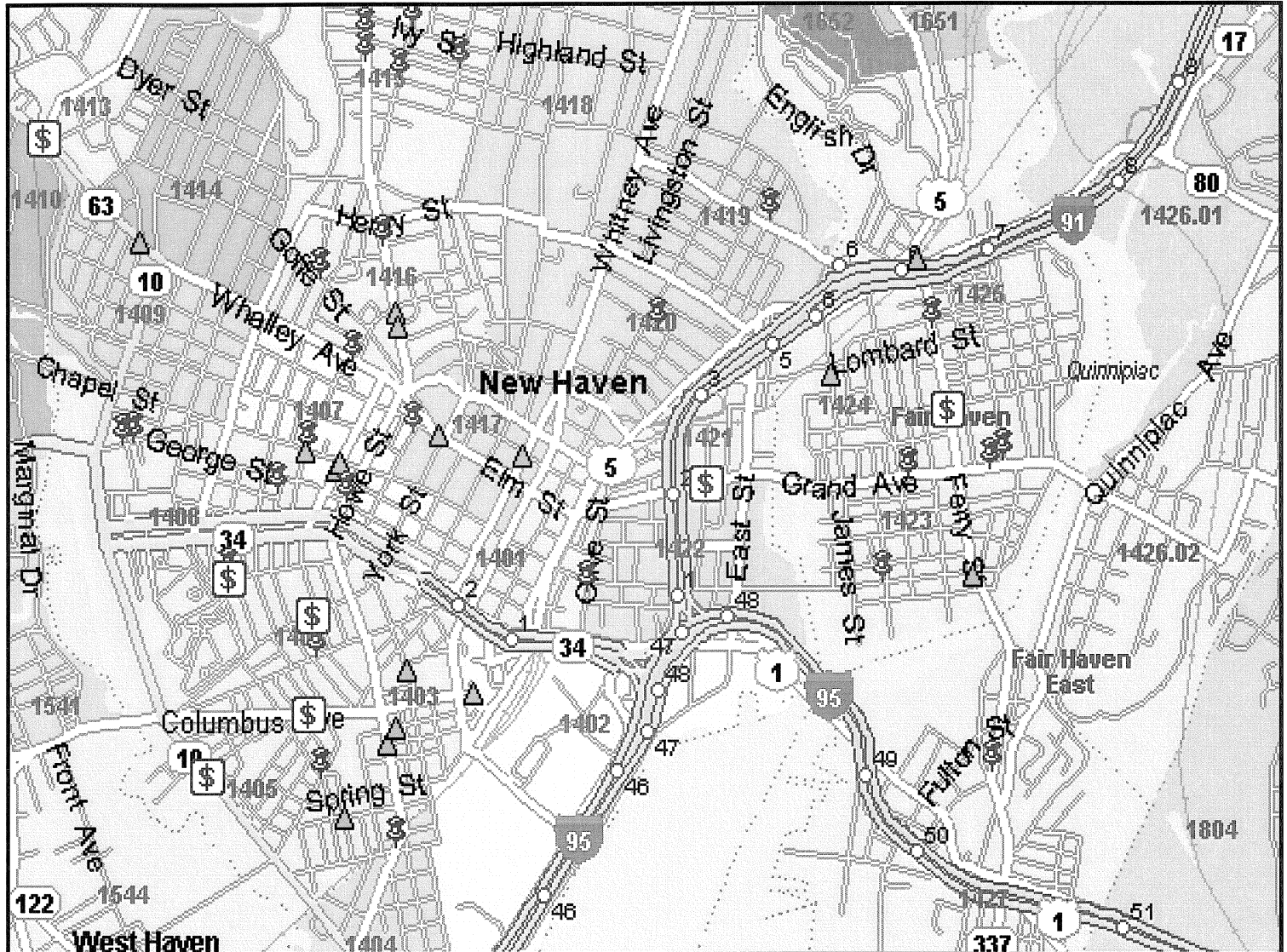
Funding Sources for Connecticut Food Bank's Non Emergency Programs



Key for Funding Sources

△	Secular Funding
⋄	Faith Based Funding
⋈	State, Fed, City Funding

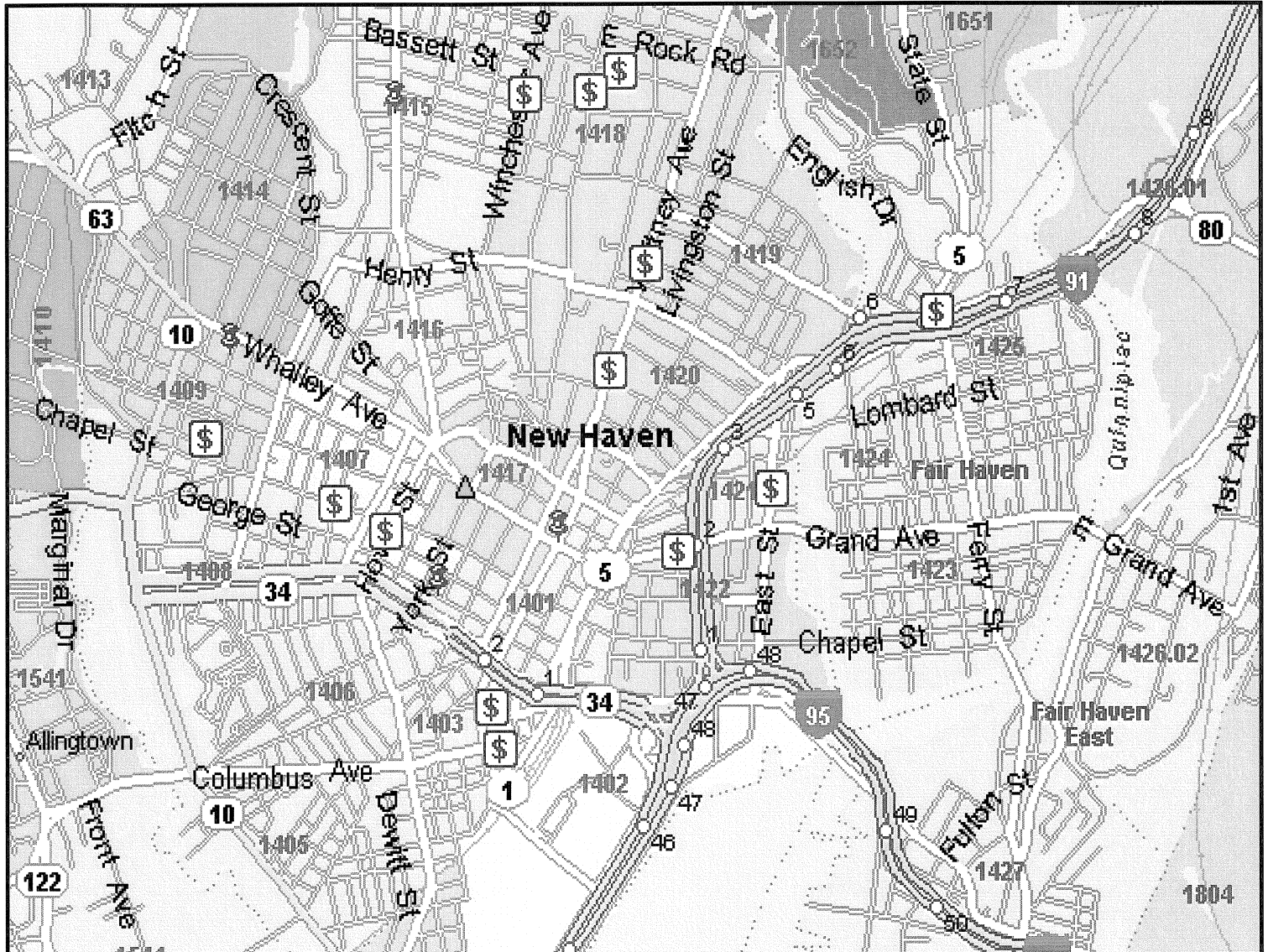
Funding Sources for Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs in New Haven



Funding Sources Key

- ▲ Secular Funding
- ⌘ Faith Based Funding
- ⌘ State, Fed, City Funding

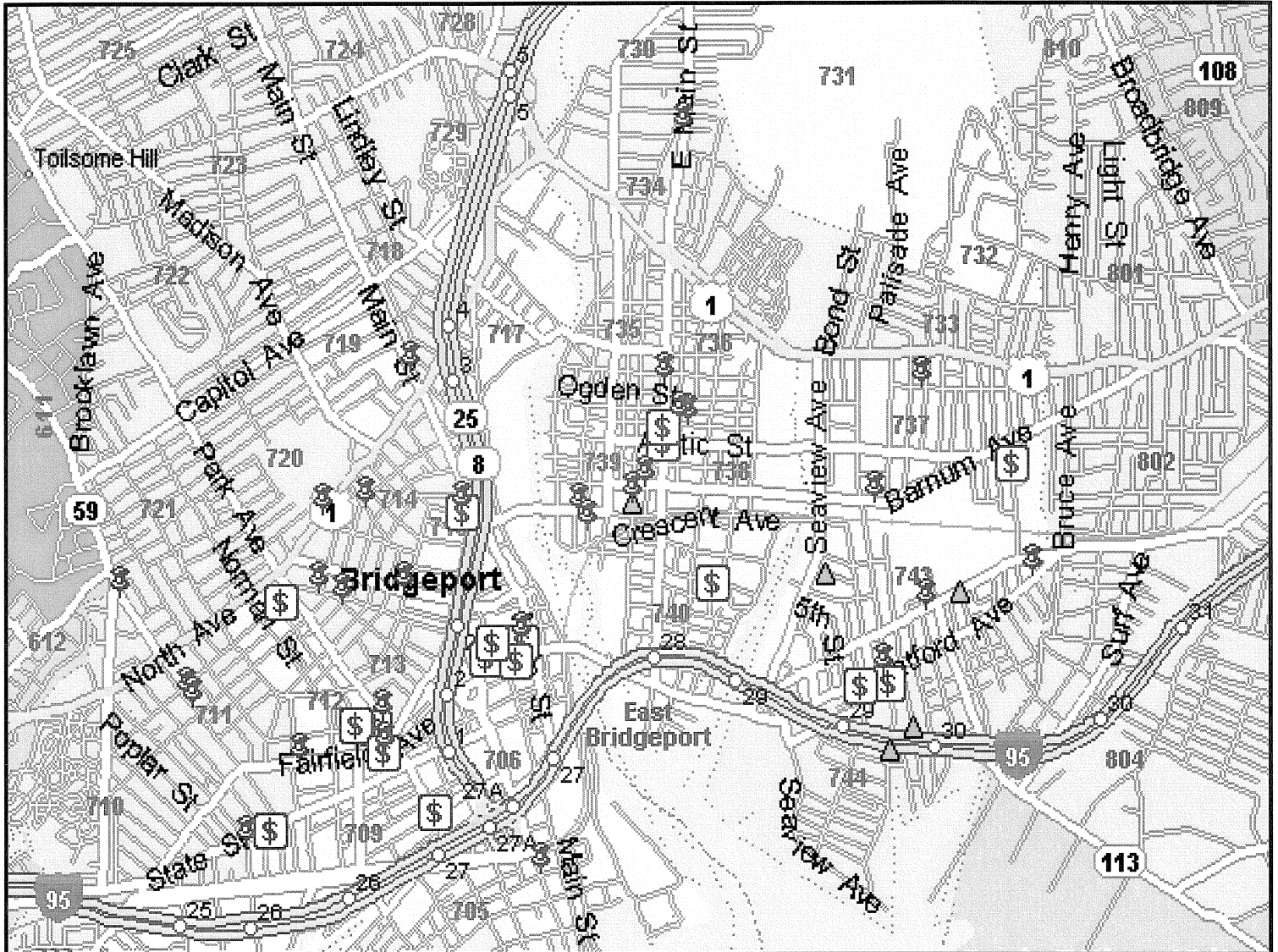
Funding Sources for Connecticut Food Bank's Non Emergency Programs in New Haven



Key for Funding Sources

▲	Secular Funding
⌘	Faith Based Funding
⌘	State, Fed, City Funding

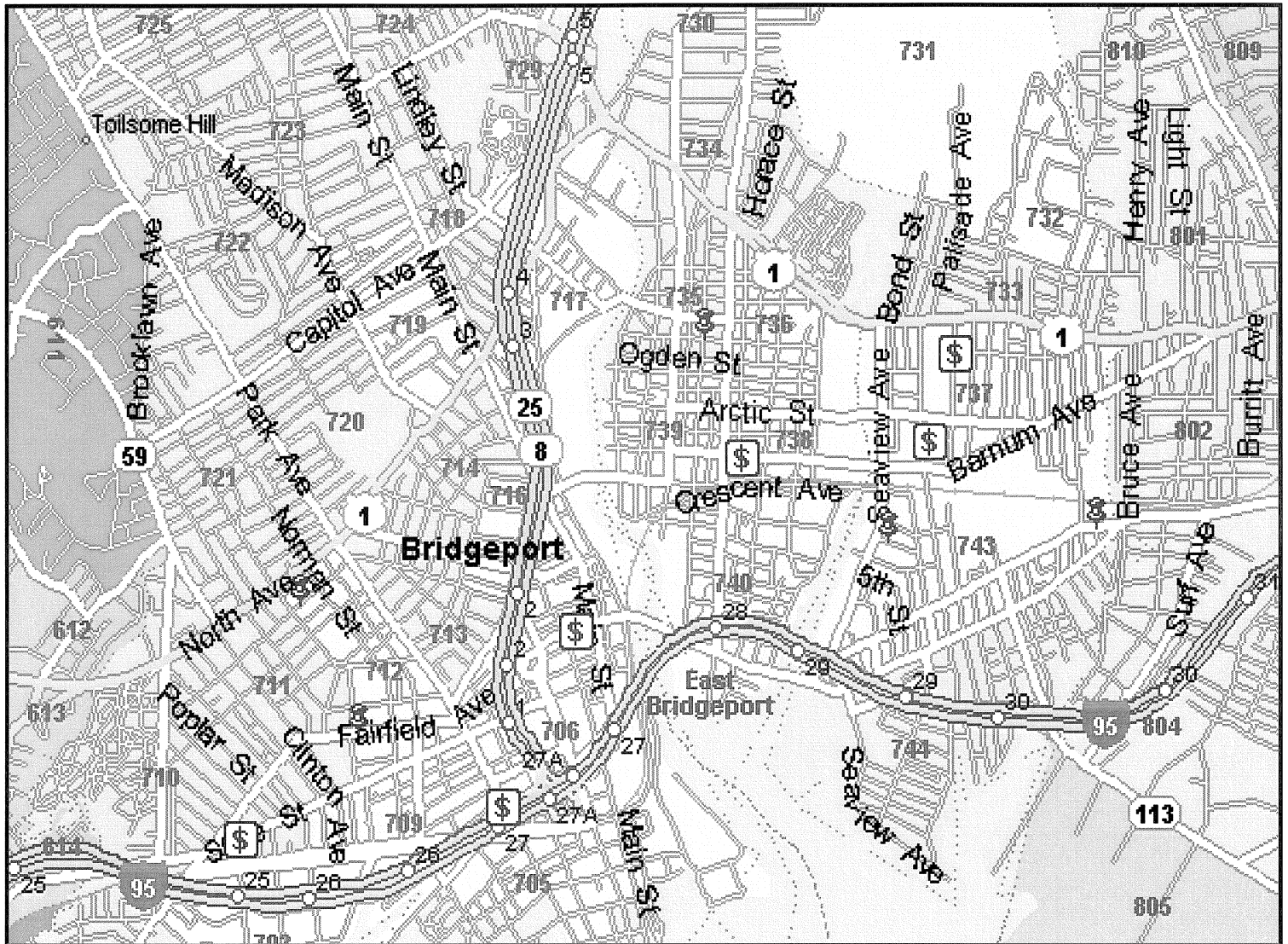
Funding Sources for Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs in Bridgeport



Funding Sources Key

- ▲ Secular Funding
- ⌘ Faith Based Funding
- ⌘ State, Fed, City Funding

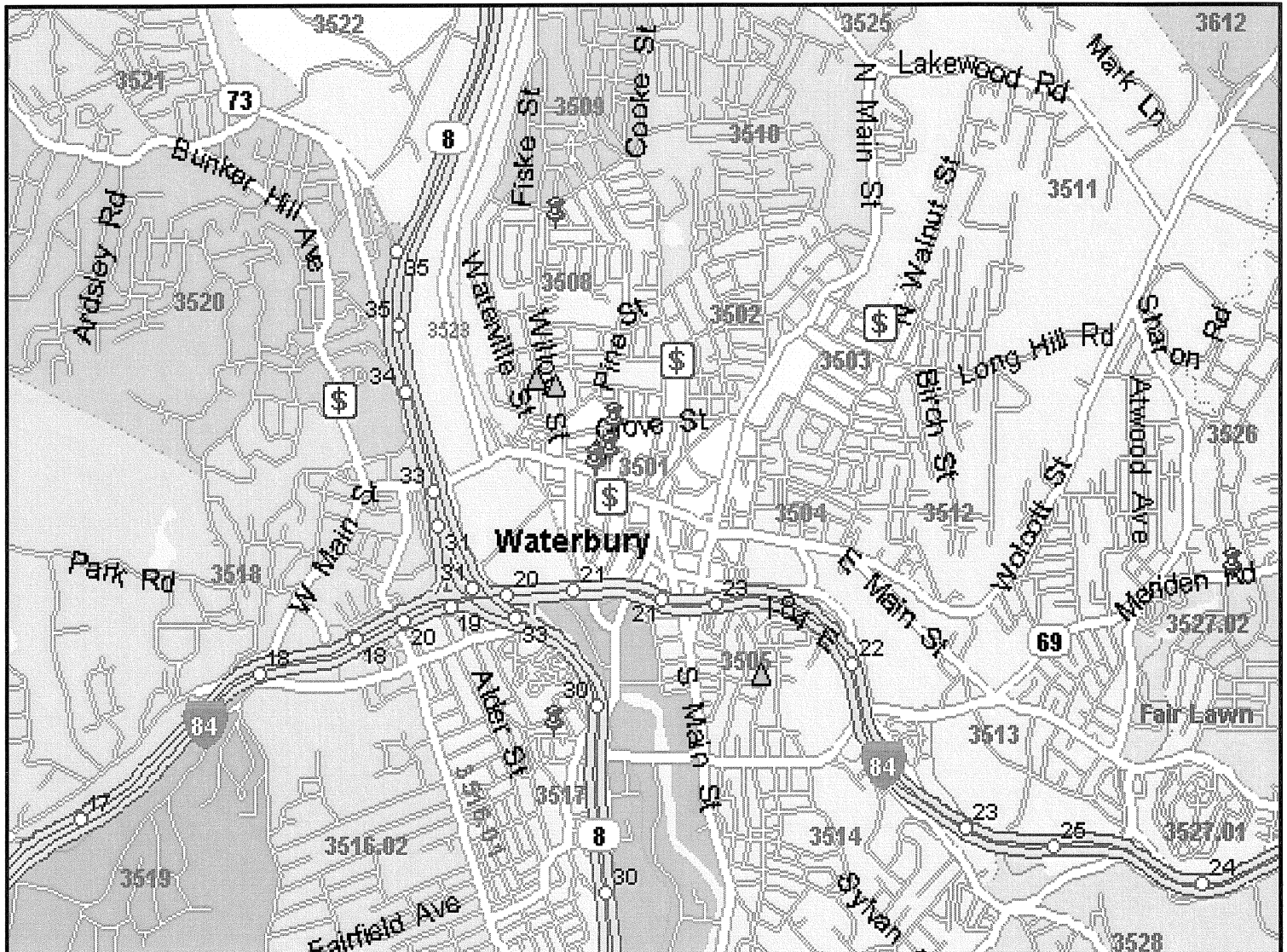
Funding Sources for Connecticut Food Bank's Non Emergency Programs in Bridgeport



Key for Funding Sources

▲	Secular Funding
⌘	Faith Based Funding
⌘	State, Fed, City Funding

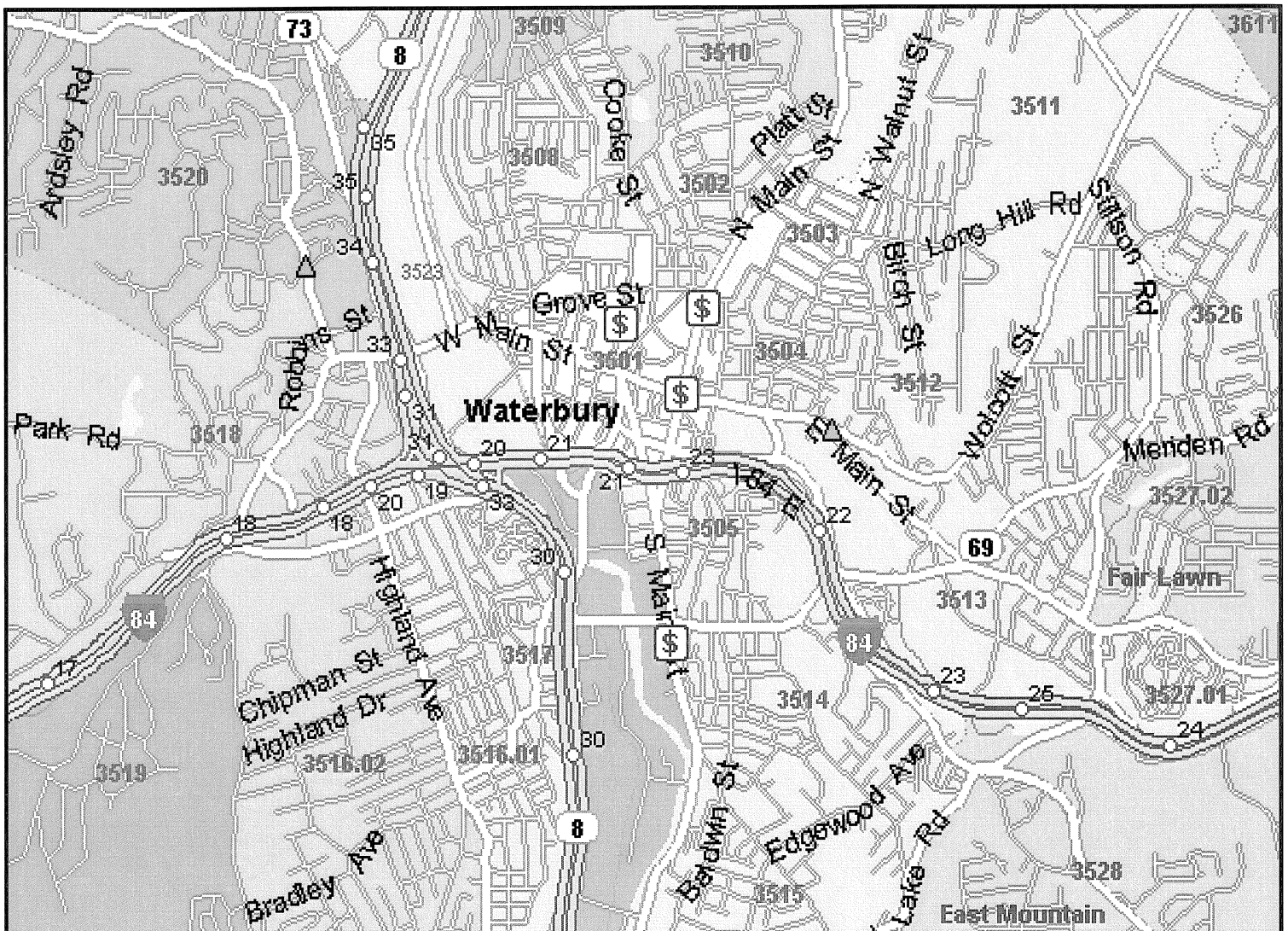
Funding Sources for Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs in Waterbury



Key for Funding Sources

▲	Secular Funding
\$	Faith Based Funding
\$	State, Fed, City Funding

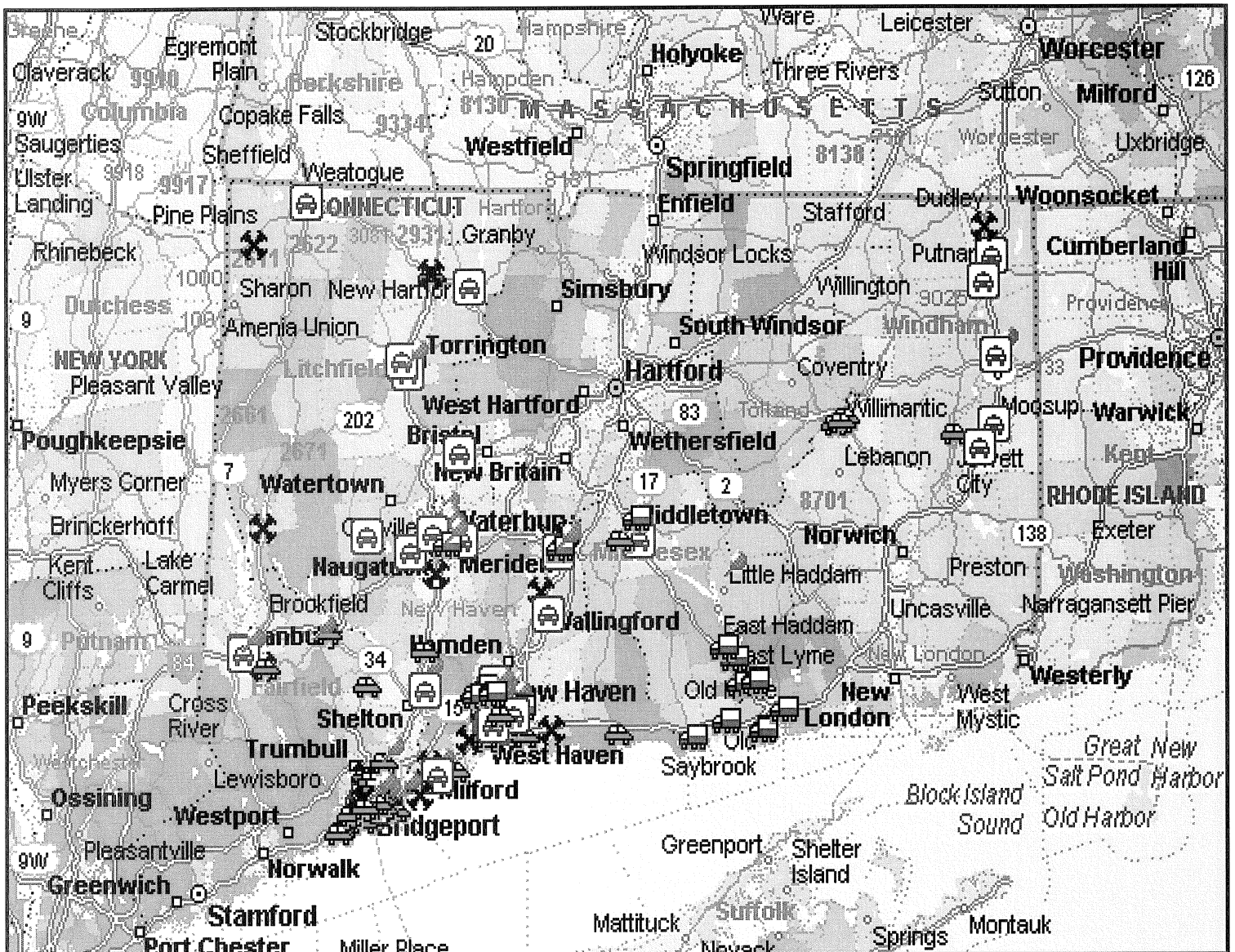
Funding Sources for Connecticut Food Bank's Non Emergency Programs in Waterbury








Key for Funding Sources

▲	Secular Funding
⌘	Faith Based Funding
⌘	State, Fed, City Funding

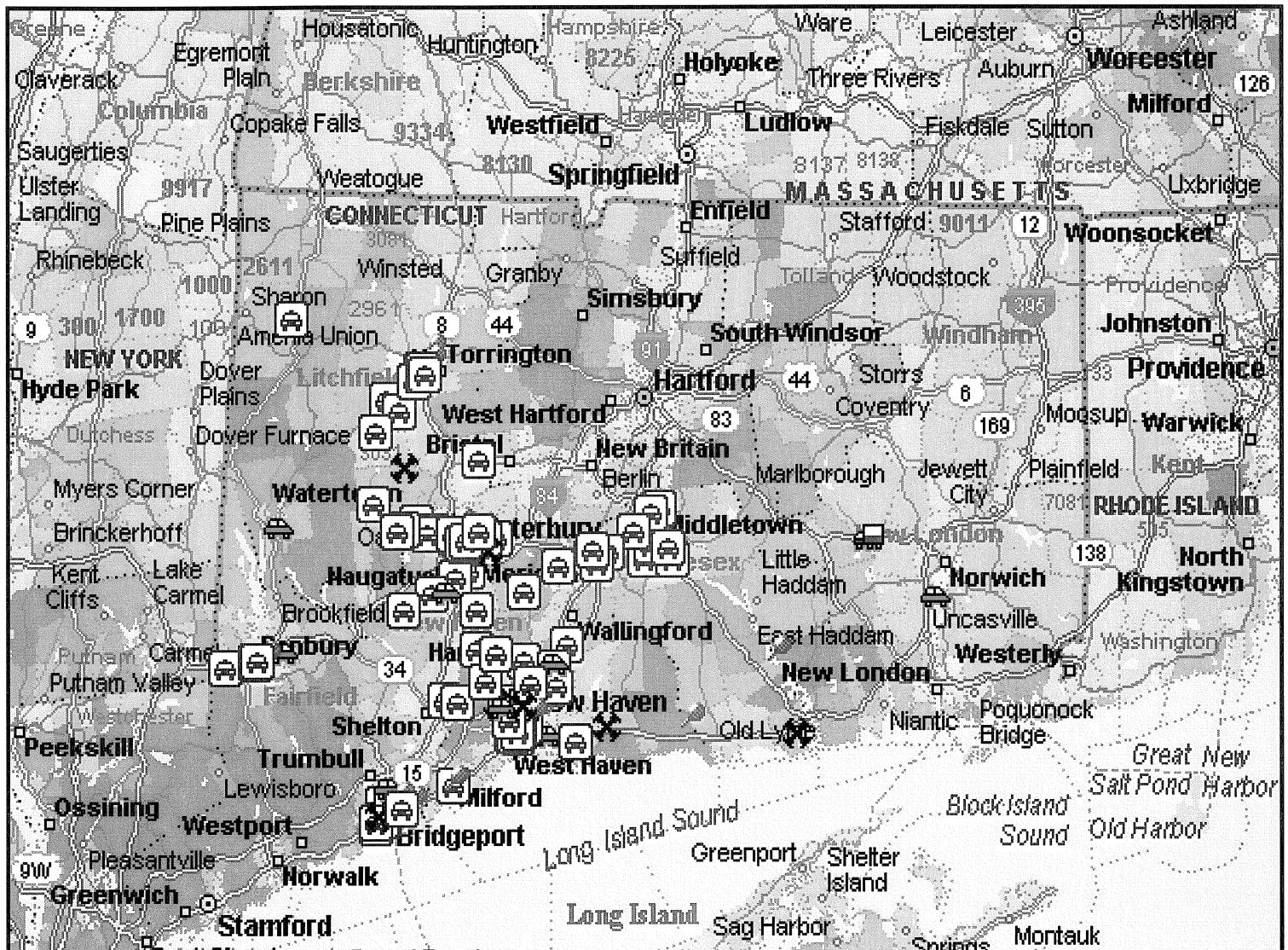
Transportation for Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs



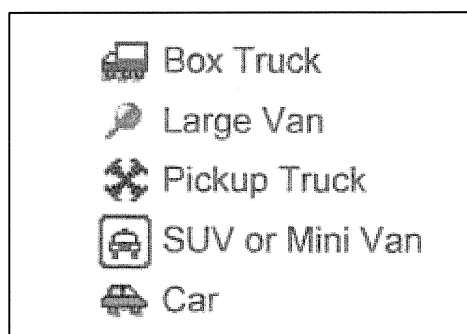
Key for Transportation

	Box Truck
	Large Van
	Pickup Truck
	SUV or Mini Van
	Car

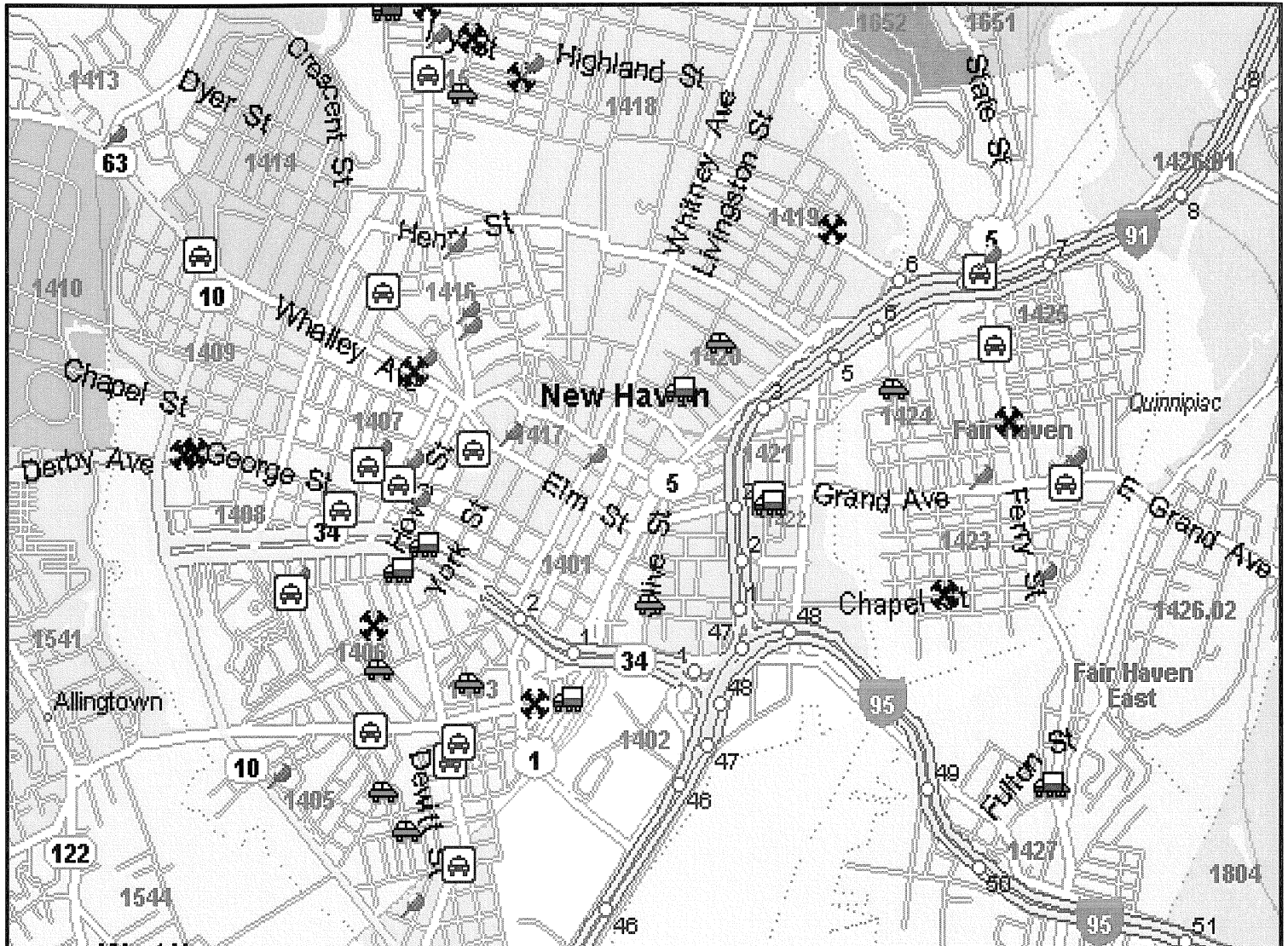
Transportation for Connecticut Food Bank's Non Emergency Programs








Key for Transportation



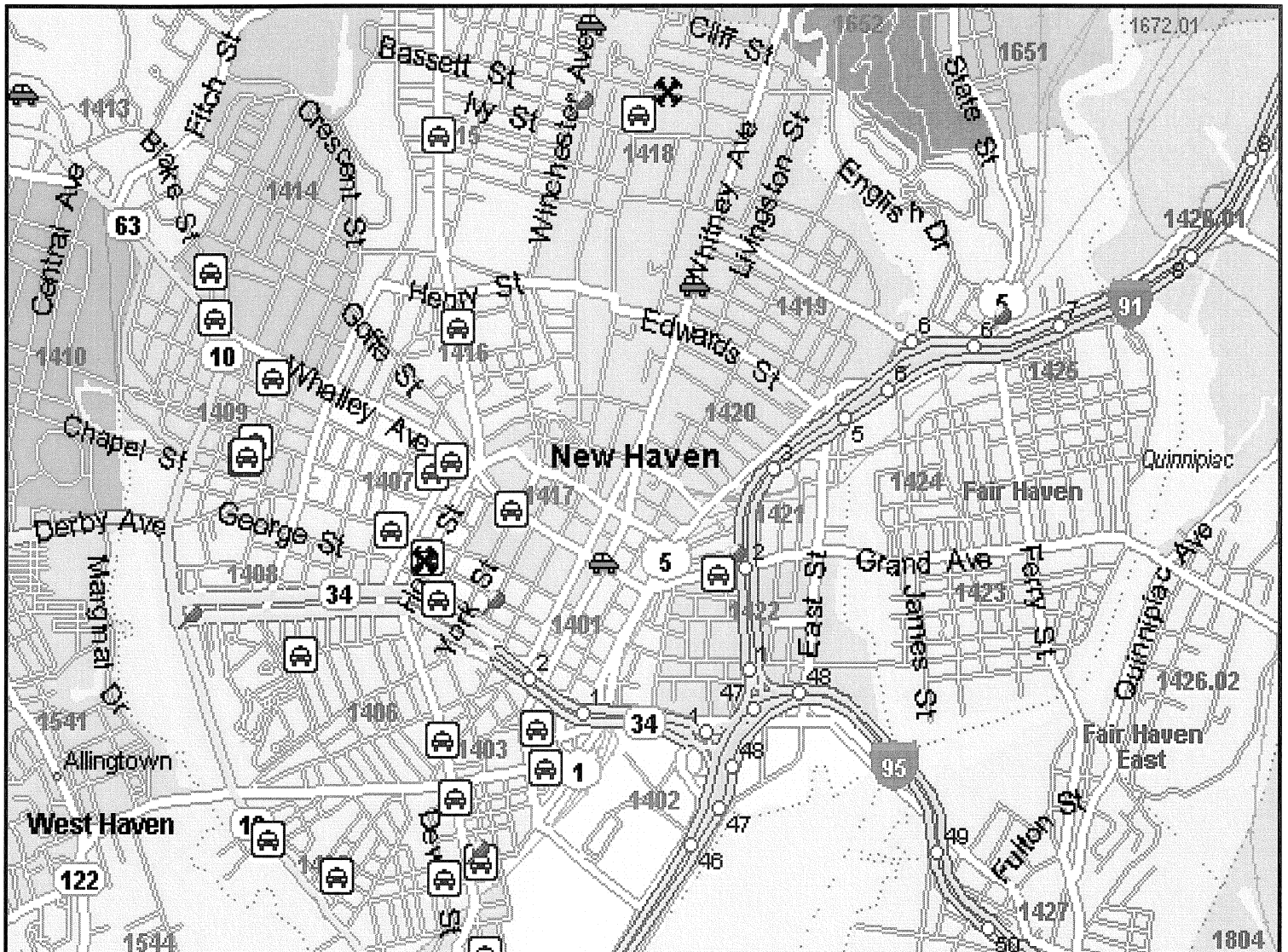
Transportation for Connecticut Food Bank's
Emergency Programs
in
New Haven








Key for Transportation

	Box Truck
	Large Van
	Pickup Truck
	SUV or Mini Van
	Car

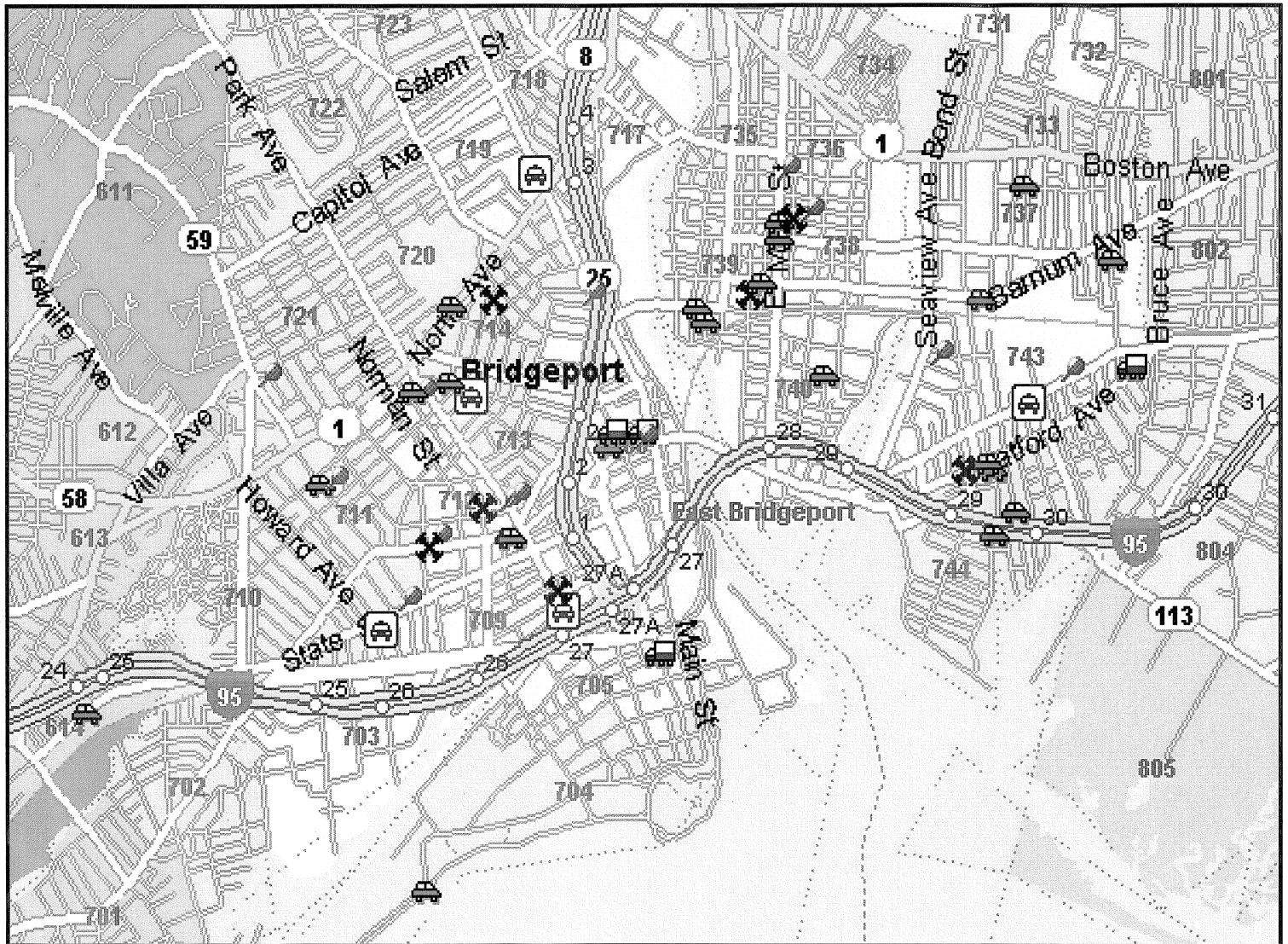
Transportation for Connecticut Food Bank's Non Emergency Programs in New Haven



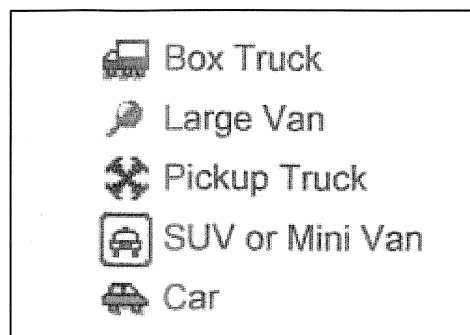
Key for Transportation

	Box Truck
	Large Van
	Pickup Truck
	SUV or Mini Van
	Car

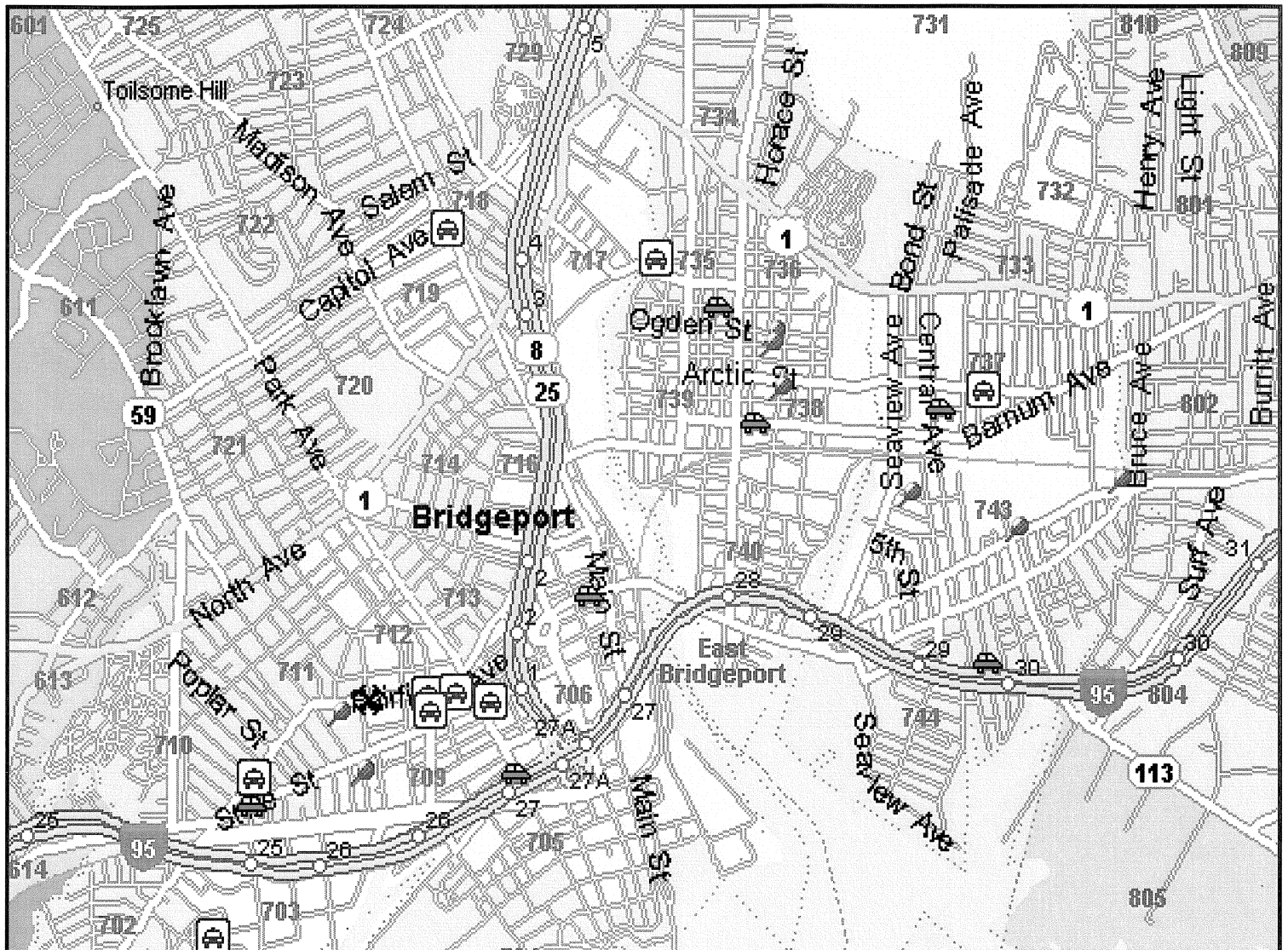
Transportation for Connecticut Food Bank's
Emergency Programs
in
Bridgeport



Key for Transportation



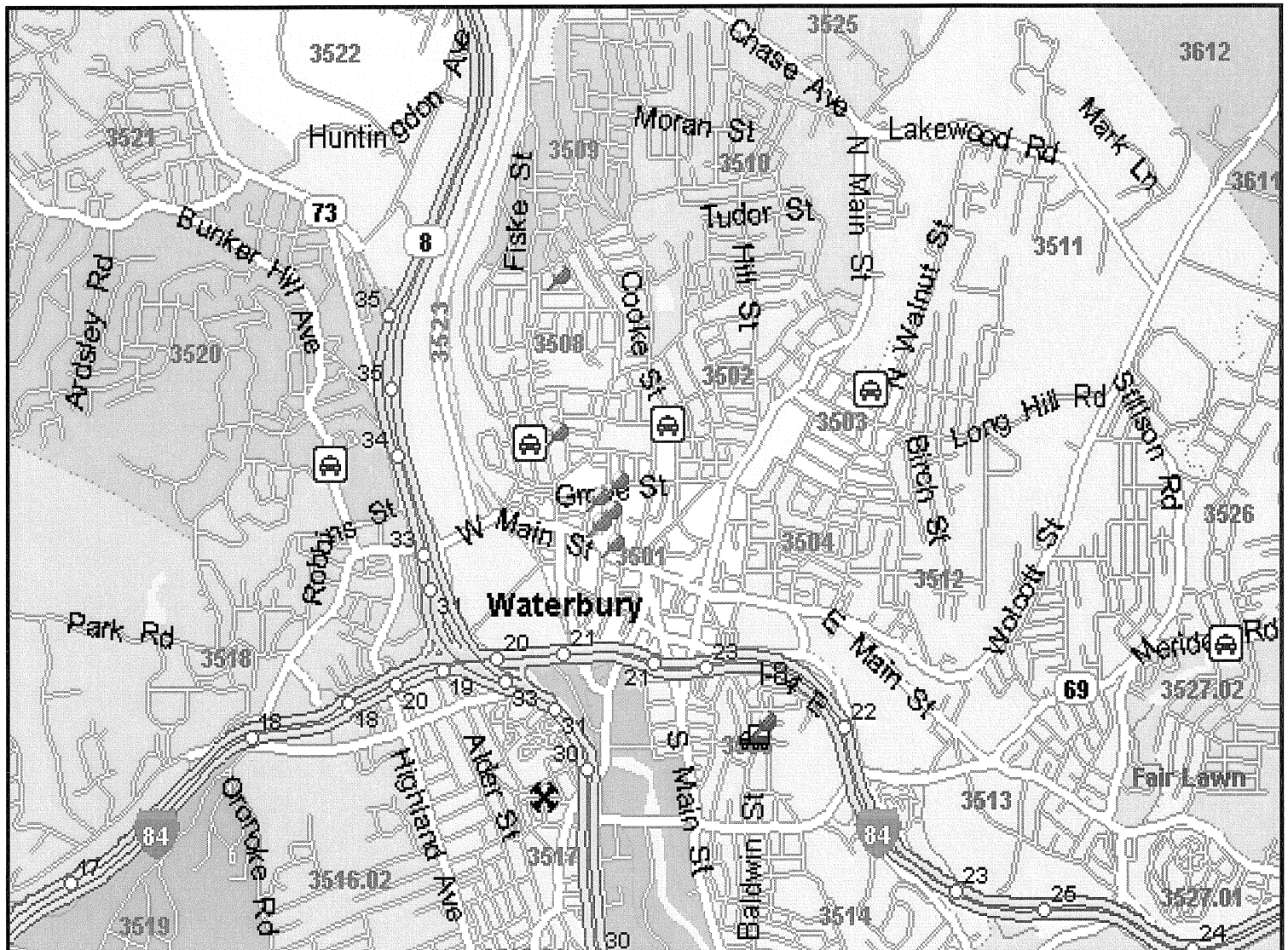
Transportation for Connecticut Food Bank's
Non Emergency Programs
in
Bridgeport








Key for Transportation

	Box Truck
	Large Van
	Pickup Truck
	SUV or Mini Van
	Car

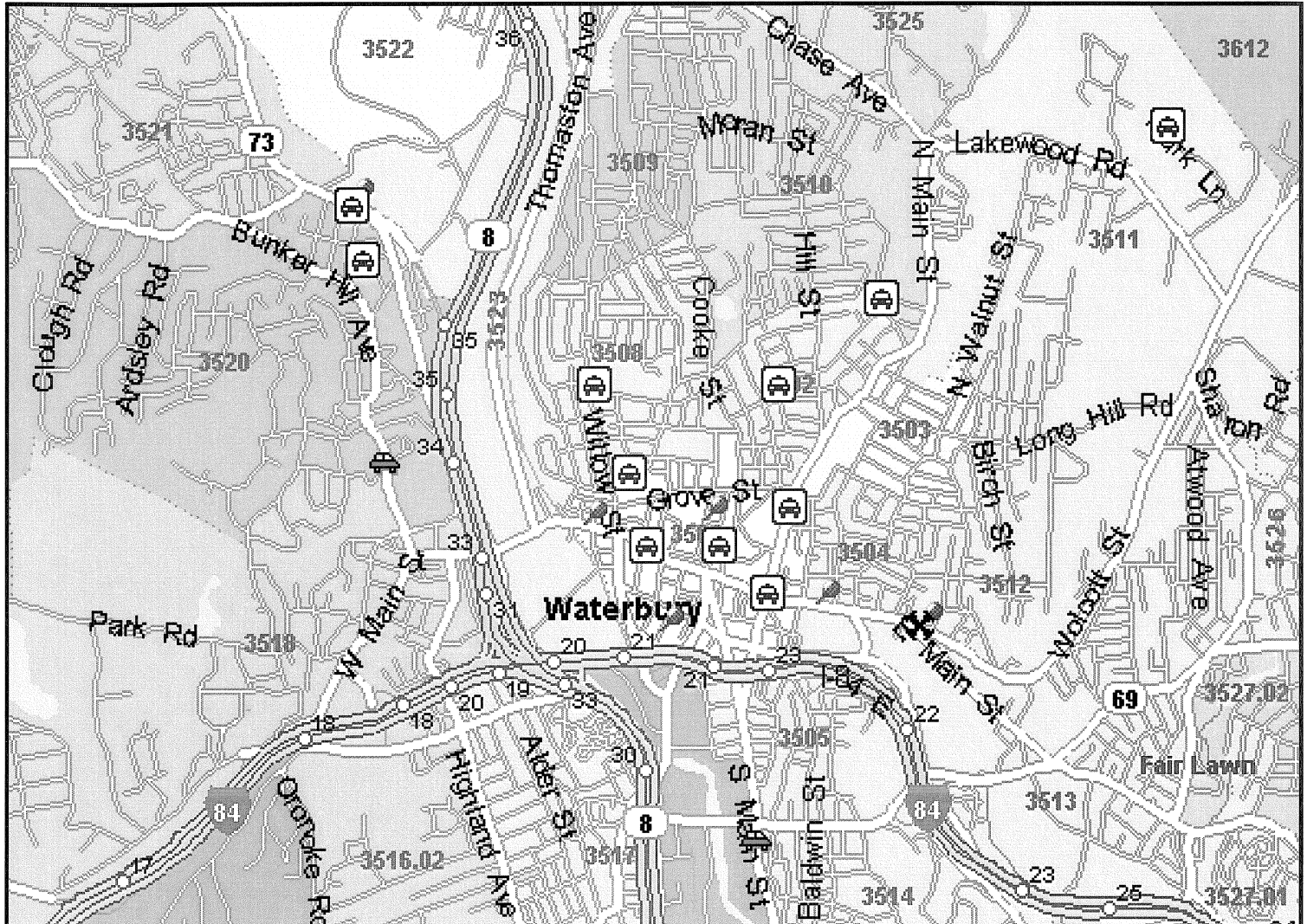
Transportation for Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs in Waterbury



Key for Transportation

	Box Truck
	Large Van
	Pickup Truck
	SUV or Mini Van
	Car

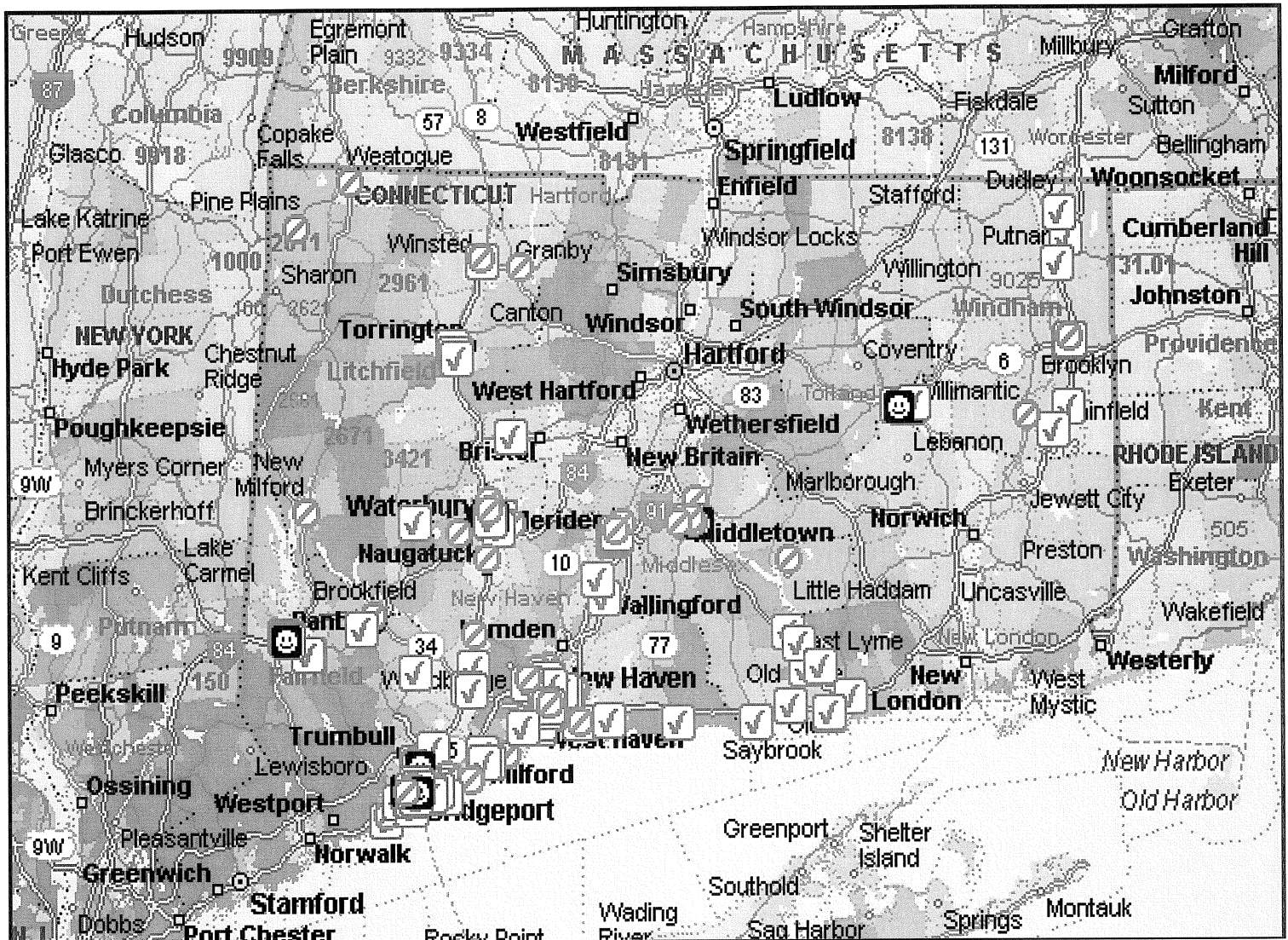
Transportation for Connecticut Food Bank's Non Emergency Programs in Waterbury



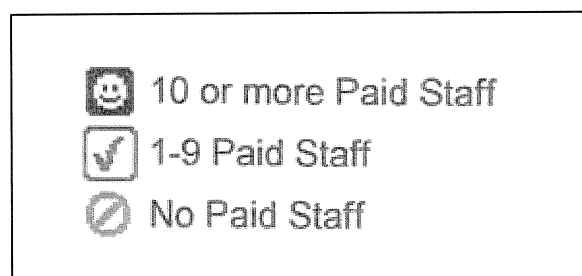
Key for Transportation

	Box Truck
	Large Van
	Pickup Truck
	SUV or Mini Van
	Car

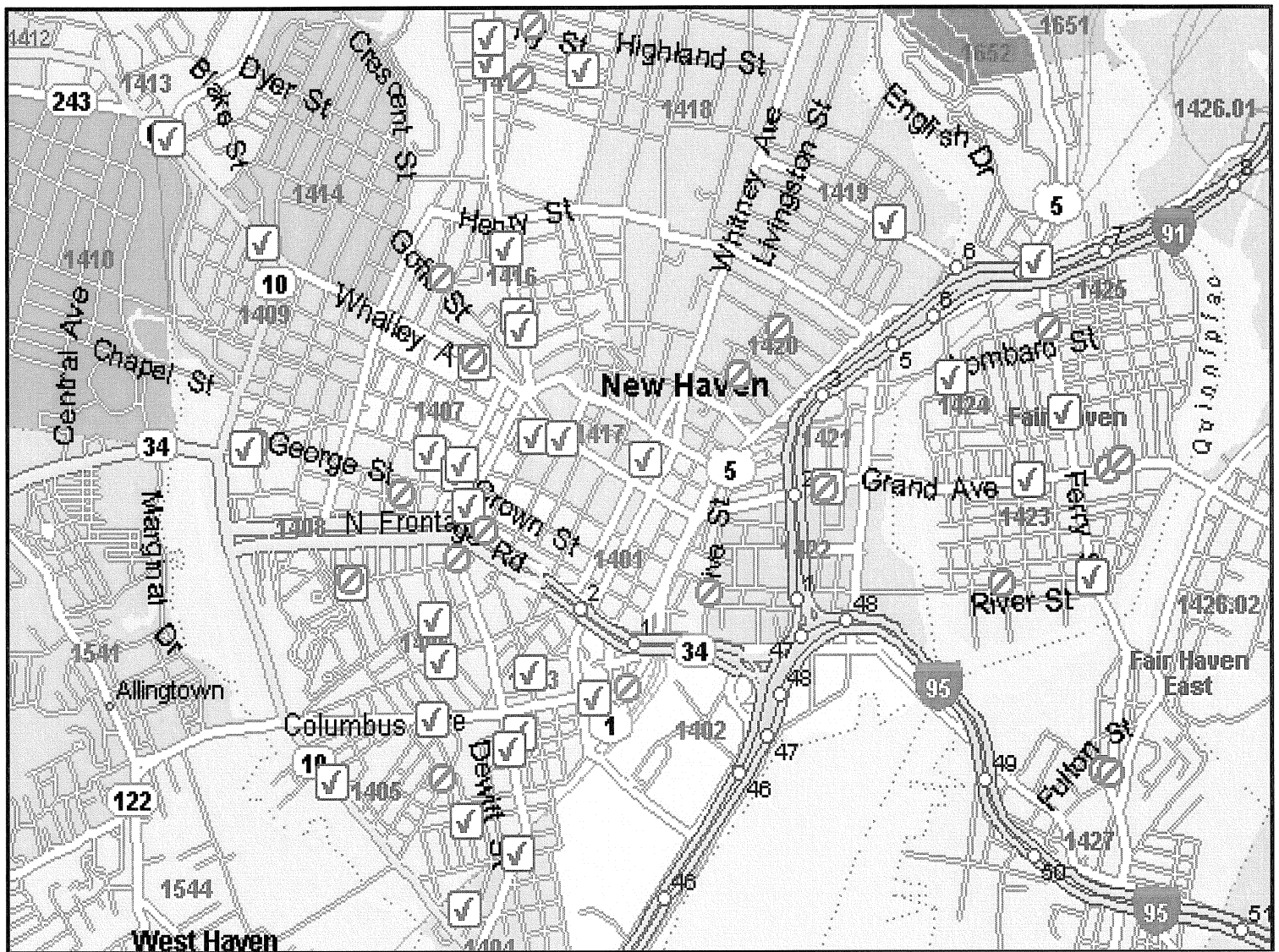
Number of Paid Staff for Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs



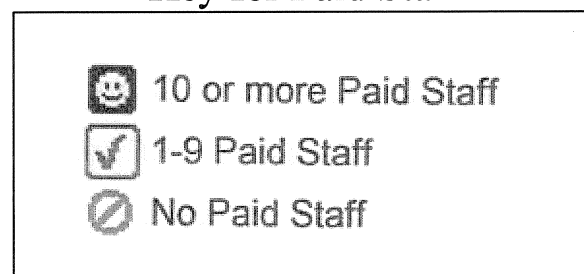
Key for Paid Staff



Emergency Programs in New Haven



Key for Paid Staff



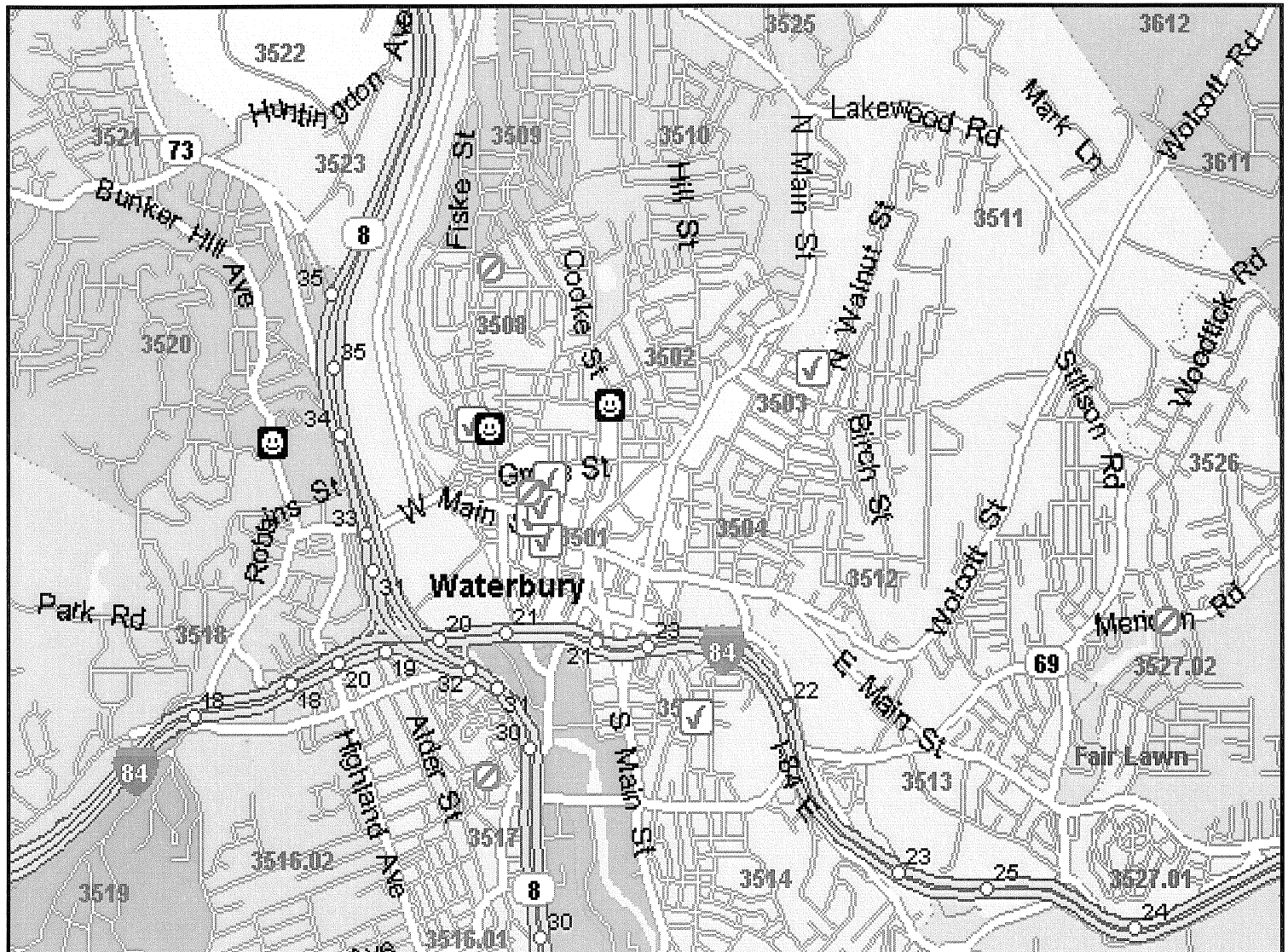
[illegible]

☐ 10 or more Paid Staff

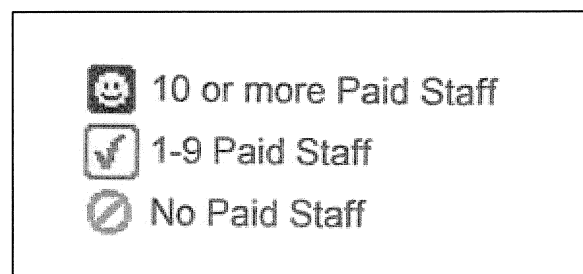
☒ 1-9 Paid Staff

☐ No Paid Staff

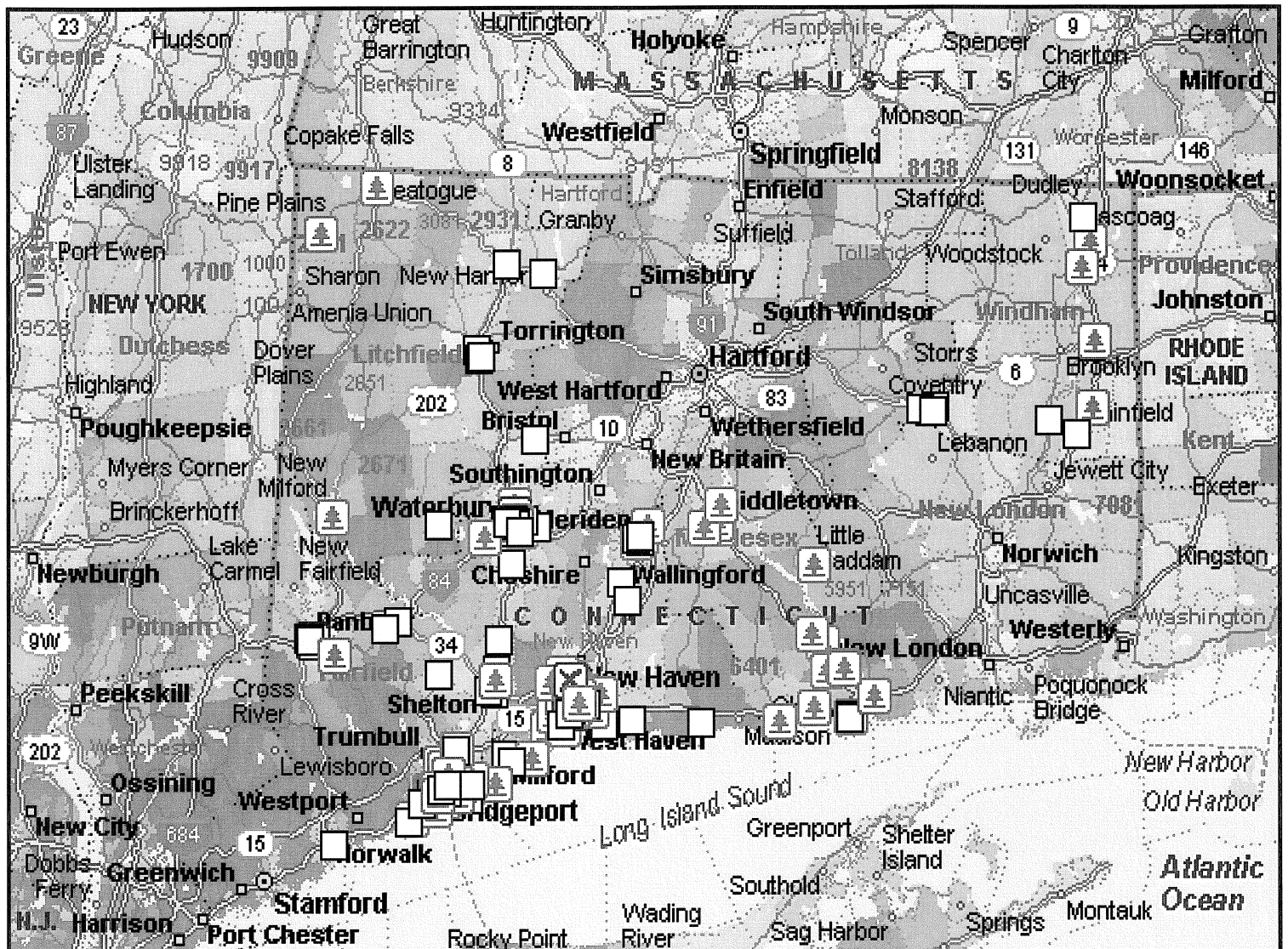
Number of Paid Staff for Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs in Waterbury



Key for Paid Staff



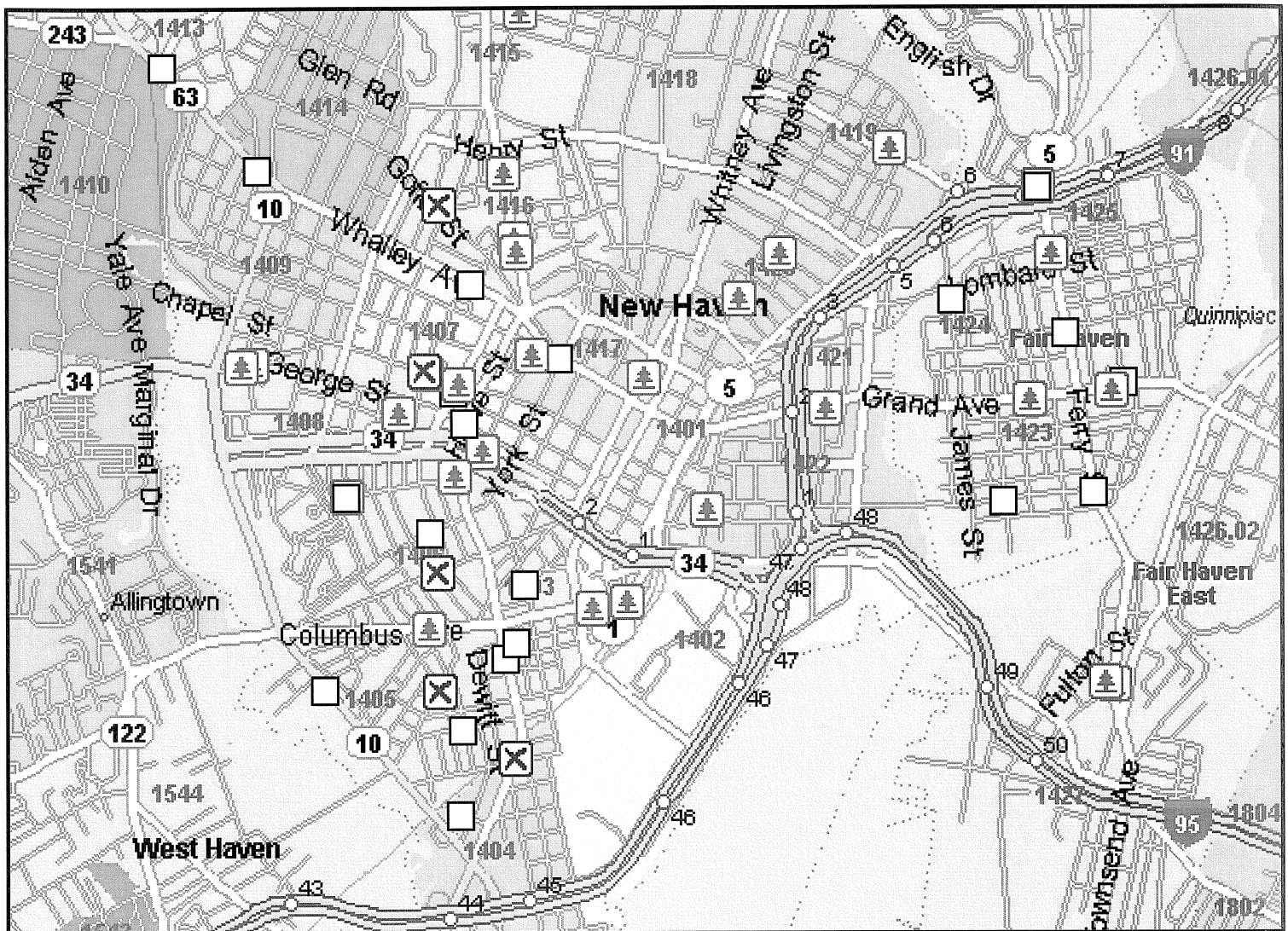
Number of Days Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs are Open






Key for Days Open

	Open once a month or less
	Open 2-4 times a month
	Open 2 or more times a week

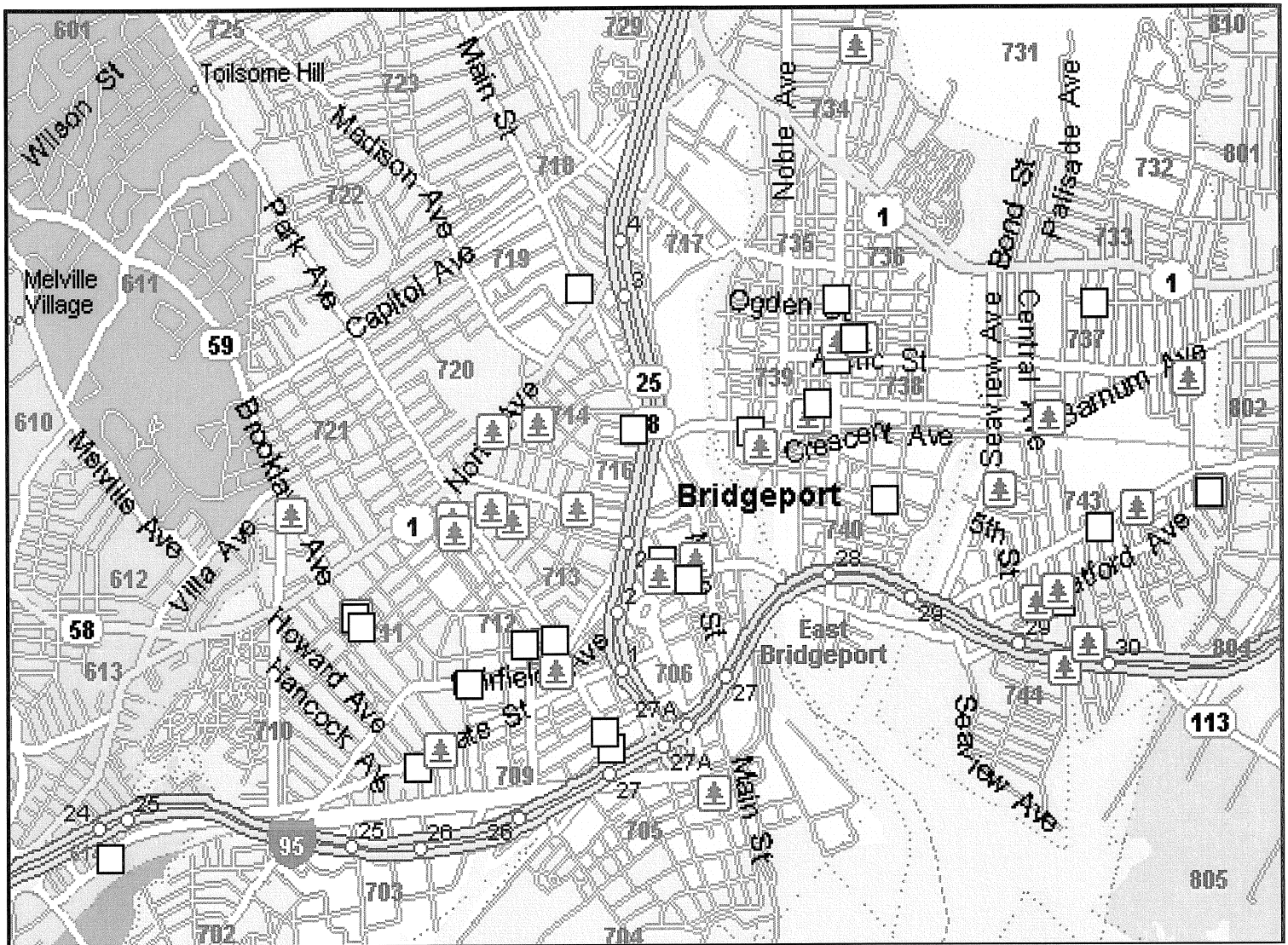
Number of Days Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs in New Haven are Open



Key for Days Open

	Open once a month or less
	Open 2-4 times a month
	Open 2 or more times a week

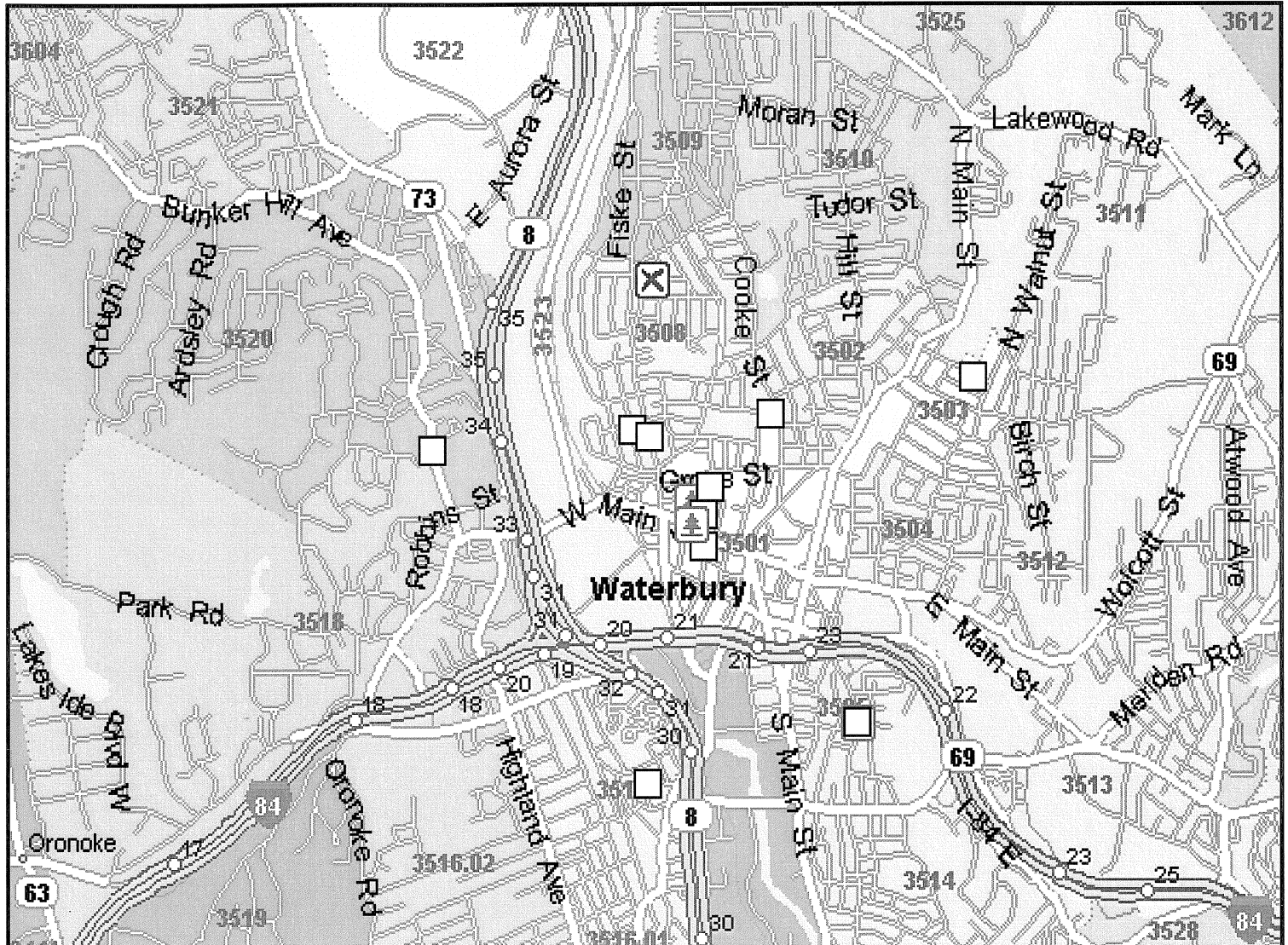
Number of Days Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Program in Bridgeport are Open






Key for Days Open

	Open once a month or less
	Open 2-4 times a month
	Open 2 or more times a week

Number of Days Connecticut Food Bank's Emergency Programs in Waterbury are Open



Key for Open Days

	Open once a month or less
	Open 2-4 times a month
	Open 2 or more times a week

The Next Steps

These GIS maps have been presented internally to the CFB staff, Board of Directors and Strategic Planning Committee for further review. The current research will also be presented to local/municipal food security councils in New Haven, Waterbury, Bridgeport and other larger towns. The research can be used as a tool for these broader groups to help them understand the challenges, gaps or overlaps in their area of interest. Perhaps one of the most important uses for this research is to improve understanding of a complex system by looking at its individual components collectively. Food Council groups, United Ways, state and town departments of social services and other community leaders who are making decisions about human service needs, can better understand capacities of the system that may affect how much food can be distributed and where it is being distributed. For example, it will become increasingly difficult for programs that do not have freezer or cooler capacity to distribute as much food as programs that do have freezer and cooler capacity. Therefore, if a community is interested in increasing the amount of food being distributed but not the number of programs that are distributing food, one way to address the problem would be to increase freezer and cooler capacity of already existing programs.

This study did have several limitations. Connecticut Food Bank does serve over 600 programs that distribute donated food, however, this may not include all programs that serve food insecure people in Connecticut. Programs may exist independently of CFB and their affect on a community and their location are unexamined in this report. Also, the information used in this study was gathered through interviews and files and current information that can change frequently as the status of programs can change overnight for any number of reasons. But this study can be updated easily as status of programs change, using the excel spreadsheets used to create the maps initially. Therefore, the forever changing abilities of the emergency food system can be kept current. This will allow for constant or periodic monitoring of gaps in Connecticut's charitable food system.

This study has given Connecticut Food Bank a comprehensive view of its constituencies. In sum, this analysis provides a tool to better understand a complex system of food distribution. The study is limited because it does not provide direct answers to all the challenges, but assessment of programmatic capacities is vital to the process of finding ways and means that Connecticut Food Bank must pursue to continue fulfilling its mission of alleviating hunger and raising public awareness about the issue.

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