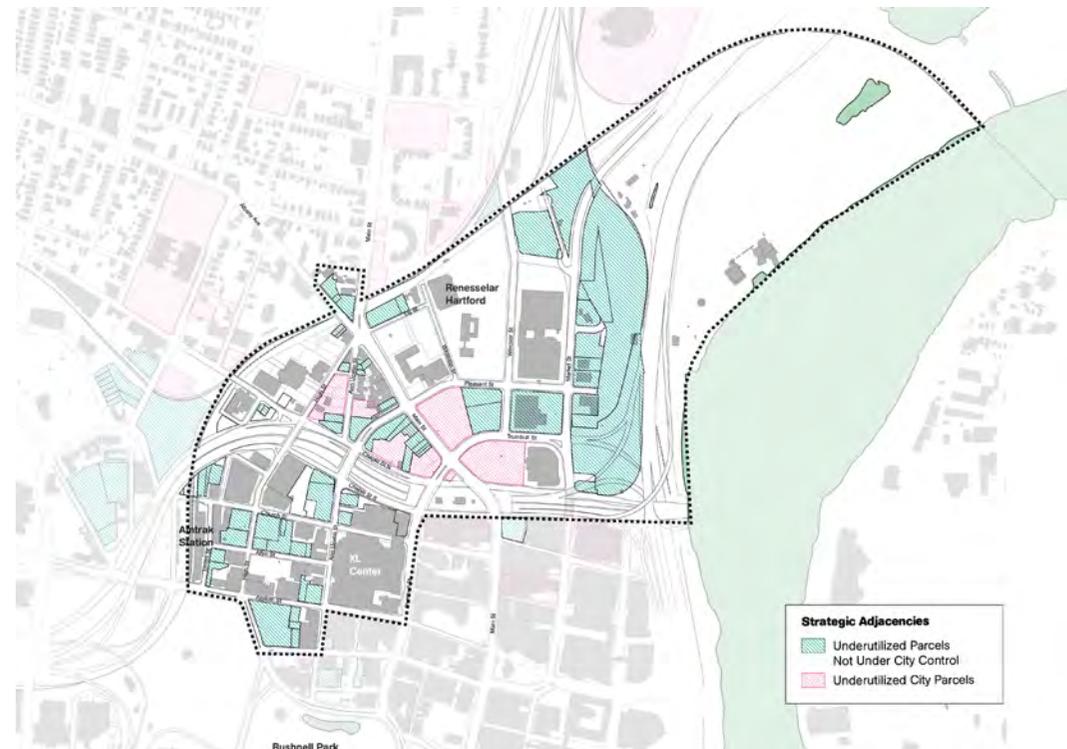


### Strategic Adjacencies

The study area has a wealth of parcels that have been labeled as vacant or otherwise underutilized; however, not all of those parcels are suited for development at this time. The planning approach targets redevelopment areas where these vacant or underutilized properties have proximity to one another, and to more active areas in the downtown core. When clustered they can act as an extension of that downtown activity.

- The City and its development partners should take into consideration
- Adjacencies between underutilized land and City-owned property
  - Underutilized land that can provide shovel-ready development sites
  - Parcel acquisition and any assemblage that may be necessary



### Potential Development Areas

By assessing strategic adjacencies, concentrations of parcels may be found that are the most suitable for redevelopment areas. At times, these parcel clusters will create nodes akin to a neighborhood and other times they may lend themselves to large-scale redevelopment sites, such as the parcels to the east of Market Street.

The potential redevelopment parcels identified meet some established development criteria:

- Their status or use is generally vacant or underutilized, which may include undeveloped lots, surface parking, or obsolete buildings.
- They have a single owner, which reduces the process and expense of parcel assemblage.
- There is no site demolition of existing structures on the lot.
- They are proximate to downtown or other activity centers thereby reducing the distance (both real and perceived) between built areas.
- There is little to no environmental remediation needed on site.

- They are of a scale that is suitable for types of development for which there is a market demand and that are financially feasible.

A deeper investigation into the parcels and areas being identified revealed facts that may be contrary to first observations. Some areas that have multiple parcels are actually held by a single landowner. In this scenario acquisition for development may be less burdensome than assumed because there are multiple parcels within the area identified.



Parking areas of different sizes can yield a range of development scales from single-parcel infill development (as seen in the photo of the surface lot at top) to large redevelopment sites, such as the area pictured above.

DEVELOPMENT AREA	NUMBER OF PARCELS	OWNERSHIP	STATUS/USE	SIZE
Area 1	1	Single	Parking/Building	1.3 acres
Area 2	4	Multiple(2)	Parking	2.8 acres
Area 3	9	Single	Parking	2.2 acres
Area 4	2	Multiple(3)	Parking	1.1 acres
Area 5	14	Multiple(15)	Parking/Vacant	4.0 acres
Area 6	12	Multiple(2)	Parking	3.6 acres
Area 7	3	Multiple (2)	Parking/Vacant	4.9 acres
Area 8	1	Single	Parking	3.4 acres
Area 9	10	Multiple(8)	Parking/Vacant	23.0 acres
Area 10	2	Single	Parking	2.1 acres

Most areas identified are currently surface parking or vacant, as revealed by GIS parcel data. On-the-ground observation yielded similar conditions, making these areas more amenable to development. There are some parcels along Market Street with structures that are active businesses.

Assessment of the number of parcels and ownership data for these areas revealed that despite some areas having a high number of parcels, they are often under the control of the same landowner who has consolidated the parcels into a contiguous area, but still has the opportunity to sell them off piecemeal.

The different tones of gray in the development areas (diagram opposite page) indicate multiple owners. If parcel ownership is contiguous, the tone will be the same for adjacent parcels.



Potential Development Areas



# Downtown Retail and Housing

New residents and retail will revitalize the life of downtown.

# Retail Market Analysis

There is significant un-met demand for retail in Downtown North and Downtown West to serve both local and regional populations.

The retail market analysis revealed that there is not only demand for local retail that could serve the immediate area (both residents and office workers), but that it is also strategically located, such that it is attractive to retailers looking to serve a broader geographic area. In particular, Downtown North, is located at the intersection of two major interstates (I-84 and I-91) with multiple exits for I-84 at the site.

This immediate access has the ability to draw in populations that are not relegated to the immediately surrounding neighborhoods. However, the study also revealed that there is a dearth of retail options in the primary trade area for Downtown North, which includes the residential neighborhoods to the north, often considered a food and retail desert.

The Downtown West neighborhood was also analyzed and concluded that there is a



Figure No. 2

significant amount of retail that could serve a daytime population of office workers in the study area. The Downtown West primary trade area was smaller and found that there are fewer residents to be served by retail, but that the office worker population was significant.

## Downtown North

The retail study was split between Downtown North and Downtown West because they serve very different demographics and present distinct retail demand. The area of Downtown North can potentially provide needed goods and services for the surrounding population, including nearby residents, office workers and visitors. The residents north of the study area are currently underserved by retail and are required to drive to find basic retail services, such as groceries stores.

It was determined that the Downtown North study area has a demand for 163,000 square feet (sf) of additional retail development. This development would produce \$59 million in sales, and by 2017 it would generate up to \$62 million in gross sales. The area could absorb up to 53,000 sf of restaurant space, a new 31,000 sf grocery store and additional retailers, such as department stores, appliance stores and clothing stores.

This site is able to draw upon, not just nearby residents, but also the 70,000 daytime office workers in Downtown, creating additional linkages between Downtown North and the core business district of Downtown Hartford. The



availability of large parcels of vacant and underutilized land make this an attractive area for near term development.

## Downtown West

The Downtown West primary trade area, which is limited to the boundaries of the Downtown West study area for the project and an overall trade area that comprises Downtown Hartford south of I-84. The total trade area is within a 1/4 mile walk (5 minutes) from anywhere in the Downtown West study area. This is a common metric of how far people are willing to walk before they decide to drive or take transit. This proximity bodes well for successful retail.

The study found that Downtown West has an existing demand for 72,000 sf of additional retail development, which would produce up to \$25.7 million in sales. By 2017 it has the potential to produce over \$27 million in gross sales. Retail may include restaurants, neighborhood grocers, bars or pubs, and a discount department store.

The primary population for retail would be daytime office workers. While there are currently a smaller amount of downtown

residents that in the Downtown North trade area, future housing demand may change that scenario.

Ultimately, the retail market analysis has assessed that there is 235,000 sf of retail that could be absorbed between Downtown West and Downtown North. This significant demand for additional retail is a positive sign for the potential of new development in Downtown Hartford.

# Downtown Housing

## The Downtown Housing analysis was conducted to gain a better understanding for the future residential development potential in Downtown.

Downtown housing increased by 626 units between 2000-2013 and using traditional methods of housing projection it is estimated that Hartford will only add 100 units over the next five years. The fluctuation of the housing market, the volatility of local economies and change in consumer preference can all affect demand for housing that historical growth patterns are unable to assume.

Because of this unpredictability, a different approach to a housing analysis was taken. This approach involved a combination of

- ➊ Resident Market Research
- ➋ Demographic Statistics and
- ➌ Precedent Case Studies.

to determine the quantity and type of housing that could be absorbed in the Downtown Hartford study area.

The Resident Market Research assessed current downtown residents and those

interested in the growth of downtown housing. The process included input from

- ➔ 368 survey respondents
- ➔ Four formal focus groups
- ➔ Three informal focus groups at evening events

The results of the survey will help to include on the ground research in the overall market assessment.

Demographic statistics used for the study included

- ➔ Baseline demographics of Downtown, including residents and workers
- ➔ City of Hartford
- ➔ Hartford Metro
- ➔ Psychographic segmentation, which is an analysis of purchasing patterns, lifestyle, and entertainment choices

And lastly, precedent case studies of cities similar to Hartford in size, economic base and demographic profile were analyzed as benchmarks for Hartford. Like Hartford these cities are not “university towns”, they have similar talents pools, they focus on insurance and financial services industries, and they have had significant growth in downtown housing.

These included

- ➔ Cleveland
- ➔ Milwaukee
- ➔ Kansas City
- ➔ Des Moines, and
- ➔ Additional secondary research

## What Was Heard

The focus group interviews produced a series of common themes that could provide insight into ways that Downtown could improve its image and what it has to offer.

- ➔ The is not enough to do, especially on the weekend days
- ➔ The City has an image problem
- ➔ The City needs to do a better job marketing itself
- ➔ It is hard to find a housing product that suits needs and affordability
- ➔ It is important to create a walkable environment that focuses on place-making
- ➔ Access to staples and small quantities of fresh foods is highly desirable.
- ➔ Improved transit on weekends would be helpful

The on-line housing survey that was filled out by 368 respondents showed a demand

for a mix of housing products. The highest response rates included

- ➔ Townhouse or condo that opens to the street (61%)
- ➔ High-rise apartment or condo of 4-10 units (46%)
- ➔ Loft or untraditional (46%)
- ➔ Apartment or condo building (37%)

Some of these housing types exist only in limited quantities and therefore reveal a potential market for such housing types.

Other questions also asked why people would chose to move to Downtown Hartford. Responses varied from providing proximity to work to requiring less driving on a daily basis. The highest rate of responses included

- ➔ For “city life”
- ➔ Proximity to work or school
- ➔ Closer to cultural resources
- ➔ Less driving on a daily basis

Secondary research of downtown residents and those in the metro Hartford area that match shopping and lifestyle preferences can be used to determine what type of amenities are desirable. These similarities reveal that there is latent demand for additional housing

in Downtown Hartford that could serve a regional market, one that is young with a high annual income and discretionary spending potential.

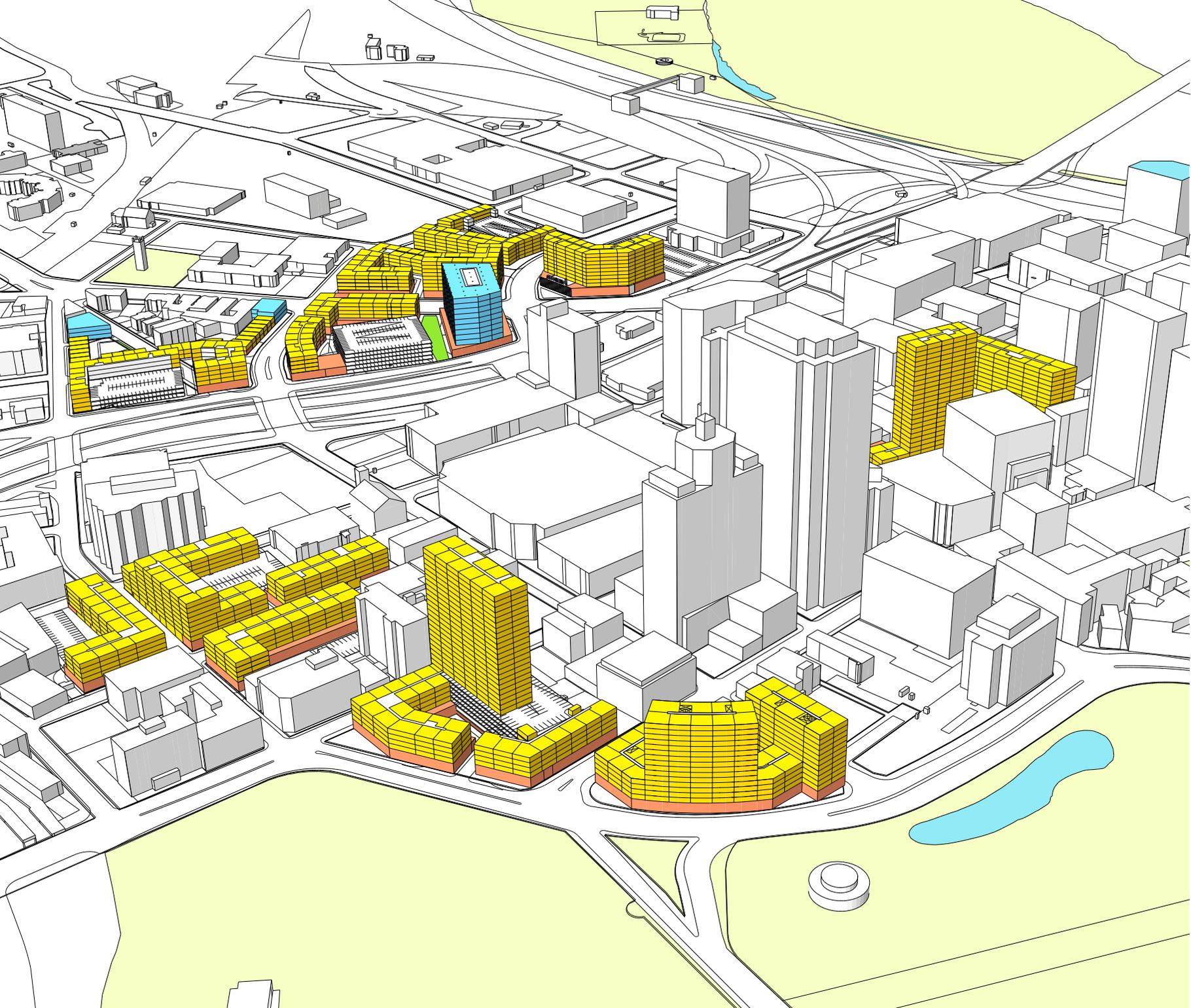
## What Was Learned

Downtown housing’s growth is being led by a young-adult cohort, currently comprising 42% of the households in downtown. Empty nesters are also a growing population in downtown. Based on analysis and the associated median income for young-adult residents (\$60,882)—and considering the average student debt that this demographic carries—it was determined that a rental price point would have to be between \$750 to \$1,000 per month.

It was discovered, based on psychographic fit, that there is a large pool of residents in the metro Hartford area that fit the profile of the downtown resident, totaling 46,950 persons. Analyzing the percentage of residents that are downtown compared to the metro area population, the highest level would equate approximately 13,300 people or 7,400 units. At .5% that would equate to 6,100 people or approximate 3,400 units.

Aside from a benchmark based estimate, looking at the households in the region that have expressed an affinity for urban living (10-16% of the addressable market opportunity in the region), the survey suggests that 30-40% of that demographic would consider living in Downtown Hartford. IRS data suggests that 12,000-15,000 people move into Hartford every year and 7,000-9,000 people on average move within Hartford County. Based on the population distribution considered, that means approximately 1,400 to 2,000 households per year are in these segments and income categories.

Based on the analysis, it is plausible that an additional 1,700 to 4,700 units of housing could be supported in Downtown Hartford. This is taking into account the units presently downtown and the 1,100 units that are planned. How long it will take to reach the maximum build-out is dependent on a number of factors including housing types, prices and rents, and the required place-making to enhance liveability to accelerate present absorption rates. Place-making strategies including investments in public art and park space—through public and private funding—helped to spur additional development in all case study cities.



# Development Districts

Sites identified for future growth arose out of a planning strategy that established criteria for the most opportune development areas.

# Site Selection

Following an established set of criteria, unique areas for infill development were targeted.

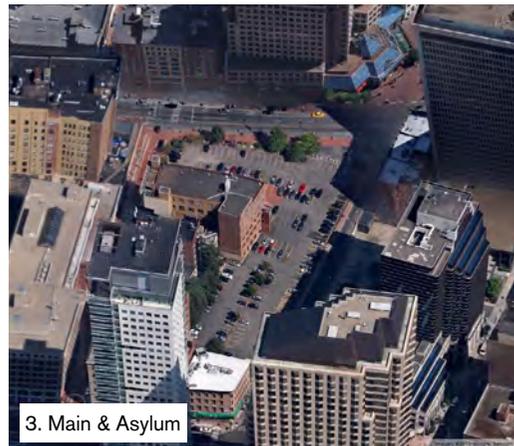
Based upon the logic of identifying a collection of parcels that are underutilized and have strategic advantages—such as City ownership, appropriate sized parcels for development and those that are well-located—five districts or “nodes” have been selected for development planning. Parcel acquisition and ownership may be the biggest hurdle toward assembling contiguous development sites in some cases.



1. Ann Uccello



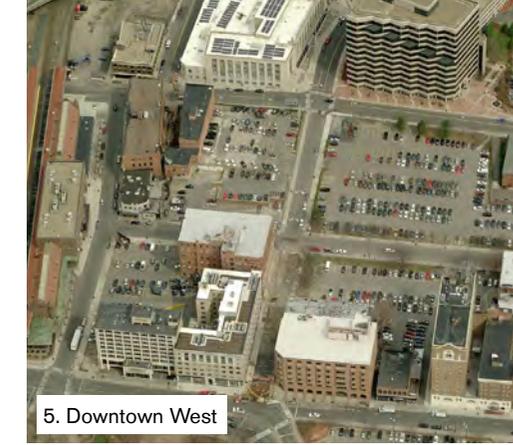
2. Main and Trumbull



3. Main & Asylum



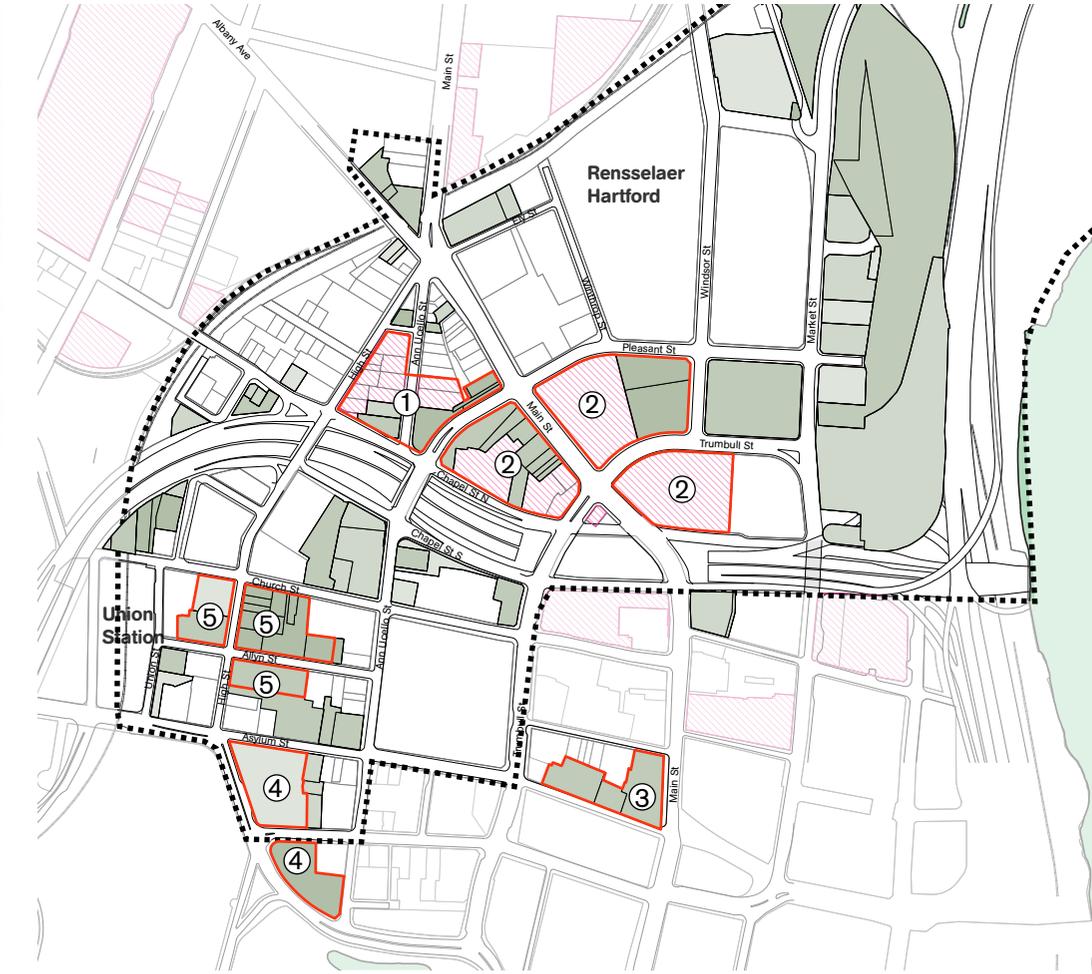
4. Bushnell Park



5. Downtown West

The retail market analysis for Downtown North determined that approximately 163,000 square feet of demand for new retail exists north of I-84. An additional 72,000 square feet of retail could be absorbed in Downtown West within the next five years.

These development scenarios take this absorption into account, providing a consistent active ground-level use. It is understood that not all street level uses will ultimately be retail, but will still be a productive collection of uses that lend a vibrancy and character to the city.



Potential Development Areas

# Five Districts

Five districts or “nodes” have been identified; each one offers a different set of opportunities.

Some of the development areas are attractive based on their ability to fill in an already rich fabric of urbanism, such as Downtown West and Bushnell Park. Other sites, such as Main and Trumbull, are vacant or underutilized City owned parcels that are ripe for disposition for larger scale development.

All of these development areas, however, must have an accompanying improved public realm that complements the quality of new development. The streets in Downtown North have excess capacity for the amount of traffic they actually carry. Furthermore, some streets in Downtown West have poorly utilized their available right-of-way (ROW). Solutions to this condition have been incorporated into the district plans that follow.

In these scenarios, residential units are provided one parking space per unit. This differs from the current regulations of 1.25 spaces per unit, but represents a more progressive approach commonly used for

downtown residential parking. Dedicated retail parking was provided for the grocery store in Downtown North; all other retail will be accommodated in new excess spaces or in existing parking downtown.

Building typologies for the development scenarios will establish the number of stories permitted.

- Low-rise Mixed Use: 4-5 stories using wood frame construction.
- Mid-rise Mixed Use: 10-12 stories using steel frame construction.
- Landmark High-rise: Select buildings will be identified for high-rise development. These heights will set a maximum number of stories.

The heights of the buildings reflect the development economics of construction types. Four to five story wood frame buildings are considerably less expensive per square foot than steel high-rise buildings that exceed seventy feet in height, the threshold for high-rise construction. As a result, buildings are either shown at four or five stories to maximize density with wood frame construction, thus maximizing the return on land cost – or are shown at ten stories or taller to provide enough density to

allow developers to recoup the cost of steel construction and other features that are required as a result of the more stringent high-rise building code.

Standard heights were used when measuring floor-to-floor height for prototypical buildings in the development scenarios.

- Residential: 11’
- Office/Commercial: 13’-6”
- Retail (Ground Level): 18’-20’

The following are districts identified for new development:

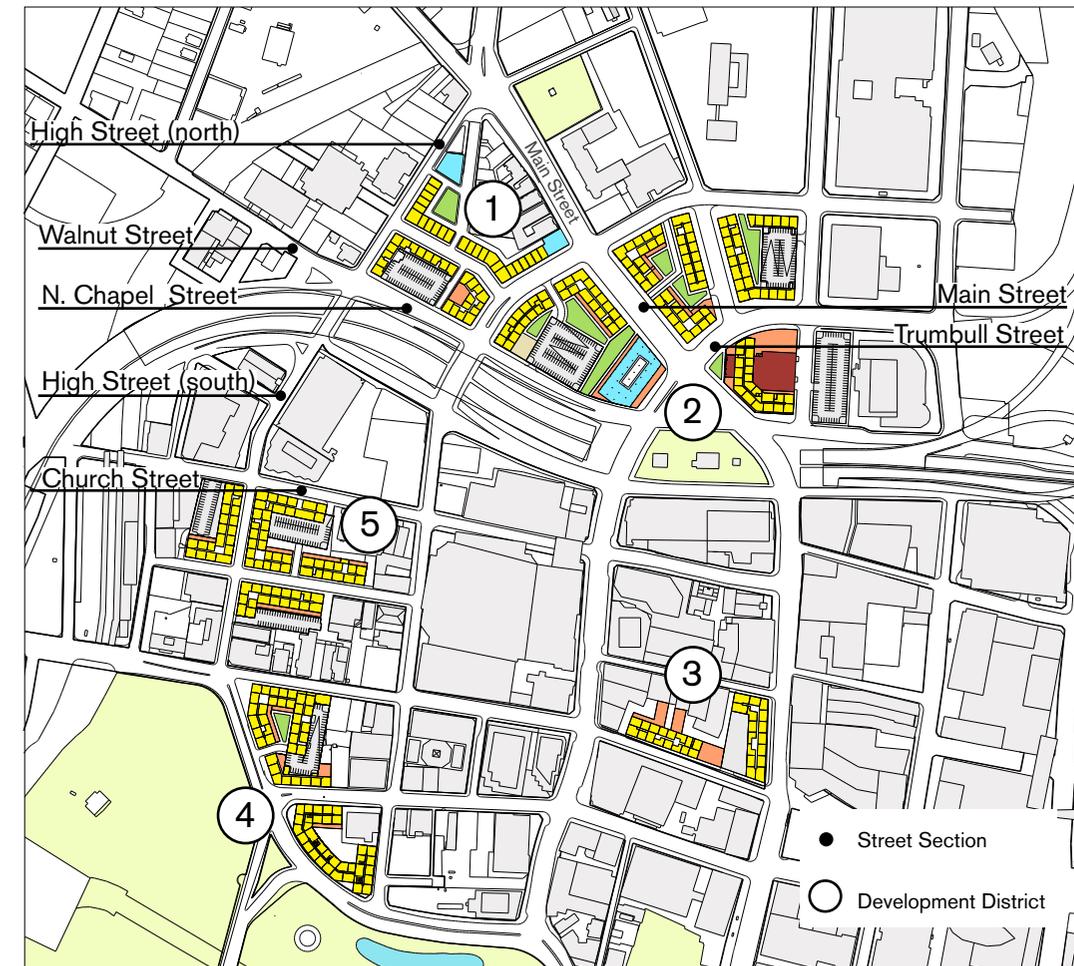
**1. Ann Uccello:** Located across from the new municipal complex, which sits between High Street and Pleasant Street, this district is a neighborhood-scale development with three-story townhomes, a new cross street, and corner retail. This scale complements the existing Main Street buildings.

**2. Main and Trumbull:** Based on retail market analysis, there is demand for a substantial amount of new retail in Downtown North (approx. 163,000sf), including a 30,000sf grocery store. This area could form a new town center with retail anchors, residential development, and a proposed municipal office building.

**3. Main and Asylum:** Hartford’s Main Street forms the primary north-south spine for downtown. Its edge condition and public realm are continuous for the most part, but gaps exist. At the intersection of Main Street and Asylum Street, there is a large surface parking lot. A new mixed-use building could anchor that corner and repair the broken street wall condition.

**4. Bushnell Park:** Bushnell Park is one of Hartford’s most valued assets. Currently, there is a large surface parking lot on the corner of Asylum Street and Ford Street, as well as a YMCA building immediately south on the corner of Ann Uccello and Ford Street. These two sites offer views and access to the park, and they are only blocks from Main Street and Downtown West.

**5. Downtown West:** Adjacent to Union Station—in the heart of a restaurant and nightlife district and amidst historic buildings—Downtown West’s development opportunities are a natural extension of the already vibrant district. There are a number of surface parking lots dotting the district that could be used for infill sites, particularly a series of lots at the intersection of High Street and Allyn Street.



# 1 Ann Uccello

## Creating a Neighborhood

The area that is bound by High Street to the west, Main Street/Pleasant Street to the east, and Chapel Street to the south is mostly a collection of vacant lots (at the southern end) and Downtown North's only



Much of the area is currently a surface parking lot.



Older buildings will be preserved and new development will complement their scale.

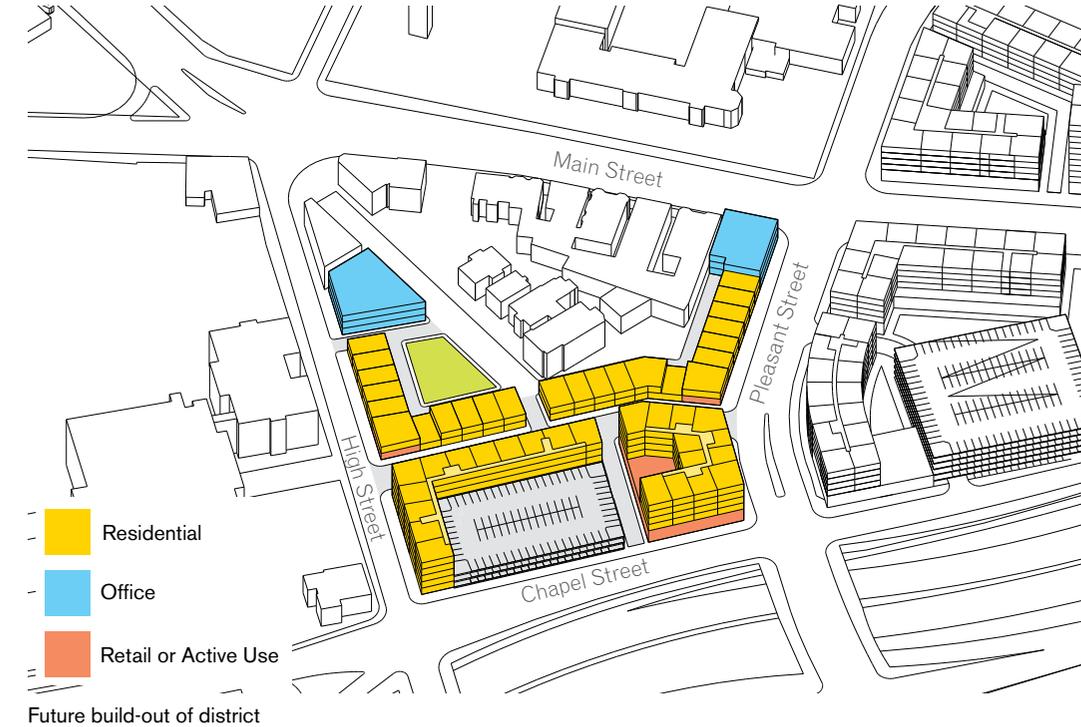
active retail along Main Street. The area is bisected by Ann Uccello Street which is truncated on the northern end at the intersection of Main Street and Albany Avenue and terminates at Chapel Street to the south.

The lower scale building stock—largely turn-of-the-century three-story brick buildings, and the new municipal complex—lends itself to a neighborhood character. Building upon the scale of the existing neighborhood, this plan proposes townhouses, corner retail, and Low-rise Mixed Use buildings (generally 4-5 stories) that are sensitive to the context of the area. Corner retail provides a social gathering space, while a courtyard behind the townhouses offer private outdoor space. Townhouses will have street facing front doors and vehicular access via a rear alley.

A new street, running east-west through the area will provide a connection between High Street and Pleasant Street, facilitating better circulation in Downtown North. In addition, High Street will change from a one-way into a two-way street.



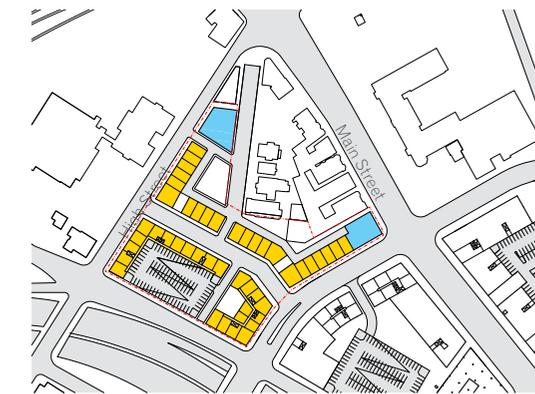
Corner store retail and townhouses provide the desired density and activity for this area.



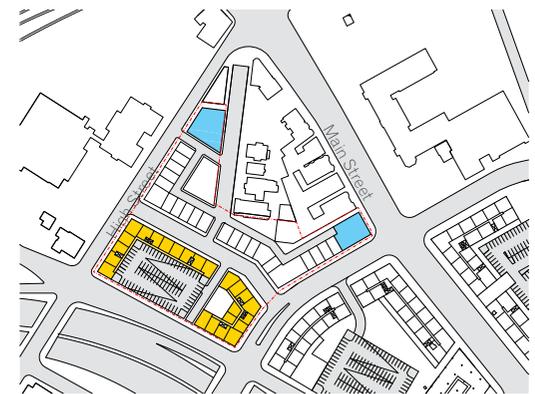
Future build-out of district



Ground Floor Plan



Second Level Plan



Upper Level Plan

	Area	Units
Residential		129
Commercial	35,000 sf	
Retail/Active Use	19,000 sf	
Parking		174 spaces

# High Street (north of I-84)

The conversion of High Street from one-way southbound to a two-way street addresses a number of challenges with its current configuration. This will be outlined in greater detail in the Transportation Chapter (p. 76).

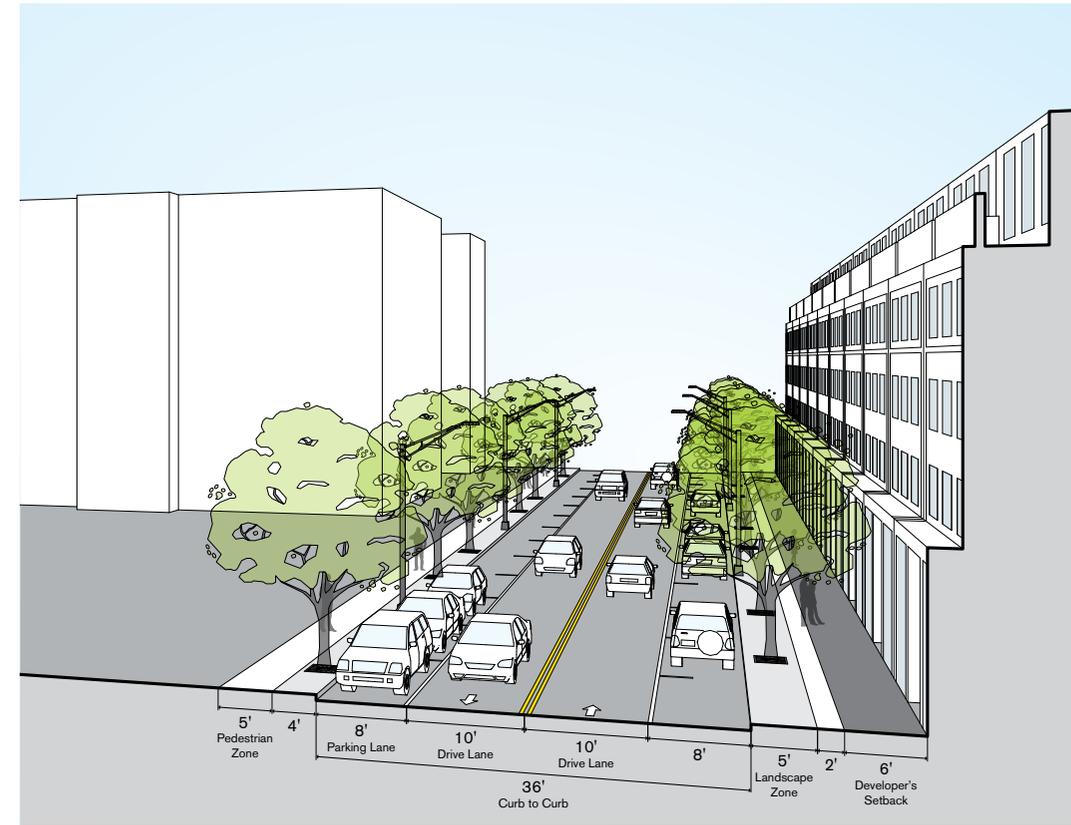
The proposed design of High Street remains a smaller scale, low-speed street with two travel lanes and on-street parking on either side of the street. Due to its constrained ROW it requires a small developer setback to accommodate an appropriately sized sidewalk.

	Existing	Proposed
<b>ROW</b>	52 feet	58 feet*
<b>Curb-to-curb</b>	36 feet	36 feet
<b>Number of travel lanes</b>	3 lanes	2 lanes
<b>On-street Parking</b>	No	Yes
<b>Bike Lanes</b>	No	No
<b>Direction</b>	1-way	2-way

\* 6' developer setback



High Street looking north.



Proposed High Street design

# N. Chapel Street

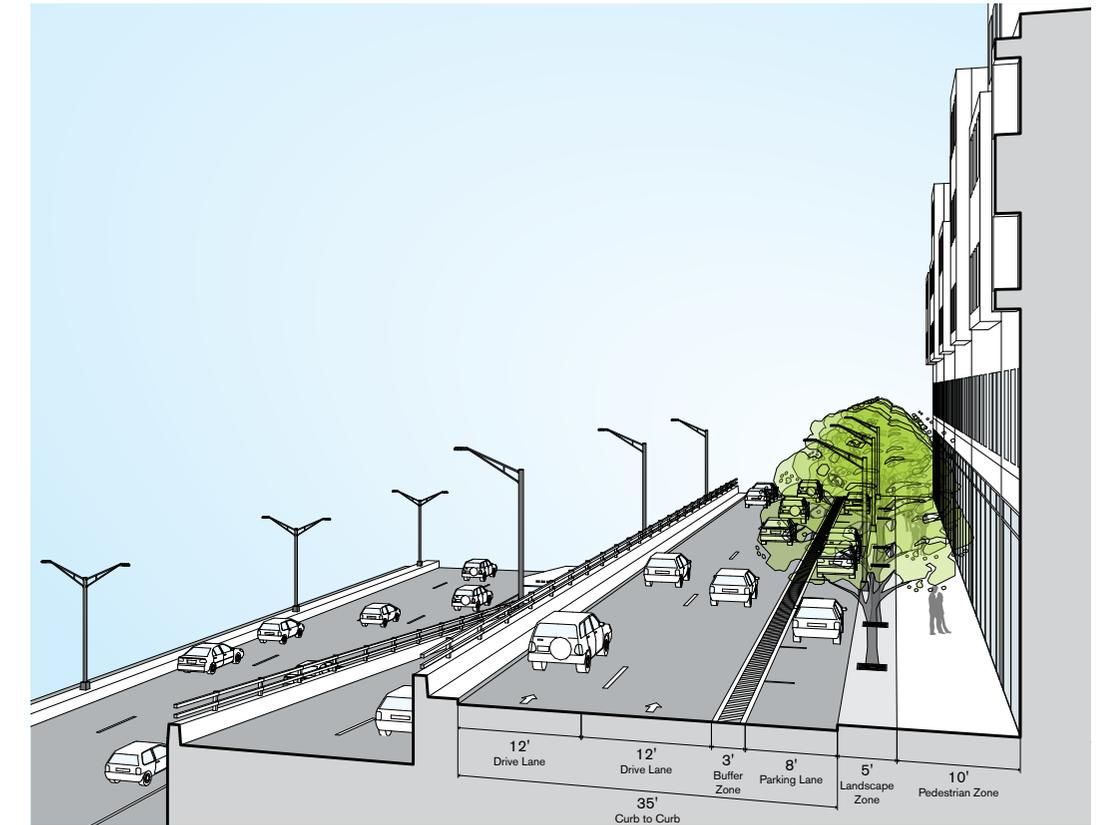
N. Chapel Street serves as one of two frontage roads for I-84 within the study area. Its current configuration is three lanes westbound; however, based on its daily traffic counts it can be reduced to two travel lanes, opening up one lane for on-street parking on the northern side of the street.

As a primary frontage road, N. Chapel runs adjacent to the interstate, ostensibly acting as the backside of the Downtown North area. While it serves more as a vehicular access route that an active public street, it will still generously accommodate pedestrian space and landscape treatment.

	Existing	Proposed
<b>ROW</b>	50 feet	50 feet
<b>Curb-to-curb</b>	42 feet	35 feet
<b>Number of travel lanes</b>	4 lanes	2 lanes
<b>On-street Parking</b>	No	Yes
<b>Bike Lanes</b>	No	No
<b>Direction</b>	One-way	One-way



N. Chapel Street looking west.



Proposed Chapel Street design