

## Executive Summary: Union Station

### What Do "Transit Oriented Development" (TOD) Districts Look

Successful TOD districts have a blend of housing, retail, and/or office and a good measure of density, whether job density or housing density. Development is more compact and less dependent on parking and auto use. Infrastructure costs for streets, water, sewer, and utilities are reduced while property values are typically increased.

Other key elements include an attractive, safe and inviting pedestrian environment as well as public space integrated with the transit station and commercial space to create a "sense of place." Buildings are located near the street edge with several windows and doors on the ground floor. Public streets and walkways are organized in a grid pattern that creates comfortably sized blocks. The districts are usually within a ¼ to ½ mile radius around a station, or a comfortable five to ten minute walking distance.

### Municipal Advisory Committee

Robert Painter, Committee Chairperson - City Council, City of Hartford

Gerry Maine - Planning Department, City of Hartford

Stephen Jewett - Commission on the City Plan, City of Hartford

Kevin Burnham - Public Works Department, City of Hartford

Glenn Geathers - Hartford Economic Development Commission

John Shemo - MetroHartford Regional Economic Alliance, Inc.

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Jackie Fongemie/Shawn Holloway - Behind The Rocks Neighborhood

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### Capitol Region Council of Governments

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For more information or to see the full report contact CRCOG at 860-522-2217 or go to CRCOG's or Hartford's websites: [www.crcog.org](http://www.crcog.org); [www.hartford.gov](http://www.hartford.gov)

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### Implementation

Implementation is focused on long term planning for the Ann Street Corridor and putting in place a framework for future development.

Developments in the Ann Street Corridor would involve longer-term acquisition and reparcelization strategies that are premature to describe at this time. The City owns several of the parcels north of I-84 and should initiate planning activities to determine the additional potential for the utilization of any tax lien property.

#### Short-Term: 2004-2009

- Consider incorporating station area plan into Plan of Conservation and Development
- Consider adopting a TOD zoning district
- Identify sources of funds for capital improvements and land assembly
- Plan and program the Union Station Intermodal Center/Garage/Office Building
- Develop a master plan for the Ann Street Corridor
- Conduct a major traffic/pedestrian circulation study around Union Station and design appropriate changes to roadways and the pedestrian environment

#### Medium-Term: 2010-2019

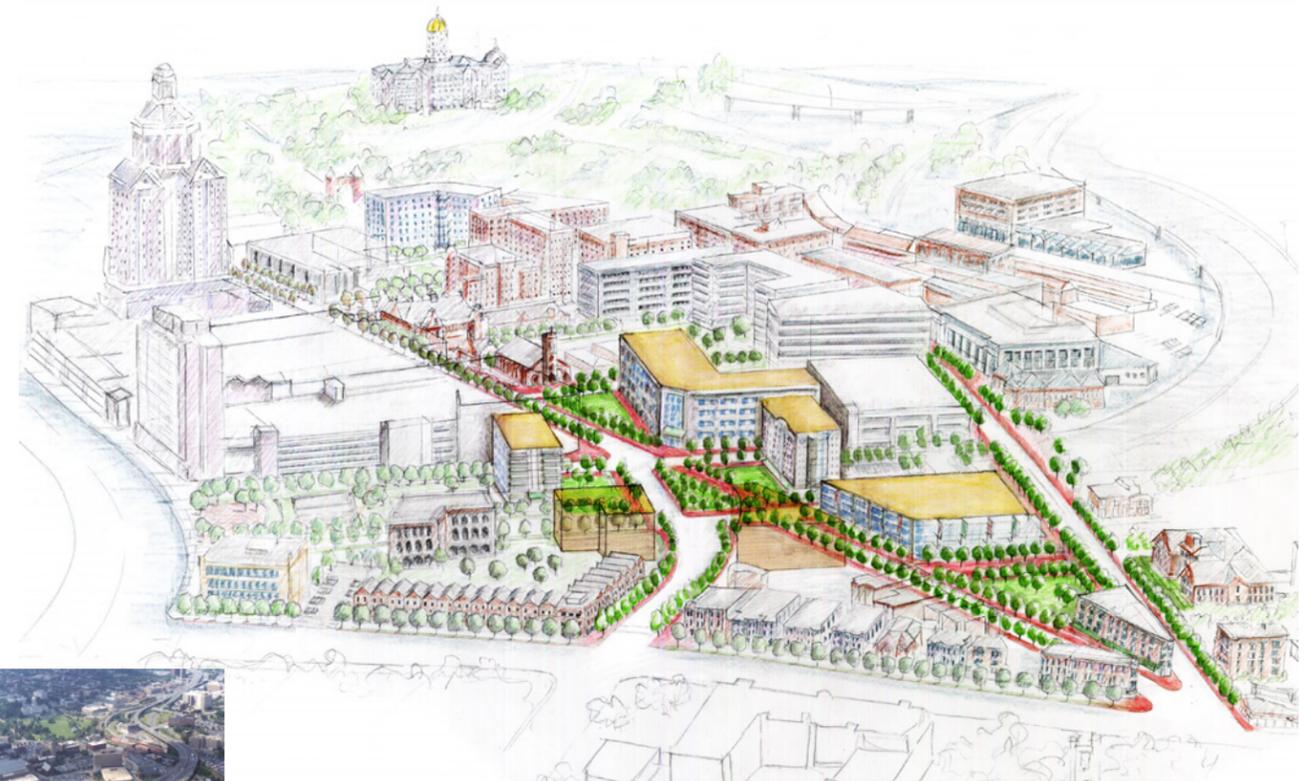
- Develop the Intermodal Center/Garage/Air-Rights Office Building
- Plan and design the I-84 decks and parks
- Assemble parcels for development
- Assist property owners and developers in relocation activities as required
- Prepare RFPs for development of publicly owned parcels

#### Long-Term: 2020-2025

- Build the I-84 decks and parks
- Develop the Ann Street Corridor north of I-84

Prepared in cooperation with citizens, the Cities of New Britain and Hartford, the Towns of West Hartford and Newington, the Capitol Region Council of Governments, and the Connecticut Department of Transportation. The opinions, findings and conclusion expressed in this publication are those of the respective Municipal Advisory Committees that served on the project and do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the Connecticut Department of Transportation and/or the U.S. Department of Transportation.

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View southwest down Ann Street corridor (with Main St. in foreground). A new government center is shown north of I-84 with new residential buildings flanking plazas on I-84 air-rights. A landscaped spine along Ann and High Streets connects this new district south across I-84 to downtown.

### Station Area Planning Project

The Capitol Region Council of Governments, working with citizens and the City of Hartford, has developed plans for the areas near stations for the New Britain - Hartford busway.

Please examine the development plan shown here to learn how the Union Station area could change. The ideas presented here are designed to make the most out of the proposed transportation investment and are intended to stimulate discussion.

Planning around transit (bus or rail) stations is known as Transit Oriented Development and it has been successful throughout the country. The Pittsburgh busway and the Washington D.C. Metro are examples where districts surrounding the rapid transit systems thrive, adding to the quality of life in these communities.

The New Britain-Hartford Busway Project is a new rapid transit facility being built by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. It is an exclusive 9.4-mile long busway, linking downtown New Britain with downtown Hartford's Union

Station. The busway has stops in New Britain, Newington, West Hartford and Hartford.

The goal of this Station Area Planning project is to coordinate transportation and land use planning for the areas around proposed stations in order to enhance economic benefits to Hartford while increasing ridership. Development concepts are focused on strategies to create vibrant walkable districts with easy access to regional transit.

This summary provides an overview of the plan for Ann Street and the Union Station station area.

#### Why Hartford

Union Station was one of six station areas chosen for detailed study. The station location at the edge of downtown, within walking distance of employment centers and underutilized land, creates opportunities to create a new mixed-use district close to transit.

### “The Bones” - Key Development Principles

The Plan shown here is conceptual. As individual projects evolve over time in response to market conditions, funding opportunities and parcel availability, it will be important that the project designs adhere to the following guiding principles - “the bones” - of the plan:

- Encourage development corridor along Ann Street with new buildings tied together by a series of small parks.
- Take advantage of large underutilized sites close to downtown for both office and residential development.
- Fill gap created by I-84 thereby connecting Clay Arsenal to Downtown Hartford.
- Create a mixed-use facility at Union Station that accommodates busway needs and provides private development opportunities.
- Require new housing to be at densities of 12 or more dwelling units per acre and commercial development to be at densities of 25 or more employees per acre to create a more active 18 hour downtown.

### Economic Benefits

The potential tax and economic benefits of the Union Station joint development project have been quantified. Given their indeterminate nature and timing, the fiscal and economic development impacts of the Ann Street initiative have not been examined.

The proposed joint development project would consist of an estimated 104,000 square feet of office space, 20,000 s.f. of retail space and 400 structured parking spaces. This would have an estimated construction value of \$17.1 million, generating an estimated 129 direct and indirect person years of employment, and \$6.1 million direct and indirect payroll dollars. Once fully occupied 300 permanent, sustained jobs would be created generating an annual payroll of \$14.8 million. Assuming the building was leased to the private sector and paid full property taxes, annual property tax revenues would be \$756,773. All figures are in constant 2004 dollars and do not include any impact from inflation and are based upon current payroll and tax rates.

### Development Summary Table

Use	Total
Office	567,920 sq ft
Residential	1,139 units
Government Center	218,706 sq ft
Retail	13,000 sq ft
Structured Parking	907 spaces



### Transit Pushes Redevelopment North

The Ann Street Initiative is a long range vision with a singular purpose: to focus development in the downtown core within walking distance of working, shopping and entertainment destinations and within easy walking distance of the Union Station Transit Station and the Downtown Circulator.

The bold vision is to use the proximity to transit, employment and entertainment retail to revitalize the north side of I-84. The large amount of developable property within five to ten minutes of the heart of the city creates a rare opportunity to redevelop a neglected district.

The plan includes decking over I-84 between High and Trumbull Streets, reclaiming unused land, reconnecting the Clay Arsenal neighborhood to downtown, and developing Ann Street with a series of small and mid-sized parks connecting Bushnell Park on the south to Tunnel Park on the north.

Development on vacant parcels between Church Street and Albany Avenue, including air-rights over I-84, extends downtown to the north with new residential and office uses. New parks on I-84 air rights provide an elegant front door for



Aerial view of Union Station and Bushnell Park facing south. Union Station shown with red dot.

surrounding buildings as well as for new housing on the air rights.

North of I-84, two options were studied. The preferred plan (shown here) leverages the forthcoming construction of a public safety complex in this area by proposing a consolidation of some additional city offices, which are currently in separate locations around the city, into a new City Government Center. The Center has a large indoor atrium over Ann Street. The atrium splits the building and provides a publicly accessible portion of the building with transaction counters and assembly spaces on the east side of Ann Street, and a “back office” portion of the building for administrative offices on the west side.

The other option is a series of new residential buildings along Ann and Pleasant Streets, and rehabilitation of many existing residential structures. Both plans include development of a proposed City Public Safety Complex on the west side of High Street.

At Union Station, on the triangular parcel bound by Spruce Street, Asylum Street and I-84, currently in use for surface parking, a new mixed-use building is proposed. The building combines an expanded parking supply for the transit station, an air-rights office building, and neighborhood service retail along the Asylum Street frontage. The retail and office space on Asylum Street will add activity and a sense of security along this heavily traveled pedestrian route.