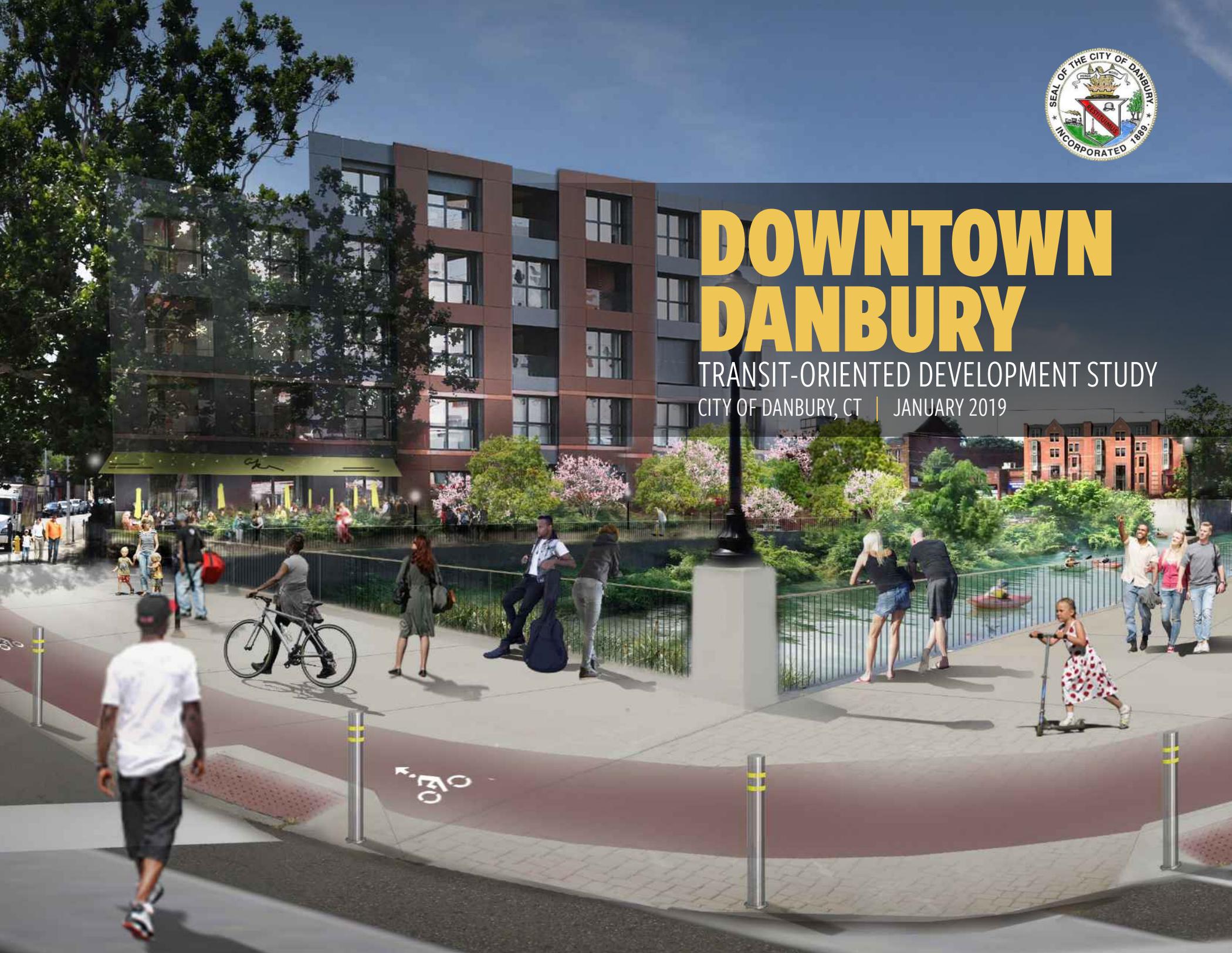




DOWNTOWN DANBURY

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT STUDY
CITY OF DANBURY, CT | JANUARY 2019





ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

On behalf of the City of Danbury, I thank the many City residents, stakeholders, and community businesses and partners who provided valuable input that helped develop and refine the initiatives recommended in this Study. I also thank the Downtown Danbury Transit-Oriented Development Study Task Force members who gave of their time and shared their vast knowledge of Downtown Danbury over the course of the preparation of this Study.

As we blaze our path to the future, we honor and remember our storied past that has helped shape the form of the City from a land use, transportation, and policy perspective. The urban landscape of Downtown Danbury is changing. Positive energy has been ignited Downtown by the activities of the Task Force, private investments in housing and retail, public investment in institutional land uses, and the synergistic activities of Danbury's Downtown cultural and civic organizations. The benefits of a more focused transit-oriented development approach will help to continue to attract investment in Downtown Danbury and create a vibrant atmosphere for those who live, work, play, and visit Downtown. As a City, we remain committed to moving the Vision of this Downtown Danbury Transit-Oriented Development Study forward.

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City of Danbury

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

The Downtown Danbury Transit-Oriented Development (“TOD”) Study provides a strategy to encourage TOD in the area within a 10-minute walk of the Danbury Train Station (see Figure 1). TOD refers to real estate development that emphasizes compact, mixed-use development in walkable settings that are located near good transit service. The TOD approach helps attract investment and increase vitality in places with a mix of opportunities to live, work, shop, study, and play by providing a variety of convenient transportation choices. The strategy of this TOD Study is to build upon established strengths of market potential, urban form, multi-modal transportation options, and cultural activity to expand economic and community development opportunities for Danbury and its region. Funded through a grant from the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management Responsible Growth and TOD Program and the City of Danbury, the TOD Study process was stewarded by a Task Force of key stakeholders, including representatives of City government, regional government, downtown organizations, transit agencies, downtown educational institutions, and business and property owners.

The TOD Study provides new analysis and recommends action-oriented initiatives to supplement the strong foundation of coordinated public and private programs and activities that have leveraged Downtown Danbury’s natural assets, including the City’s robust housing and employment markets. The Study approach was guided by the following principles:

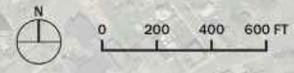
- to build on Danbury’s momentum and unlock additional market-driven development opportunities that expand on downtown’s walkable mixed-use character;
- to make more effective use of transit service and synergies that address the critical relationship of multi-modal access, including bus and rail co-location, and redevelopment;
- to design great places for people by creating more welcoming streets and parks linking downtown, neighborhoods, and transit; and
- to continue and advance opportunities to engage key community stakeholders to advance the TOD Vision.

Downtown Danbury is well-positioned to develop its economy by building on the momentum of recent investment in downtown housing, retail, and educational and community institutions. Its rail and bus transit services will contribute to this economic and community growth and become more effectively utilized as a result. While Danbury’s transit services are not primarily responsible for attracting recent investment, they are perceived as a valuable amenity. Continued real estate development, creation of destination places, and public improvements will help produce a more walkable urban setting that in turn will make transit a more attractive transportation choice and provide additional transit riders. This will progressively reduce traffic generation and infrastructure demands from new development, make better use of existing infrastructure, and broaden the availability of quality transportation choices.

Figure 1: Transit-Oriented Development Study Area



Transit-Oriented Development Study Area Boundary



STUDY SCOPE

The Downtown Danbury TOD Study followed a targeted scope supported by a strong foundation of previous planning studies and projects. Study tasks focused on new questions and current conditions not addressed in previous efforts and on identifying the specific action steps that will be most effective in encouraging further economic development. These scope tasks, in approximate order of sequence, included:

- determining a geographical boundary for an appropriate TOD Study Area;
- identifying and evaluating land and building use patterns and zoning in the TOD Study Area;
- reviewing existing plans and policies relevant to the pursuit of transit-oriented development in Downtown Danbury;
- identifying properties in the TOD area that would be appropriate for increased business, commercial, institutional, retail, and residential densities that could be enhanced by increased access to transportation services as part of a parcel assessment;
- completing an integrated market analysis identifying the current and near-term market potential for housing, office, and retail development to establish the optimum development program;
- determining relevant parking issues within the TOD area and assessing current parking facilities;
- evaluating other TOD planning in the area;
- preparing a co-location plan for transit hubs that would provide access to rail, private bus, and public bus facilities at one central location;
- preparing a complete streets and integrated mobility plan for increased transit and pedestrian connectivity within the TOD Study Area
- preparing preferred development scenarios, including potential development and density alternatives;
- identifying implementation tools and funding options to achieve TOD recommendations;

- preparing a societal impact statement for all transit relocation proposals; and
- preparing this Downtown Danbury TOD Study document to synthesize and assemble all information gathered and recommendations developed as a result of the TOD Study.

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

Execution of the TOD Study tasks described above produced the TOD Vision and existing conditions findings, defined the four key strategy areas, and identified initiatives that further TOD in Downtown Danbury.

Introduction & Vision

Purpose, related planning studies, public engagement process, Study Area, and Downtown Danbury TOD Vision.

Downtown Danbury, similar to many other downtowns across the United States, is being rediscovered as an important center for economic and community development. Its inherent characteristics including its mix of commercial, residential, and institutional uses; walkable street network; transit options; and enduring sense of history have become increasingly important assets in today's economic and social context. Residents, businesses, educational, and destination uses are attracted to Downtown Danbury with its pleasant streetscape and ease of access by various modes of travel. This attraction creates vibrancy and opportunities for further investment. TOD strategies capitalize on these strengths.

Many elements of TOD are in place in Downtown Danbury, a result of continued and consistent focus and investment downtown by the City of Danbury and others in terms of infrastructure improvements, regulatory structure, economic incentives, and critical partnerships that promote the vibrancy and vitality of downtown. This focus must continue. As such, the purpose of the Downtown Danbury TOD Study is to provide recommendations or initiatives that advance TOD, responsible-growth, and infill development and promote the use of multi-modal transit

options in the City's urban core. A key component of the TOD Study was the analysis of co-locating rail and bus transit services to promote greater use of transit options.

Public engagement is critical to developing consensus and moving initiatives towards a common goal. Throughout the year-long planning study process, multiple opportunities were provided for public input and community engagement including twelve Task Force meetings, three public meetings, and numerous stakeholder interviews. Comments and ideas garnered at public meetings were considered and incorporated into the TOD Study initiatives.

The Downtown Danbury TOD Study Area was mapped as the area encompassed by an approximate 10 minute walk from the Danbury Train Station. The boundary was established to follow lot lines, public rights-of-way, or zoning district boundaries and therefore the 10-minute walk criteria was slightly modified to include key assets and catalytic sites for transit-oriented development.

Downtown Danbury stakeholders have long recognized trends that are making downtowns more valuable places. The Main Street Renaissance Task Force, in the 2010 Issues and Recommendations Report, identified strategies and recommendations to overcome challenges and create opportunities to revitalize downtown including creation of the Downtown Revitalization Overlay Zone. Adopted in 2011, these regulations established a clear regulatory structure for development in the specified area to achieve desired economic, urban design, historic preservation, and public improvement goals. This Downtown Danbury TOD Study builds upon concepts and outcomes of the 2010 Report, previous planning studies, and Danbury's longstanding commitment to its downtown.

The Vision for this Downtown Danbury TOD Study Area, as fashioned by the Task Force, is as follows:

“By capitalizing on its great places and multi-modal transit connections, transform Downtown Danbury into a more vibrant, densely developed center of urban life where businesses thrive, mixed-use neighborhoods develop and strengthen, and opportunities for diverse cultural experiences continue to grow.”

Downtown Danbury Today

Ongoing population growth, job and employment distribution, and land use patterns set the essential context for understanding TOD opportunity.

Danbury's population continues to grow. In 2016, the population was estimated at approximately 85,000 persons, representing a 5% growth since the 2010 Census. As a subset of the City, during the same time period, the Census Block Groups that comprise Downtown Danbury realized a growth of approximately 8%. The population of Downtown Danbury also continues to remain diverse, comprised of a mix of races and ethnicities, with a higher percentage of residents with low English proficiency and low incomes than Danbury overall. Recent market-rate residential development in Downtown Danbury represents over 25% of occupied residential units. As such, the 2020 Census will be an important benchmark for population growth and changing demographics in Downtown Danbury. Danbury as a whole also remains a strong economic engine for the Region, as evidenced by a 10.6% job growth rate between 2010 and 2016.

Downtown Danbury represents an emerging market for transit-oriented development. As a neighborhood, Danbury's downtown offers a variety of housing options including housing in mixed-use developments, has active and attractive public spaces, provides convenient connections to retail and other services as well as employment and education opportunities, offers a variety of activities, provides access to various modes of travel, and is easily walkable. Based on analysis, the market potential for

downtown housing is strong, with an estimated demand for 1,200 units over the next decade. This growing market interest in living downtown is expected to provide its most significant economic development opportunity. Additional downtown residents coupled with the increasing student population at institutions of higher education and destination visitors can produce demand for more retail and commercial services, all of which contribute to improved economic conditions.

Downtown Danbury's physical form and City Zoning Regulations provide a promising setting for TOD. It has a significantly greater concentration of mixed-use, compact development in a walkable setting than other Metro-North rail station areas within 15 miles, making it a natural place for new development to capitalize on available transit. The Zoning Regulations appropriately encourage development that includes a variety of high-value uses and that is designed to leverage and improve attractive settings for walking. Within the overall Study Area, its historic Main Street corridor, Still River area, and surrounding traditional neighborhoods each offer a distinct sense of place while contributing to the greater whole. Investment opportunities are available within the Downtown Danbury TOD Study Area that can help attract a range of real estate market segments.

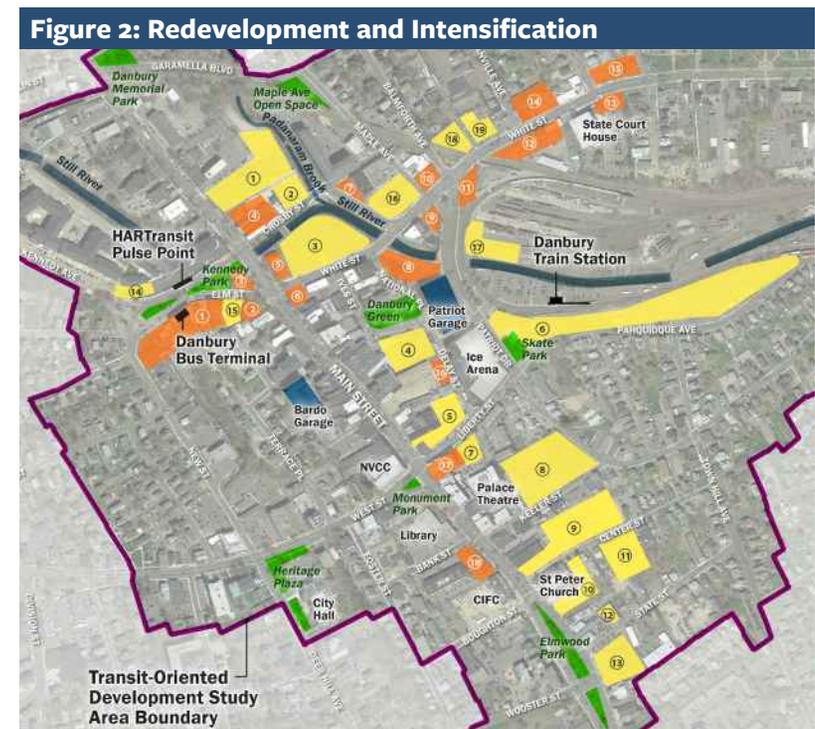
Land Use & Development

Provide opportunities and incentives for land development in the TOD Study Area that will encourage a mix of land uses at densities that promote transit use.

Many parcels in the TOD Study Area within each of the character areas identified above offer promising opportunity for development. These parcels are typically underutilized today. If redeveloped, the parcels could provide transformative benefits for activity and appearance of streets and blocks around them. Their redevelopment could catalyze additional development activity in Downtown Danbury, ultimately providing capacity for the ten-year demand for new housing units. Development scenarios tested as part of the land use analyses build upon existing land use patterns, concentrate development near transit options, and add

distinctive identity to the each of character areas to enhance market position and sense of community. The sites can accommodate new residential units with retail and other pedestrian-oriented ground floor uses, where appropriate, to support walkability and increased business activity. Many more parcels offer additional opportunity for intensified or higher-value use of existing buildings in the long term. See Figure 2 for redevelopment and intensification parcels.

Redevelopment in Downtown Danbury, as in all urban downtowns, is challenging. More often than not, incentives are required to achieve economic feasibility and attract development. Danbury provides a number of incentives aimed at making development more economically feasible. In addition to such incentives that offer reduced permit fees, expedited application processing, and a regulatory structure that relaxes parking



Sample downtown properties with greater potential for redevelopment (yellow) or intensification of existing use (orange).

requirements in certain areas of the downtown, the City also provides for the deferral of tax assessment increase for new development for specific uses. Economic feasibility analyses for a sample of redevelopment possibilities on downtown parcels indicated that, with similar assumptions as to building program, costs, and expenses, continued application of the City's current tax deferral program would effectively enable development under the tested scenarios. This incentive is therefore recommended to continue as an option for investors albeit with refinements, as applicable, to garner additional economic information from the applicant as part of the process.

Other land use initiatives to help encourage investment in Downtown Danbury include consideration of zoning amendments related to parking and building height, providing for mixed-use residential developments in districts where it is not currently permitted, promoting ground floor non-residential uses, and assessing long term parking needs and the potential for additional public parking as demand warrants.

Transportation & Infrastructure

Expand access to convenient transportation choices and enhance walkability and biking within the TOD Study Area and surrounding neighborhoods.

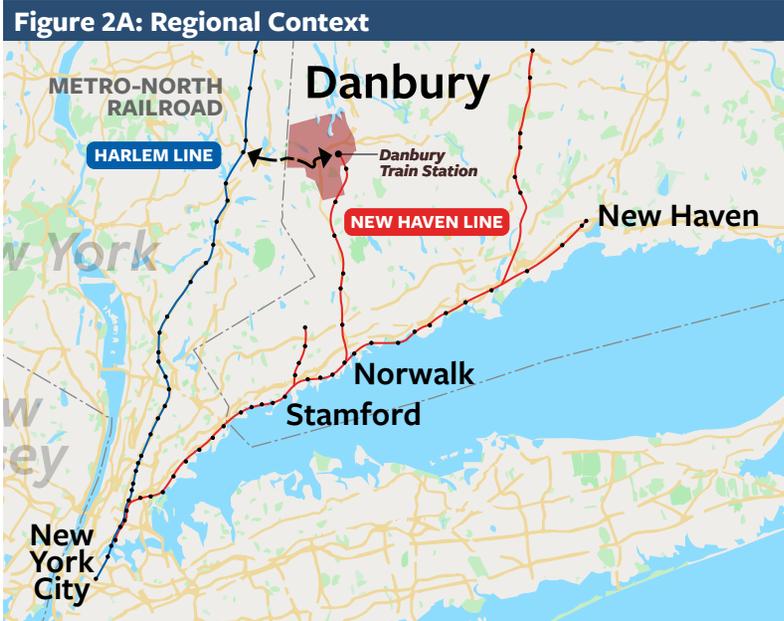
Transit-oriented development relies on a wide variety of appealing transportation choices including bus and rail transit, walking, and bicycling to succeed. Transportation and infrastructure improvements that enhance bus and rail transit service connections, add and improve ease of access to several modes of transportation, and provide a streetscape environment conducive to pedestrian activity increase economic and community development opportunity.

The transportation and infrastructure analyses in the Downtown Danbury TOD Study focused on the feasibility of co-location of the rail and bus transit service facilities, the potential benefit of improving passenger rail

connections to the Metro-North Harlem Line to the west of Danbury, downtown pedestrian and streetscape improvements, bicycling opportunities to connect the TOD Study Area to greater Danbury, and smart parking strategies that will help support increased transit use, pedestrian and bicycle activity, and TOD.

A priority task of the TOD Study was to determine potential feasibility of an intermodal transportation center incorporating Metro-North train service, HARTransit's "Pulse Point" local bus transfer hub, and private interstate bus service that connects to other major cities in the Northeast within a short walk of each other. After comparing different potential locations to relocate bus facilities near the existing Danbury Train Station, it was determined that the existing HARTransit bus hub and Peter Pan bus service could be relocated to a site adjacent to the existing Danbury Train Station. This potential co-location area of transportation services is termed the "Danbury Transit Center." Principal anticipated benefits of the potential Danbury Transit Center include improved walkability near the train station, greater community awareness of and access to transit services, and expanded bus service capacity. The Danbury Transit Center concept, located on a site comprised of the utility-owned parcel on Pahquioque Avenue and the City-owned parcel on Patriot Drive, would provide sufficient space for an expanded bus facility, an overhead pedestrian bridge to the Danbury Train Station, and associated amenities. A concept site plan was prepared, evaluated, and a general cost of improvements quantified. See the Transportation and Infrastructure chapter, pages 79 and 81, for the concept site plan and cost estimate. In addition to providing area for the relocated bus hub, sufficient land would remain available to develop for housing or a mix of uses furthering the objectives of TOD.

The extension of passenger rail service over existing rail lines in a westerly direction providing a connection to the Metro-North Harlem Line was considered for its potential benefits. See Figure 2A for a map of this connection. Such a connection could provide significant benefits for TOD in Downtown Danbury including increased opportunities for economic development around the Danbury Train Station, congestion mitigation



Introducing passenger rail service on existing tracks connecting Downtown Danbury and Metro North's Harlem Line could open up valuable new transportation options and economic development opportunities.

on area roadways and interstate highways now used by Danbury and other Connecticut residents to access the Harlem Line stations, a reduction in environmental impacts associated with vehicular commuting, improvements to the quality of life of commuters, and improved interstate commerce opportunities over upgraded rail lines. A passenger rail connection from the Danbury Train Station west to the Harlem Line stations could bring people into the area and activate the downtown streets in furtherance of TOD Study objectives. The feasibility of this passenger rail extension service is not dependent upon the construction of the Danbury Transit Center but would add to the Transit Center's value if the Center were constructed.

Targeted improvements to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in Downtown Danbury would yield significant benefits for transportation

as well as land use and public spaces. New or improved sidewalks, crosswalks, and bicycle lanes on priority streets between the Danbury Train Station, Main Street, and the existing HARTransit Pulse Point would result in safer, more convenient access to transit, as well as to Downtown's most active parks, retail streets, and development sites. Additional pedestrian and bicycle network improvements in a wide area could significantly enhance access from more neighborhoods to Downtown Danbury and its transit services as shown in Figure 3. When planning and designing for streetscape improvements and transit connections, the accessibility needs of all user groups must be considered.

In terms of parking, Downtown Danbury is well-served by the two public parking garages, several public surface parking lots, and on-street parking. In the future, as development activities intensify downtown, additional study will be necessary to determine if another public parking structure is warranted and if so, where it should be located. If a future structure is constructed, it could provide for the opportunity to convert former surface lots to development parcels. The current policy of allowing downtown residents to park overnight in public parking facilities provides valuable support for downtown housing development and should be continued to the extent capacity allows. Filling gaps with dense mixed-use development with amenities that activate adjacent public space will add vibrancy and critical mass downtown. In the near-term, zoning amendments that encourage car-share opportunities and provide for bicycle parking facilities should be considered.

Urban Design & Public Spaces

Add and enhance great public places in Downtown Danbury through thoughtful design and wayfinding, including clear walking connections to transit.

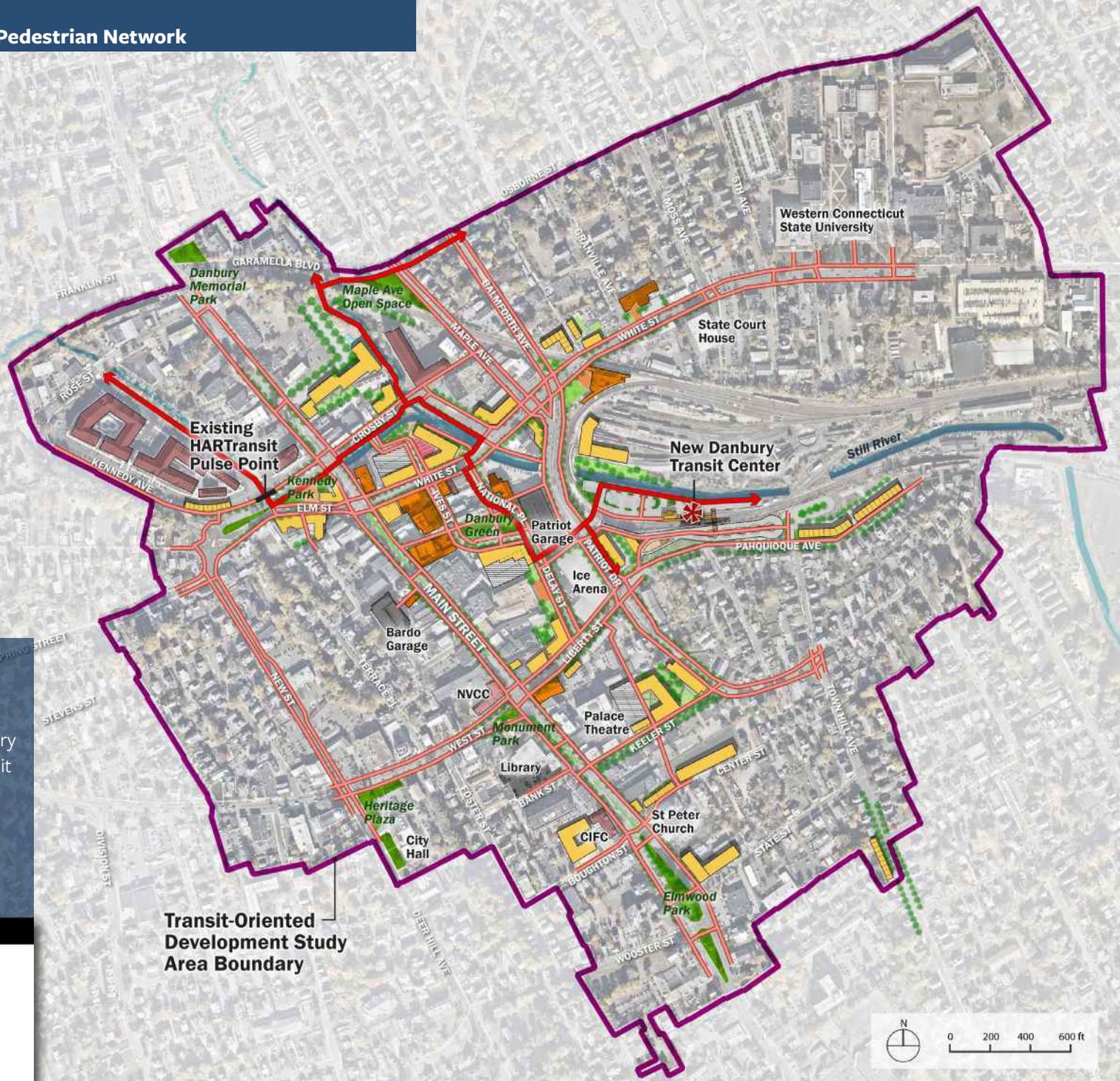
Downtowns provide opportunity for economic development and TOD best when they are welcoming places for people. This depends on street, park, building, and site landscape design that promotes safe,

Figure 3: Desired Downtown Pedestrian Network

This diagram of priority pedestrian-friendly streets downtown also highlights the locations of the proposed Danbury Transit Center, existing HARtransit Pulse Point, proposed Riverwalk Trail, and prime opportunities for new development (yellow) or intensified use of existing properties (orange).

LEGEND

-  TOD boundary
-  Riverwalk Trail
-  Desired sidewalk network





Conceptual rendering of urban design improvements and development surrounding Kennedy Park.

interesting, inviting environments for walking and engaging with other people. Important methods of improving urban design and public spaces within Downtown Danbury include direct infrastructure improvements, investment in public art, consistent wayfinding, and continued enforcement of development standards that ensure new buildings and site landscaping produce walkable settings along adjacent sidewalks. Many of these improvements benefit from coordinated public-private partnership in designing, maintaining, and programming downtown's public spaces.

Continued priorities in terms of urban design in Downtown Danbury include enforcement and refinement of zoning regulations that help activate the street, promotion of designs that build community identity, and the highlighting and preservation of downtown's historic architecture. In addition, continued engagement with stakeholders will help to promote downtown, entice tenants, and welcome visitors to downtown destinations. Physical improvements to the pedestrian environment and

public spaces that welcome and engage users will encourage people to visit and linger on downtown streets and parks.

It is recommended that the City explore new opportunities to add public spaces downtown, actively utilize existing plaza space for more activities, add art downtown to generate interest into the public realm, and provide consistent wayfinding to direct people to transit options.

Seven locations were examined where improvements to parks, plazas, sidewalks, and intersections would provide particularly strong benefits in multiple ways including expanding quality transportation choices, promoting economic development, and attracting more people to cultural and recreational destinations. One such transformative opportunity is the creation of a Riverwalk Trail along the Still River. This new concept for a Riverwalk Trail would provide a public space for activities capitalizing on the proximity and visual interest of the Still River. Other improvements include highlighting key intersection street crossings, improving amenities along Post Office Walk, and exploring connections from Downtown Danbury to other places of interest within and outside City limits.

Diversity & Cohesion

Make Downtown Danbury a thriving cultural destination and easily accessible for all populations within the City and the region.

For generations, Downtown Danbury has been the center of cultural and historic institutions for its region, and the residents who live in and around it, and those who work and visit, have represented a broad and dynamic diversity of cultures. This is true today as ever. New and longtime downtown residents, workers, and visitors value its cultural diversity and enjoy all that downtown has to offer. Added housing, cultural events and programs, green spaces, and retail uses would be welcomed additions providing more destinations and more people on downtown streets.

Sustained proactive efforts are needed to continue welcoming and connecting people of different cultures. Examples include creating universally accessible public spaces, providing information in multiple languages, and using the arts to express and bridge different cultural traditions. In addition to enriching quality of life of current residents, steps such as these can also encourage economic development. Potential results include more destination restaurants featuring unique cuisines, improved business growth opportunities for a variety of entrepreneurs, and cultural events that draw more visitors from outside Danbury.



Taking Action

Achieving the Vision requires taking action. The final chapter of the Downtown Danbury TOD Study provides a concise summary of initiatives in each strategy area. These initiatives are listed in Table 1.

Within each strategy area, the initiatives are categorized as zoning regulation refinements, economic development, or public improvements. Zoning regulation refinements are initiatives that modify development regulations to fulfill the TOD Vision. Changes to the regulatory structure will incentivize development and better align regulations with physical, economic, and market realities facing development in Downtown Danbury. Economic development initiatives include efforts by the City of Danbury and its partners to promote development in the TOD Study Area through strategies such as refined development incentives, business outreach, marketing, and event programming. Economic initiatives range from small business support to the support of regional transportation service improvements. Public improvement initiatives directly improve public places, transportation infrastructure, and other physical assets. Capital improvements to the infrastructure in Downtown Danbury will improve safety, pedestrian and bicycle access, and enhance development opportunities, all of which benefit transit users, local businesses, and the quality of life of residents.

Initiatives are also categorized based on a timeline for implementation. High priority initiatives are policies, investments, and other actions that will have a catalytic effect on TOD in Downtown Danbury and are ready to begin implementation within 1-3 years. Secondary priority initiatives require more time, resources, and participation efforts and are estimated to be achievable within 3-5 years. Ongoing initiatives are those that should continue on a sustained basis to promote TOD. Other initiatives may develop over time or evolve from ongoing activities. All efforts require a continued and consistent commitment by the City, its partners, and stakeholders to ensure success.

Table 1: Implementing the Downtown Danbury TOD Study Vision

	Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources		
	City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG			
Action Task												
LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT	Goal											
	<i>Provide opportunities and incentives for land development in the TOD Study Area that will encourage a mix of land uses at densities that promote transit use.</i>											
	HIGH PRIORITY INITIATIVES											
	Zoning Regulation Refinements											
	AMENDMENTS TO PARKING REGULATIONS											
		Encourage the use of existing parking structures to meet residential parking requirements.	●									City of Danbury General Operations
		Lower parking space requirements where possible to encourage shared use of spaces.	●									City of Danbury General Operations
		Increase radius for use of off-site parking spaces to meet required parking.	●									City of Danbury General Operations
	BUILDING HEIGHT AMENDMENTS											
		Amend building height restrictions to accommodate buildings heights that are sensitive to historic and neighborhood context while also practical for potential market-driven development.	●									City of Danbury General Operations
	AMENDMENTS THAT FURTHER ENCOURAGE MIXED-USE											
		Consider zoning amendments in zoning districts within the TOD Study Area to allow mixed-use, multi-family development where such use is not currently permitted and amend the Zoning Map, as appropriate, for industrial parcels.	●									City of Danbury General Operations
		Explore creating a density bonus for mixed-use/mixed-income development.	●									City of Danbury General Operations
	Clarify and strengthen zoning regulations, as appropriate, to continue to require uses on the first floor that activate and provide direct access to bordering sidewalks and public spaces within the TOD Study Area.	●									City of Danbury General Operations	

Table 1: Implementing the Downtown Danbury TOD Study Vision

	Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources	
	City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG		
Action Task											
LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT	HIGH PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
	Economic Development										
	Update the Deferral of Assessment Increases program application submission requirements in the Code of Ordinances to require applicants to provide more detailed project financial information for consideration by City Council.	●									City of Danbury General Operations
	SECONDARY PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
	Economic Development										
	Support reuse of the former Tuxedo Junction site for public events.	●	●		●	●					City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; CityCenter; Grants for the Arts as appropriate
	Public Improvements										
	Undertake a long-range parking study to include consideration of relocation of public surface parking into structured parking to provide additional infill sites for mixed-use development.	●									City of Danbury Capital Projects; City of Danbury General Operations
	ONGOING INITIATIVES										
	Zoning Regulation Refinements										
Review regulations to ensure zoning requirements to address locational and design needs of an aging population including siting housing near social services, activities, and public transportation; pedestrian accessibility; and the provision of housing options.	●	●				●			●	City of Danbury General Operations	
Economic Development											
Continue marketing efforts to attract businesses and development to the TOD Study Area.	●	●						●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter	
Continue to support the Deferral of Assessment Increases program for projects within the TOD Study Area that meet TOD objectives.	●	●						●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter	

Table 1: Implementing the Downtown Danbury TOD Study Vision

		Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources
		City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG	
Action Task											
LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT	ONGOING INITIATIVES										
	In partnership with organizations and private entities, encourage a concentration of destination dining and entertainment options in the Ives Street area.	●	●						●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; Private Funding
	Coordinate tracking of development in the TOD Study Area including new businesses, residences, and other uses.	●	●				●		●	●	City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter
	Continue outreach to encourage infill redevelopment.	●	●						●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter
	Public Improvements										
Provide infrastructure to ensure walkability for all community residents and downtown visitors.	●										City of Danbury General Operations; Private Funding
TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE	Goal										
	<i>Expand access to convenient transportation choices and enhance walkability and biking within the TOD Study Area and surrounding neighborhoods.</i>										
	HIGH PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
	Public Improvements										
Advance the preferred transit co-location option for the Danbury Transit Center.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; HARTransit; ConnDOT; Federal Grant Programs; Flexible Federal Funding Programs; Joint Development; Revenue Bonds.
Initiate streetscape renovation projects on high priority corridors including survey, planning, design, and phased construction as funding is available.	●		●							●	City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; Competitive Grants
Reinstall benches at existing HARTransit Pulse Point to improve accessibility and passenger comfort.	●					●					City of Danbury General Operations

Table 1: Implementing the Downtown Danbury TOD Study Vision

	Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources	
	City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG		
Action Task											
TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE	HIGH PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
	Public Improvements										
	Participate in, expand, and support opportunities for rail connections to the Metro-North Railroad Harlem Line.	●		●			●	●		●	City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; HARTransit; ConnDOT/ State Programs; Federal Grants; Federal Funding Programs
	Review crosswalk locations, markings, and lighting within the TOD Study Area to promote walkability and safety.	●	●	●		●	●				City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects
	Evaluate multi-modal travel paths to key destinations in Downtown Danbury to improve accessibility and connections between uses.	●									City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects
	SECONDARY PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
	Public Improvements										
	Seek funding for the preparation of a City-wide pedestrian and bicycle corridor master plan.	●		●						●	City of Danbury Capital Projects; WestCOG; Competitive Grants
	ONGOING INITIATIVES										
	Zoning Regulation Refinements										
Review regulations to encourage car-share opportunities in Downtown Danbury.	●	●								City of Danbury General Operations	
Amend the regulations to require bicycle parking as appropriate.	●									City of Danbury General Operations	
Economic Development											
Continue to promote improvements to the Danbury Branch line to increase train ridership.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; HARTransit; ConnDOT	
Support continued operations of public bus services within the City and region.	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; HARTransit; ConnDOT	

Table 1: Implementing the Downtown Danbury TOD Study Vision

		Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources
		City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG	
Action Task											
TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE	ONGOING INITIATIVES										
	Public Improvements										
	As necessitated by demand, consider constructing structured public or promote public/private parking in the southern portion of the TOD Study Area.	●	●	●					●	●	City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; Competitive Grants
	Ensure accessibility for all user groups when approving designs for streetscape and property improvements or transit connections in Downtown Danbury.	●									City of Danbury General Operations; Private Funding
	Continue the capital program funding for streetscape improvements.	●	●	●		●					City of Danbury Capital Projects
Seek opportunities for other funding sources for streetscape improvements.	●	●	●		●	●	●		●	City of Danbury General Operations, Competitive Grants, State Funding	
URBAN DESIGN & PUBLIC SPACES	Goal										
	<i>Add and enhance great public places in Downtown Danbury through thoughtful design and wayfinding, including clear walking connections to transit.</i>										
	HIGH PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
	Zoning Regulation Refinements										
Review regulations and amend as necessary to encourage development to capitalize on adjacent public space through active ground-floor uses, fenestration, and other design features that engage the street. Where allowed, new ground-floor residential development should include porches, stoops, or other design features that help place “eyes on the street” while maintaining residential privacy.	●	●							●	City of Danbury General Operations	
Economic Development											
Implement a public art program and coordinate art installations in the public right-of-way and, as appropriate, on private property.	●	●		●	●				●	●	City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; CityCenter; Private Funding; Competitive Grants

Table 1: Implementing the Downtown Danbury TOD Study Vision

		Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources	
		City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG		
Action Task												
URBAN DESIGN & PUBLIC SPACES	HIGH PRIORITY INITIATIVES											
	Public Improvements											
		Coordinate streetscape and other public improvements in the TOD Study Area with input from various stakeholders as appropriate.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; CityCenter; Private Funding; Competitive Grants
		Explore opportunities to replace the concrete parapet wall along the Still River with fencing to create a visual connection to the water. Incorporate visual access with public amenity and active public space.	●								●	City of Danbury General Operations; Competitive Grants
		Improve the pedestrian connection between the existing HARTransit Pulse Point and the Metro-North Railroad Station.	●	●								City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; CityCenter; Private Funding
		Prune trees as appropriate where obstructing storefront visibility or decorative lighting.	●									City of Danbury General Operations
		Replace streetscape improvements on Ives Street and Post Office Walk to encourage public use and improve pedestrian safety and accessibility. Consider decorative overhead lighting on Post Office Walk.	●	●							●	City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; CityCenter; Competitive Grants
		Establish a wayfinding or signage plan to direct people to downtown destinations including public parking and modes of transit.	●	●	●			●	●			City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; HARTransit; ConnDOT
	SECONDARY PRIORITY INITIATIVES											
	Zoning Regulation Refinements											
	Review regulations and land use approval review processes to ensure support of improvements to buildings that are sensitive to the historic ambiance of the downtown and the Main Street Historic District while balancing private objectives.	●	●							●	City of Danbury General Operations	

Table 1: Implementing the Downtown Danbury TOD Study Vision

Action Task	Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources
	City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG	
Goal										
<i>Make Downtown Danbury a thriving cultural destination and easily accessible for all populations within the City and the region.</i>										
HIGH PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
Economic Development										
Ensure that public art displays consider diversity themes in design as appropriate.	●	●		●	●			●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; Private Funding; Competitive Grants
Ensure walkability and accessibility in streetscape improvement design.	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Program; CityCenter; Competitive Grants
Promote and/or expand media opportunities to re-introduce residents, students, businesses and others to Downtown Danbury.	●	●		●	●	●		●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; Competitive Grants
Extend evening and weekend hours for cultural venues and businesses to attract people to Downtown Danbury.	●	●		●				●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; Competitive Grants
Public Improvements										
Incorporate design elements celebrating cultural diversity in streetscape improvement projects.	●	●								City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects
SECONDARY PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
Economic Development										
Encourage programs, events, and festivals in the TOD Study Area that engage a wide variety of ages and cultural interests.	●	●		●	●			●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter
Establish programs to celebrate cultural diversity by linking access and use between various cultural and public venues and businesses.	●	●		●	●	●		●		City of Danbury General Operations; Competitive Grants

DIVERSITY & COHESION

Table 1: Implementing the Downtown Danbury TOD Study Vision

		Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources	
		City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG		
Action Task												
DIVERSITY & COHESION	ONGOING INITIATIVES											
	Economic Development											
	Continue to assist small businesses with locating in Downtown Danbury and encourage business practices that promote cultural diversity.		●	●		●					●	<i>City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter, Private Funding; Grants/Loans</i>
	Continue stakeholder involvement and expand engagement to additional Downtown Danbury constituencies and partners.		●	●		●	●				●	<i>CityCenter</i>
	Encourage destination restaurants and retail uses that reflect Danbury's cultural diversity.		●	●		●					●	<i>City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter</i>
Develop a program to encourage arts displays in vacant storefront windows as permitted by zoning regulations.		●	●		●	●				●	<i>City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; Grants</i>	

INTRODUCTION & VISION

Purpose, Related Planning Studies, Public Engagement Process, TOD Study Area, and Downtown Danbury TOD Vision

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Introduction

The Downtown Danbury Transit-Oriented Development (“TOD”) Study explores opportunities to expand on Downtown’s revitalization progress, with special emphasis on leveraging its rail and bus transit access as assets for economic and community development. The Study was funded through a June 2016 award to the City of Danbury from the State of Connecticut’s Responsible Growth and Transit-Oriented Development Grant Program and by the City of Danbury to prepare a study on existing land use and transportation conditions, including modes of transit, in downtown Danbury. Supported by a team of planning, market, and transportation consultants—as well as input from a stakeholder task force and the general public—the City of Danbury launched this study in Fall 2016 to provide recommendations to advance transit-oriented development, responsible growth, and infill development in the City’s downtown area and to promote intermodal coordination and co-location of transit services.



The City of Danbury is the seventh largest city in Connecticut with an estimated 2016 population of 85,000 persons. Danbury’s urban core includes the area generally surrounding Main Street consisting of the central business district in a historic downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods. Downtown has and continues to be an area with a diverse racial and ethnic population comprised of residential neighborhoods, downtown commercial development, cultural and institutional uses, and neighborhood centers.

The downtown area contains Danbury’s Main Street, State Route 53, fed by major roadways that lead into the center of the City. The Metro-North Danbury Train Station (“Danbury Train Station”), located in the downtown, is the terminus of the Danbury Branch of the New Haven Metro-North Commuter Rail Line, which provides service to other cities including Norwalk, Stamford, and New York City as shown in Figure 4. Also located downtown is the Housatonic Area Regional Transit Pulse Point (“HARTransit Pulse Point”) which provides bus services within the City and region as shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Downtown Context

What is Transit-Oriented Development?

TOD is a type of development that emphasizes compact, mixed-use development integrated into a walkable setting and located near good transit service. The TOD approach helps attract investment and increase vitality by locating a mix of opportunities to live, work, shop, study, and play in places with a variety of convenient transportation choices. These transportation options include walking, bicycling, local bus service, regional bus and rail service, and driving, so that development does not depend solely on driving as its primary means of access. This approach helps maximize the value of real estate, support attractive and people-friendly public spaces, and make cost-effective use of public transportation and utility infrastructure. TOD can be a powerful strategy for revitalization of downtowns and neighborhoods, as can be seen in many communities in Connecticut and across the United States.

The State of Connecticut encourages investments in multi-modal transportation options and infill development and funds studies and infrastructure projects that meet TOD objectives.

What Could Focused TOD Strategies Do for Downtown Danbury?

As the financial, governmental, and transportation center of the City and the region—and a growing residential neighborhood—downtown Danbury is well poised to benefit from a more focused TOD approach. A TOD approach focuses on harnessing economic opportunities for a mix of land uses integrated into a well-designed walkable neighborhood that fosters use of various modes of transit. Multiple underutilized sites in downtown Danbury offer opportunity for new mixed-use development that can both benefit from presence of rail and bus transit service, and enable more effective use of those transit services by providing more potential riders and improved walking conditions. Recent development activity has clearly demonstrated this opportunity, producing several hundred multi-family housing units. Mixed land uses can provide Danbury and its region new places to live, work, learn, shop, play, and activate the sidewalks with people. The increase in walking activity associated with walkable mixed-use environments will further make sidewalks and public spaces places where people want to be, promote healthy lifestyles, add vibrancy, and improve quality of life indicators.

Increasing the number of transit trips and improving transit so it is a faster and easier option can reduce reliance on the automobile, reducing traffic growth and environmental impacts. Benefits of increased transit use include improving public health, fostering a sustainable community, strengthening the local economy, and reducing sprawl. Strategies that help accomplish all of the above will make downtown Danbury stronger as an economic and community center for the City and region.

Context for TOD in Danbury

Danbury's downtown has many TOD elements already in place, starting with a street and block network that connects a concentrated mix of land uses with public transit options. Transit options include several well-established services:

- The Danbury Train Station on Patriot Drive is served by Metro-North commuter rail on the Danbury Branch of the New Haven Line. Metro-North services connect Danbury to a variety of regional centers to the south. Limited direct train service is provided to New York City.
- Local bus service is provided by HARTransit. The bus network is centered on the “Pulse Point” transfer hub on Kennedy Avenue. Thirteen routes provide connections to various locations in Danbury and the region. Shuttle bus service is also available to the Metro-North Harlem Line station in nearby Brewster, NY which connects to Westchester County, NY and New York City.
- Private inter-city bus service throughout the Northeast Corridor is provided by Peter Pan from a stop on Elm Street, across the street from the Pulse Point. Ticketing and passenger waiting is provided from an Elm Street storefront office.

While the bus services provided by HARTransit and Peter Pan are nearby each other, both are a 10- to 15-minute walk from rail service at the Danbury Train Station. This distance restricts a passenger’s ability to transfer effectively between transit modes and therefore multi-modal trips are limited. As such, this study examined the feasibility of relocating the HARTransit Pulse Point and Peter Pan passenger facility to a site adjacent to the train station. A co-located transit center, a major TOD investment, could potentially enable easier and faster transfer between modes of transit and provide improved passenger facilities, expanded service possibilities, and greater public awareness of transit options.

Downtown Danbury’s development pattern demonstrates a wide mix of uses that bring people downtown. As a result, residents, workers, visitors, and students are all important members of the downtown community. There are several commercial and residential zoning districts in the downtown area. The central business district is centered on Main Street. The Central Business District lost some destination retail in the 1980’s when the Danbury Fair Mall opened, but most of its retail storefronts remain occupied with a variety of dining, neighborhood retail, arts, office

and community service uses. Office space continues to be clearly present, but downtown is no longer Danbury’s principal office address, as several other districts in the City also include significant amounts of office space. Meanwhile, downtown has emerged as an attractive residential neighborhood in its own right, and is growing in population. Additional downtown residents can help support an increase in non-residential activities, as workforce, consumers, and participants in community activities. The growing synergies among downtown’s varied uses can help downtown’s economy and activities take better advantage of existing transit services and support further improvements to transit service and to transit facilities.

Land use and density of development on land parcels are controlled by the City of Danbury Zoning Regulations, which encourage compact, high-value mixed-use development. Redevelopment of parcels, intensification of use on a parcel, and opportunities for new uses in downtown Danbury can provide the necessary population of workers, residents, and students to further promote TOD.

The physical form of downtown development is characterized by an eclectic mix of building styles from historic façades to more modern structures. The collection of historic buildings along Main Street is a particular asset. The Main Street Historic District, listed on the National Register, contains a wide variety of historic buildings and historic preservation efforts have continued to protect these structures. Public spaces and cultural, entertainment, and educational venues are available in downtown Danbury for a wide spectrum of users. These locales are also assets. In combination, these uses and locales and the proximity of transit has helped downtown Danbury attract major public and private investment.

Public infrastructure is needed to support TOD growth and already exists within the downtown area of Danbury. The Study Area’s street network provides a good basis for walkability through its largely complete system of sidewalks and crosswalks. However, many opportunities are present to

improve the pedestrian system by upgrading facilities in poor condition, adding new ones where gaps exist, or improving the urban design quality of adjoining parcels and streetscape, as recommended later in this document. Utilities including water, sewer, gas, and electric services are readily available.

Additional policies, infrastructure improvements, and other investments that support or encourage TOD can unlock additional market-driven development potential. Development can leverage and expand on downtown's walkable mixed-use character and have synergies with transit service, achieving the full benefits of TOD.

A Strong Foundation of Commitment to Danbury's Downtown

Even after Main Street and the downtown area lost its once preeminent role as the commercial core of the City, Danbury remained committed to investment in its downtown. Decades of federal, state, city, and private investment in downtown Danbury have resulted in an urban core that is beautifully endowed with buildings, streets, and parks accessible by various modes of transportation.

Leveraging state and federal investments, Danbury improved the streetscape of downtown and its feeder streets, renovated the historic Danbury Railroad Station on White Street, and constructed two public parking garages. A Downtown Revitalization Program was established by the City of Danbury in 1990 with three major components: preparation of a plan for a 7.7-acre downtown redevelopment area; initiation of a recruitment program to attract new development to the area; and construction of major downtown street and pedestrian improvements, including an expansion of public parking. These early public efforts have been, and continue to be, complemented by private construction, community facilities, and additional public investment in infrastructure, parks, and educational institutions. The City of Danbury has remained

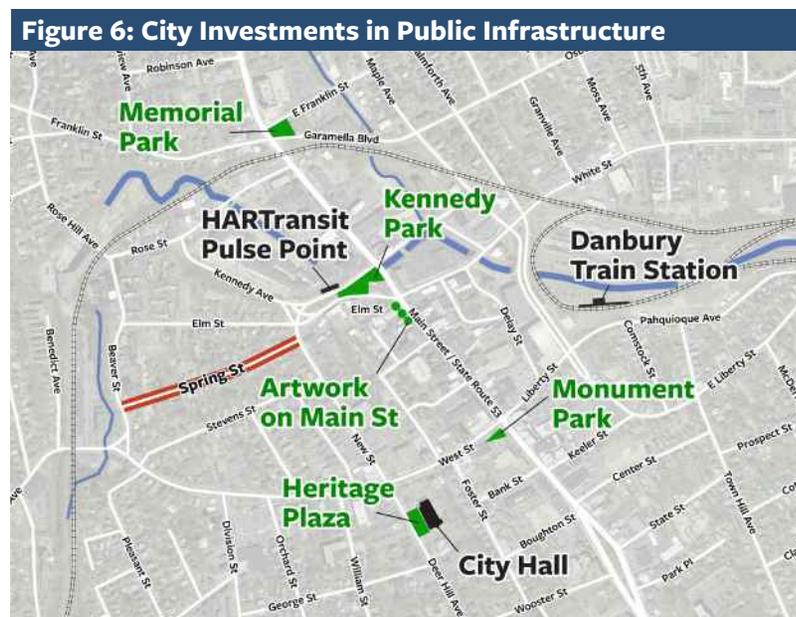
aggressive in incentivizing private investment in the downtown by easing development regulations and reducing land use approval and permitting fees within its designated revitalization area.

THE MAIN STREET RENAISSANCE TASK FORCE

In 2008, Danbury convened the Main Street Renaissance Task Force ("MSRTF") to evaluate downtown Danbury and recommend strategies designed to strengthen its social and economic position within the City and region. The MSRTF produced the 2010 *Downtown Danbury: Issues and Recommendations* report (the "Report") that identified key issues facing downtown, provided an overall vision for its future, set objectives, and posited fundamental planning principles to guide change. Following the tenets of best management practices for downtown revitalization and neighborhood planning, the Report provided recommendations to promote economic development, ensure proper urban design, preserve historic buildings, and identify public improvements. Increasing opportunities for market-rate housing, promoting the expansion of a diverse commercial base, and expanding entertainment and cultural activities were, among other objectives, deemed important to realize the vision for downtown Danbury.

The Report also recognized the importance of adjacent neighborhoods as contributing to the growth and success of downtown Danbury, the role of new small businesses in filling vacant retail space on Main Street, and the promotion of historic preservation techniques to continuing celebration of Danbury's past. Important key recommendations from this effort included creation of the Downtown Revitalization Overlay Zone and other regulatory amendments aimed at promoting economic development, preserving historic structures and ambiance, directing public improvements, and establishing an organizational structure to implement the Report recommendations. The Report and the subsequent regulatory changes and actions recommended therein provide a strong foundation for the Downtown Danbury TOD Study.

Additionally, since the completion of the Report, the City has continued to invest in public infrastructure in the downtown area. Sidewalks were replaced on Spring Street and along roadways in downtown neighborhoods, improvements were made to Kennedy Park and Monument Park, the new Memorial Park was constructed, artwork was installed on Main Street, and Heritage Plaza at City Hall was completed, as shown in Figure 6. Capital appropriations continue to be funded by the City of Danbury for future projects and programs. This continued public investment, in addition to the private investment in new residential development and commercial ventures, has created momentum for a resurgence of Danbury's downtown.



The Planning Process & Community Engagement

Community engagement opportunities were important components of the Downtown Danbury TOD Study process. Throughout the year-long planning process, multiple opportunities were provided for public input. The TOD Study was stewarded by a task force of key stakeholders, including representatives of City government, regional government, downtown organizations, transit agencies, downtown educational institutions, and business and property owners. This Downtown Danbury TOD Task Force (“Task Force”) convened monthly public meetings throughout the duration of the TOD Study facilitated by the City of Danbury Planning Director and the City’s lead consultant. The Task Force helped determine the boundaries of the TOD Study Area and provided input on the evolution of the TOD Vision. Task Force members reviewed the findings of all analyses, including the parcel assessment, market findings, and transportation studies. Additionally, the Task Force assisted with community engagement, arranging additional stakeholder meetings and focus groups, and helping to publicize the public meetings.

The consultant team also conducted dozens of stakeholder interviews that included detailed conversations with downtown property owners, local developers, educational, social and cultural institutions, business leaders, community members, and officials from transit agencies and government. These interviews were important in order to ensure analysis and recommendations were detailed and vetted by local knowledge.

The community engagement process involved a series of large-scale public meetings to present the TOD Study findings and analyses, solicit input, obtain feedback, test ideas for implementation initiatives, and present findings. Many implementation initiatives came directly out of the community engagement process.



The first public meeting introduced the TOD Study's preliminary findings.



Meeting attendees provide direct feedback on strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities.



On-site focus groups with downtown residents provided valuable feedback on why residents chose to live downtown.



The second public meeting included detailed feedback from small groups.



In addition to public meetings, the TOD Study process included interviews, focus groups, and small group presentations.



Public meetings were advertised in three languages: English, Spanish, and Portuguese.

Downtown Danbury and the TOD Study Area Defined

The term “Downtown Danbury” describes a different area to different people. For the purpose of this TOD Study, Downtown Danbury means the area within the boundary of the TOD Study Area. The broader application of the term Downtown Danbury can still be used to identify the area of the City’s urban core.

TOD areas are generally delineated by a ½-mile radius from a train station, a distance which most people are willing and able to walk in about 10 minutes. Therefore, this TOD Study is focused on the opportunities for redevelopment and increased transit connections and usage within an approximately 10-minute walking distance of the Danbury Train Station. The outer limits of this area, as mapped and identified in Figure 7 on the adjacent page, is referred to throughout the document as the TOD Study Area. The TOD Study Area encompasses most of what many consider Danbury’s Downtown. It includes historic Main Street from Danbury’s new Memorial Park to the north to Elmwood Park to the south. The western edge of the boundary is on Harmony Street. The eastern edge extends just beyond the campus of Western Connecticut State University (WCSU) to Eighth Avenue then south across the railroad tracks to Chestnut Street. The TOD Study Area encompasses a variety of properties that could be redeveloped or are currently available for purchase in the vicinity. The boundary was established to follow lot lines, public rights-of-way, or zoning district boundaries. In specific instances the 10-minute walk criteria was slightly modified to include key assets and catalytic sites for TOD.

The TOD Study Area includes, among other prominent land uses, major entertainment and civic institutions such as the Danbury Ice Arena, the Danbury Green public park space, the Palace Theatre, Danbury’s Music Center, the Danbury Public Library, and City Hall. It also encompasses vacant and underutilized property along the Still River. Portions of established neighborhoods adjacent to the Danbury Train Station and the core of Downtown are included within the TOD Study Area boundary. These neighborhoods may gain new opportunities and new connections to transit as infrastructure is improved.

The TOD Study Area is not co-terminus with any one zoning district or with the Downtown Revitalization Overlay Zone (“DRZ”). While this may appear to complicate implementation initiatives, such obstacles can be addressed with strategic regulatory measures and/or amendments.

TOD STUDY SCOPE

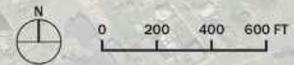
In addition to facilitating the TOD Study Task Force and public engagement efforts, the Downtown Danbury TOD Study included the following scope items:

- determining a geographical boundary for an appropriate TOD Study Area;
- identifying and evaluating land and building use patterns and zoning in the TOD Study Area;
- reviewing existing plans and policies relevant to the pursuit of transit-oriented development in Downtown Danbury;
- identifying properties in the TOD area that would be appropriate for increased business, commercial, institutional, retail, and residential densities that could be enhanced by increased access to transportation services as part of a parcel assessment;
- completing an integrated market analysis identifying the current and near-term market potential for housing, office, and retail development to establish the optimum development program;
- determining relevant parking issues within the TOD area and assessing current parking facilities;
- evaluating other TOD planning in the area;
- preparing a co-location plan for transit hubs that would provide access to rail, private bus, and public bus facilities at one central location;
- preparing a complete streets and integrated mobility plan for increased transit and pedestrian connectivity within the TOD Study Area;
- preparing preferred development scenarios, including potential development and density alternatives;
- identifying implementation tools and priority real estate development incentives, co-location facility capital costs and funding options, and other funding strategies to achieve TOD recommendations;
- preparing a social impact statement for all transit relocation proposals; and
- preparing the Downtown Danbury TOD Study document to synthesize and assemble all information gathered and recommendations developed as a result of the TOD Study.

Figure 7: Transit-Oriented Development Study Area



**Transit-Oriented
Development Study
Area Boundary**



DOWNTOWN DANBURY TOD

VISION

The following statement is the vision for Downtown Danbury as fashioned by the Task Force. It builds upon previous planning studies and outcomes and helps shape Downtown Danbury's path forward.

The illustrative plan in Figure 8 on the opposite page depicts a scenario achieving this vision.

By capitalizing on its great places and multi-modal transit connections, transform Downtown Danbury into a more vibrant, densely developed center of urban life where businesses thrive, mixed-use neighborhoods develop and strengthen, and opportunities for diverse cultural experiences continue to grow. Four key strategies focus on how this vision will be realized:

- **Land Use & Development**

Provide opportunities and incentives for land development in the TOD Study Area that will encourage a mix of land uses at densities that promote transit use.

- **Transportation & Infrastructure**

Expand access to convenient transportation choices and enhance walkability and biking within the TOD Study Area and surrounding neighborhoods.

- **Urban Design & Public Spaces**

Add and enhance great public places in Downtown Danbury through thoughtful design and wayfinding, including clear walking connections to transit.

- **Diversity & Cohesion**

Make Downtown Danbury a thriving cultural destination and easily accessible for all populations within the City and the region.

DOWNTOWN DANBURY TODAY: EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Ongoing population growth, job and employment distribution, and land use patterns set the essential context for understanding TOD opportunity.

People & Demographics: A Diverse and Growing Community	14
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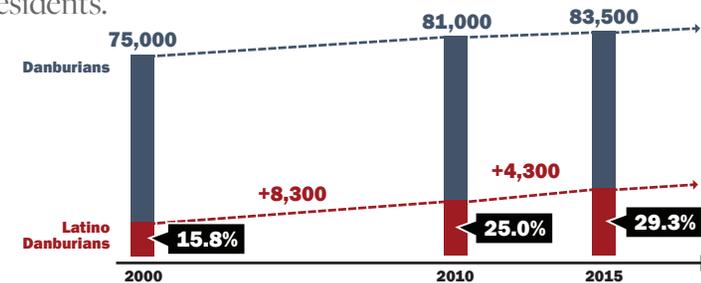
People & Demographics: A Diverse and Growing Community

CITY OF DANBURY

According to the 2016 U.S. Census estimates, the population of the City of Danbury is approximately 85,000 residents. This number represents an increase of 5% since the 2010 Census. Growth of the Hispanic or Latino population in Danbury has been the primary contributor to overall population growth over the last decade, as shown in Figure 9. According to the 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates*, almost 30% of Danbury's population is Latino or Hispanic. Compared to other major cities in Connecticut, Danbury continues to grow at a steady and fast pace. Over the same time period, the number of households in Danbury rose from 28,907 (2010 Census) to 29,426 (2012-2016 ACS). Growth in number of households is important because it creates the demand for housing units. These units could be provided as part of more dense transit-oriented development in Downtown Danbury.

Figure 9: Danbury Population Growth, 2000-2015

Danbury has grown **by almost 10,000 people** since 2000. The largest contributor to growth is the increase in Latino residents.



Source: Census 2000, 2010 & 2011-2015 American Community Survey

The historical time line of Danbury, as first a small agricultural community developed around the Still River supplemented by trades, to being destroyed in the Revolution, to a bustling manufacturing City centered downtown, is well documented. By the late 1880s, Downtown Danbury, home to several hat factories, shops, and other businesses, was fraught with typical urban problems of the time period and associated with high density commerce and residential use. Around the same time, the area of Downtown Danbury and its adjacent neighborhoods began to

experience an influx of racial and ethnic minorities. As noted by William E. Devlin in his 1984 book entitled *We Crown Them All*, although immigrant groups initially clustered together in segregated neighborhoods, many of the neighborhoods eventually became integrated. During the decade of the 1990s, a major wave of Hispanic and Latino immigrants, including Brazilians, established Danbury as their home. According to 2012-2016 ACS estimates, just over 30% of Danbury's population is foreign-born. Just over half of the foreign-born population is from Brazil, Ecuador, or

the Dominican Republic. Other origins of significant numbers of foreign-born Danburians include Mexico, Portugal, India, Guatemala, Poland, Colombia, and Vietnam. Thus Danbury's diversity began early and continues to flourish today.

Danbury's diverse population helps support ongoing activities and businesses citywide and, particularly

within Downtown Danbury, because of the cluster of immigrant groups residing in the downtown area. Strategies that promote and expand diversity of uses in Downtown Danbury, provide for access to and transit options for all groups, and that help integrate new immigrant groups into the diverse Danbury community remain important for the revitalization of Downtown Danbury.

Diversity and immigration have a long history in Danbury. In 1900, **27 different languages** were spoken in Danbury. Today, Danburians speak **54 different languages**.



* The Downtown Danbury TOD Study utilized a number of U.S. Census Bureau data sets in order to analyze population, demographics, and characteristics of housing in Danbury and the TOD Study Area. Census 2000, Census 2010, 2011-2015 American Community Survey, and 2012-2016 American Community Survey data can be accessed utilizing the U.S. Census Bureau's American Factfinder tool: <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml> Census Annual Population estimates for the City of Danbury can be accessed through the U.S. Census Bureau's QuickFacts tool: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045217>. More information on data sources can be found on page 139.

DOWNTOWN DANBURY TOD STUDY AREA

In order to provide an estimate of demographic information within the TOD Study Area, data was analyzed at the Census Block Group level. The map in Figure 10 shows Census Block Group boundaries superimposed on the Danbury TOD Study Area boundary. Because the TOD Study Area boundary was drawn to follow existing land use patterns, parcel lines, and future development areas, it does not align with the Census Block Group limits. The selected Census Block Groups included in Table 2 (2101-1, 2101-2, 2101-3, and 2102-2) are as close an approximation as possible to the TOD Study Area boundary, as shown in Figure 10. Table 2 provides conservative estimates of demographic data because portions of the Census Block Groups in Downtown Danbury are outside the TOD Study Area while other Census Block Groups are only partially within the TOD Study Area and are not included.

Downtown is Growing Faster than the City Overall

At the time of the 2010 Census, the four Census Block Groups in the TOD Study Area had a combined population of 7,685. By the 2011-2015 ACS estimates, those same block groups had a population of 8,279, an increase of 594 residents and approximately 8% growth. During this period, Downtown was growing in population at a faster rate than the City of Danbury was growing overall. Since then, the 374 unit Kennedy Flats apartment development, located on Kennedy Avenue within the TOD Study Area, was constructed and occupied, adding several hundred more residents to Downtown Danbury.

How does Downtown Compare to the City Overall in Selected Demographics?

As a subset of Danbury, the TOD Study Area represents approximately 9% of Danbury’s population. It has a lower population of elderly residents, has a higher percentage of residents with low English proficiency, is more diverse in terms of racial and ethnic makeup, and has a higher percentage of low-income residents than the rest of the City. The 2011-2015 ACS estimated that the TOD Study Area Block Groups have a poverty level of 53.2%, compared to the City overall at 28.2%. The TOD Study Area Block Groups have a slightly lower rate of households with children than the City overall with the exception of Block Group 2102-2, which includes Western Connecticut State University and has significantly fewer households with children.

Figure 10: TOD Study Area and Census Block Groups

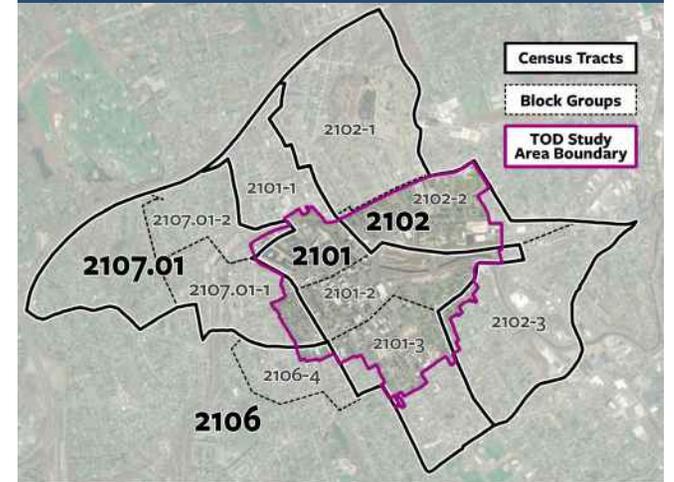


Table 2: Study Area Census Block Group Demographic Data (2011-2015 ACS)

Block Group	Total Population	Elderly (65+)	Households with Children	Limited English Proficiency	Race & Ethnicity (Census 2010)						Poverty Level
					White (non-Hispanic)	Black (non-Hispanic)	Asian (non-Hispanic)	Other (non-Hispanic)	Hispanic or Latino	Total Minority	
2101-1	1,470	6.3%	26.5%	21.4%	33.0%	5.6%	4.0%	4.2%	53.3%	67.0%	46.3%
2101-2	1,254	8.0%	29.7%	17.6%	40.5%	3.8%	2.8%	10.2%	42.7%	59.5%	51.5%
2101-3	3,552	13.4%	31.2%	19.1%	36.3%	6.9%	7.5%	7.4%	41.8%	63.7%	47.1%
2102-2	2,003	4.2%	18.8%	42.8%	41.3%	6.2%	4.6%	6.6%	41.3%	58.7%	67.8%
Block Group Total	8,279	7.9%	27.7%	25.2%	37.8%	5.6%	4.7%	7.1%	44.8%	62.2%	53.2%
City of Danbury	83,476	12.6%	31.8%	12.2%	54.5%	5.7%	6.0%	3.3%	29.3%	26.9%	28.2%

Source: Census 2010 (Race & Ethnicity), 2011-2015 American Community Survey all others

***The Study Area Census Block Groups include portions outside of the TOD Study Area. Other Block Groups with only a portion within the TOD Study Area are not included. They are as close as an approximation as possible, but most likely over-estimate the population.

Jobs & Employment: One of Connecticut's Fastest-Growing Labor Markets

REGIONAL GROWTH: WESTCOG COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Danbury is part of the Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG), which oversees a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Western Connecticut Region including Danbury, Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Norwalk, Redding, Ridgefield, Sherman, Stamford, Weston, Westport, and Wilton as shown in Figure 11. WestCOG reports, based on 2010-2014 ACS estimates, that the region has a population of just over 600,000 and grew at a rate of 1.9% between 2010-2014, faster than the State of Connecticut as a whole. WestCOG identifies Danbury as the job and population market center for the northern part of the WestCOG region.

Future development in Downtown Danbury that supports one of WestCOG's regional economic development priorities or the State of Connecticut's statewide economic development priorities may be eligible for subsidies, investment, or other support from WestCOG or the State. Danbury may also benefit from WestCOG and the State's economic development activities. In its adopted 2017 Comprehensive Economic Strategy, WestCOG identifies regional priority industries for economic development as health care and social assistance; professional, scientific, and technical services; finance and insurance; and arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services. Statewide priority industries are finance and insurance; advanced manufacturing; healthcare/bioscience; digital media; green technology; and tourism.

DANBURY LABOR MARKET AREA

The Danbury Labor Market Area, comprised of Danbury, Bethel, Newtown, New Fairfield, Brookfield, Bridgewater, Sherman, and New Milford, is shown in Figure 12. The WestCOG region contains portions of the Bridgeport-Stamford-Norwalk Labor Market Area. Labor market

Figure 11: Western Connecticut Council of Governments

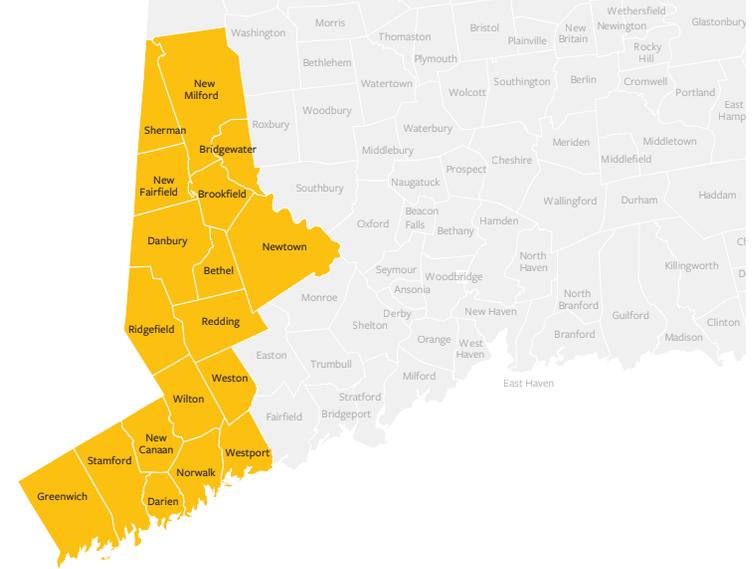
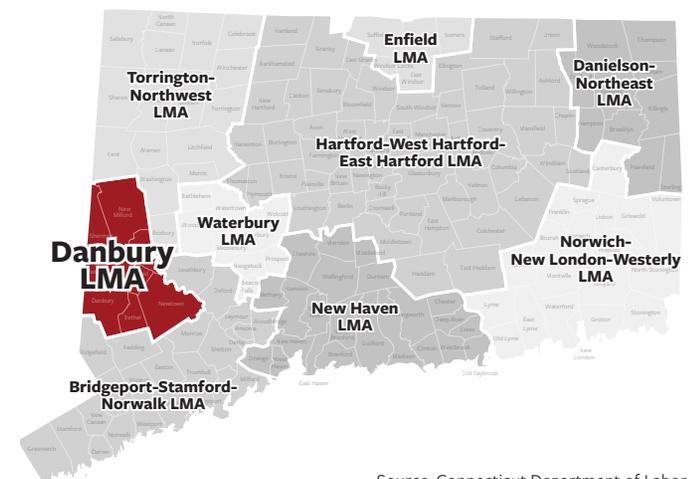


Figure 12: State of Connecticut Labor Market Areas (2010 CENSUS-BASED)



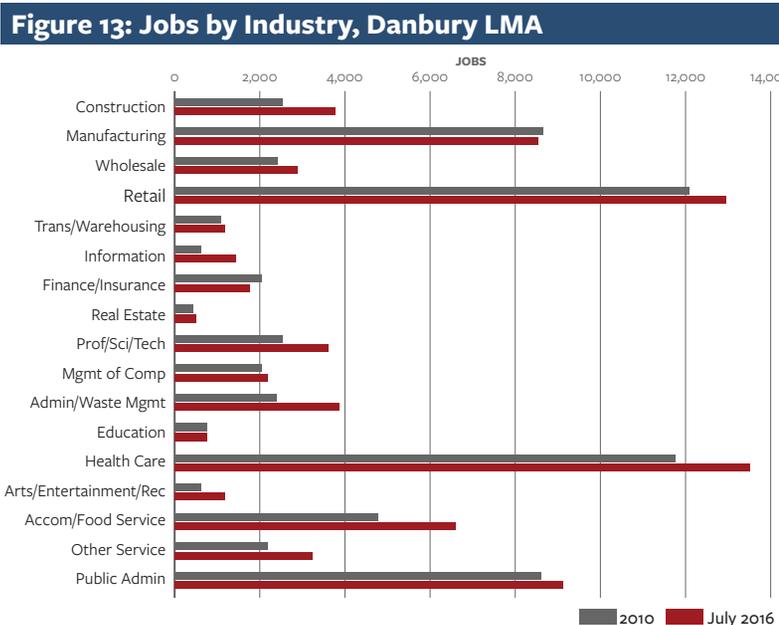
Source: Connecticut Department of Labor

areas are determined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics to capture areas of core economic integration that are measured as places where there is significant commuting from outlying areas for employment.

According to the Connecticut Department of Labor, there are approximately 79,000 jobs in the Danbury Labor Market Area (LMA). As shown in Figure 13, jobs in the Danbury LMA are concentrated in health care, retail, public administration, and manufacturing. Since 2010, there has been strong job growth in the accommodation and food service industries and the professional, scientific, and technical industries.

Overall job growth has been relatively strong in the Danbury LMA, as indicated in Table 3. Jobs have grown from 71,600 to 79,200, or by 10.6% between 2010-2016. The Danbury LMA’s rate of growth surpassed the other large Labor Market Areas in Connecticut. While there are significantly more jobs in the Bridgeport-Stamford, Hartford, and New Haven Labor Market Areas, these LMAs all had 5.5%-7.1% rates of job growth from 2010-2016, lower than Danbury’s 10.6%.

A strong and growing labor market contributes to overall population growth in Danbury, as residents follow jobs. Growth in employment and population will both help to create demand for new and more dense redevelopment manifesting TOD in Downtown Danbury. The labor market is also important to TOD because Downtown Danbury is an important attractor for the regional workforce, both as an amenity destination and as a neighborhood that is connected by transit to regional jobs. Interviews with new Downtown Danbury residents indicated that good access to the larger regional job market was a key factor in the decision to live in Downtown.



Source: Connecticut Department of Labor; W-ZHA

Table 3: Trends in Total Number of Jobs
SELECT CONNECTICUT LABOR MARKET AREAS (2010-2016)

Labor Market Area	2010	2016	Change	
			#	%
Bridgeport-Stamford	385,700	411,300	25,600	6.6%
Hartford	540,400	570,100	29,700	5.5%
New Haven	264,200	283,000	18,800	7.1%
Waterbury	64,100	67,500	3,400	5.3%
Danbury	71,600	79,200	7,600	10.6%

Source: Connecticut Department of Labor; W-ZHA

Existing Land Use & Development Patterns

The TOD Study Area encompasses the heart of Downtown Danbury. Three major character areas, identified in Figure 14, describe the variety of predominant land uses and building form: historic Main Street, an emerging riverside district that is transitioning away from industrial uses, and established traditional neighborhoods surrounding these two areas. Important corridors of commercial and institutional properties overlap these areas on Main, White, West, and Liberty Streets. The existing land use pattern in the TOD Study Area, including these different character areas, already demonstrates a rich mix of uses. Continued redevelopment and intensification will build on the considerable strengths of each character area, and Downtown as a whole, as a place to live, work, and play.

Historic Main Street

Downtown Danbury is centered on historic Main Street: a mixed-use corridor that served for over a century as the major economic center of Danbury. Historic Main Street is part of a National Register Historic District with 97 contributing structures in a variety of architectural styles dating from the late 18th to early 20th century.

The historic building pattern is mixed-use, with pedestrian-oriented commercial uses on the ground floor and office, residential, or other uses above. Main Street continues to be a strong center for Downtown with many important community assets, including the Danbury Public Library, Danbury Innovation Center, Palace Theatre, Elmwood Park, and multiple community organizations. Many ground floor spaces or storefronts are occupied, but vacancies exist. Since it is also a major transportation corridor and therefore highly visible, vacant space on Main Street appears more prominent.

Because of the historic development pattern and significant past planning efforts, including streetscape improvements and the 2010 Downtown Issues and Recommendations Report, the Main Street area



Historic Main Street is a pedestrian-oriented corridor serving a mix of commercial, residential, and institutional uses and the core of Downtown Danbury.

and established development regulations are well-suited to TOD and historic preservation. Main Street remains walkable although streetscape improvements constructed in 1993 are in need of replacement. Restaurant uses, including cafés and sidewalk dining, are becoming important ground floor uses along Main Street in addition to ongoing retail use. Renovations of “above the store” residential spaces—as well as infill development on some prominent underutilized sites—are demonstrating Main Street’s appeal as a place to live and as a center for community institutions.

Figure 14: Downtown Danbury TOD Area Existing Land Use Patterns

The Still River and Industrial Areas in Transition

Commercial and Institutional Corridors

Historic Main Street

Traditional Neighborhoods



Transit-Oriented Development Study Area Boundary

Traditional Neighborhoods

Within a block or two to the east and west of Main Street are some of Danbury's older and more traditional neighborhoods. Similar neighborhoods are north of the Still River, rail yard, and surrounding commercial area and adjacent to Western Connecticut State University. These areas are stable, with a primarily detached residential building development pattern that has become multi-family over time as a result of conversions of once single-family dwellings to multiple-unit buildings. Some units serve college students, while others serve a wide range of other households. The street grid generally supports walkability throughout the neighborhood as well as to Downtown. Some more auto-oriented streets and other gaps, such as parking lots and large vacant parcels at the edge of the neighborhoods, diminish walkable connections to Downtown and transit.



Traditional neighborhoods are within a convenient walk of historic Main Street, the Danbury Train Station, and bus transit.

The Still River and Industrial Areas in Transition

Several parcels adjacent to the Still River, near the Danbury Train Station, and at the northern end of Main Street in the TOD Study Area, have undergone major transitions in land use and development. This area became a center of industry in the nineteenth century because of the water supply, flat sites, and transportation provided by the Still River and railroad. Historic industrial development and manufacturing uses thrived from the end of the Revolutionary War until the end of World War II, including hat-making, Danbury's largest industry at the time. Land parcels were large to accommodate the demands of industrial and manufacturing uses.

The Still River flooded catastrophically in 1955 just as a wave of economic change and de-industrialization was occurring nationwide. In Danbury, the hat-making industry was particularly affected by changing fashions that reduced consumer demand for hats sharply over the following decades. While some industrial and manufacturing uses in the area continued and are still present today, the area has failed to attract significant manufacturing redevelopment to replace vacant buildings and land.



Residential development, such as Brookview Commons at the right, overlooks the Still River and its tributaries.

Because of flood damage and the changing economic base this “riverside” area was also a target of urban renewal in the 1960s, which cleared large tracts of land. The combination led to the demolition of most historic buildings in this area. The Still River was channelized within fortified banks and culverts, its surface well below street level to protect the area from future floods. Fifty years later, some properties in the areas developed soon after the 1955 flood have since depreciated in value or, due to building construction, are now obsolete as modern-day commercial or industrial property.

This riverside area is still the central crossroads for Danbury and is where the current train station, current bus hub, and potential future co-location of bus and rail services are all located. The area has more vacant land and larger parcels than the other character areas in the TOD Study Area. Former industrial sites in the neighborhood are transitioning to housing as a marketable and desirable use. However, the area is currently visually disconnected from the Still River as an asset and lacks amenities and public space. The area can be a barrier between the Historic Main Street district and other parts of the downtown area owing to underutilized properties and an unwelcoming pedestrian environment. This emerging



The Still River is channelized to prevent flooding.

riverside area offers a key opportunity for larger scale development to increase residential density, employment, and walkability in Downtown Danbury following TOD principles.

Commercial and Institutional Corridors

Throughout all three character areas, Downtown Danbury is home to a number of key entertainment and civic destinations that attract people from throughout the City and the region. Many of these major destinations are concentrated on or near Main, White, West, and Liberty Streets. The Palace Theater, a National Register site that has provided a venue for entertainment for more than 50 years, the Danbury Ice Arena, Danbury Public Library, Danbury Senior Center, Danbury Green, Danbury Railroad Museum, Elmwood and Kennedy Parks, and neighborhood centers such as the one on the corner of Liberty Street and Town Hill Avenue provide for varied and synergistic uses. Western Connecticut State University on White Street and Naugatuck Valley Community College at West and Main Street are major educational uses drawing thousands each day into the TOD Study Area. These uses, plus retail and dining along Main Street and around the Danbury Green, all contribute to an active Downtown Danbury.



White Street connects Downtown with WCSU and adjoining neighborhood streets, but its auto-oriented development pattern makes it less walkable than other commercial corridors.

Development Regulations in the TOD Study Area

Zoning is important to TOD to ensure that development is compatible with a wide mix of uses and dense, pedestrian-friendly urban form. Zoning is also important because eliminating regulatory hurdles that inhibit appropriate development is one of the most powerful strategies for achieving TOD. Downtown Danbury is comprised of various zoning districts as well as two overlay zones that regulate land use and building form as identified in Figure 15.

The Main Street corridor, often referred to as the heart of downtown, is zoned **Commercial Central Business District (C-CBD)**. The purpose of the CBD is to allow a mix of compatible uses that will strengthen the downtown as the social and economic focus of the City; promote cohesion for the interaction of people and businesses; stimulate investment; improve access, safety and parking; facilitate pedestrian movement; and provide a setting for community activities. A wide mix of uses is permitted, including two-family and three-family dwellings, apartment houses, office, commercial, and retail. Buildings may completely cover a site. Building height within the **Main Street Historic Overlay Zone (MSHOZ)** is limited to five stories. Outside of the MSHOZ, building height is limited to ten stories and subject to a number of setback and lot size requirements.

The **High-Rise Residential District (RH-3)** is located to the west of the Main Street Corridor and also in the area surrounding Western Connecticut State University. RH-3 provides for a compatible mix of high-density residential and limited commercial, institutional, and neighborhood uses in the urban core of the City. Permitted uses include apartment houses of up to seven stories, parking garages, and college or universities. Special exception uses include office, grocery store, and nursing home uses among others. All other uses besides apartment houses are limited to three stories in height.

The **Multi-family Residential District (RMF-4)** is located to the east of the Main Street Corridor and CBD and to the north of the White Street corridor and Danbury Train Station area. This district allows a variety of uses intended to permit medium to high density housing reflecting existing patterns of development in stable neighborhoods, to promote redevelopment in appropriate locations to meet the changing needs of the population, and to provide such housing in developing areas of the City appropriate for permitted densities. Apartment houses are a permitted use and have a maximum height of four stories, while all other uses have a maximum height of three stories.

In the TOD Study Area, the **Three-Family Residential District (R-3)** is located southwest of the Main Street corridor CBD area. This district provides an area of single and medium density multi-family development in suitable locations that are in character with existing urban neighborhoods, to promote compatible site design that meets the needs of residents, and to provide for customary neighborhood uses. One, two, and three-family dwellings are permitted, but apartment houses are not.

The **Light-Industrial District (IL-40)** is located in areas surrounding the Still River and Padanaram Brook, including the Danbury Train Station. IL-40 provides for the expansion of the industrial base in the City. The uses allowed in this district are of a limited and light industrial nature that if appropriately developed can be compatible with abutting commercial and residential uses.

The **General Commercial Corridor District (CG-20)** is located along the White Street commercial corridor. CG-20 allows for the provision of general commercial goods and services in appropriate locations along major roadways of the City. A wide variety of commercial uses including retail, office, and services are permitted in the zone.

The Market for Transit-Oriented Development in Downtown Danbury

Downtown Danbury presents an emerging market for TOD. Rail and bus access is an asset to downtown development but not, so far, the primary factor attracting residential and mixed-use development. Downtown Danbury's traditional urban form, mixed land uses, proximity to jobs, and available development sites have been more important factors. However, as Downtown Danbury gains more residents, workers, and students, its transit services are likely to become a more powerful factor in its appeal. More potential transit riders will be available near transit service and the appeal of riding transit can be expected to increase as walking connections to transit improve and a broader social culture of using transit emerges. This transition will leverage important public investments in transit and support regional economic development by improving connections between skilled workers and employers.

A distinct increase in the number of residential units proposed and developed in Downtown Danbury in recent years indicates that housing has emerged as Downtown's most significant market opportunity motivating real estate development. This TOD Study analyzed the depth of the housing market further to understand better how many households would likely choose to live in Downtown over the next ten years and what housing prices they are able to afford based on income. This TOD Study also analyzed factors affecting demand for office space, which has shown relatively high levels of vacancy and little growth in demand, as well as for retail space. Retail market opportunity has demonstrated little demand growth, but can potentially increase through an increased downtown residential population, deliberate marketing, multi-modal transportation and streetscape improvements, cultural programming, and other initiatives of this plan that draw more people to work, visit, and study in Downtown Danbury. More detailed information can be found in Appendix A: Real Estate Market Analysis.

The following pages detail conclusions from this market analysis. The following Land Use & Development chapter discusses the related factors which affect whether a developer can economically build space to tap available market demand, demonstrates program and design concepts for some sites where development would be most feasible and impactful, and recommends land use policy refinements that could further encourage real estate investment.



The Martha Apartments & Palace Theatre is a historic mixed-use building with storefronts, apartments, and a theatre on Main Street.

Residential Market Assessment

WHY LIVE DOWNTOWN?

In both major metro centers and small towns across the US, downtowns are being rediscovered as having the assets of a great neighborhood, including:

- varied housing options and housing in mixed-use developments;
- active and attractive public spaces;
- convenient connections to retail and other services as well as employment and education opportunities;
- multiple activities on weekdays, evenings, and weekends;
- access to various modes of travel for less reliance on the automobile; and
- easy walkability and pedestrian-friendly form.

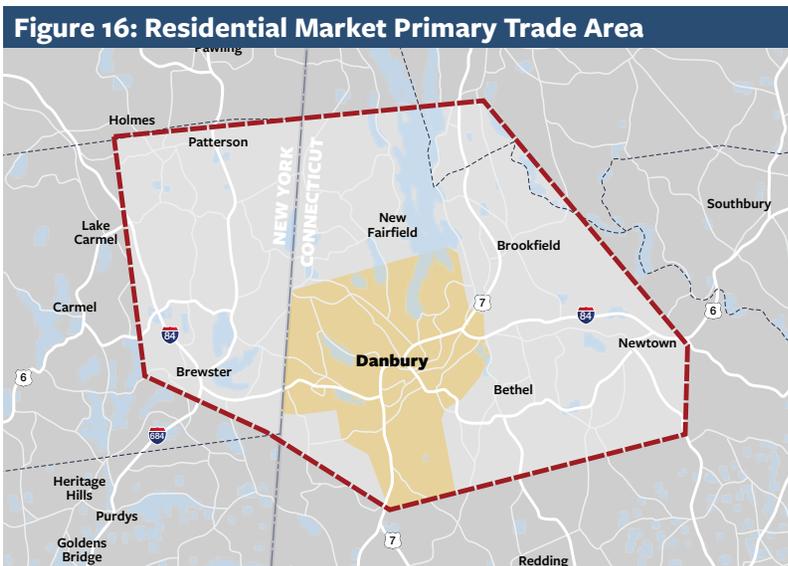
These assets support an urban lifestyle offering a wider range of accessible choices for transportation, amenity, and housing type than are available in typical areas of more dispersed, auto-oriented suburban development. Downtown Danbury already has many of these assets.

The TOD Study consultants interviewed a selection of new residents and real estate professionals to determine what assets mattered most in their decision to move to Downtown Danbury. According to interviews with new residents, downtown developers, and property managers, most households who recently moved to Downtown Danbury are either young professionals, or older Danbury residents who sold their single-family homes and wanted to stay in the area with a different, more urban lifestyle. Many younger residents cited good access to the regional job market and their positive experiences living an urban lifestyle in larger cities as key reasons for their move to Downtown

Danbury. Other communities in the region did not offer this combination. For residents of Kennedy Flats, a large rental housing development that opened Downtown in phases from 2015-2017, the development's own internal amenities such as social events and fitness facilities are important factors in addition to the urban, walkable environment and cultural life of Downtown Danbury. Kennedy Flats management indicated the development attracted more "empty nester" demand from older households than had been expected. Transit access is seen as an amenity by new residents, but is not used regularly by most. Among the new residents who commute by train, some use the Danbury Train Station, while others use the Harlem Line service from Brewster, NY. Residents who commute by train often have a partner who drives to work, making the combination of convenient transit and driving access important. Across these conversations, it is apparent that Downtown's combinations of certain assets are important: jobs *and* urban character, internal *and* external housing amenities, transit *and* vehicular access.



Kennedy Flats is a significant new multi-family apartment community in the DRZ.



Source: Esri; W-ZHA

MARKET POTENTIAL FOR DOWNTOWN HOUSING

The market potential for housing in Downtown Danbury is a portion of the market seeking housing in a larger primary trade area within an approximately 20- to 25-minute drive to Danbury. The trade area is truncated slightly on the south because of competition from the urban centers to the south. The trade area is slightly expanded to the west because there are not competitive urban centers in that area of New York State. Lower taxes in Connecticut and fairly easy commutes to employment centers in lower Fairfield County and New York State are attractive reasons for households to locate in Danbury. The residential market primary trade area is shown in the map in Figure 16.

The future residential market for housing in Downtown Danbury consists of two sets of households with distinct characteristics:

- new households that move into the primary trade area from outside; and
- current households that move within the primary trade area.

The analysis in Table 4 and Table 5 summarizes Census, Department of Labor, and Department of Commerce data trends on households interested in moving into the primary trade area. It projects that 1,678 new households will move into the Danbury residential primary trade area over the next five years. The five-year estimates were extrapolated to 2027 to estimate ten-year demand. Over the next ten years, 4,252 new households are expected to move into the primary trade area.

Not all of these households represent potential market for Downtown Danbury, as many may seek housing types and settings different from what Downtown offers. Some of the households most likely to seek an urban setting such as Downtown Danbury include households that already live in an urban or inner suburban area that are empty-nesters or, singles or couples without children.

Table 4: New Households Moving into the Area: Projections by Income

RESIDENTIAL PRIMARY TRADE AREA (2017, 2022, 2027)

	Total Household Count			Household Change	
	Baseline 2017	Estimated 2022	Estimated 2027	2017–2022	2017–2027
< \$15,000	3,769	3,773	3,777	4	8
\$15,000–\$24,999	3,825	3,629	3,443	(196)	(382)
\$25,000–\$34,999	3,484	3,116	2,787	(368)	(697)
\$35,000–\$49,999	6,263	5,642	5,083	(621)	(1,180)
\$50,000–\$74,999	9,938	8,908	7,985	(1,030)	(1,953)
\$75,000–\$99,999	8,769	8,642	8,517	(127)	(252)
\$100,000–\$149,000	13,271	14,418	15,664	1,147	2,393
\$150,000–\$199,999	6,951	8,104	9,448	1,153	2,497
\$200,000+	7,617	9,333	11,436	1,716	3,819
Total	63,887	65,565	68,139	1,678	4,252

Source: Esri; W-ZHA utilizing Census, Department of Labor, and Department of Commerce data.

**Table 5: Projected Urban-inclined Lifestyle:
New Households Moving into the Area**

RESIDENTIAL PRIMARY TRADE AREA (2017–2027)

	2017–2027
Households with Lifestyle Consistent with Urban Living	1,340
<i>Owners</i>	760
<i>Renters</i>	580

Source: Esri; W-ZHA utilizing Census, Department of Labor, and Department of Commerce data.

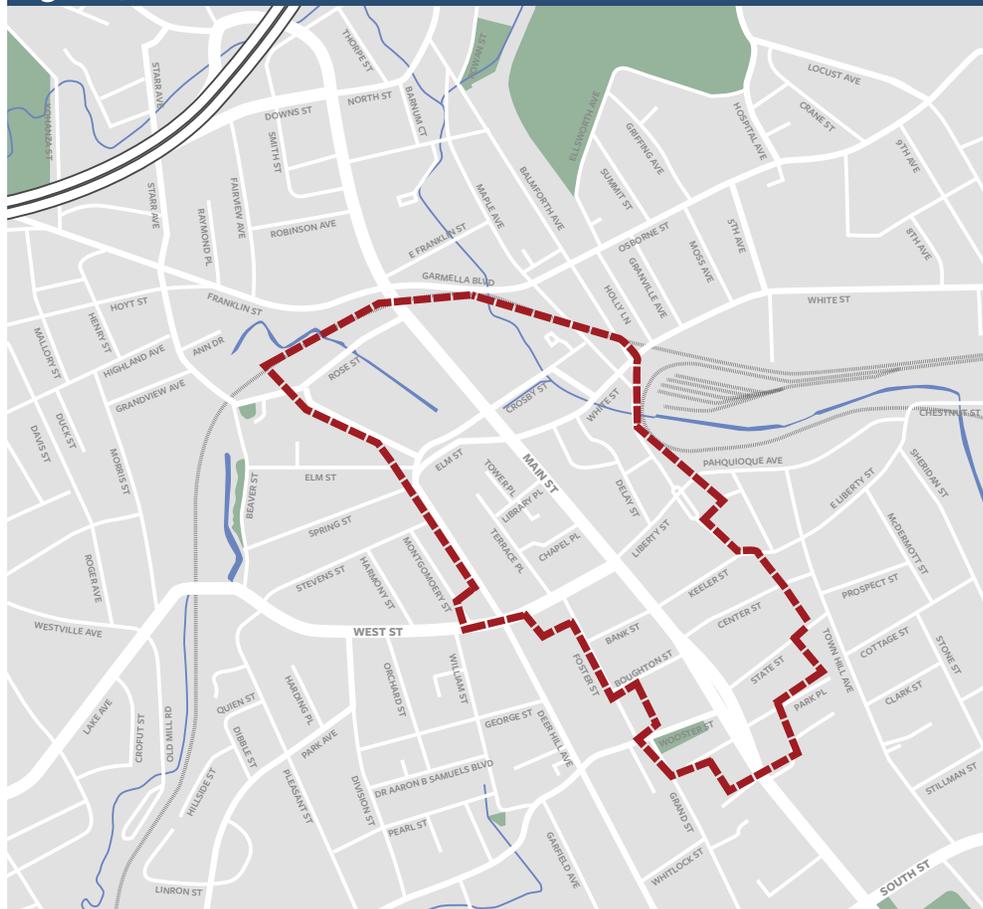
Table 5 contains profiles of anticipated new households based on Census, Department of Labor, and Department of Commerce Data. It is estimated that approximately 32%, or 1,340, of the 4,252 new households moving to the Danbury trade area in the next ten years will have lifestyles that align with Downtown’s urban living opportunities. Approximately 43% of the housing demand from these newcomers to the Danbury trade area will be for rental product (580 units) and the remainder will be for for-sale product (760 units). Downtown Danbury will have an opportunity to capture a share of this market, both rental and for-sale.

The cost of available housing and the income profile of potential residents will further influence how much housing market Downtown will capture. Kennedy Flats, the most recent and largest new construction of multi-family market-rate housing in Downtown Danbury, is an important indicator of the likely pricing of similar housing in coming years. At the time of this Study, its pricing averages \$1.90 per square foot per month, or \$1,777 per-month for a 935 square foot apartment, which is in the range of a large one-bedroom or small two-bedroom unit. This price range is most affordable to households earning at least \$70,000 per year, per the standard that housing costs should not exceed about 30% of a household’s income. As shown in Table 4, virtually all of the new households projected to move to the Danbury area will have incomes over \$100,000, and thus can be expected to afford new market-rate multi-family units.

In addition to new households moving into the trade area, some households currently living in the market trade area may want to move to Downtown Danbury. This potential market of households moving within the Danbury area was analyzed using Census, Department of Labor, and Department of Commerce data trends for the Danbury primary trade area. Utilizing this data, the analysis found that of the 26,900 households in the trade area that have lifestyles consistent with urban living, 2,984 are projected to move in any given year. Of these households, 81%—or 2,416—currently rent and may seek to rent in their new location. Based on demographic data, only 545 of the 2,984 urban-inclined households moving within the Danbury area in a given year have incomes over \$70,000. The vast majority of these households—82%—cannot afford new housing at the market price range defined by Kennedy Flats. Therefore, most of these households will be seeking more affordable housing options. A range of housing type and price points must be available if Downtown Danbury is to capture this potential market.

Nearly all of the growth in new households moving into the Danbury primary trade area in the next decade can be expected to be able to afford new market-rate housing. It is projected that 1,340 households with lifestyles consistent with urban living will move to the residential market primary trade area over the next ten years.

Source: Esri; W-ZHA utilizing Census, Department of Labor, and Department of Commerce data.

Figure 17: Downtown Revitalization Zone

Over half of current households in the Downtown Revitalization Zone have moved into the DRZ since 2010.

Source: 2011-2015 American Community Survey modified to include the Kennedy Flats apartment complex; W-ZHA

EXISTING AND FUTURE HOUSING SUPPLY

The TOD Study compared housing market potential in Downtown Danbury to the area's current housing supply to determine the extent to which market potential may justify constructing additional units. The existing TOD housing supply was analyzed using the boundary of the Downtown Revitalization Zone ("DRZ"), the zoning overlay that allows for denser, mixed-use development with the characteristics of TOD within the Central Business District ("CBD"). This area is shown in red outline on the map in Figure 17.

According to the 2011-2015 American Community Survey ("ACS") there were 987 housing units in the DRZ and approximately 12% were vacant. The 2011-2015 ACS data does not incorporate Kennedy Flats, a 374-unit apartment complex built in 2016, so the 2011-2015 ACS data was modified to include Kennedy Flats in the following analysis. Based on interviews with the developers and property managers, Kennedy Flats was assumed to be 90% occupied. With Kennedy Flats included, there are approximately 1,361 housing units in the DRZ. Kennedy Flats provides more than a quarter of occupied Downtown units. Adjusting the 2011-2015 ACS data to incorporate Kennedy Flats, approximately 88% of the occupied housing units in the DRZ are rental units.

Many of the households that reside in the DRZ have moved there recently. Combining the 2011-2015 ACS data with Kennedy Flats, which opened in phases from 2015 to 2017, finds that over half of the households in the DRZ have moved into the area since 2010. See Table 6.

The DRZ's housing stock includes a variety of product type, with over a third of units in 2- to 10-unit buildings. This pattern indicates the smaller scale of historic buildings in the DRZ. Larger-scale infill TOD projects, identified as part of the parcel assessment on page 42, thus can have a significant and catalytic effect on the total population and housing supply in the DRZ.

Table 6: Year that Current Residents Moved to Downtown Danbury

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION ZONE

	Households in occupied Kennedy Flats units as of 2017 (10% vacancy reported)	Households in other occupied housing stock as of 2015 (12% vacancy from 2011-2015 ACS)	Total occupied units
Prior to 2010	0	538	538
2010 or later	337	323	660
Total Occupied Units	337	861	1,198

Source: 2011-2015 American Community Survey modified to include the Kennedy Flats apartment complex; W-ZHA

The 2011-2015 ACS estimates that the average rent for DRZ housing stock is approximately \$840 per month. This does not incorporate the new development at Kennedy Flats, which opened after the 2011-2015 ACS time period. At the time of this analysis, monthly rent at Kennedy Flats was approximately \$1,700 per month for a one-bedroom apartment and \$2,015 for a two-bedroom apartment. The Household Median Income for the City of Danbury over the 2011-2015 ACS is \$66,676. The vast majority of the housing stock in the DRZ would thus be considered “affordable” to the median Danbury household, as it is less than 30% of monthly household income for the median household.

One reason rents are low in the DRZ is because much of the housing stock is old. As shown in Table 7, just over a third of the residential stock Downtown was built before 1939. Excluding Kennedy Flats, 1941 was the median year Downtown housing was constructed. Older housing stock, particularly without significant renovations, is generally more affordable than new construction.

The 10-year housing demand for units in Downtown Danbury, as shown in Table 5, is 1,340 units. Current vacancy is estimated at 12%, or about 118 units. Therefore, over the next ten years there is estimated to be demand for at least 1,200 additional housing units in Downtown Danbury.

Further information on the residential market assessment can be found in Appendix A: Real Estate Market Assessment.

Table 7: Year Residential Structure Built

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION ZONE

Year Built	Units	%
2010 or later	374	27.5%
2000–2009	40	2.9%
1990–1999	63	4.6%
1980–1989	107	7.9%
1970–1979	43	3.2%
1960–1969	70	5.1%
1950–1959	102	7.5%
1940–1949	78	5.7%
1939 or earlier	484	35.5%
Total Units	1,361	100.0%

Source: 2011-2015 American Community Survey modified to include the Kennedy Flats apartment complex; W-ZHA

There is estimated to be demand for approximately 1,200 net new housing units in Downtown Danbury over the next ten years.

Source: Esri; W-ZHA utilizing Census, Department of Labor, and Department of Commerce data.

Opportunities for Commercial, Institutional, and Mixed-Use Transit-Oriented Development

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Larger commercial establishments have a continuing presence in Downtown Danbury, including the main branches of several community banks, offices for professionals that meet health and health-service related needs, and several government offices. However, vacancy rates in larger and smaller office building spaces are relatively high and have shown little sign of decreasing. The market outlook for additional office space demand is limited, and existing vacant space in Downtown and elsewhere in Danbury is likely able to accommodate any foreseeable demand. Near-term development of new office space Downtown is therefore unlikely.

Experience in many other downtowns across the United States demonstrates that growing downtown residential populations tend to stimulate job growth in new and growing small office-inclined businesses. Thus, encouraging more housing development in Downtown Danbury is likely also to encourage office-related job growth and real estate development in Downtown or elsewhere in Danbury. The presence of the Danbury Innovation Center Downtown can further support this effect, as centers similar to this that help develop marketable products, ideas, and business concepts often perform well in mixed-use urban areas that make it convenient for people to collaborate.

The City of Danbury and its partners should continue efforts to attract businesses and employers to Downtown Danbury while retaining existing businesses and helping them grow. CityCenter Danbury, the special services tax district in Downtown, has continued its marketing campaign promoting Downtown and meeting with potential tenants touting Downtown Danbury as a great place to live, work and play.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Downtown Danbury is privileged to be home to the main campus of Western Connecticut State University and the Danbury Campus of Naugatuck Valley Community College. These educational institutions have recently made physical plant improvements to meet their growing needs. Both institutions provide opportunities for advancement of TOD policies by providing a population of students and workers who can support downtown businesses, housing, and take advantage of transit services. Interviews with university officials indicated that Downtown's many commuter college students seek food and retail services elsewhere because they find few conveniently accessible options Downtown. This untapped demand could potentially spur more downtown retail and, coupled with new residents, provide retailers with multiple customer markets. Providing safe, pedestrian-friendly links to and from these respective campuses will only improve the dynamics between these uses



The Connecticut Institute for Communities is an important community development project recently completed in Downtown Danbury.

CityCenter Danbury is a major asset. Downtown management organizations are important to building synergies among downtown activities and people.



in Downtown Danbury. The City should encourage future expansions of these and other educational uses in the Downtown Danbury area.

Recently another major social service institution has invested in Downtown Danbury. The Connecticut Institute for Communities built a facility with over 46,000 square feet of new medical office space at the corner of Boughton Street and Main Street. The lot behind the new building is slated for new residential units offered to serve the aging population with a portion of the units designated as affordable. Community development efforts similar to this project can provide

needed social services and transit-supporting destinations in Downtown and also support the market for further commercial and institutional development.

RETAIL AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

Retail and personal services in Downtown Danbury continue to evolve to meet the needs of the changing market and demographics that they serve. This dynamic is a common phenomenon in American downtowns. Over time, as general shopping moved to larger stores along auto-oriented corridors, to regional malls and, most recently to online vendors, the retail mix in Downtown has changed. Storefronts on Main Street and in adjacent neighborhoods have remained occupied by small businesses catering to local needs. New restaurants and shops have opened recently. These uses are symbiotic with existing entertainment uses within Downtown—including the Danbury Ice Arena, historic Palace Theatre, and the wide variety of programmed events and entertainment on the Danbury Green and at Kennedy Park.

The principal opportunities for expanding downtown retail are in food and drink establishments, unique entertainment, the arts, and limited boutique or specialty shopping. As mentioned previously, the existing college student population is an available source of market demand that could be leveraged further. Developers of housing in Downtown Danbury may choose to include retail and personal service uses in or near their buildings as an amenity to attract residents.

Increasing the population of Downtown Danbury with additional workers, visitors, and residents can be expected to exert a more varied demand for retail, personal service, restaurant, and entertainment uses. A safe and convenient pedestrian network linking these uses to each other and to transit is essential to fully translate this demand into business investment.

Insights from TOD Studies in Danbury's Region

The City of Danbury, other WestCOG municipalities, and the State of Connecticut have invested significant effort in recent years to determine potential to gain more economic development and transportation benefit from Metro-North's Danbury Branch Rail line. The Downtown Danbury TOD Study is the latest of several studies to analyze TOD potential around existing and potential future stations.

The two most relevant TOD studies were conducted for the two stations with significant development potential nearest Danbury: the Bethel Forward TOD Vision plan (2016) and the Branchville Transit Oriented Development Study (2017). The study areas of those two plans are very different from the Downtown Danbury TOD Study Area and offer insights for this study. The main message is that Downtown Danbury has far more opportunity for TOD than other station areas in the region due both to substantially greater housing market demand and to the greater economic and physical feasibility of creating that housing in Downtown Danbury. Although the Danbury Train Station ranks second, behind Bethel, in Danbury Branch weekday peak boardings, its ridership is still substantial. The Danbury Train Station accounts for about 20% of boardings at the line's seven stations according to the Danbury Branch Improvement Plan 2012 DEIS Report. These insights indicate that people find rail services at the Danbury Station useful and thus it is possible that a share of additional households moving to Downtown Danbury would make use of the services as well.

The Bethel TOD study area has a denser pattern of streets and development than Branchville, and overlaps Bethel's successful downtown district centered along Greenwood Avenue. Despite downtown Bethel's attractive qualities, its projected housing market demand is barely a tenth of what this study determined for Downtown Danbury. The Bethel TOD plan envisions 50 additional new housing units in its downtown within the next 3 to 5 years, while Downtown Danbury has opportunity for an average of over 130 units per year for the next ten years. Based on

demand from predicted new households, the Bethel plan predicts 72,000 square feet of new commercial space over 20 years. The Bethel plan calls for a substantial amount of infrastructure investment to accommodate its long-term buildout of roughly 1,000 housing units over 20 years. This includes two new street grade crossings and two new pedestrian grade crossings of the Danbury Branch Line to fill gaps in the street network. Much of the proposed new housing and retail development would be on parcels requiring aggregation or some degree of displacement of existing uses. It is thus contingent on a combination of significant public investment and private initiative.

The Branchville TOD Study area, located primarily in Ridgefield, is a crossroads with predominantly auto-oriented uses. Market potential for housing in the area was determined as 20 to 50 units over five years, and 2,500 to 7,500 square feet of commercial space. Building and marketing this development would depend heavily on creating a sidewalk and crosswalk network. It would also depend upon investing several million dollars in a sewer main and expansion of the existing sewage treatment plant in the Georgetown section of Redding.

Compared to both Bethel and Branchville, Downtown Danbury has much stronger housing market demand and the walkable street and utility infrastructure already in place to accommodate it. Danbury also has more large sites ready for development and appropriate zoning regulations in place for TOD, which Bethel and Branchville lack. While TOD in all three study areas can offer economic and community benefits, these studies show that in comparison Downtown Danbury already offers a more cost-effective and TOD-ready environment. Danbury could attract much more private-sector interest in TOD than other nearby Danbury Line station areas. With such development, Downtown Danbury can maintain and reinforce its traditional role as its region's economic core, offering the variety of choices uniquely available in its walkable urban environment.

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

Provide opportunities and incentives for land development in the TOD Study Area that will encourage a mix of land uses at densities that promote transit use.

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Applying a TOD Approach for Community and Economic Development

A strategic approach to TOD can provide much better opportunities for jobs, housing, education, and other venues near transit services as well as better connections between all of these activities. Key strategies that encourage TOD include:

- promoting density and a wide mix of uses,
- creating convenient pedestrian connections,
- ensuring good urban design and distinct sense of place,
- creating destinations and activity during both peak and off-peak hours, and
- managing parking efficiently to maximize available capacity for high-value property development and public spaces.

The TOD Study Area is comprised of a wide mix of land uses, some of which have been present in their location in Downtown Danbury for decades. There are properties within the area used solely for residential, commercial, and institutional purposes that contribute to an overall mix of uses in the Downtown Danbury neighborhood. There are also some properties containing a mix of uses within the same building, such as on historic Main Street. Land parcels range in size from less than a quarter-acre to larger parcels of several acres, including the large assemblage of lots that comprise Western Connecticut State University.

The Downtown Danbury market assessment on pages 25–29 describes the potential for market-driven development opportunities in the TOD Study Area that leverage and expand on Downtown’s walkable mixed-use character. In the TOD Study Area, intensifying use of underutilized land will be the key to continued growth and an economic generator. Therefore, TOD strategies and initiatives should focus on incentivizing development with a mix of uses to create a

dense environment of residents, workers, and visitors who can benefit from the available transportation options and amenities. This chapter identifies catalytic redevelopment and infill development sites that can be especially influential, if developed, in changing the character of Downtown Danbury by including features that highlight its qualities and attractiveness as a place to live, work, and play. These sites present market-supported opportunities for investment. This chapter also identifies sites available for more moderate levels of intensification throughout TOD Study Area. The chapter recommends specific development incentives and regulatory changes where necessary to increase development feasibility.

Framework for Land Use and Development in Downtown Danbury

Three major character areas previously described in the section “Existing Land Use and Development Patterns” on page 18 offer distinct opportunities for future development in Downtown Danbury. These areas are again shown in Figure 18. These character areas build upon existing land use patterns, accommodate development near transit options, and each express a distinctive identity to enhance market position and sense of community. Within each character area, the framework for development should promote a mix of uses in a pedestrian-friendly setting and provide opportunities for greater use of and good connections to transit.

HISTORIC MAIN STREET: A NEIGHBORHOOD IN ITSELF

Increasing emphasis on Main Street as a place to live will reinforce its traditional role as a center for shopping, dining, working, and community services. More residential units above ground floor commercial uses on Main Street will increase activity along the corridor specifically in the evenings and weekends and help to build a sense of neighborhood. Downtown residents will also utilize the service of businesses in the neighborhood, improving retail activity and stimulating the economy. Housing unit types should be varied to appeal to the broad range of potential dwellers and housing affordability should be promoted. While homeownership of units downtown should be welcomed, recent trends in new construction and concepts for housing developments are projects that have been comprised of market-rate residential apartment uses. Market and development trends indicate that most demand will be for multi-family rental apartments.

Few vacant lots exist and few storefronts are empty. Where lots are vacant, infill development should be encouraged and provide a mix of uses, with retail in the ground floor and housing in the upper stories. This mixed-use land development format should occur on lots bordering Main Street or with direct connections to Main Street. Lots just off of Main Street, such as

those at the corner of Liberty Street and Keeler Street behind the Palace Theater, should be used for multi-family housing to create more dense, continuous urban neighborhoods. Form and orientation of buildings and their uses should be sensitive to the historic district. Adaptive reuse of existing historic buildings should protect and preserve historic integrity. Empty storefronts should be filled with uses that help activate the street and appeal to a broad variety of users including the new influx of students and young adults. New ground floor commercial uses can provide economic opportunities for entrepreneurs. Vacant upper stories should be converted to residential use where feasible.

The Post Office Walk pedestrian corridor between Main Street and Ives Street should be activated by creating and promoting adjoining destination uses such as restaurants, entertainment uses, and public uses. The former Tuxedo Junction building, recently purchased by the City, on Post Office Walk offers an opportunity to establish an indoor venue for public art and events, creating, in conjunction with the outdoor venue on the nearby Danbury Green, a cluster of arts and entertainment destinations.

Pedestrian connections should be improved to foster a walkable environment. Additional or renewed streetscape, sidewalks, and other improvements to public space in this area will encourage people to linger and stroll on Main Street and easily access the Ives Street area, parking in public garages, and bus and rail transit facilities. Use of the sidewalks as extensions of ground floor retail and restaurant uses where feasible should be encouraged.

RIVERSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD: NEW BUILDINGS AND PUBLIC SPACES FOR TODAY'S LIFESTYLES

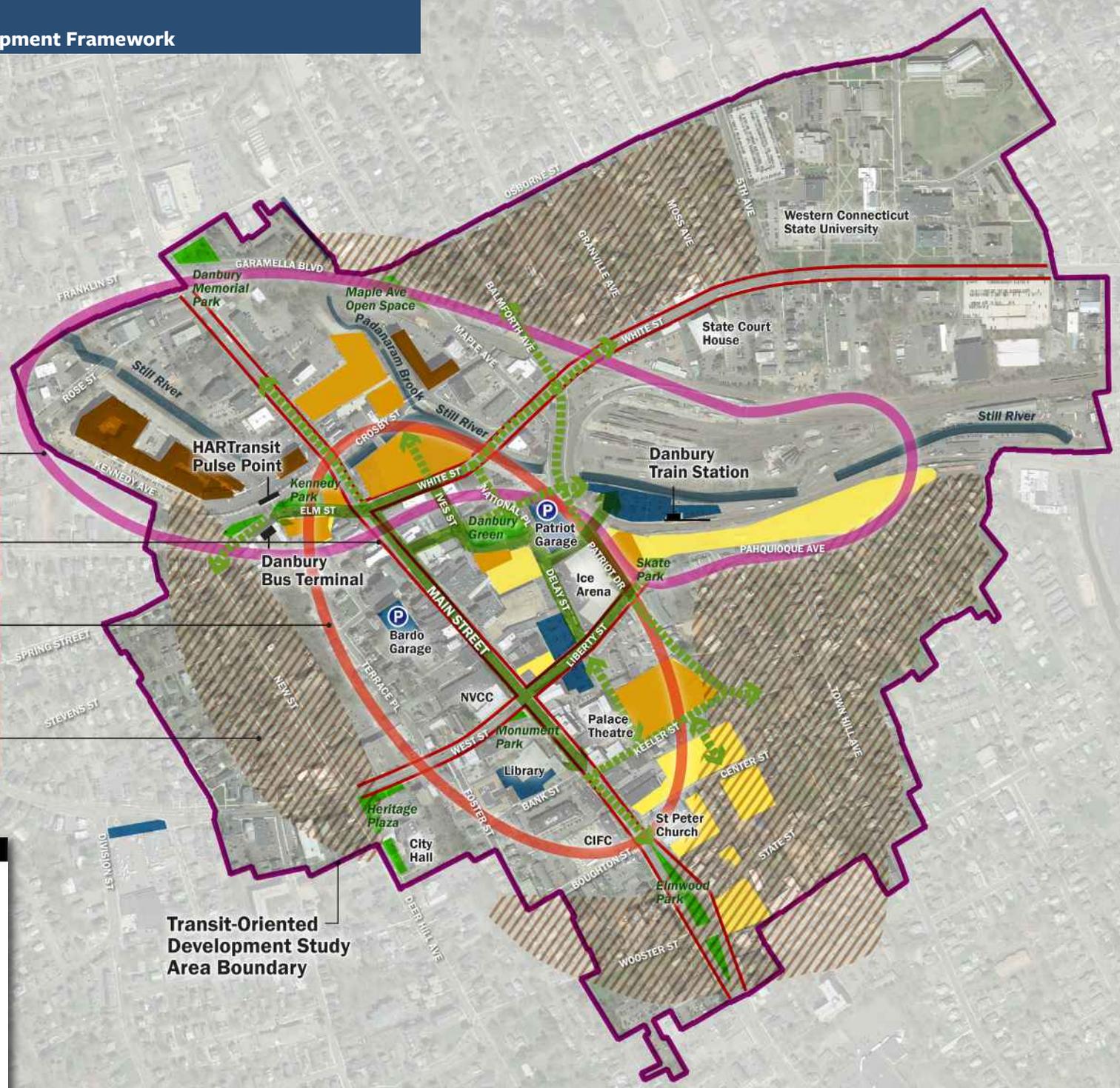
Danbury should capitalize on the presence of the Still River and its tributaries in promoting a change in uses along lots that border or are visually connected to these water resources. As previously noted, many of these lots are transitioning from former industrial use to commercial and residential uses. Redevelopment opportunities in this emerging

Figure 18: Land Use & Development Framework

- Riverside Neighborhood:
New Buildings and Public
Spaces for Today's
Lifestyles**
- Commercial and
Institutional Corridors:
Great Walking Streets**
- Historic Main Street:
A Neighborhood in Itself**
- Traditional Neighborhoods:
A Short Walk to Amenities
and Community**

LEGEND

- TOD boundary
- Streetscape improvements
- Potential streetscape improvements
- Potential development sites analyzed
- Other potential development sites
- Recent multifamily development
- City-owned parking



neighborhood benefit from the proximity to existing bus and rail transit services.

New larger-scale mixed-use developments are possible on several sites in this Riverside neighborhood. To complement development, there are opportunities for new and improved public spaces along the Still River and for improved connections to transit. Design changes to the parapet wall along the Still River can provide a visual connection to the water and design elements, including art, and can promote strolling and other recreation. Improved sidewalks along the river will also directly connect to transit options, encouraging transit use and intermodal transfers. Similarly, buildings can benefit from prominent views of riverside public spaces. Buildings should contain a mix of uses with ground floor commercial and retail uses and upper story residential dwelling units.

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS: A SHORT WALK TO AMENITIES AND COMMUNITY

Downtown Danbury is surrounded by traditional neighborhoods with good housing stock and close access to both downtown amenities and transit options. While these neighborhoods are a source of enduring strength and stability for Downtown Danbury, certain land uses create walkability gaps along side streets between Downtown and neighborhoods. These uses include surface parking lots, vacant lots, and auto-oriented uses. Where feasible, these uses should be redeveloped with new housing and mixed-use development designed to create and benefit from pedestrian-friendly sidewalks.

COMMERCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CORRIDORS: GREAT WALKING STREETS

Pedestrian-friendly site and streetscape design along major corridors within each of the character areas will improve links to transit options. Mixed-use developments will enable a greater concentration of commercial and residential uses to populate Downtown Danbury. Important opportunities for improved connections to transit include Liberty Street, Patriot Drive, White Street, and West Street.

Each of these strengthened character areas offer a wide variety of opportunities for infill TOD. A range of development scale, density, and use is possible across different sites, providing flexibility for a variety of property owners to respond to different market opportunities over time. Increased use of existing public parking, addition of new public parking, and reduced parking demands owing to good transit options can all help expand the extent of high-value building development possible.

The framework of character areas enhances market positioning for development by cultivating the unique appeal of each area. At the same time, it encourages consistent presence of high-value development, walkability, transit access, and appealing public spaces connecting the character areas into a strong Downtown whole.

Cost of Transit-Oriented Development in Urban Centers

The cost of development can be challenging to TOD. Development costs include the cost of acquiring the property, demolition or site work as necessary to prepare a site for the planned development or improvement, and both building and parking construction costs. These costs are generally higher in more urban settings than rural or suburban settings as sites can be more expensive to purchase; may be smaller in size with adjacent uses at zero or minimal setbacks; may have environmental issues present; and may present challenges with construction mobilization, staging, and demolition. Additionally, the amount of on-site parking required as well as the format of parking can substantially impact the feasibility of a project. Although surface parking is less expensive to build than structured parking, it requires large amounts of land that may limit project feasibility and desirability in a downtown area such as Danbury. Structured parking oftentimes allows for desired densities and building form to be achieved on smaller parcels, but it is more costly to build. Both surface and structured parking can be uninviting, particularly to pedestrians, and should preferably be screened from streets with occupied building space.

These variables, among others, present challenges for downtown development. This TOD Study examined economic feasibility of development on Downtown sites to determine the program, design, and funding strategies that can best achieve development that advances the TOD Vision and community goals.

Existing Incentives for Downtown Danbury Development

The City of Danbury currently provides a number of incentives in order to make development more feasible by reducing development costs or operating expenses.

REDUCED FEES AND EXPEDITING PROCESSING

The 2010 Main Street Renaissance Task Force Report recommended several strategies to provide incentives that would support downtown revitalization, and all were either instituted through public policy procedures or by reforming applicable regulations. Development fees for applications in the DRZ were reduced by half, lowering cost of development, particularly for small projects and improvements in the DRZ. Land use and permit applications are expedited and moved to the “top of the pile” for administrative review and processing, reducing processing times for approvals. Together, these reforms have enabled faster establishment of new uses and improvements in the DRZ by reducing the costs of development.

REVISED PARKING REQUIREMENTS & RESTAURANT REGULATIONS

The City of Danbury also made changes to its development regulations regarding parking requirements to reduce the cost of development. For example, residential parking requirements within the DRZ were reduced from two spaces per two bedroom unit to one and a half spaces per two bedroom unit. Businesses gained flexibility to provide parking for their employees off premises, including in City-owned parking garages. The City

also eliminated the restriction on the ratio of alcohol sales to food and beverage sales for restaurants as it, after time, appeared to discourage new restaurants from opening in Downtown Danbury.

DEFERRAL OF ASSESSMENT INCREASES PROGRAM

Tax deferral is a favored strategy by many municipalities because it does not involve direct subsidy, but rather the foregoing of future revenue. In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 12-65b, the City of Danbury provides a program for the deferral of property tax assessment increases attributable to construction or improvements. Under Sec. 18-25 of the Code of Ordinances, applicants who own or propose to acquire an interest in real property or air space, in Downtown Danbury and throughout the City, may be eligible for a deferral of tax assessment increase for a specified time period based on the estimated cost of the improvements. The approved uses are identified in the Code. The program intent is to encourage economic development and the continued economic vitality of the City.

For projects that meet eligible criteria under the program, taxes on improvements are deferred for a period of seven years for improvements valued at \$3 million or more, or two years for \$500,000 or more. Small improvements between \$25,000–\$500,000 can be partially deferred for up to three years. The City of Danbury still collects taxes on the property based on the pre-developed value. Once the deferral period expires, the property is required to pay full taxes based on its assessment and value of improvements at that time.

Such programs are designed to help projects get over a short-term hurdle to redevelopment, rather than provide an ongoing, permanent subsidy. From a public policy perspective, such programs are generally cost effective because they provide multiple benefits and revenue streams. The City of Danbury gets the benefits of redevelopment, including an increased number of residents and jobs, enhanced downtown vitality, and the corresponding economic activity. After the

deferral period, the subsidy ultimately generates increased property tax revenues that would not otherwise occur. Several projects in Downtown Danbury received City Council approval under the program. The most recent, in 2017, was a proposed project at the former *News-Times* newspaper building site, located at 333 Main Street.

Analyzing Feasibility of Development in Downtown Danbury

When determining whether a site has redevelopment potential it is important to understand underlying real estate investment goals from the perspective of a developer. Investors or developers of real estate must obtain enough income from a stabilized project to pay development costs and achieve an adequate return on investment. Otherwise other investment opportunities may be more attractive. As such, this TOD Study analyzed feasibility of development from a developer's perspective, estimating development costs and operating income for real sites in Danbury to ensure that the land use and development framework is market-tested and feasible.

There are several methods of fiscal analysis, but the return-on-cost threshold methodology is a simple measure of the cost of development compared to the income it generates in a stabilized year of operation. This measurement does not include debt, nor does it incorporate time. It is a straight-forward way to test whether investment may be worth pursuing. If the investment threshold is satisfied, investors typically proceed to more detailed investment analyses. Return-on-cost analysis can be useful to help evaluate whether other financial incentives are necessary to encourage development in the desired area.

The investment threshold varies by investor. The investment threshold is a composite number that incorporates the cost of money and market risk. This TOD Study utilized the services of W-ZHA, a specialist in real estate economics, to conduct market and feasibility analysis.

W-ZHA refers to the *PwC Real Estate Investor Survey* ("Survey"), a comprehensive data set of actual criteria utilized by active real estate investors and property market information, to determine a reasonable investment yield for a given land use. W-ZHA examined the Survey's overall capitalization rate range and made a judgment on where the tested development site would likely fall within that range given market risk. To control for the prospective nature of the investment, W-ZHA added between 100 and 150 basis points to the overall capitalization rate to determine the investment threshold.

As per the Survey, the national apartment market in the 4th Quarter of 2017 experienced overall capitalization rates between 3.5% and 7.5%, with an average of 5.32%. For apartment projects, the Mid-Atlantic Region's overall capitalization rates were between 3% and 6.75%, with an average of 5.17%. Because Danbury's prospective projects are in a Central Business setting (recently proven to be lower risk), W-ZHA assumed that Danbury's overall capitalization rate for apartments was 5.2%. W-ZHA then added 130 basis points to account for market/finance risk to arrive at an investment return threshold of 6.5%.

The capitalization rate is the ratio of Net Operating Income ("NOI") to the property asset value. NOI, or the annual income or revenue generated by a property, is derived by calculating revenue generated from all rent and fees and deducting operating expenses and property taxes. Developments with higher projected NOIs are more attractive to an investor. Therefore, incentives that help raise rents, reduce operating expenses, or lower development costs are desirable. Additionally, when a developer obtains a return exceeding the return-on-cost threshold, there may be an opportunity for the developer to invest in community-oriented amenities.

Figure 19 shows the estimated development costs for a sample Downtown Danbury TOD project. Based on recent projects in the Danbury market, development costs are indicated in units of cost per

Figure 19: Estimated Development Costs for a Sample Project in Downtown Danbury



Costs are estimates and will vary from project to project based on acquisition costs, site conditions, building development type, and parking type among other factors.

square foot of building. Development costs include site acquisition, demolition and site preparation, building development, and parking. In addition to these hard costs, soft costs including design and administration as well as financing costs are also included in total development cost.

Table 8 demonstrates a return on cost analysis for a sample Downtown Danbury TOD development without a deferral of tax assessment increase. The sample TOD development is on a one acre site valued at \$800,000 per acre. The developer builds a 5 story, 55,000 square foot building with 50 rental residential units and an elevator. The residential units are a mix of one and two bedroom units, averaging 935 square feet a unit. Parking is provided in a surface lot on the site at a ratio of 1.25 spaces per unit. At a cost of approximately \$202/sq ft the estimated total development cost comes to \$11,117,240. The development's residential units rent at market rate, or approximately \$1.90 a square foot a month, with a vacancy of 5% based on current Danbury market conditions. This results in a total income for the project of \$1,012,600. Ongoing operating expenses are

calculated at 25% of the effective rental income, and the property taxes are based on the property tax estimate for the value of the land and the development cost. The net operating income comes to \$630,980. Compared to a total development cost of \$11,117,240, the return on cost comes to 5.68%, or below the 6.5% investment threshold. This example analysis indicates that the minimum NOI threshold may not be met for buildings with an elevator or structured parking, typical of the taller and denser structures desired in a TOD area.

Table 9 shows a return on cost analysis for the same 55,000 gross square foot multi-family residential building and development program with a reduction in initial property tax costs. In this case, NOI will increase and a TOD project will be a better or more attractive investment opportunity. The operating expenses are lower because \$108,390 of the property taxes has been abated as part of a deferral of tax assessment increase. The development still pays \$20,080 in property taxes based on the value of the land before redevelopment. The deferral of tax assessment increase thus raises the NOI to \$739,370. Compared to the total development cost, this results in a return on cost of 6.65%. For this sample development project, the deferral of tax assessment increase makes the project economically feasible.

Redevelopment Capacity

A variety of sample redevelopment sites were considered to capture a broad sense of potential development capacity and to identify those sites where high value redevelopment could be especially feasible and beneficial to Downtown. Site locations reflect land use patterns that have emerged in Downtown Danbury through recent property improvements and redevelopments. Uses along Main Street have remained predominantly retail, office, and institutional with some upper story residential. New higher density residential development and redevelopment has targeted large underutilized former industrial parcels in the northern section of the TOD Study Area.

**ANALYSIS OF SAMPLE DANBURY TOD DEVELOPMENT
55,000 SQ FT BUILDING WITH 50 RESIDENTIAL UNITS IN AN ELEVATOR BUILDING WITH SURFACE PARKING**

Table 8: Return on Cost Analysis for Danbury TOD Development Without Deferral of Tax Assessment Increase

Income			
Residential Units	50	Avg 935 SF	
Rent/RSF/Month	\$1.90/SF	\$1,777/Mo	\$1,065,900
Vacancy	5%		(\$53,300)
Total Income			\$1,012,600
Expenses			
Operating Expenses			(\$253,150)
Property Taxes			(\$128,470)
Sub-Total			(\$381,620)
Net Operating Income			\$630,980

$$\frac{\text{Net Operating Income}}{\text{Total Development Cost}} > 6.50\% \quad \frac{\$630,980}{\$11,117,240} = 5.68\%$$

Project is not an attractive investment opportunity

The map in Figure 20, displayed on the following page, shows parcels that appear to have the greatest potential for redevelopment and intensification of development. Some parcels are much better suited for redevelopment than others, owing to their larger size, flexibility of site layout, ability to accommodate parking needs, walkable setting, proximity to amenities, zoning, and/or interest and motivation of the property owner. Parcels in yellow are assumed to have greater capacity and/or feasibility for redevelopment because they are generally larger and/or do not contain occupied buildings. Parcels in orange are assumed to have lesser capacity and/or feasibility for redevelopment because they are generally smaller and contain occupied buildings. They are, however, typically in prominent locations or appear underutilized and thus should be considered priorities

Table 9: Return on Cost Analysis for Danbury TOD Development With Deferral of Tax Assessment Increase

Income			
Residential Units	50	Avg 935 SF	
Rent/RSF/Month	\$1.90/SF	\$1,777/Mo	\$1,065,900
Vacancy	5%		(\$53,300)
Total Income			\$1,012,600
Expenses			
Operating Expenses			(\$253,150)
Property Taxes			(\$128,470)
Property Tax Abatement			\$108,390
Net Property Taxes			(\$20,080)
Sub-Total			(\$273,230)
Net Operating Income			\$739,370

$$\frac{\text{Net Operating Income}}{\text{Total Development Cost}} > 6.50\% \quad \frac{\$739,370}{\$11,117,240} = 6.65\%$$

Project is an attractive investment opportunity

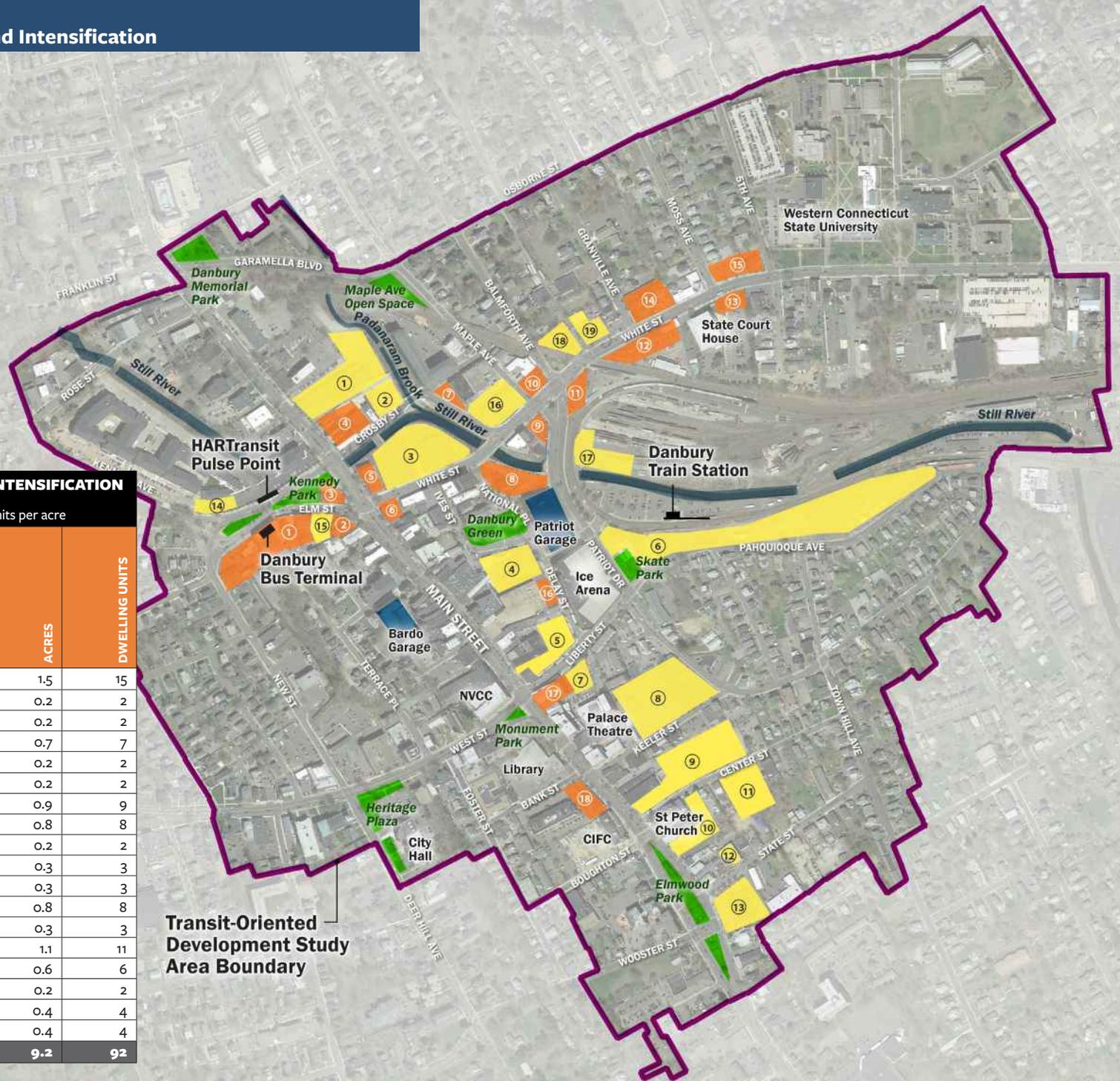
for intensified use—higher-value uses in existing or new buildings—where feasible.

Potential residential dwelling unit capacity is provided here as an example measure of development capacity. Dwelling units are assumed to contain about 1,100 square feet of gross floor area on average. Parcel area and capacity measurements are approximations. Actual feasibility for development is dependent upon economic feasibility, market opportunity, owner interest, and other factors. The depiction of parcels in Figure 20 as redevelopment or intensification opportunities is not intended to compel owners to undertake improvements. Other parcels not depicted may also offer real estate investment opportunity.

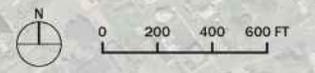
Figure 20: Redevelopment and Intensification

SAMPLE REDEVELOPMENT CAPACITY 30 or 60 dwelling units per acre			
SITE	ACRES	30 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE (WITH SURFACE PARKING)	60 DWELLING UNITS PER ACRE (WITH STRUCTURED PARKING)
1	2.0	60	120
2	0.4	12	25
3	2.1	63	126
4	1.0	29	58
5	0.8	24	48
6	3.0	90	180
7	3.1	92	185
8	1.8	55	110
9	2.2	66	132
10	0.8	24	48
11	1.0	29	58
12	0.1	3	6
13	1.0	30	60
14	0.2	6	12
15	0.3	9	18
16	0.4	12	24
17	0.6	18	36
18	0.3	9	18
19	0.4	12	24
TOTAL	22.6	644	1,287

SAMPLE INTENSIFICATION CAPACITY 10 dwelling units per acre		
SITE	ACRES	DWELLING UNITS
1	1.5	15
2	0.2	2
3	0.2	2
4	0.7	7
5	0.2	2
6	0.2	2
7	0.9	9
8	0.8	8
9	0.2	2
10	0.3	3
11	0.3	3
12	0.8	8
13	0.3	3
14	1.1	11
15	0.6	6
16	0.2	2
17	0.4	4
18	0.4	4
TOTAL	9.2	92



Transit-Oriented Development Study Area Boundary



OVERALL DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Based on the sample capacity analysis, the sites shown could accommodate the potential demand for over 1,200 net new housing units over ten years determined by market analysis, but only if most redevelopment sites (yellow) are developed at densities requiring structured parking, and/or a significant number of intensification sites (orange) gain new development. This opportunity is attainable, but it would likely depend on some level of public subsidy for structured parking development and increased residential use of existing public parking.

Representative Redevelopment Parcel Assessment and Scenario Testing

Several development scenarios were tested on actual sites in the TOD Study Area in Downtown Danbury in each of the character areas, with specific assumptions for program, site layout, parking format, building height, and development massing. The primary development program in each case was assumed to be multi-family housing, for which real estate market analysis identified significant investment potential. Ground-floor retail uses were also included for sites with frontage on principal commercial streets, such as Main and White Streets. Scenario testing examined how well market-oriented development fits with established zoning regulations, size of potential redevelopment sites, downtown character of place, and financial feasibility. Different building and parking approaches compared in the redevelopment scenarios include:

- townhomes with parking in surface lots and/or at-grade under the building;
- walk-up multi-family buildings with ground-floor retail, with parking in surface lots and/or at-grade under the building, and with parking in a structure; and
- elevator multi-family buildings with ground-floor retail, with parking in surface lots and/or at-grade under the building, and with parking in a structure.

Testing out these sites helped determine what forms of development are most feasible under current market conditions in Downtown Danbury and also where a subsidy may be necessary to incentivize development in the TOD Study Area. The results of this analysis indicate what general scale of redevelopment Downtown Danbury can expect in the short-term, a sense of the incentives necessary to achieve the development, and any land use and regulatory changes required to remove barriers to redevelopment. These various scenarios demonstrate opportunity to create a vibrant, walkable, and connected Downtown and identify where future public investment in infrastructure can help achieve Downtown Danbury's desired TOD Vision.

The map in Figure 21 shows the parcels determined to be most suitable for redevelopment including 333 Main Street, 12-20 Crosby Street, 301 Main Street, 99 Railroad Place, and the Palace Theatre Parking Lots & Keeler/Liberty Street Sites. Many of these sites were first identified as catalytic development opportunities in the 2010 Main Street Renaissance Task Force Report including: 12-20 Crosby Street, 99 Railroad Place, and the Palace Theatre Parking Lot and Keeler/Liberty Street Sites. Other parcels including the Elm Street sites bordering Kennedy Park and Train Station Area sites along Patriot Drive and Pahquioque Avenue were also identified as part of the 2010 Main Street Task Force Report as areas of focus. These latter sites are examined for their development feasibility in terms of physical capacity and design, but they were not evaluated with respect to economic feasibility.

REPRESENTATIVE REDEVELOPMENT PARCELS

Opportunities for new development or redevelopment appear feasible on several sites significant for their size and prominence. These sites include 12-20 Crosby Street, 301 Main Street, and 333 Main Street, all of which can capitalize on their locations in the Riverside neighborhood.

Another site in the southern portion of the TOD Study Area presents a development opportunity combining large vacant and underutilized parcels on Keeler Street and Liberty Street. In this location new housing

can serve Downtown Danbury's emerging residential population and create continuous residential character between Downtown and the adjacent Town Hill neighborhood. This site also provides an opportunity to establish parking that could be shared with uses along Main Street such as the Palace Theatre and Danbury Library.

The site at 99 Railroad Place, occupied by the Firestone tire shop facing the Danbury Green, is a priority location for pedestrian-friendly design and a new use to enhance the character and activity around the Danbury Green. This site was also identified in the 2010 Main Street Renaissance Task Force Report. The existing use of the site affects its likely redevelopment in the near term. However, if the existing use relocates, the site could offer an attractive opportunity for re-tenanting with pedestrian-oriented retail or dining. In combination with adjacent land, a larger development site with shared parking offers greater opportunities with housing on upper stories.

REPRESENTATIVE INTENSIFICATION PARCELS

The most important opportunity for intensification is the existing building at 294-300 Main Street (#3 in orange on Figure 20), which is highly visible from Main Street, Elm Street, and Kennedy Park. Although the building is currently occupied, higher-value or community-oriented uses that better engage adjoining sidewalks and Kennedy Park, coupled with façade upgrades, could transform it into a landmark destination that enhances adjacent properties and public spaces. Other properties with intensification opportunity include 127 White Street (#14 in orange in Figure 20), where alternative tenancing with a pedestrian-oriented retail use and conversion of some front yard parking into a landscaped pedestrian entrance would significantly enhance walkability along White Street.

Selected redevelopment and intensification parcels are described and analyzed on the following pages with greater detail on their site and context, relevant urban design considerations of development, alternate development scenarios, and financial feasibility of development.

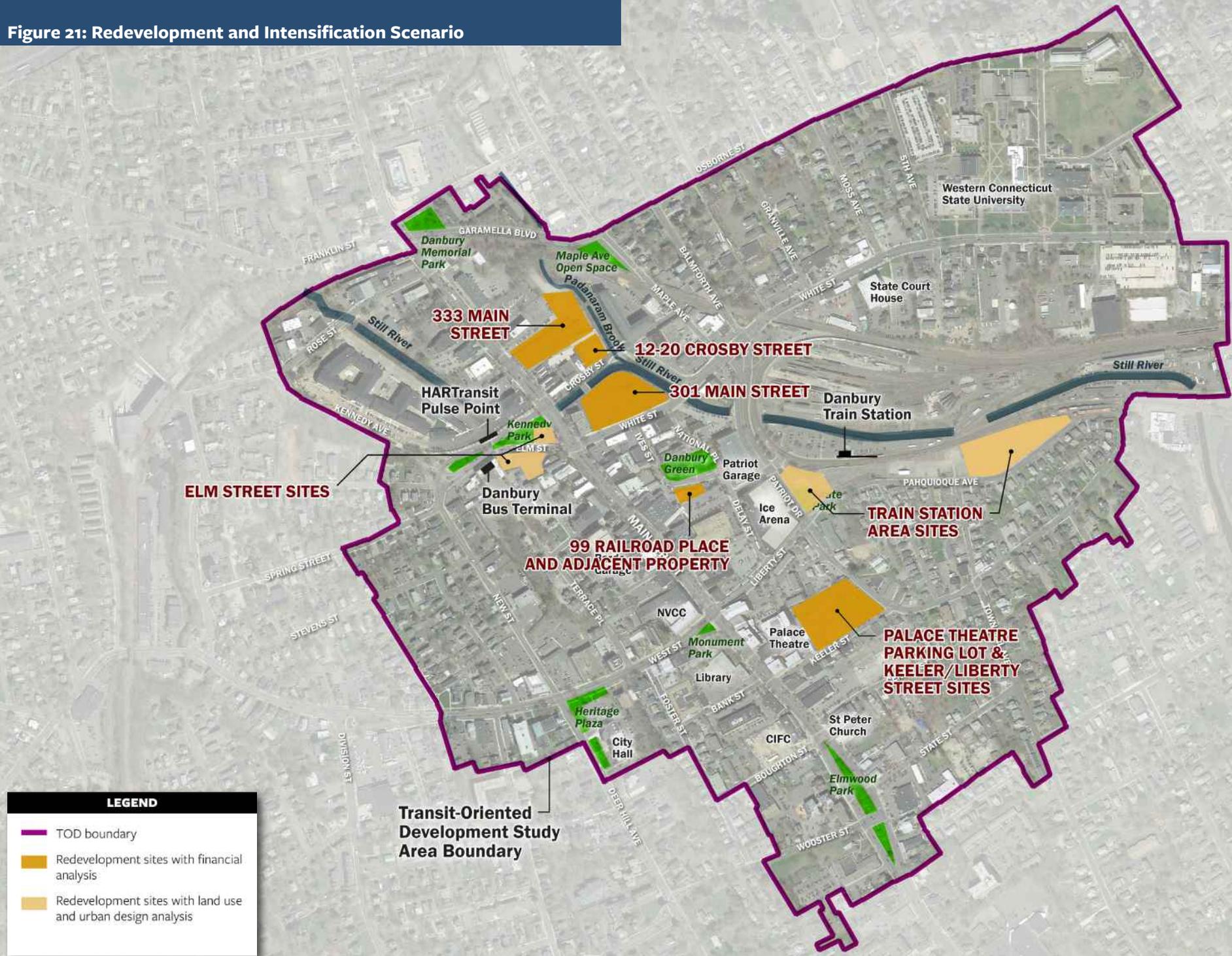
REPRESENTATIVE PARCELS OVERALL DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

The most feasible redevelopment sites, among those depicted in Figure 21, could yield approximately 350 to 600 units in total, with the higher range requiring structured parking.

DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY

Analysis of the development scenarios for the redevelopment sites indicated that most development scenarios fail to achieve financial feasibility for investors without additional subsidy. However, application of Danbury's established deferral of tax assessment increases program would help projects achieve financial feasibility for most scenarios. Therefore, continued use of this program is important to promoting TOD in Downtown Danbury. Additional gap financing is also required for some development scenarios. Pages 56–57 provide detail on financial feasibility analysis.

Figure 21: Redevelopment and Intensification Scenario



333 Main Street



WHAT CAN THIS SITE DO FOR DOWNTOWN?

Development on this site could extend the mixed-use character of historic Main Street north of the Still River, joining Brookview Commons and Kennedy Flats to produce a substantial residential district mixed with commercial use.

SITE STATISTICS

2.47 acre site is zoned C-CBD and part of the DRZ. Site is currently occupied by a vacant 1-2 story building and parking lot that previously contained offices and printing facilities.

SITE AND CONTEXT

The site is located along the Main Street corridor and adjacent to the 12-20 Crosby Street redevelopment site. Significant property investment occurred recently near the site: the 374-unit Kennedy Flats development across Main Street and the popular Mothership Bakery just south of the site. A request for a deferral of tax assessment increase and development proposal for a 150-unit multi-family market-rate apartment building was

submitted to the City Council in 2017 and approved. Plans for land use approvals have not yet been submitted to City departments. Together with Kennedy Flats and the adjoining 115-unit Brookview Commons development, residential development on this site would result in a concentration of well over 600 market-rate housing units in a compact area. Ground floor retail was also proposed as required on Main Street. This concentration could further increase development potential for hundreds more housing units on nearby underutilized sites by reinforcing the area's market position as a desirable residential neighborhood with supporting additional retail. A trail along the Still River and a possible walk along the site's Padanaram Brook frontage would add further appeal to residential use here.

The site's ample size and Main Street address could also make it suitable for office use, as demonstrated by the site option including both office and residential use on the facing page. This Study's economic feasibility analysis focused solely on the elevator multi-family and retail option, however, given the much stronger market potential for housing than office space.

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The location must include retail or other non-residential uses along the Main Street frontage in accordance with zoning regulations. This ground-level active use should meet typical standards for retail storefront design. The building should present an attractive appearance not only from Main Street, but also from Lee Hartell Drive, from which it may be prominently visible.

DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

129 residential units in a mixed-use building with 6,000 square feet of retail along the Main Street frontage. The scenario is potentially feasible with tax abatement.

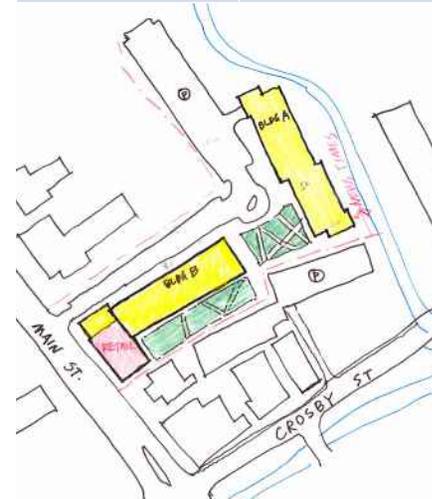
ELEVATOR OPTION (RESIDENTIAL AND OFFICE MIX)

# units	office sf (including storefront retail)	# stories	density du/ac
55	80,000	5 residential 3-4 office	40 (residential portion)



ELEVATOR OPTION (RESIDENTIAL AND RETAIL MIX)

# units	retail sf	# stories	density du/ac
129	6,000	5	52



These example images from other urban communities show potential styles and form of development for two development scenarios at 333 Main Street.

12-20 Crosby Street



WHAT CAN THIS SITE DO FOR DOWNTOWN?

Development on this site can extend the Downtown's newest neighborhood to Crosby Street and to a prominent location overlooking a potential new trail along the Still River as well as overlooking Padanaram Brook.

SITE STATISTICS

0.46 acre site of vacant land and a parking deck structure that are currently zoned C-CBD and within the DRZ. Crosby Street is not identified in the Zoning Regulations as a street where first floor residential uses are prohibited. The site was identified in the 2010 Main Street Renaissance Report as suitable for new development.

SITE AND CONTEXT

This vacant site is well-located to extend the Riverside Neighborhood that is anchored by new residential development Kennedy Flats on the block west of the site. There is also high-density housing to the east at Brookview Commons. The site is adjacent to Padanaram Brook, which joins the Still River nearby. The potential Riverwalk Trail along the Still River, described in the Urban Design and Public Spaces chapter on page 110, is across Crosby Street from the site. Being adjacent to these natural resources with potential for pedestrian and bicycling improvements along the Still River can add significant value for residential use of the site. An existing parking deck to the rear of the site provides valuable existing parking capacity, freeing the remainder of the site for building and landscape amenities. The development program on the site could be coordinated with adaptive reuse of the adjacent building to eliminate building vacancy on the Crosby Street frontage from Lee Hartell Drive to Main Street.

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

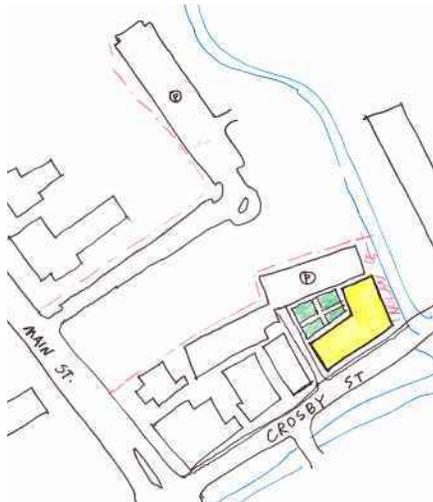
The site is prominent along Crosby Street and from Lee Hartwell Drive. This location is suitable for either retail or residential space at ground level. Ground-level retail should meet typical standards for retail storefront design. Ground-level residential space should be designed for adequate privacy separation from the sidewalk, with features such as stoops and a compact front garden bed. The site offers adequate space to include a courtyard for residents.

DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

21 to 35 residential flats in a walk-up or elevator building. Parking provided in existing deck on site. The higher-density elevator option does not enhance feasibility; either scenario is potentially feasible with tax abatement.

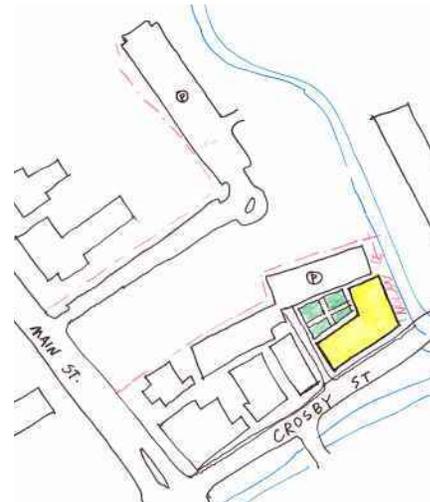
WALK-UP OPTION

# units	retail sf	# stories	density du/ac
21	0	3	46



ELEVATOR OPTION

# units	retail sf	# stories	density du/ac
35	0	5	76



These example images show potential styles and form of development for two development scenarios at 12-20 Crosby Street.

301 Main Street



See page 111 for a conceptual illustration of redevelopment opportunity on this site.

WHAT CAN THIS SITE DO FOR DOWNTOWN?

Redevelopment of the site would close a gap on a major thoroughfare by replacing surface parking with a desired mixed-use building. It would link all of Downtown's major areas with more vibrant activity and walkable streets. Opportunities exist for structured parking on the Crosby Street side and to incorporate public amenities.

SITE STATISTICS

2.7 acre site currently zoned C-CBD and DRZ. Currently contains a large shared surface parking lot and two buildings. A three story office and retail building is located along the Main Street frontage of the site. A one story service and retail building is located at the corner of White Street and the Still River. Both buildings are occupied. A surface parking lot is located between the buildings to serve the uses.

SITE AND CONTEXT

This large, prominent, and highly-accessible site presents a unique opportunity to connect the Main Street and White Street corridors, the Ives Street dining and entertainment district, and established and emerging neighborhoods together at Downtown Danbury's core. The site includes street frontage along White Street, Crosby Street, Lee Hartell Drive, and the Still River. Redevelopment on this site (which includes retaining the existing office building on Main Street) should include a new building with ground-level retail along White Street—restoring the street's traditional role as a walkable retail street—and offers an important opportunity for housing on upper levels. The Still River provides a valuable and underutilized amenity along the north and east sides of the site. Housing and outdoor dining on the site could directly adjoin and overlook the river, complemented by a new public Riverwalk Trail on the other bank. Parking on the site should be structured to best leverage the site's development opportunity, and can be shared to serve the existing office building to the west along Main Street as well as new retail and residential uses.

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The street frontage along White Street is a priority retail location and thus should include retail storefronts along an attractive sidewalk. Consider opportunity to extend Ives Street as a public walk connecting north across the Still River to Crosby Street. Parking should not be visible along White Street and any parking facing Crosby Street or Lee Hartell Drive should be screened from public streets by trees or other landscaping.

DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

69 to 150 residential flats in a walk-up or elevator building. The lower density scenario has 5,000 square feet of retail space; the higher density scenario is 12,000 square feet of retail. Parking could be accommodated in a single deck structure along the north edge of the site. The lower density scenario is potentially feasible without a tax abatement and is feasible with a tax abatement. The higher density scenario likely needs tax abatement and additional gap financing in order to be feasible.

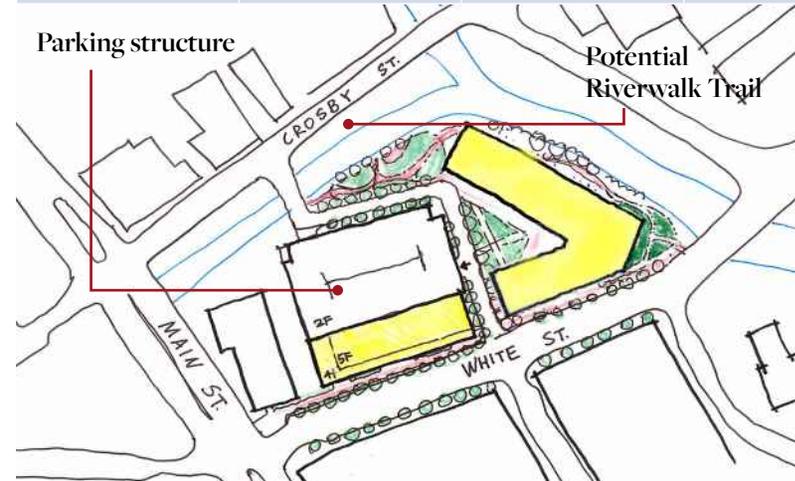
WALK-UP & SURFACE PARKING OPTION

# units	retail sf	# stories	density du/ac
69	5,000	3	35



ELEVATOR & STRUCTURED PARKING OPTION

# units	retail sf	# stories	density du/ac
150	12,000	5	75



These example images show potential styles and form of development for two development scenarios at 301 Main Street. See also the conceptual illustration on page 111.

99 Railroad Place



WHAT CAN THIS SITE DO FOR DOWNTOWN?

Development on this site can provide for a mix of uses to frame the public space of the Danbury Green and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment in the Ives Street area.

SITE STATISTICS

1.65 acre site is zoned C-CBD and in the DRZ. The site currently contains a one-story building with an active auto-service use and associated parking. The 2010 Main Street Renaissance Task Force Report envisioned redevelopment of the site as a three-story brick commercial building.

SITE AND CONTEXT

The site is highly visible facing the Danbury Green. There is a parcel-long curb cut along the sidewalk across from the Danbury Green with parking out front. The lot is not deep, so development would need to target either of two scales:

- A smaller-scale development that fully fits on the site, potentially utilizing the nearby Patriot Garage to minimize on-site parking needs. Even a re-use of the existing building as a restaurant or retail store would offer strong benefits albeit the automotive nature of the site may restrict or pose environmental conditions limiting reuse of the building.
- A larger-scale development that also incorporates the parking lot behind the site and/or other lots along Delay Street.

The Danbury Green, directly across the street, is an important community center and park space. The site is also close to restaurants along Ives Street, the City-owned former Tuxedo Junction building, Post Office Walk, and the Danbury Ice Arena. Redeveloping this site can be a catalytic stimulant to the area and a connector to nearby transit.

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

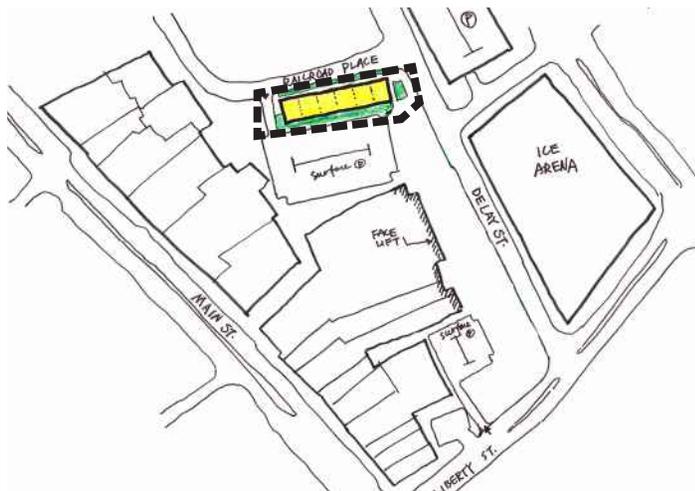
The new development should provide a more inviting setting for walking, widening the sidewalk right-of-way, adding street trees, and eliminating the lot-long curb cut. The façade facing the Danbury Green along Railroad Place should directly engage the park, with windows and entrances facing the street and Danbury Green. Outdoor dining or other accessory retail space could occupy compact courtyards or any widening of the sidewalk.

DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

12 to 115 residential flats in walk-up townhomes or an elevator apartment building. The lower density scenario of townhomes requires tax abatement and does not meet current zoning requirements for ground floor commercial use along Railroad Place. The higher density scenario of an apartment building is likely only feasible with tax abatement and aggregation of adjacent parcels, including land for parking. The higher-density scenario offers the opportunity for mixed-use development, with 9,000 square feet on the ground floor that could be used for a non-residential use such as a restaurant, cafe, or retail store. While not studied for economic feasibility, the site could also be redeveloped for a single or mixed-use commercial structure.

WALK-UP & TUCK-UNDER PARKING OPTION

# units	retail sf	# stories	density du/ac
12	0	3	55



ELEVATOR & STRUCTURED PARKING OPTION

# units	retail sf	# stories	density du/ac
115	9,000	5	70



These example images show potential styles and form of development for two development scenarios at 99 Railroad Place.

Palace Theatre Parking Lot & Keeler/Liberty Street Sites

EXISTING



See page 115 for a conceptual illustration of redevelopment opportunity on this site.

WHAT CAN THIS SITE DO FOR DOWNTOWN?

Development on this site can connect Main Street and the adjacent Town Hill neighborhood along great residential streets.

SITE STATISTICS

This site is comprised of several parcels totaling 2.3 acres currently zoned C-CBD and in the DRZ. Some portions of the site are used as surface parking lots for the Palace Theatre and Martha Apartments and metered parking spaces for the general public. Other areas are vacant land with grass and mature trees. The parcels are identified as 151 & 161 Main Street, 45-49 Keeler Street, and 62-66 Liberty Street. The 2010 Main Street Renaissance Task Force Report envisioned a new parking facility or combination building/parking structure on the site.

SITE AND CONTEXT

The site presents a prominent gap between residential areas to the north, east, and south and historic Main Street to the west. Redevelopment

could include new parking sufficient in supply to continue to serve the Theatre and the Martha Apartments as well as meet the demands of new housing. Development along the street edge of Keeler Street would close the gap between Keeler and East Liberty Streets.

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

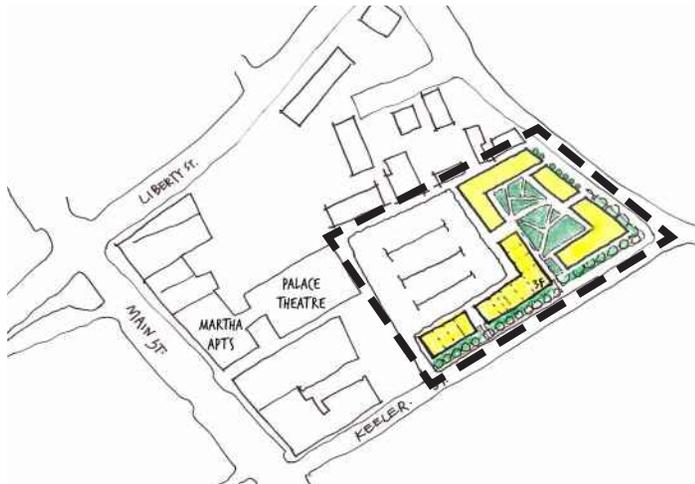
New housing frontage along Keeler and East Liberty Streets should complement existing housing across those streets by incorporating proportions, materials, and/or other design elements that fit well with the existing neighborhood. New development may be taller, but should step back upper floors so that the façade at lower floors is in scale with the facing buildings along Keeler and Liberty Streets. It may be possible to retain the site's large mature trees by locating a courtyard around them. This site also offers one of the better opportunities to locate new public parking south of Liberty and West Streets where a future increase in demand is expected. Therefore, consider opportunities for a shared parking facility to serve multiple needs, including those of on-site and adjacent public uses. Consider extending the Palace Walk into the site to connect to Main Street and extending the Walk around the building to Liberty Street.

DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

40 to 165 residential flats in walk-up townhomes or an elevator apartment building. The site is large enough that housing development could be phased in two or more steps. The lower density scenario of townhomes is potentially feasible without tax abatement and feasible with tax abatement. The higher density scenario of an apartment building is likely only feasible with tax abatement and additional gap financing.

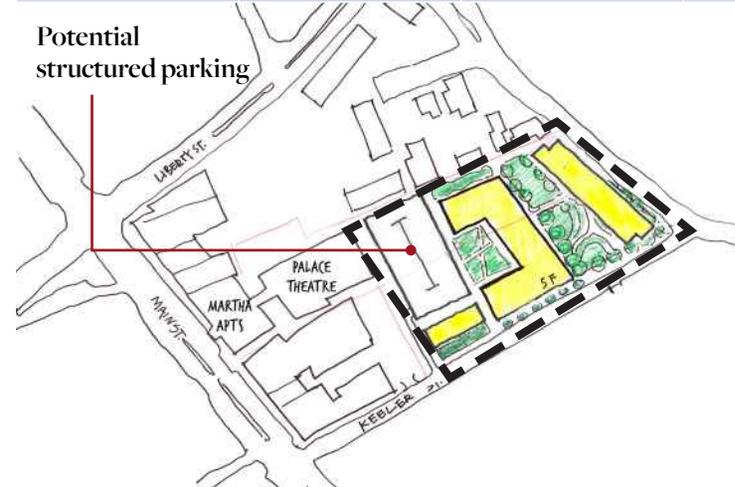
TOWNHOMES OPTION

# units	retail sf	# stories	density du/ac
40	0	3	17



ELEVATOR & STRUCTURED PARKING OPTION

# units	retail sf	# stories	density du/ac
165	0	5	72



These example images show potential styles and form of development for two development scenarios on the Palace Theatre and Keeler/Liberty sites. See also the conceptual illustration on page 115

Financial Feasibility of Representative Redevelopment Parcels in Downtown Danbury

Table 10 shows the results of the financial feasibility assessment for the development scenarios on the five sites described on the previous pages. A lower-density scenario with surface parking and a higher-density scenario with structured parking were examined for most sites. Analysis took into account land costs, development costs, operating income, operating expenses, and costs of financing.

For 333 Main Street, the mixed-use residential scenario is potentially feasible with a deferral of tax assessment increase.

For the 12-20 Crosby Street site, both scenarios are potentially feasible with deferral of the tax assessment increase. The higher density scenario does not help increase the economic feasibility of development due to the increased building development costs.

Table 10: Financial Feasibility Assessment Scenario Results

Site & Scenario	Unit count	Tax deferral needed?
333 Main Street–mixed-use residential	129	Y
12-20 Crosby Street–lower density	21	Y
12-20 Crosby Street–higher density	35	Y
301 Main Street–lower density	69	Y
301 Main Street–higher density	150	Y
99 Railroad Place–lower density	12	Y
99 Railroad Place–higher density	115	Y
Keeler/Liberty Street Sites–lower density	40	N
Keeler/Liberty Street Sites–higher density	165	Y

For the 301 Main Street site, the lower density scenario is potentially feasible without a deferral of tax assessment increase, and is feasible with deferral of tax assessment increase. The higher density scenario is not feasible without the deferral of tax assessment increases. In addition to a deferral of tax assessment increase, the higher density scenario would likely require additional gap financing in order to be feasible because of the increased construction cost of the building and structure parking.

For the 99 Railroad Place site, the lower density scenario of townhomes would require a deferral of tax assessment increase. The low density scenario does not comply with current zoning requirements for commercial uses on the ground floor along Railroad Place and was tested only for potential financial feasibility. The higher density scenario is likely only feasible with a deferral of tax assessment increase, aggregation of adjacent parcels into a larger development site, and acquisition of adjacent land for parking. While not analyzed for development feasibility, single or multi-story commercial development is a permissible use under existing zoning of the site. Adaptive reuse or redevelopment of the site as a commercial use, such as a restaurant, may be the most feasible redevelopment scenario given the challenges of developing housing on the site.

For the Palace Theatre Parking Lot & Keeler/Liberty Street sites, the lower density scenario of townhomes is potentially feasible without a deferral of tax assessment increase and is feasible with a deferral. The higher density scenario would require additional gap financing along with a deferral of tax assessment increase to be feasible.

The economic analysis of these representative redevelopment parcels indicates that most development scenarios fail to achieve economic feasibility without subsidy. The analysis results in Table 10 show that the current tax deferral program—with a 7-year time period—should make most of the development scenarios feasible. Table 9 on page 41 shows

an example of how tax deferral raises the Net Operating Income to make a project feasible. Therefore, if development is desired in Downtown Danbury, depending on building design and density, continued use of the deferral of assessment increases program is an important incentive to improve development financial feasibility.

Many questions typically arise during the discussion of use of the existing tax deferral program. Under Section 18-25 of the Code of Ordinances, additional information could be required from a prospective developer to justify the need for a subsidy and provide a more transparent process for consideration. Such additional information could include specific information on development costs and projected operating income. Many localities require third party review of the economic feasibility of a project in order to conclude that the tax deferral is necessary to render the project economically feasible.

Example redevelopment sites featured on pages 58–page 61 demonstrate feasible configurations of buildings, parking and, site design with good urban design qualities, but these redevelopment sites were not tested for economic feasibility.

Train Station Area Sites

WHAT THESE SITES CAN DO FOR DOWNTOWN

Redevelopment on these sites can transform obsolete industrial land into a walkable, mixed-use neighborhood around the proposed Danbury Transit Center at the Danbury Train Station. The sites are shown in the illustrative plan in Figure 22. Please see page 78 for more information about the Danbury Transit Center.

SITE STATISTICS

These sites are zoned IL-40 Light Industrial and would require a zoning change to enable housing development and mixed-use retail. The Patriot Drive site is approximately 0.5 acres and currently contains a skate park. The 2010 Main Street Renaissance Task Force Report recommended redevelopment but noted challenges of poor access and environmental contamination on the site. The Pahquioque Avenue site is approximately 2 acres. The rail yard site could potentially include several acres.

SITES AND CONTEXT

These sites offer unique redevelopment opportunities near rail transit. In the near term, the sites on Patriot Drive and Pahquioque Avenue provide more realistic opportunities for redevelopment if rezoned. As former industrial land, redevelopment feasibility may be affected by remediation costs. The smaller western site

has frontage on Patriot Drive opposite the Danbury Ice Arena. In a redevelopment scenario, the existing park space on this site would be relocated. The larger eastern site has frontage on Pahquioque Avenue east of Nichols Street. Housing development on both sites would be highly valuable in transforming existing gaps into active, occupied expansions of Downtown and Town Hill neighborhood areas. Enhancing walking routes to the train station could be added and new housing choices would be conveniently located next to transit. In the long-term, an additional site north of the river within the rail yard could be redeveloped with a mix of uses. This site is more speculative and would require shifting the Danbury Railroad Museum's equipment to other sections of rail yard

Figure 22: Train Station Area Sites Illustrative Plan



as well as resolving access issues arising from active rail road tracks and Metro-North service. After other sites in Downtown are redeveloped, however, this area may become more attractive and feasible as one of the few remaining locations for large-scale development.

URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The western site on Patriot Drive should feature front doors, stoops, and porches facing Patriot Drive, extending the residential character that is present one block south along East Liberty Street. Ground-level retail space, such as a coffee shop serving transit passengers, would be highly desirable at one or both street corners, if supported by market opportunity. Patriot Drive's streetscape should be improved in conjunction with increased activity. Example strategies include adding a tree lawn with street trees between the sidewalk and curb on the east side of the street and compact landscaped front planting beds between new buildings and the sidewalk. Parking may be accommodated on the east side of the site, screened from Patriot Drive, with surface spaces, and/or garages or carports under the rear of the residential building. Driveway access may best be located with a right in/right out connection to Patriot Drive.

The eastern site on Pahquioque Avenue should feature front doors, stoops and porches facing Pahquioque Avenue, creating a two-sided residential street. Development may take the form of one or two rows of townhomes and/or walk-up multi-family buildings, but should include massing, materials, and proportions that fit comfortably with the scale of traditional neighborhood houses across the street. Development should include installation of a sidewalk and street trees along the north side of Pahquioque Avenue, promoting walkable connections to transit, Downtown, and neighborhood areas to the east. Parking may be accommodated on the north edge of the site, screened from Pahquioque Avenue. Surface spaces and/or garages or carports may be appropriate under the rear of the residential building. Driveway access may be located at the Nichols street intersection or another appropriate location.



This housing with tuck-under parking at 128 Osborne Street demonstrates a site configuration that could also work well along Pahquioque Avenue.



Eastern site along Pahquioque Avenue



Western site facing Patriot Drive

See page 109 for a conceptual illustration of redevelopment opportunity on this site.

Elm Street Site and 294-300 Main Street Site at Elm Street Corner

WHAT THESE SITES CAN DO FOR DOWNTOWN

Redevelopment on these sites can extend neighborhood character and enhanced retail occupancy to Elm Street, framing Kennedy Park as a signature neighborhood square. The sites are shown in the illustrative plan in Figure 23.

SITE STATISTICS

Both sites are zoned C-CBD and are within the DRZ. The Elm Street Site is comprised of several parcels totaling 1.64 acres on the south side of Elm Street. This site is also within the Main Street Historic Overlay Zone and was identified in the 2010 Main Street Renaissance Task Force Report as an important site for redevelopment. That report envisioned new retail and service businesses on Elm Street and market-

rate housing. The 2010 development concept for this site has been updated with added amenities to capitalize on the recent improvements to Kennedy Park. The site at 294-300 Main Street has frontage on Elm Street as well, is 0.25 acres, but is not within the Main Street Historic Overlay Zone.

SITES AND CONTEXT

The Elm Street Site includes multiple parcels, some occupied by existing buildings and others occupied by surface parking. Along its south edge, the site rises in elevation and is ringed by retaining walls next to higher-elevation parcels at the end of Tower Place. Development on these sites could include a combination of new construction on portions of the parking lots fronting Elm Street and renovation or upgrade of space in existing buildings. Consider the opportunity for a new building to face the end of Tower Place on the southern, uphill area of the site. Ground-floor space along Elm Street should include retail use. Upper floors should be occupied by housing or office space.

The existing building at 294-300 Main Street, at the corner of Elm Street, Kennedy Park, and Main Street, is a highly-visible opportunity for intensification as a destination. The site fronts on active public streets and Kennedy Park. The current uses and appearance of the building do not fulfill the site's full potential. New uses and programming of the ground floor of the building as well as the upper levels could turn this building into a landmark hub of activity adjacent to reactivated public space at Kennedy Park. Such uses could include creative workspace, dining or retail space, space for the arts, or craft/maker space. Depending on redevelopment, housing in the upper stories may be feasible.

Figure 23: Elm Street and 294-300 Main Street Sites Illustrative Plan



URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

For the Elm Street Site, ground-floor retail space along Elm Street should meet typical storefront design standards. Development should include a terraced public walk connecting Elm Street with Tower Place. Consolidation of parking areas along the south edge of the site, regraded to allow consistent access and elevation, could increase parking capacity through greater efficiency. Redevelopment of the prominent corner parcel at 294-300 Main Street should include entrances from Main Street and from Kennedy Park as appropriate.



See page 108 for a conceptual illustration of redevelopment opportunity on this site.



Existing edges of this building facing Kennedy Park (left) and Elm Street (right) miss an important opportunity for building use and design to engage adjacent outdoor public spaces.

Removing Regulatory Barriers to TOD in Downtown Danbury

The regulatory structure and approval process for real estate development are important determinants as to whether and where development occurs, and what its characteristics are. The regulatory structure provides direction on allowed uses and the form of development. The process for land use entitlements is a function of the use and is regulated in the Zoning Regulations as well as by State statutes. The process affects the cost and timing of development.

As discussed in the Downtown Danbury Today chapter, the development regulations for Downtown Danbury have been specifically amended to encourage TOD by accommodating a variety of land uses, enabling greater height and density, lowering parking requirements, and encouraging design that promotes walkability. There are, however, opportunities to make the Zoning Regulations more effective at capturing additional development. Some opportunities respond to the strength of housing market opportunity, making housing development feasible on additional parcels where it may not be feasible today due to use prohibitions or economics. Others can better encourage traditional downtown commercial uses. Together, potential changes to the Zoning Regulations would help increase the level of private investment in the full variety of developed uses and building types necessary to capture Downtown's full TOD potential.

In Danbury, development is controlled by the Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map. The approval process, while statutorily regulated, is administered locally within departments through an administrative process or by a land use commission/board. Ensuring that the Zoning Regulations for land within the TOD Study Area provides a predictable setting that supports walkability and mixed-use development will enhance the value of properties and public spaces for the greater whole.

Amendments to the Zoning Regulations that incentivize real estate development in conjunction with established preferential administrative

procedures for desired projects in catalytic locations will help TOD succeed in Downtown Danbury. Such regulation amendments should focus on parking requirement reductions as has been a common strategy in other urban Connecticut municipalities and across the country. Zoning Regulation amendments should also address building height limitations that may be restricting development in desired locations, the mix of uses allowed in certain districts within the TOD Study Area, and ground floor uses that promote street activity, all of which can help ensure land can be redeveloped along important corridors with uses and at densities that achieve the TOD Vision for Downtown Danbury. As noted in this chapter, amendments to the Zoning Map for individual parcels will be required over time to realize the type of development desired at key locations.

Recommendations for amendments to the Zoning Regulations and amendments to the Zoning Map are detailed as follows.

ZONING REGULATION AMENDMENTS

Potential zoning regulation amendments include changes to parking requirements, the height limits for downtown buildings, the mix of uses and pedestrian-friendly form along the White Street corridor, and continuing to require ground floor uses that promote street activity.

CHANGES TO PARKING

Parking is one of the most important factors shaping transit-oriented development. Parking takes up valuable land and is expensive to build. Removing or amending regulations related to parking in favor of more flexible market-driven standards can help make redevelopment more economically feasible, encourage greater use of transit, and promote walking and biking.

People who choose to live Downtown may not want to own a car, instead taking advantage of car-sharing and other less expensive or more convenient transportation options. Possibilities for use of various modes of transit have expanded with greater accessibility and route options for bus and rail and with the introduction of new programs and technologies such as car sharing services, ride-hailing, and forthcoming

autonomous vehicles. Car share services provide on-demand access to local vehicles, with users typically paying by the hour or by the trip. A 2010 study by the Journal of the Transportation Research Board indicates that households that are car-share members own half as many cars as non-member households. It is likely that over time these new programs and technologies will continue to change travel behavior and automobile ownership rates. When people think of car use as an option and not a necessity, fewer vehicle trips occur and more land area traditionally allocated for the automobile can be used for other modes of transportation including walking, biking, and transit.

The City of Danbury has already made significant reforms to the parking requirements within the C-CBD Zoning District and the DRZ. For specific uses, parking requirements have been reduced. However, the City should consider additional amendments to further promote development in the TOD Study Area such as coordinating the restaurant parking space requirement with that for a retail use, particularly where public parking is available, so there is not an increased requirement when there is a change of use from retail to restaurant. This amendment would help Downtown Danbury continue to develop into a dining destination as lots are especially small in size and typically cannot accommodate on-site parking.

Shared parking should also be encouraged. Off-site parking, where required parking is an allowed use and provided on a different parcel than the use that requires the parking, is currently permitted within a 500-foot radius of the use. Consideration of a regulatory amendment that would increase the radius to 1000 feet, approximately a two-block walk in Downtown Danbury, may encourage redevelopment or re-use of more properties that would gain access to off-site parking. As the pedestrian environment and walking connections are improved and updated in Downtown Danbury and activity on the street increased, a two-block walking distance to off-site parking does not appear to be unreasonable.

Other amendments to the parking requirements include considering a flexible range of parking based on dwelling unit type, incorporating a provision for a reduced requirement if car-share spaces are provided,

encouraging all parking for residential units to be priced separately from rents so the expense is optional for those who do not own automobiles, and promoting the concept of shared parking for residential uses in public parking lots and structures. Additionally, the City could also consider implementing market-based parking by removing minimum parking space requirements in a specified area similar to what other Connecticut municipalities and cities have implemented throughout the country.



The City of Hartford, CT recently implemented market-based parking for new developments and uses, removing zoning requirements to provide parking. Developers and businesses can now provide only as much parking they need. Some developments or uses may provide extra parking, and some may rely on public parking availability, walking, biking, transit, and ride-sharing to serve their clientele.

The City of Hartford and the Capital Regional Development Authority found that eliminating parking requirements made the redevelopment process faster and less costly and helped support mixed-uses that could share parking.

HEIGHT OF DOWNTOWN BUILDINGS

The C-CBD Zoning District allows for Danbury's most urban-scale development. Most of the DRZ is within the C-CBD Zoning District although some parcels along the DRZ edge have other zoning designations. The lots subject to the MSHOZ requirements are all within the recognized Main Street Historic District and C-CBD Zoning District. Height restrictions vary in all zoning districts.

Building height on lots in the C-CBD Zoning District and within the MSHOZ is limited to 5 stories or 55 feet. Properties in the C-CBD Zoning District but outside the MSHOZ may be developed with buildings to a height of 105 feet or 10 stories but with an 18 foot stepped setback requirement for each additional 10 feet of building height above 55 feet. Additionally, any building exceeding a height of 75 feet is required to be on a parcel 2 acres in size with a minimum lot width of 200 feet. In this instance, the building is also required to be set back from any side or rear lot line a distance of 25 feet. There are no similar setback requirements in the underlying C-CBD Zoning District.

While these building restrictions were imposed to ensure development is compatible with the historic character of the Main Street Historic District, they limit market opportunities and affect development economics. Unless land is assembled to create a large parcel, the 2-acre minimum lot size is difficult to achieve as lots Downtown are relatively small in size. Therefore, building height in the C-CBD Zoning District where density is desired due to its urban setting and proximity to transit resources is practicably limited to less than 75 feet.

As appropriate after study and analyses, the City may wish to consider amending the Zoning Regulations to reduce the minimum lot size for buildings over 75 feet. Such amendments could also include a commensurate reduction in the required minimum lot width and clarification regarding the stepback for buildings exceeding 55 feet in height. These amendments would serve to further incentivize

development and clarify the regulations in the C-CBD Zoning District while ensuring development remains compatible with critical overlay districts.

WHITE STREET: A MIX OF USES AND A PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY CORRIDOR

Some parcels with redevelopment or intensification opportunity along White Street toward the eastern edge of the TOD Study Area are zoned CG-20 which allows mixed-use development but not with a residential component. In this area, it may be appropriate to consider amendments that would allow residential use, provided that ground floors along White Street contain commercial space to better transition this auto-oriented use corridor to a more pedestrian-friendly mixed-use corridor. Allowing multi-family housing on parcels along this corridor may also provide the opportunity to link the student, faculty, and visitor population of Western Connecticut State University with Main Street and other Downtown Danbury locations in a more pleasing and walkable pedestrian environment. Overly wide curb cuts should be reduced in width where feasible. A mix of uses on this corridor would also provide opportunities for new housing close to rail transit on Patriot Drive.

Additional amendments may be appropriate in this area to encourage a more pedestrian-friendly form of development by reducing front setbacks and requiring parking, if needed at all, to be located in rear of the lot behind the street facing building.

GROUND FLOOR USES THAT PROMOTE STREET ACTIVITY

To help activate key sidewalks and public spaces within the TOD Study Area, the City should continue to enforce the use restrictions in the DRZ. It should also continue the prohibition of first-floor residential use on lots bordering Ives Street, Main Street, National Place, Railroad Place, West Street, and White Street in favor of commercial and retail uses that will put people on the street and create synergy. However, regulatory amendments should be considered to clarify and possibly increase the amount of non-residential space required in parking facilities that front

on Main Street. Extension of this requirement may be appropriate along other key corridors in the TOD Study Area.

ZONING MAP AMENDMENTS

The Train Station area sites analyzed in this chapter included recommended development scenarios that are not currently feasible as the proposed housing use is prohibited in the underlying industrial district. Since these parcels are either in industrial use or currently vacant, over time these parcels would need to be rezoned to provide for a mix of uses in order to further the TOD Vision. Environmental and other site conditions and existing uses provide challenges, but a vision can stimulate interest for possible redevelopment in both the near and long term. To achieve the mix of uses desired on these sites, the zoning designation of these parcels would need to be changed to allow both residential and commercial uses, reduce front yard setbacks, and increase site coverage. Housing development on the sites, or a combination of housing and commercial uses, would be valuable in transforming existing gaps in land use into active neighborhoods with strong connections to nearby transit options.

Other Land Use & Development Initiatives for Transit-Oriented Development

ASSESSING PUBLIC PARKING SUPPLY, DEMAND, AND DISTRIBUTION

As indicated in the land use parcel assessment scenarios, on-site surface parking reduces valuable developable land and structured parking adds significantly to development costs. Public parking in surface lots also utilizes valuable land that could be made available for infill development. If parking needs for redevelopment are met by reducing requirements, shared-parking, or in public parking structures in defined locations, then there is the opportunity to convert former public surface parking lots into transit-oriented development sites filling critical gaps on downtown corridors. The public surface parking lot on Liberty Street at Delay Street is an example of a potential infill site.

The distribution of public parking facilities is also more heavily weighted to the north of West Street and Liberty Street than the south, while uses to the south have created continued demand. This is evidenced by the increasing parking space demand at the Danbury Library. While an on-site lot is provided on Bank Street and is being improved to add spaces, demands continue to increase. Additionally, the commuting student population at Naugatuck Valley Community College continues to increase. Therefore, public parking in a location at the southern end of the TOD Study Area may be appropriate at a future date potentially freeing up infill sites.

To assess parking supply and demand and potential conversion of public parking sites to other desired land uses, the City should undertake a long-range downtown parking study. This was a recommendation in the 2010 Downtown Danbury Issues and Recommendations report as well. There may also be opportunities in the future, as parcels are redeveloped, for the City to assist in the cost and operation of structured parking if it is determined that there are public benefits of investment and increased supply.

ACCOMMODATING A DIVERSE RESIDENTIAL HOUSING SUPPLY

The focus of recent residential development in Downtown Danbury has been on market-rate housing. In the near term, this focus should continue as the benefits of a population with disposable income and urban living desires is important to create the synergies necessary for successful TOD. However, there are also other populations including older adult and those who cannot afford market-rents that should be accommodated Downtown as social services are available, transit options exist, and destinations are open to all. To ensure all populations can enjoy the benefits of compact walkable TOD, Danbury should continue to encourage a range of housing types and affordability levels.

The Zoning Regulations provide a housing incentive option in two of the multi-family residential zoning districts. This incentive allows an

increase in density by reducing the minimum lot area per dwelling unit requirement if, for every additional unit gained, one unit is also designated as affordable. A contract must be executed with the City, as approved by City Council, ensuring affordability. This option is not currently applicable in the C-CBD Zoning District due in part because housing density is not restricted by parcel size. Rather, it is restricted by minimum dwelling unit size, building height, and the requirement for parking. Other zoning regulations such as building setback requirements and a minimum open space requirement in the multi-family zones are not similarly required in the urban C-CBD Zoning District.

There are parcels within the TOD Study Area to which the housing incentive may be applied. Such developments should continue to be encouraged. Additionally, in time, Danbury may wish to consider other inclusionary housing incentives in zoning districts in which they are not currently allowed to help maintain a diverse residential housing supply in Downtown Danbury.

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT CONCLUSIONS

Private investment represents the largest potential source of investment in Downtown Danbury's real estate, business and consumer activity. Therefore, transforming Downtown Danbury requires close attention to what land uses can be developed and in what form they are developed to ensure these opportunities are attractive to investors – whether a developer, their financier, or a business, residential or institutional tenant. This chapter's recommendations on priority land uses, economic incentives, and regulatory refinements will help the City optimize Downtown's appeal as a place to invest, while maintaining and growing the value of existing property. The City of Danbury and CityCenter Danbury should jointly monitor progress by tracking development and changes in use within the TOD Study Area to better understand its competitiveness in the marketplace, the mix of land uses, and the magnitude of development activity.

Municipal government should apply these land use and development recommendations as part of its essential role in providing a vision for what is desired, regulatory clarity, incentives to entice desired development in specific locations, and a continued commitment to maintain and improve the public infrastructure necessary to support the TOD Vision.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Expand access to convenient transportation choices and enhance walkability and biking within the TOD Study Area and surrounding neighborhoods.

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Improving Transit and Transportation Choices to Achieve Transit-Oriented Development

Transit-oriented development relies on a wide variety of appealing transportation choices including transit, bicycling, and walking in order to succeed. The previous chapter detailed the market potential for redevelopment in Downtown Danbury and set out a land use and development framework to catalyze further reinvestment. This chapter details the transportation improvements recommended to support and promote economic and community development in Downtown Danbury, including new and enhanced bus and rail transit service connections, pedestrian and streetscape amenities, the creation of a bicycle network, and smart parking strategies.

Transportation choices offer many benefits for walkable places such as Downtown Danbury. Many members of the population, such as youth, seniors, those disabled, those without a driver's license, or those who choose not to drive, depend on transit, walking, biking, taxis, or other services to travel. While convenient automobile access will remain vital for Downtown Danbury's attraction as a place to live, work, shop, study, and play, adding and improving ease of access to several modes of transportation increases economic opportunity in a number of ways. When there is a reduced need for downtown residents to own and operate a car because other transportation options exist, benefits are possible including significant household savings, an increase in household disposable income, and additional spending in downtown locations. Additionally, when new development requires less parking to be constructed because other transportation options are available, the financial feasibility of development improves allowing for higher-value uses of properties and improved building design and appearance.

Downtown Danbury is also an opportune place to support shared mobility options such as Zipcar and bike share. Shared autonomous,

or self-driving vehicles, may also soon be available as a means of travel. These shared transportation options can provide the convenience of on-demand travel at less cost and with less space demand than what would be required to support individual car ownership. Shared transportation options make people less dependent on cars.

Increasing pedestrian activity improves the vitality of streets and sidewalks and supports shopping and dining on commercial corridors such as Main Street. Increasing walking trips within Downtown Danbury and to adjoining neighborhoods will help create a connected identity for the area. Bicycling is well-suited for connecting downtown destinations that are beyond an easy walk, and helps connect Downtown, including the Train Station and bus hub, to destinations outside the TOD Study Area. More active forms of transportation including walking and bicycling offer healthier lifestyles for residents and visitors and are more environmentally-friendly.

Improved transit service connections, including the ability to easily transfer between local bus service and train service, can significantly increase transit's usefulness by multiplying the variety of convenient trips available. This chapter examines and demonstrates the possibility of rail and bus service co-location in Downtown Danbury. Other possible new transit connections could take advantage of the Danbury Train Station's location at a rail junction. Potential rail passenger service west to Metro-North's Harlem Line in Brewster, NY would access another popular rail connection to New York City for commuters and other travelers. Passenger rail service north to Brookfield and New Milford is another future possibility. All these potential connections would enhance Downtown Danbury's appeal and impact as a strategic place for TOD. These opportunities are described later in this chapter.

This chapter includes strategies for five major areas of transportation and infrastructure to support TOD in Downtown Danbury:

- a major analysis of co-locating existing bus and rail transit service in Danbury into a unified Danbury Transit Center to improve opportunities for multi-modal transit;
- consideration for future rail connections to points west and north;
- pedestrian improvements that are coordinated with the land use and development framework to ensure new development occurs in a walkable setting;
- bicycle improvements that help connect the TOD area to greater Danbury; and
- smart parking strategies that will help support increased transit use, pedestrian and bicycle activity, and transit-oriented development.

Co-location Analysis: The New Danbury Transit Center

As part of this TOD Study, multiple sites were analyzed to determine whether a co-located transit center with bus service and train service in a single location would be possible within Downtown Danbury. Goals for co-located transit are to increase mobility within the City and the region, provide seamless transit connections between existing services and modes of travel, provide amenities for transit patrons without adding significantly to HARTransit and Peter Pan Bus Line's operating expenses, encourage new ridership, and support TOD in the City of Danbury.

EXISTING TRANSIT SERVICE

Currently there are dual, disconnected transit hubs for train and for bus service in Downtown Danbury. The Danbury Train Station is located off of Patriot Drive in an area bounded by the rail lines and rail yard. The existing HARTransit Pulse Point, or bus hub, is a linear transfer area along Kennedy Avenue. This hub design is particularly important to operations because HARTransit operates a hub and spoke system wherein the bus routes all arrive at the hub at the same scheduled time in a "pulse" of activity to



The **Danbury Train Station** provides service along the Danbury branch of the New Haven line from Danbury to Grand Central Terminal. Weekday service includes 5 peak trains and 9 off-peak; return trips have 7 peak and 7-off peak trains. Weekend service includes 6 trains in each direction. The trip into New York City is approximately 2 hours and most trains require a transfer in Norwalk. Other terminal destinations include Norwalk and Stamford.





The **HARTransit Pulse Point** is served by 7 CityBus, 2 Shuttle, and 3 Loop routes. The CityBus routes run every 30 minutes during the peak and every 60 minutes off-peak serving City and regional locations. Hours of operation are Mon-Fri 6 am–6 pm, Sat 8 am–5 pm. Loop routes run Mon-Sat evenings only and provide the system with Sunday service from 9 am–7 pm. The commuter shuttles provide service to the Brewster Metro-North Station and regional service to the Norwalk Wheels Hub and run weekdays only. The Pulse Point has passenger shelters as well as a ticket booth, and was built using federal funds. While benches were initially installed at the Pulse Point, they were later removed due to safety concerns. Re-installation should be considered as an amenity for bus passengers.



allow riders to easily transfer between different routes. Peter Pan inter-city bus service on the Boston-Hartford-New York City route leaves from a curbside bus stop on Elm Street across Kennedy Park from the Pulse Point. There is a storefront location for tickets and a passenger waiting area.

As shown in Figure 24, these two transit hubs—the rail station and the bus hub—are just under a half-mile apart, or an approximately 10- to 15-minute walk. Only HARTransit Route 2 serves the Danbury Train Station and does so only on its way toward the Pulse Point, limiting the ability to connect between bus and rail service. The HARTransit Pulse Point configuration shown in Figure 25 is currently operating at capacity and cannot accommodate an additional berth to serve another route. The linear configuration of the hub along Kennedy Avenue also complicates transfers as some passengers have to walk past many buses in order to make transfers, a distance that could range up to 550 feet.

Figure 24: HARTransit Pulse Point and Danbury Train Station

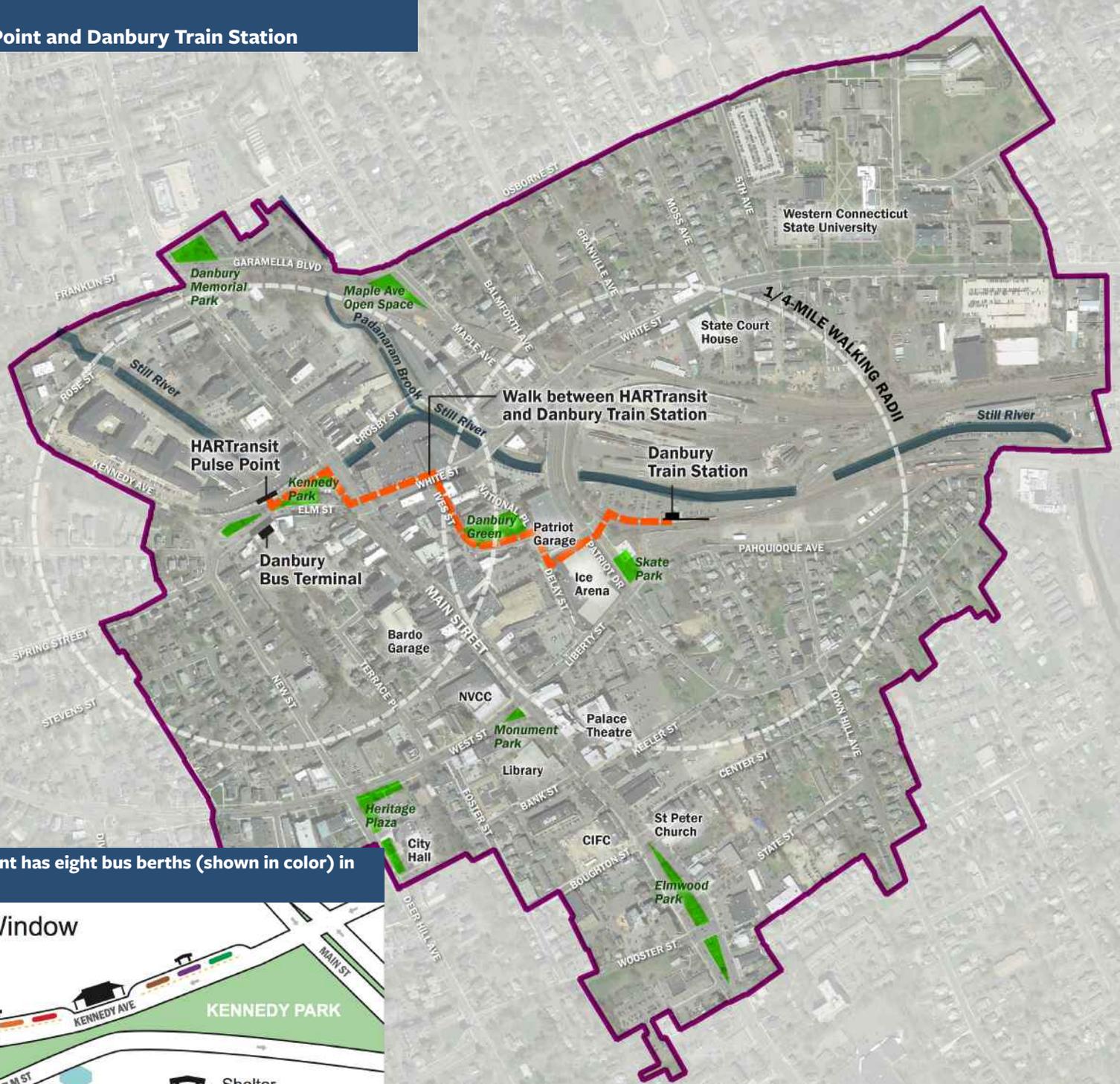
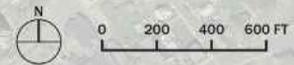
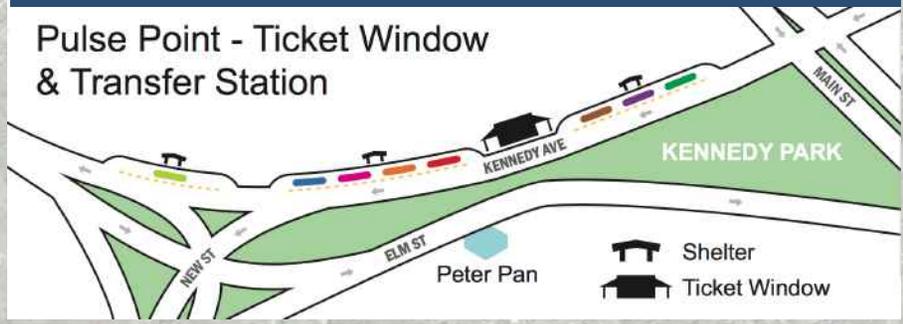


Figure 25: The existing Pulse Point has eight bus berths (shown in color) in line along Kennedy Ave.



OPPORTUNITY FOR CO-LOCATION IN DANBURY

Co-location of the HARtransit Pulse Point, Danbury Train Station, and Peter Pan Bus Terminal into a single Danbury Transit Center at or near the existing train station would offer benefits for transit users. It would create a physically interconnected transit network that includes regional and local transportation options. Bus-to-bus transfers could be more convenient than at the current Pulse Point's long line of bus berths. Bus-to-bus transfers are an important consideration, as the HARtransit route network depends on transfers and schedules are determined in part by how quickly passengers can complete a transfer.

Over time, operational changes could potentially create more unified and streamlined service. Aligned schedules for transferring between bus and rail services could extend the reach of the Metro-North rail service. Additionally, a co-located Danbury Transit Center could strengthen the area around the rail station as a safe place to walk and an attractive area for development. It could unlock additional development and park improvement opportunities along Kennedy Avenue and Elm Street, where the Pulse Point is located today. Co-located transit center facilities could offer more expansion capacity, updated technology and amenities, and more efficient service than the current dispersed facilities.

There are also potential challenges for bus riders. A co-located transit center would move the bus hub further from some residential areas near the existing Pulse Point although riders in those neighborhoods would continue to have access to the bus system. It could also increase traffic, especially bus traffic on a pulse schedule, at the Danbury Train Station and surrounding access routes.

Synchronizing bus and rail schedules in order to allow for timely transfers may also pose challenges, as it could have operational impacts on cost and schedule. As conditions exist today, multi-modal ridership is not prevalent, meaning that it appears that most bus riders utilizing the regional bus

EXAMPLE APPROACH TO TRANSIT CO-LOCATION IN BRIDGEPORT, CT

- Co-located bus and rail hub
- Capitalizes on local and regional transit
- Creates an inter-connected transit network
- Served by local bus, interstate bus, commuter, and inter-city rail. Rail service is provided by Metro-North and Amtrak; local bus service is provided by Greater Bridgeport Transit.



View of the Bridgeport Transportation Center, which connects by walkway to the rail station.



network as a means of transportation do not utilize rail transit services to reach their destinations and vice versa. However, coordinated physical and schedule connections between rail and bus services would provide the necessary conditions for people to take advantage of transfer opportunities. Co-locating the Danbury Branch Line rail service with HARTransit's Pulse Point and Peter Pan's intercity services would provide more than 150 scheduled departure possibilities from one location every weekday. Combined with an equal number of arriving transit services, this would offer passengers compelling new opportunities to travel by transit to a wide variety of local and regional destinations.

Since the rail lines are in a fixed location, this task of the TOD Study evaluated the physical and operational feasibility of relocating the HARTransit Pulse Point and Peter Pan operations closer to the existing Danbury Train Station. After determining berth needs, several sites close to the train station were evaluated with respect to:

- site size and accessibility;
- physical requirements of layout and parking;
- operational considerations and impact to bus operations;
- integration with transit-oriented development in Downtown Danbury;
- order of magnitude costs; and
- traffic impacts.

ASSUMPTIONS FOR FUTURE BUS HUB OPERATIONS PROGRAM

A series of bus hub operations assumptions were made to test site layout possibilities and assess construction cost on several potential sites as part of the co-location analysis.

As to HARTransit, these included:

- All bus routes were relocated to the co-located bus facility.
- There was no change to bus headways, frequencies, and hours/days of operation.
- A total of 11 berths were needed to meet current and future HARTransit operations: 8 for existing routes, 2 to accommodate future routes and expansion, and 1 for exchanging buses or other maintenance purposes.
- Loop and Shuttle Bus routes would share the CityBus berths.
- There would be restrooms for drivers, easily accessible from the bus platform.
- There would be enclosed storage space.

As to Peter Pan Bus Operations Program, these included:

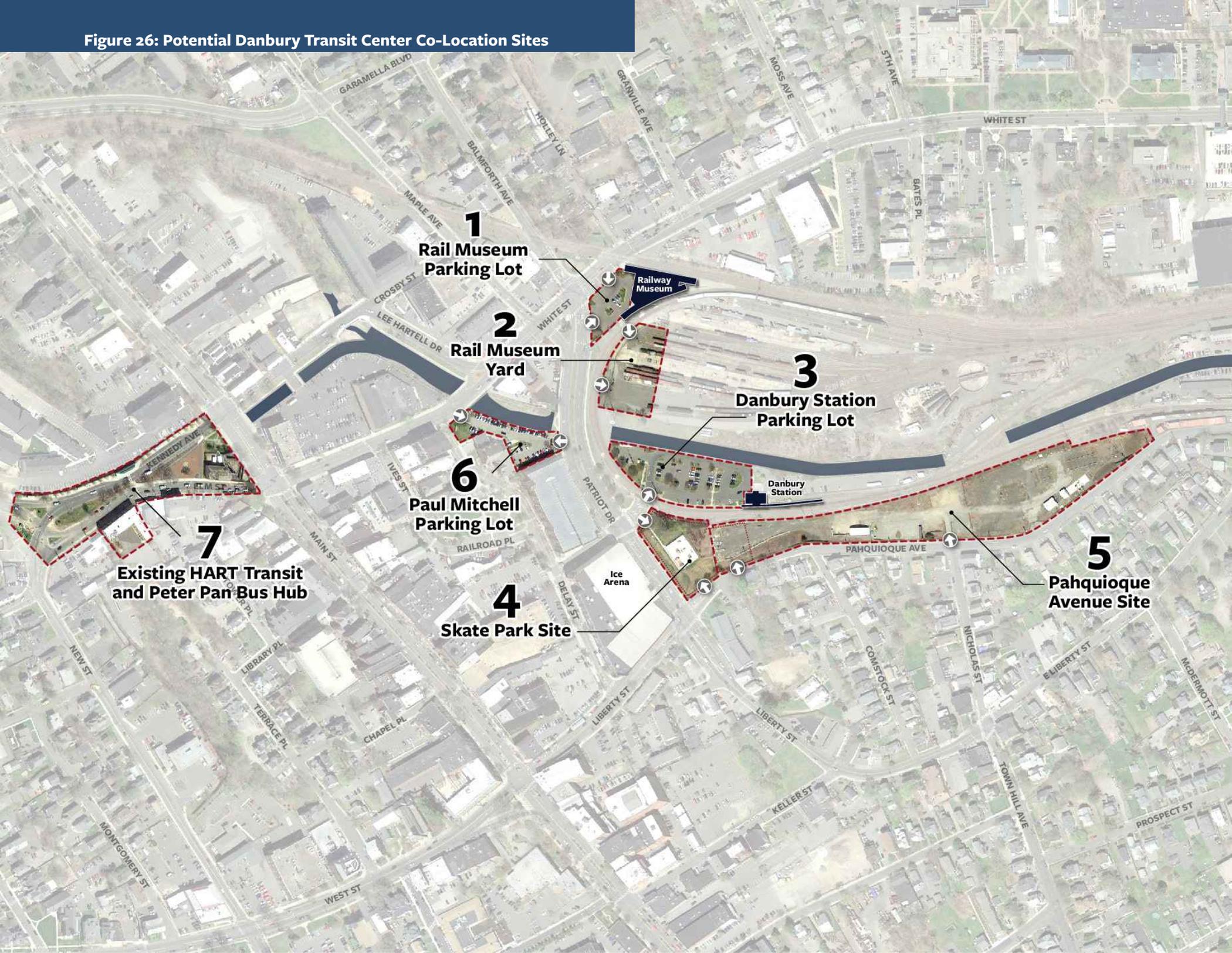
- Existing bus routes and station/waiting room would be relocated to the co-located bus facility. Peter Pan passengers would utilize a new bus waiting room or the existing rail station waiting room.
- There would be no changes to bus headways, frequencies, and hours/days of operation.
- A total of 1 berth was needed for existing Peter Pan bus route.
- The design would consider opportunities for additional bus berths that would allow future expansion of Peter Pan bus operations.

SITE ANALYSIS

The initial round of analysis considered the feasibility of relocating bus operations to six potential sites within a 2- to 5-minute walk of the Danbury Train Station. The sites are identified in Figure 26. It also considered a relocation and reconfiguration of the Pulse Point near its current location on Kennedy Avenue. Analysis of the seven sites is provided below. See Appendix B: Transit Co-Location Analysis - Site Evaluation for more information on the site analysis.

- 1. Danbury Railway Museum Parking Lot.** Although this site is publicly-owned and located on a prominent corridor, it is too small in size to accommodate bus berth requirements. Museum parking would be displaced. Bus passengers would continue to have a relatively long walk from a bus platform to the Danbury Train Station boarding platform. Bus movements into and out of the site would compromise traffic flow on White Street.
- 2. Danbury Railway Museum Yard.** The land within the yard is publicly-owned and a parcel of sufficient size could possibly be subdivided to accommodate bus needs but access limitations compromise its potential. Active Metro-North tracks and the Still River bound the area and access would require at-grade crossings or costly bridges to serve both bus traffic and pedestrians.
- 3. Danbury Train Station Parking Lot.** Public ownership, adjacency to the Metro-North tracks, and an existing building made this site a prime candidate within which to relocate bus services. Access into the station parking lot and train station from Patriot Drive requires the crossing of Metro-North tracks at grade. The significant increase in bus activity over the at-grade crossing poses a serious safety concern in addition to operational challenges. Necessary parking for commuters would be displaced.
- 4. Danbury Skate Park Site.** The City-owned site was developed with a skate park. The site is small in size and located at the corner of Patriot Drive and Pahquioque Avenue. Site size would not accommodate the number of bus berths required. Access options are limited. A bus hub on this site would preclude development as a mixed-use building, a priority redevelopment scenario for the Study Area. The existing skate park would be displaced.
- 5. Pahquioque Avenue Site.** This site is owned by a public utility company and has been sparsely used over the past years for utility-related functions. It is approximately 5 acres in size extending mid-block on Pahquioque Avenue almost to the corner of East Liberty Street, offering ample room for bus facilities as well as additional development possibilities. It is bounded on the north by the railroad tracks. Grade differential across the site and limitations for access for buses pose challenges. Pedestrian access to the Metro-North station at the street level requires a lengthy walk. An overhead pedestrian bridge to the station is possible. Environmental remediation would likely be required based on historic use. Initial discussions with the site owner regarding partial redevelopment of the site with a transit use were favorable.
- 6. 2 National Place, Paul Mitchell School Parking Lot.** The site is privately-owned and contains a building and associated parking. It is under an acre in size. Accommodating the necessary bus berths would be difficult. Pedestrian access to the Danbury Train Station would require a long walk with a change in grade to Patriot Drive and a street crossing.
- 7. HARTransit Pulse Point Expansion.** Consideration was given to extending the existing Pulse Point west on Kennedy Avenue to serve future operational needs. However, no improved connection between bus and train services would be achieved. Possible bus berths could be provided on both sides of the street although right-of-way grade on the south side, existing roadway operations, and limited sight lines posed significant challenges. As important, since the bus operations at this location are linear, adding berths further west would extend passenger transfer distances resulting in the need for more time between transfers. Transfer distance could therefore affect schedules.

Figure 26: Potential Danbury Transit Center Co-Location Sites



1
Rail Museum
Parking Lot

2
Rail Museum
Yard

3
Danbury Station
Parking Lot

6
Paul Mitchell
Parking Lot

7
Existing HART Transit
and Peter Pan Bus Hub

4
Skate Park Site

5
Pahquioque
Avenue Site

Preferred Site for a Co-Located Danbury Transit Center

Based on the size of the individual sites to accommodate bus operators, proximity to the existing train station, ease of accessibility by other modes of transit, environmental considerations, compatibility with existing land uses, and the ability to further goals or transit-oriented development, no one site met all these objectives. However, upon further analysis it was determined that a combination of two parcels could provide the most feasible opportunity for the development of a bus facility adjacent to the Danbury Train Station creating a co-located Danbury Transit Center.

The Danbury Skate Park Site and the Pahquioque Avenue Site could be assembled to amass enough land to accommodate the bus program as well as provide opportunities for development as envisioned in the TOD Study Area. Once the combined site was determined to be the preferred alternative, further conceptual site plans, analysis of bus route and running time modifications, traffic implications regarding access, and estimated capital and operating costs were studied in greater detail. The results are presented on the following pages.

The Pahquioque Avenue site is owned by Eversource, the public utility company, and the Skate Park site is owned by the City of Danbury. Together these sites comprise 5.5 acres with frontage on and access from both Patriot Drive and Pahquioque Avenue. This combined site offered advantages in terms of size, location, access, and ability to provide for development parcels, but also posed challenges in design due to its elongated shape, slopes along Pahquioque Avenue, and likely environmental conditions due to previous industrial use(s). Optimal locations for bus access, a pedestrian bridge to the train platform, and a passenger pick-up and drop-off area needed to be determined.

Thus the following design questions were considered as part of the site study:

- whether a single linear platform or double-sided platform best suited bus operations;
- whether the site layout required a retaining wall along the Pahquioque Avenue site and what length and height of wall was necessary;
- whether site access would be provided from Patriot Drive, Pahquioque Avenue, or both;
- whether use of the entire 5.5 acre site was necessary to satisfy bus operation needs;
- how overhead access to the Danbury Train Station would be provided and where it should be located; and
- what layout would preserve land on both or either individual parcels as future development sites for a mixed-use development(s)?

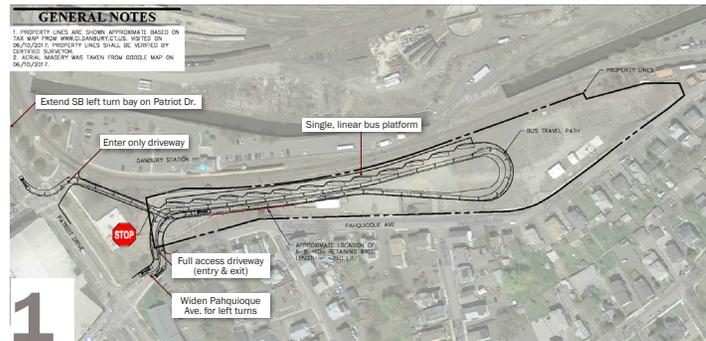
LAYOUT ALTERNATIVES

Several layout alternatives were considered during the design analysis. These alternatives are shown conceptually in Figure 27 and can also be found in Appendix C: Transit Center Co-Location Analysis - Potential Funding Sources, Conceptual Site Layout, Conceptual Cost Estimate.

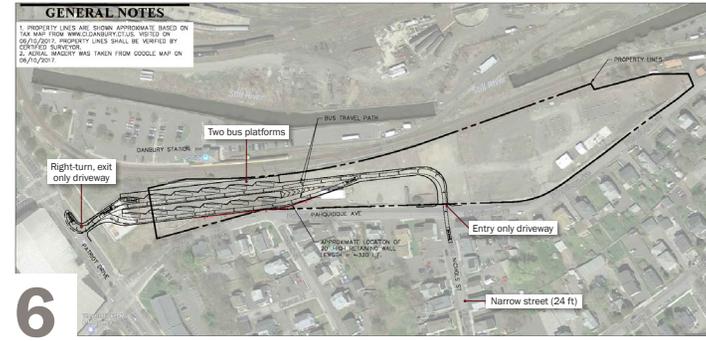
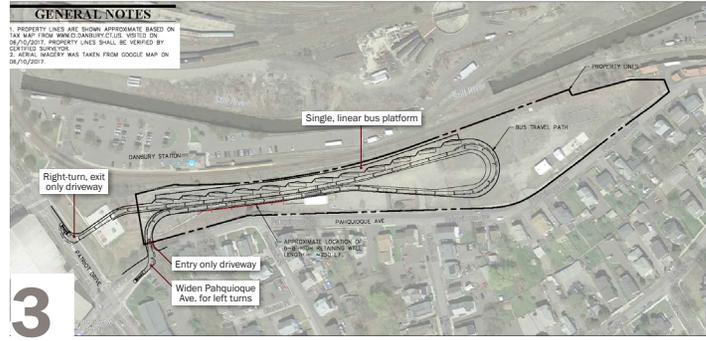
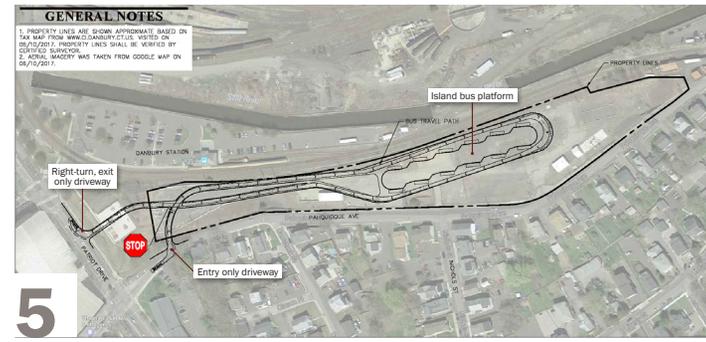
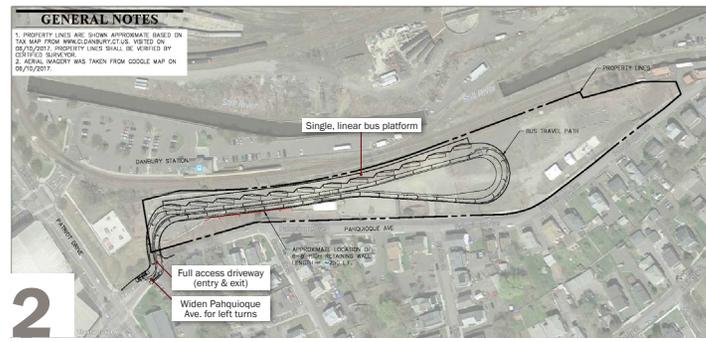
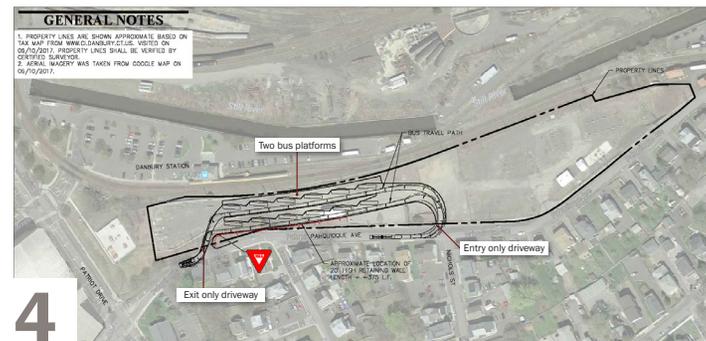
The underlying goal of considering co-location is to promote transit use by facilitating easier and more efficient connections between modes of transit. However, there was an additional goal in this Study to preserve land to accommodate growth around the transit center. In consideration of dual goals, Layout 5 offered the best opportunity to meet both transit and development objectives, but required further refinement.

Figure 27: Pahquioque Avenue/Skate Park Site Layouts

SINGLE, LINEAR BUS BERTH CONFIGURATION



DOUBLE & ISLAND BUS BERTH CONFIGURATION



Six different site layouts were tested. Layout 5 emerged as the preferred approach, but required further refinement.

Preferred Design Layout for the Co-Located Danbury Transit Center

Figure 28 is a site plan for Layout 5 as refined into a preferred concept for the co-located Danbury Transit Center. This site plan can also be found in Appendix C: Transit Center Co-Location Analysis - Potential Funding Sources, Conceptual Site Layout, Conceptual Cost Estimate. An illustrative plan of the schematic design layout of the Danbury Transit Center is provided in Figure 29 to show how a co-located transit center in this location would fit into the TOD Vision. Adjacent or nearby redevelopment parcels with potential building configurations are shown.

While Figure 28 is not a fully-engineered site plan, it demonstrates that a new bus facility could be constructed on the Pahquioque Avenue/Skate Park site. This site, in combination with a new connection to the Danbury Train Station, could become the “Danbury Transit Center” and provide:

- 12 bus berths on a double-sided platform designed to be served by one-way travel facilitating easier transfers;
- a pedestrian bridge, including elevators for ADA access, over the existing railroad tracks to provide a direct connection to the Danbury Train Station;
- a canopy over the bus platform for protection from the weather;
- a designated area paratransit pick-up and drop-off;
- restrooms for bus transit staff;
- a separate entrance and exit path for one-way bus travel through the site;
- racks for bicycle parking;
- clear sidewalk connections between all elements;
- a bus passenger station building with a waiting area and ticketing services as well as potential public restrooms;
- a potential pick-up and drop-off area for taxis and other vehicles;
- landscaping; and

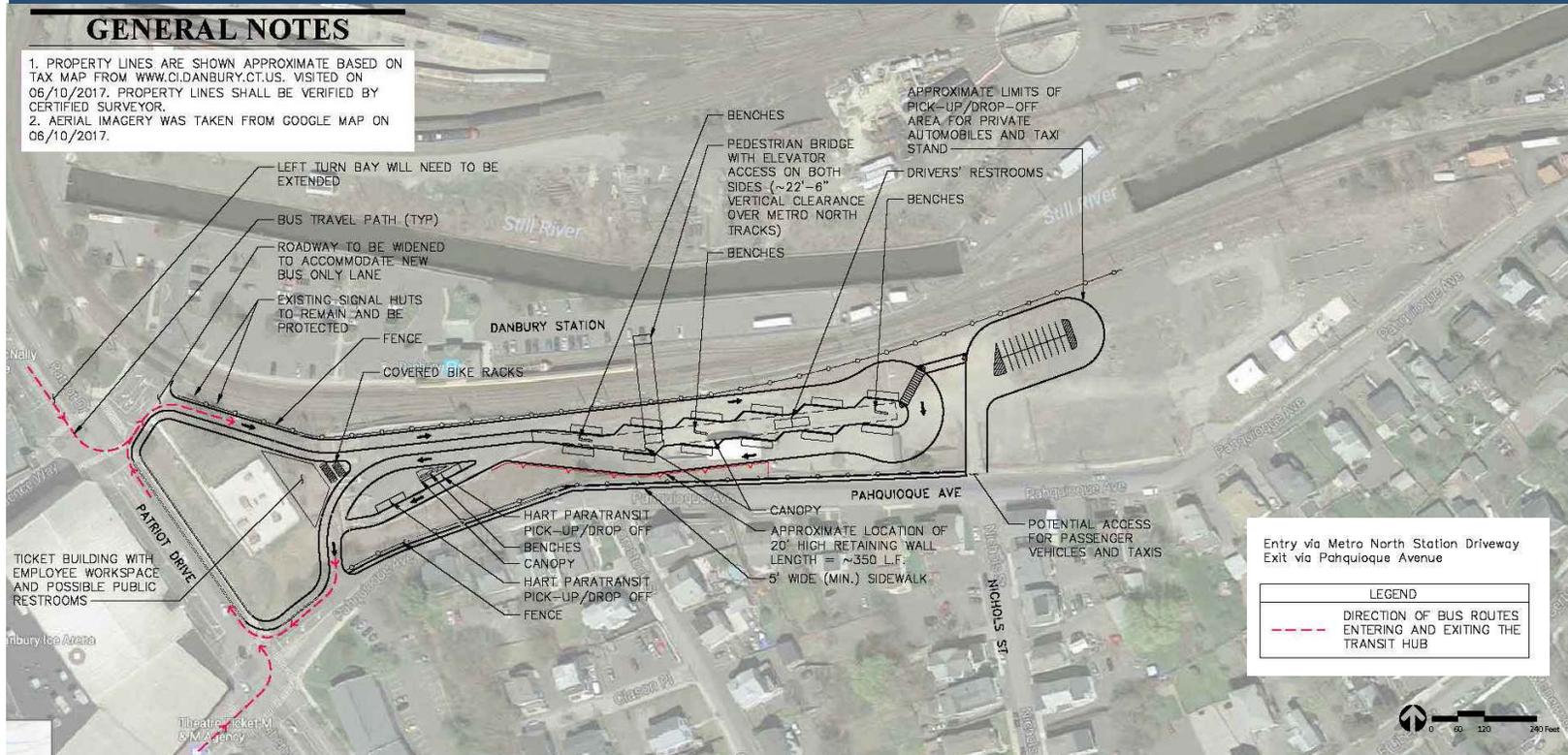
- opportunities for real estate development to the west of the site, facing Patriot Drive and to the east, facing Pahquioque Avenue.

A retaining wall would be necessary to address the grade differential on the site and accommodate the bus facility. The proposed new Danbury Transit Center would be accessed off of Patriot Drive over the existing curb cut and driveway that provides access to the Danbury Train Station. Once across the intersection, buses would turn into the site via a new dedicated bus lane and proceed in a one-way direction to the bus platform. The double-sided platform is designed to foster a more efficient transfer between buses for bus passengers. Buses would continue movement in a one-way direction, stopping at the paratransit platform as necessary, and exit onto Pahquioque Avenue at its intersection with Liberty Street. Street improvements are likely necessary at this intersection to accommodate the bus volumes. HARTransit routes would be modified to travel to the co-location station instead of the existing Pulse Point.

It should be noted that the concept site plan provides a bus berth for the private bus operations of Peter Pan should it desire to relocate. Peter Pan currently operates from Elm Street, across the existing HARTransit Pulse Point on Kennedy Avenue. Opportunities may also be available for Peter Pan service to relocate to the existing Danbury Train Station where parking is also available. Numerous attempts to contact representatives of Peter Pan during the course of this TOD Study were unsuccessful.

SOCIETAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This TOD Study included an analysis as to whether the relocation of bus facilities to the proposed Danbury Transit Center would negatively impact the mobility opportunities of elderly, disabled, minority, linguistically-isolated, and economically disadvantaged populations in the City of Danbury. Such societal impact analysis is required pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Environmental Justice requirements of Executive Order 12898 that prohibit discrimination and adverse human health or environmental effects of programs to minority and low income populations for projects receiving federal financial assistance. Populations studied for impact include environmental justice communities as defined

Figure 28: Preferred Concept Site Plan for Co-Located Transit Center: Engineering Plan

by WestCOG: those with limited English proficiency, minority residents, elderly residents, disabled residents, and residents with household incomes falling below 200% of the poverty line. The analysis is included in Appendix D: Transit Center Co-Location Analysis - Societal Impact Analysis and Proposed Bus Re-Routing.

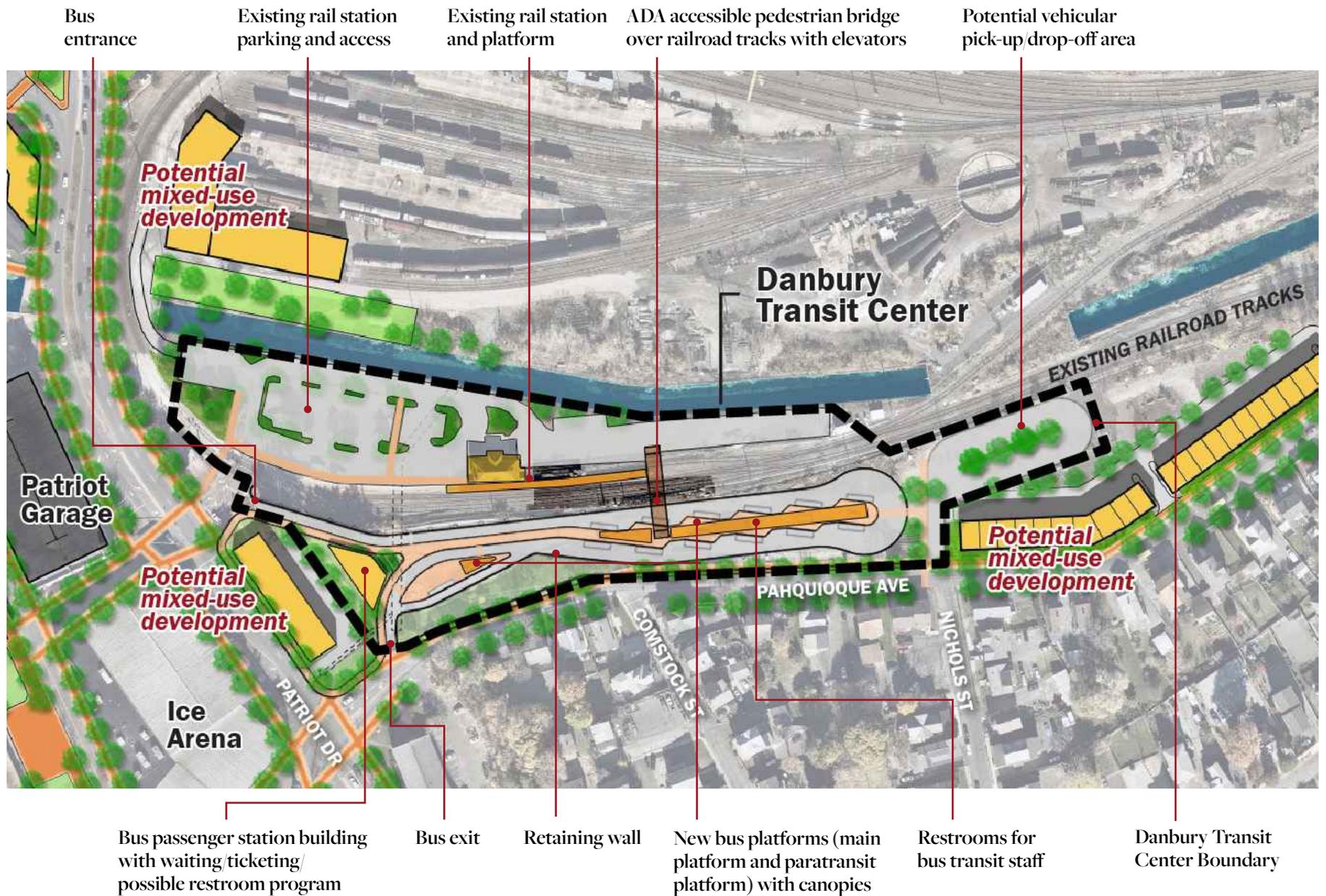
Given that the location of the proposed Danbury Transit Center is in close proximity to the existing bus operations of HARtransit, the analysis found that, based on the information available, there would be a negligible impact on transit accessibility for environmental justice communities. In addition, it was found that the Danbury Transit Center would improve the ease of transfers. The analysis concluded that based on the information available at the time, the proposed relocation of bus

operations to the Danbury Transit Center, upon construction, would have an overall positive societal impact considering the anticipated improvements in service.

VETTING OF CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN WITH TRANSIT AGENCIES

To ensure that regional and state transit agencies had the opportunity to review and discuss potential design and physical operational issues associated with the concept site plan for the co-located Danbury Transit Center, several conference calls were held during the Study process between City officials, TOD planning and transportation consultants, State Department of Transportation officials, and representatives in planning, operations, engineering, and safety at Metro-North Railroad. The concept

Figure 29: Preferred Schematic Design Layout for Co-Located Transit Center: Illustrative Plan



site plan and schematic plan were shared with all parties to facilitate discussion regarding design of the proposed transit center within the overall context of the TOD Study Area and potential impacts to existing rail operations.

The conceptual layout was discussed in detail in terms of proposed ingress from Patriot Drive, access into the new bus facility at the entry of the train station site, one-way bus movements, and egress onto Pahquioque Avenue. Concerns raised by Metro-North Railroad officials regarding additional at-grade crossings over the active tracks were negated by avoidance of the at-grade crossing in favor of a dedicated passing lane into the new facility just off Patriot Drive. The dedicated bus lane would remain operable and bus traffic could move from Patriot Drive into the bus hub area of the Danbury Transit Center unencumbered by signal arm movements required when trains passed across the at-grade crossing. The City acknowledged that future engineering design of the Transit Center would have to address protection of existing signal boxes adjacent to the bus entry lane.

There were no significant comments relative to the ability to provide the pedestrian bridge over the active tracks except that the bridge design would be required to meet engineering height requirements. Use of the existing Danbury Train Station as a berth and ticketing area for Peter Pan bus service was discussed briefly and it was noted that leasing agreements may have to be amended to provide this capability. No aspect of the conceptual site design for the potential Danbury Transit Center met unfavorable commentary. This was due to the concerted design effort to separate additional bus movements associated with the relocated bus facility from the active rail service and associated parking lot on the other side of the at-grade rail crossing. Once additional crossings were eliminated, related safety concerns were abated.

ESTIMATED COST OF DANBURY TRANSIT CENTER

An order of magnitude cost estimate was prepared for the construction of the Danbury Transit Center based on the conceptual site plan. The estimate is included in Appendix C: Transit Center Co-Location Analysis —Potential Funding Sources, Conceptual Site Layout, Conceptual Cost

Estimate. As a preliminary estimate, it includes a significant contingency to account for additional costs that may arise as the design is further developed and refined, and as engineered drawings are prepared.

The estimated cost for construction of the Danbury Transit Center is approximately \$27 million dollars. Annual operational costs of the Danbury Transit Center facility are estimated to total approximately \$100,000 based on operational costs of similarly-sized facilities. Cost savings are possible with shared maintenance services. The co-located facility is not expected to significantly affect the annual cost of bus operations, as net changes to bus travel distances and times would be negligible.

This estimate does not include any specific costs associated with environmental remediation of the site. Environmental remediation costs would be determined after testing and remedial plan development. Existing reports may be available from the site owners. Funding programs through the State of Connecticut are currently available for brownfield site revitalization to help entities prepare comprehensive remediation and redevelopment plans as well as related activities. Redevelopment of the site as a multi-modal transportation facility is consistent with State planning policies and would be highly effective in returning it to productive economic use. As such, additional funding for the environmental analysis and remediation phase of redevelopment for the Danbury Transit Center may be available through existing State programs.

Roadway improvements to Patriot Drive and Pahquioque Avenue to accommodate bus movements into and exiting the proposed Danbury Transit Center have also not been included. Grade differences on Patriot Drive may preclude additional lengthening of the dedicated left turn lane and at this time it has not been determined whether additional length is required. Further traffic analysis would be required. Similarly, roadway improvements to the intersection of Pahquioque Avenue and Liberty Street to accommodate exiting buses have not been engineered as part of this TOD Study. It is expected that roadway realignment at this intersection would be required. After additional traffic and engineering analysis based on a site plan, probable costs and funding requirements would be determined.

FUNDING SOURCES

The Study also identified potential funding mechanisms that could be pursued to secure funding and financing related to the construction of the proposed Danbury Transit Center. These mechanisms are described in Appendix C: Transit Center Co-Location Analysis - Potential Funding Sources, Conceptual Site Layout, Conceptual Cost Estimate and include federal grant programs, federal flexible funding programs, joint development opportunities, and revenue bonds. Federal grant programs that could be used to fund the Danbury Transit Center include: the Bus & Bus Facilities Infrastructure Investment Program, Urbanized Area Formula Grants, and the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program. Federal flexible funding programs include the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ) and the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Program (TIGER). State programs may also be available.

Joint development projects and private sector participation is promoted by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Joint development may involve a public-private partnership (P3) with coordination between transit agencies and developers to improve and develop land owned by the transit agency or related to a transit improvement. Joint development is a form of value capture, as a transit agency creates value for the surrounding community and uses some of the developer funds generated from the benefits of the infrastructure investment to help finance the transit project. FTA-assisted joint development may utilize financial assistance from one of FTA's planning or capital grants programs or from development of property and/or air rights that were previously acquired with FTA grant funding. The State of Connecticut passed public-private partnership (P3) legislation that allows the State to enter into a P3 for the design, development, operation, or maintenance of new or existing transportation systems, including transit-oriented development and related infrastructure. Joint development and/or P3 is another potential source of funding for the Danbury Transit Center.

Revenue bonds are another source of funding for transit projects. Revenue bonds could be issued by the transit agency, state, or local government

subject to authorization. A revenue bond requires a revenue source, such as a sales tax, anticipated grant receipts, or property taxes.

PROMOTING BUS AND RAIL TRANSIT

This TOD Study acknowledges that changes to the Danbury Branch Line rail service that affect ridership have recently been proposed by others and may be implemented in the near future. Such changes may include, but may not be limited to, fare increases and reductions in service. These changes are not within the control of municipal government. However, this planning study is and should be focused on the opportunities for long-term growth and development within Downtown Danbury's urban core with access to, and the provision of, a transit system that promotes ridership across different modes of travel. Planning initiatives that remain focused on these long-term goals are within the authority of local government and should be promoted and supported, including development of a co-located transit center. Land development initiatives promoting redevelopment and re-intensification of uses and a denser urban center should continue. There should also be continued planning and capital investment in transit system improvements, sidewalks, and road networks that provide the connections necessary for a denser urban center to thrive. The City, its partners, and stakeholders should continue to promote improvements to the Danbury Branch Line that will encourage train ridership as well as support bus operations serving local and regional needs.

Rail Service Extension Opportunities

Existing rail corridors extending west and north from the Danbury Train Station offer the possibility of rail passenger service connecting Danbury with more destinations and creating a hub for rail service passengers in Downtown Danbury. The rail lines heading west to the New York State border are owned and operated by Housatonic Railroad Company. The rail lines to the north to New Milford are also owned and operated by Housatonic Railroad Company. Past New Milford to the Massachusetts border, the rail lines are owned by the State of Connecticut with the freight service operated by Housatonic Railroad Company.

A passenger rail service connection to the west would enable transfer to Metro-North's Harlem Line at the Southeast or Brewster stations, both a short distance from Downtown Danbury. See Figure 2A on page viii for a map of this connection. This would be appealing for many passengers from western Connecticut as the Harlem Line offers faster and more frequent service to New York City and Westchester County than the Danbury Branch Line. HARTransit's Danbury-Brewster shuttle and Route 3 bus services currently provide this connection to hundreds of daily commuters, but are frequently impeded by worsening traffic congestion along Mill Plain Road. A rail service alternative could potentially offer faster service with higher capacity while simultaneously relieving the roadway of vehicle congestion and associated impacts. Infrastructure upgrades supporting such service could possibly integrate a proposed parallel recreational path for pedestrians and cyclists connecting with an existing recreational path in New York. Providing additional opportunities for walking and biking connections is consistent with City transportation planning objectives and State goals for pedestrian and bicycle planning in Connecticut.

A service connection to New Milford, about 13 miles north of Downtown Danbury, was explored as part of the 2010 Danbury Branch Improvement Program TOD Study and 2016 Danbury Branch Line Final Implementation Plan conducted by the Connecticut Department of Transportation and partner agencies. This extension would create an alternative to traffic congestion along Route 7, and add station and development opportunities in northeast Danbury and Brookfield as well as New Milford. The 2016 Plan concluded that likely ridership levels in a 2030 timeframe would not justify the cost of adding this service, but recommended continued consideration of the possibility.

These possible service extensions warrant continued study. In particular the service extension west to connect to the Metro-North Harlem Line deserves immediate attention in terms of planning and funding based on potential economic growth opportunities in Downtown Danbury around the Danbury Train Station as well as the benefits of congestion management on the roadways along the Connecticut and New York

border. Providing time-efficient and cost effective transit access options improves the quality of life for transit users as the stress of travel to stations in New York and parking would be reduced. Implementing this extension is consistent with Danbury's Plan of Conservation and Development and with the 2015 Housatonic Valley MPO Long-Range Transportation Plan objectives for enhancing modal integration and connections, supporting economic vitality, upgrading freight transport, increasing mobility, and improving air quality and livability conditions in the region. It is also consistent with the State of Connecticut growth management principle in the Conservation & Development Policies: The Plan for Connecticut to improve "transit service and linkages to attract more customers through better integration of all transportation options ...while providing convenience, reliability, safety and competitive modal choice." This new competitive modal choice would utilize existing rail lines, reduce vehicular traffic congestion on the roadways and the associated environmental impacts of congestion, and improve interstate commerce opportunities while doing so at a downtown location that provides integrated transit service options conveniently, safely, and reliably. Use, conversion, and upgrades of existing rail lines require coordination and partnerships between the City of Danbury, other local, state, and regional governments in Connecticut and New York, and transportation providers including Metro-North, HARTransit, the Housatonic Railroad Company, and the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation.

A passenger rail service connection from the Danbury Train Station west to the Harlem Line would bring people to Downtown Danbury and activate the area around the existing train station in furtherance of the TOD Vision. Possible funding sources for rail improvements west include, in addition to State funding opportunities, such federal options as the CMAQ and TIGER programs as well as Capital Investment Grants, Urbanized Area Formula Grants, and Surface Transportation Block Grants. Establishing this passenger rail/commuter connection is independent of whether the Danbury Transit Center is created. However, both would contribute to overall success of TOD in Downtown Danbury.

Pedestrian & Streetscape Improvements

Ensuring that Downtown Danbury is walkable and pedestrian-friendly is a critical component to the success of TOD, promotes responsible growth, and can incentivize private investment. Whether an area is walkable depends on the physical condition of the space accessible to pedestrians as well as the perception of the physical space and its attractiveness to those who do and could utilize it. The streetscape condition plays an important role in safely separating pedestrians from automobiles, in providing connections to and between destinations, and also in creating interest and beauty along downtown streets.

Streetscape encompasses a complex set of elements in the public right-of-way supporting transportation, land use, and environmental quality. Basic transportation components include accessible sidewalks and crosswalks, vehicle travel lanes, vehicle and bike parking, bike lanes, and bus stops. Universal accessibility is a critical element of pedestrian facilities. Features such as accessible curb ramps and tactile warning strips are not only required to meet ADA standards, but add convenience

and safety for all pedestrians. Driveway curb cuts can have a significant impact on the character and safety of sidewalks. Curb cut placement, frequency, and design are important considerations as properties are developed or streetscape and road projects designed. Street lighting, traffic signals, crosswalks, and signage support safe movement of all transportation modes and can promote walkability and safety. Street trees provide thermal comfort, safe separation from traffic, and beauty, often contributing significantly to the value of adjoining properties and public spaces. Tree lawns, ornamental plantings at ground level or in planters, public art, and distinctive paving add interest and value along some streets. Design of streetscape improvements should consider and accommodate all these elements.

This TOD Study considers all of these elements in terms of existing conditions and opportunities for improvement. Factors related to transportation are emphasized in this chapter, and factors related to qualities of urban design and public space are emphasized in the next chapter. A summary of past investment in streetscape, below, is followed by recommendations on priority initiatives that will help achieve the goals of this Study.



Recent improvements to streetscape and public spaces for pedestrians at the Monument Park are a model for Downtown improvements.

DANBURY'S COMMITMENT TO DOWNTOWN STREETScape

Danbury's public policy commitment to improving streetscapes in Downtown is demonstrated and evidenced by the continued investment of capital funds for pedestrian infrastructure improvements. Since Downtown's early days centered on manufacturing activities, the pedestrian has played an important role on downtown streets. As the City grew in size and downtown businesses diversified, sidewalks continued to connect workers to nearby residential neighborhoods and to other places of destination. Urban renewal plans subsequent to the 1955 flood included road, utility, and pedestrian improvements on downtown streets in addition to land clearance, building conservation, and site assemblage objectives.

Many downtown roadway improvements made in this era prioritized convenience of vehicular movement over that of pedestrian and cyclists. In recent decades, transportation policy in Danbury and around the country has recognized the need to provide a more balanced level of quality for all travel modes. Recent and proposed street improvements in Downtown Danbury offer many opportunities to improve the safety, convenience, and comfort of walking, biking, and using transit, which depends on good walking and biking connections from transit stops.

A formalized revitalization program for Danbury's Downtown began in 1990 and included—among other activities associated with downtown business retention, parcel redevelopment, and public parking—a major street and pedestrian streetscape improvement project. Main Street and other downtown roads were realigned, Post Office Walk connecting Main Street to Ives Street was discontinued as a right-of-way for vehicles, and new sidewalks were constructed along thoroughfares that included landscaping and other amenities. These construction activities concluded in 1993.

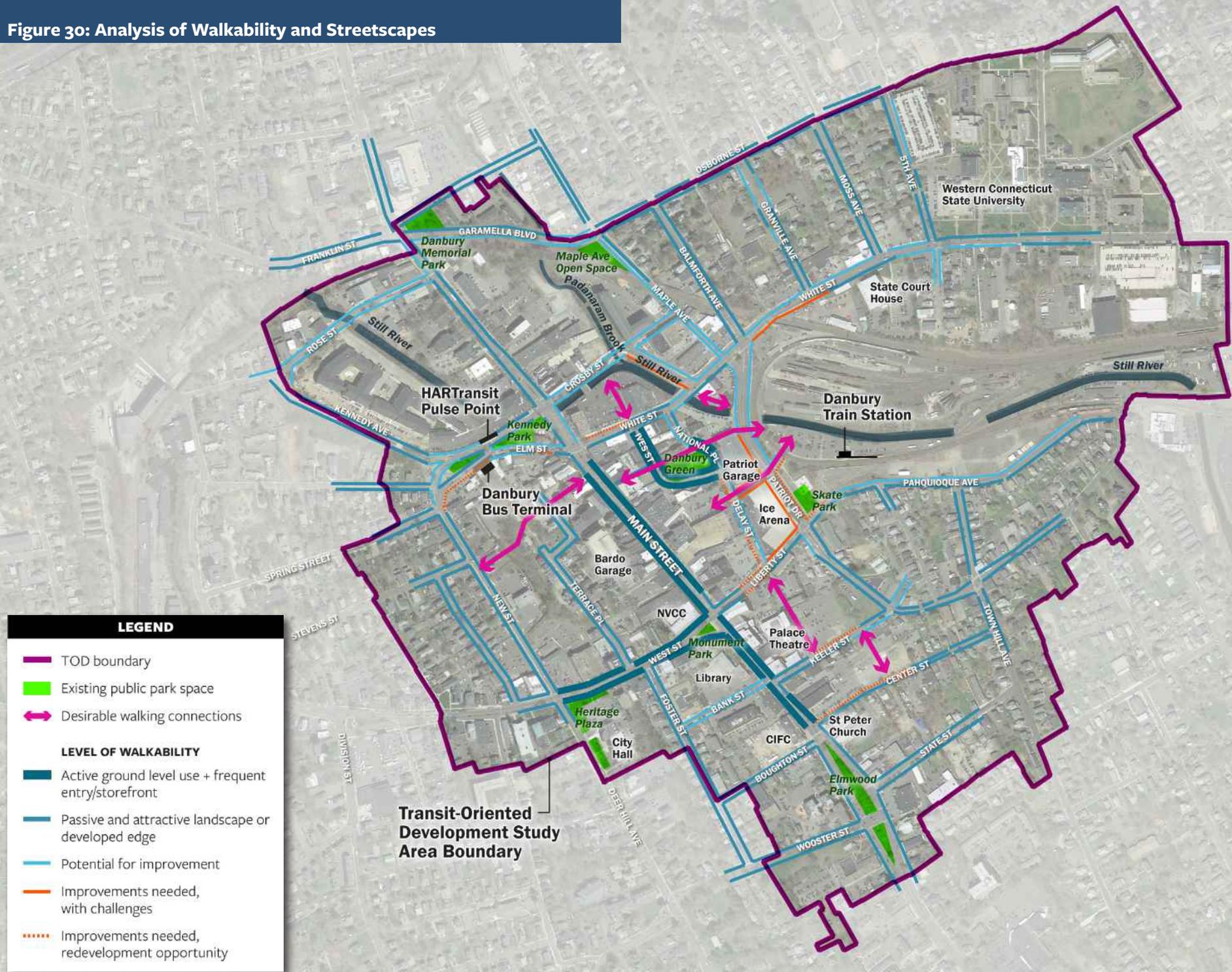
Since then, other than the Main Street North Streetscape Project in 2008, and the City's 2017 refurbishment of Monument Park at the intersection of Main and West Streets, there have been no major streetscape improvements conducted in the core of the downtown along the major pedestrian corridors linking land uses to modes of transit. In the past 25 years, the pedestrian infrastructure in this area has aged. Routine maintenance has occurred when necessary but sidewalks have deteriorated and trees have outgrown the tree wells, heaved sidewalks, and blocked visible access to downtown land uses. Decorative lighting, a streetscape component used to create an inviting pedestrian-scaled atmosphere along portions of routes connecting key land uses to bus and rail transit, exists sporadically. New major land uses have recently been established in Downtown Danbury but several walking routes serving them remain uninviting and require rebuilding. Such improvements support and grow multi-modal use, catalyze private TOD, add vibrancy,

and demonstrate the City's commitment to reinventing downtown through TOD and responsible growth strategies.

The City of Danbury remains committed to creating and encouraging a walkable pedestrian network downtown to and from jobs, retail services, school, housing, recreation opportunities, transit services, and public parking. Danbury is identified by the State as the area's regional center and Downtown is its core. Improving the downtown streetscape with modern facilities promotes opportunities for future private investment in TOD and responsible growth in the urban core. It will resolve actual and perceived safety issues resulting from deteriorated infrastructure. A planned streetscape improvement program is underway for Downtown Danbury and will be guided further by the priority infrastructure improvements identified in this TOD Study. In addition, in accordance with Connecticut's Complete Streets legislation, Danbury will continue to consider and provide accommodations for all users in the routine planning, design, construction, and operating activities associated with its road right-of-way network. Implementing these improvements will require a substantial funding commitment that may need to be programmed over several years and constructed as a multi-phase project. The City should continue its capital planning program and seek funding sources for streetscape improvements in Downtown Danbury.

Figure 30 shows an analysis of current walkability along street edges in the TOD Study Area, segments with potential for streetscape improvement, and desirable walking connections used to establish the priority streetscape network. Desirable walking connections not only lead to transit options but to and between key land redevelopment opportunities and existing destinations. The scale and pattern of streets in the TOD Study Area, particularly in the historic areas of Main Street and surrounding neighborhoods, generally support walking by providing many convenient choices of routes and many buildings designed to be accessed from the sidewalk.

Figure 30: Analysis of Walkability and Streetscapes



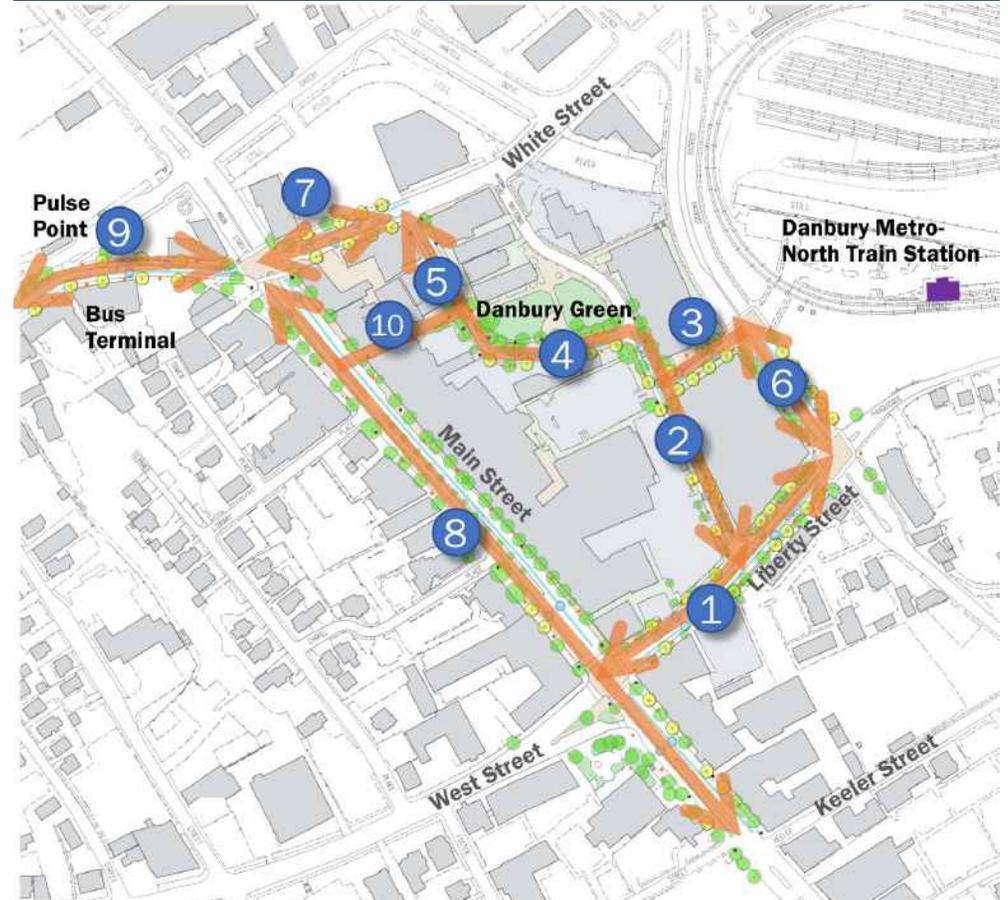
PRIORITY STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

To promote pedestrian activity on Downtown Danbury streets, priority locations or routes need to be identified and improvements designed before construction activities can commence. Priority routes are those right-of-way segments that offer the shortest pedestrian connections to major land uses and transit options. The priority routes are shown on Figure 31 and described further in Appendix E: Priority Streetscape Investment Areas of Focus. In Downtown Danbury, these corridors include segments along Liberty Street, Delay Street, Independence Way, Railroad Place, Ives Street, and Patriot Drive leading to major public space on and around the Danbury Green, to the Patriot parking garage, and to the Danbury Train Station and existing HARTransit Pulse Point. In addition, the priority segments include portions of Main Street, White Street, Elm Street, and Post Office Walk. While other downtown sidewalks are also in need of repair and rebuilding to promote TOD and meet the TOD Vision, the aforementioned segments deserve priority. Redevelopment in Downtown Danbury necessitates continued public investment in physical improvements for the pedestrian to ensure and promote the Downtown Danbury TOD Vision.

- ### Liberty Street, Main Street and West Street Intersection

Historically this intersection, referred to as Concert Hall Square then later City Hall Square, was the center of public life in Danbury. It was flanked by public buildings and buildings providing public programs, concerts, and services. With the advent of the automobile and the increase in population and business uses, the intersection and its feeder streets were widened to accommodate the new mode of travel. As the intersection was geometrically reconfigured, a small dirt and grass island remained. Today, this island is referred to as Monument Park. The Park was redesigned as part of a streetscape and public space improvement project in 2017 in celebration of the 80th anniversary of the raising of the flag pole and to commemorate the installation of the Civil War monument. With historic buildings and the Danbury Public Library at its corners, this intersection

Figure 31: Priority Streetscape Improvements



This graphic shows the most important segments for streetscape improvements that improve connections between Downtown Danbury and transit service. Segment numbering does not necessarily indicate improvement priority.

Street Segments

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Liberty Street | 6 Patriot Drive |
| 2 Delay Street | 7 White Street |
| 3 Independence Way | 8 Main Street |
| 4 Railroad Place | 9 Elm Street |
| 5 Ives Street | 10 Post Office Walk |

remains the center of Danbury. Both pedestrian activity and vehicular traffic have continued to increase across this wide intersection.

Sidewalks along Liberty Street provide the pedestrian connection from Main Street to the Danbury Train Station, the Danbury Ice Arena, public parking at the Patriot Garage, and neighborhoods to the east. In a westerly direction, sidewalks on West Street provide pedestrian access to retail, commercial, religious, public, and institutional uses at the street level. As indicated in the Land Use & Development chapter, infill development should provide opportunities to activate public space adjacent to buildings and improve the pedestrian ambiance. Artistic opportunities to enhance the façades of private buildings as well as provide public art in the public sidewalk space is further described in the following chapter, Urban Design & Public Spaces.

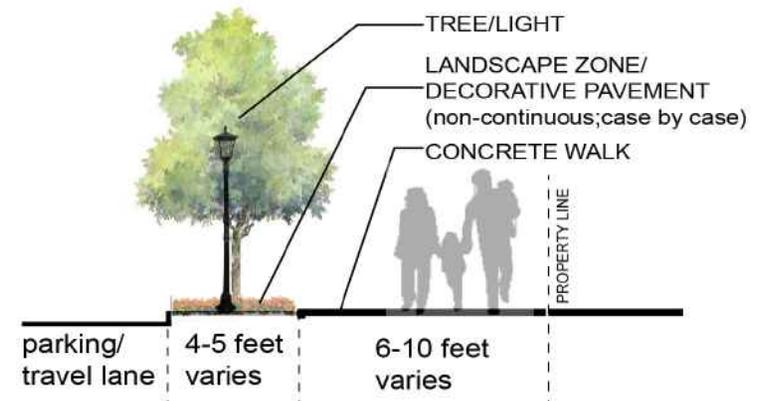
Figure 32: Example Crosswalk Improvements, as shown for Main St & Liberty/West St, include stamped accent paving, stamped accent crosswalks, and lighting.



The prominence of this intersection could be enhanced by streetscape improvements. Potential improvements include the rebuilding of sidewalks as well as a pavement pattern change in the crosswalks. These improvements would further emphasize the importance of the intersection and its intensity of pedestrian activity. An example of potential streetscape improvements at this priority location is shown in Figure 32.

- Delay Street/Independence Way/Railroad Place and Ives Street around the Danbury Green** The sidewalks and streetscape along the roadways surrounding and providing access to the Danbury Green are in need of rebuilding. Last improved in the early 1990's, this pedestrian network has been compromised due to heaving in the sidewalks and overgrown tree roots. While the Danbury Green itself remains improved as a passive recreation space, the hardscape

Figure 33: Potential Typical Section for Liberty St, Delay St, Railroad Place, Independence Way, Elm St, White St, and Main St



requires upgrades. Since a majority of all outdoor public events Downtown are centered at the Danbury Green, and these streets provide access to storefront shops, restaurants, and businesses as a pedestrian connection from the Danbury Train Station to the Pulse Point, the streetscape along these streets should be updated and improved. Additionally, oversized curb cuts should be reduced in size where appropriate. While specific pavement patterns or landscape material has not been determined at this time, Figure 33 provides a typical section showing the width of streetscape components in relation to the parking or travel lanes and building face.

- **White Street and Elm Street** These are both important corridors with segments providing pedestrian connections to bus service, the Danbury Train Station, and public parking. Many storefronts and business entries exist on the ground floor of the buildings along these corridors, and depend on quality sidewalk access.
- **Main Street** The sidewalks and streetscape conditions on Main Street, from Elmwood Park to Crosby Street and Kennedy Avenue, is critical to incentivizing TOD in Downtown Danbury. This pedestrian route connects parks, public spaces, major education and institutional uses, businesses, and residences. Storefronts, businesses, and in general all uses fronting Main Street provide for pedestrian access from the sidewalk. On the west side of Main Street, between Chapel Place and Elm Street, the sidewalk area is elevated above the on-street parking. The streetscapes along this route were constructed in the early 1990's and are in need of updating, repair, replacement, and enhancement to further the goals of the TOD Study.
- **Post Office Walk** Post Office Walk provides a pedestrian connection between Main Street and Ives Street and the area around the Danbury Green. Improvements to the Walk should be made to foster connectivity, provide additional opportunities to engage the pedestrian, and enhance the ambiance. Improvements may include overhead lighting, new pavers, seating, and landscaping. The former

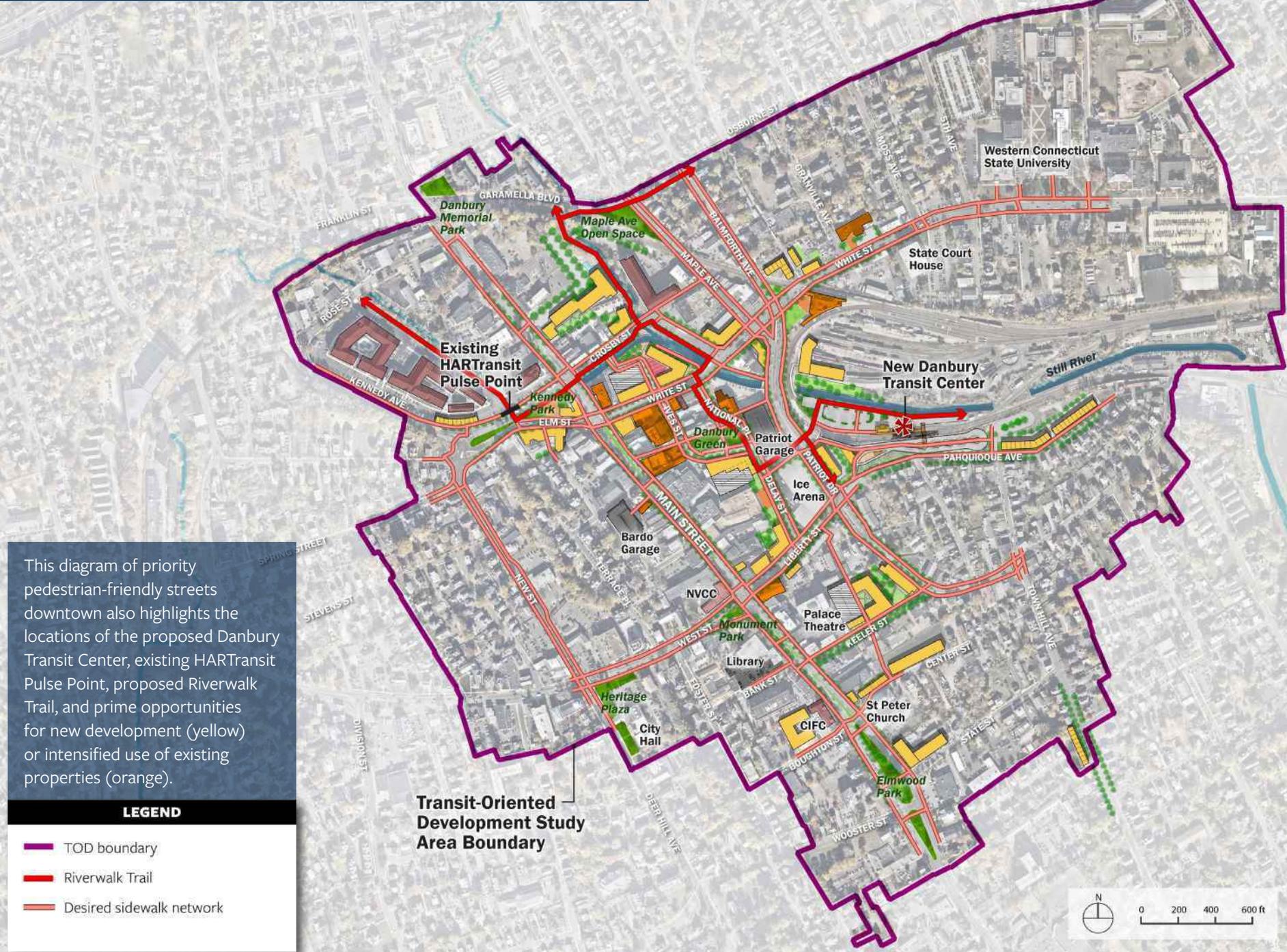
Tuxedo Junction building, a public building with direct access onto the Walk, can provide activity and increase usage.

ADDITIONAL STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS

The sidewalk and streetscape condition on other streets in Downtown Danbury—including portions of Pahquioque Avenue, Keeler Street, Center Street, Balmforth and Maple Avenues, Lee Hartwell Drive, Crosby Street, Patriot Drive, and White Street—should also be reviewed to determine if sidewalk improvements are required to provide better connectivity between land uses. The map in Figure 34 shows the extent of sidewalk networks that should be of consistently good quality. Conditions along White Street east of Ives Street particularly deserve focused attention. Despite new sidewalk paving and street lights in portions of this area, pedestrian conditions continue to suffer from the lack of crosswalks across White Street along the 800-foot segment between Ives Street and Balmforth Avenue as well as the 850-foot segment between Balmforth and Moss Avenues. The pedestrian experience is also worsened by heavy traffic volumes along White Street, long crossing distances at major intersections, and auto-oriented land uses on adjacent parcels. Substantially improving pedestrian conditions in this area would require coordinated efforts between the City, State, and property owners, and could deliver much better connections between Downtown, Western Connecticut State University, and neighborhoods north and east of Downtown Danbury.

New development, redevelopment, or intensification of uses bordering these streets and the priority routes noted above should be designed to promote a walkable environment. Access and active space should be oriented towards the corridor with parking located to the rear of buildings. New crosswalks and alternate crosswalk material at key locations should be considered to highlight the level and intensity of pedestrian activity, promote safe crossing, and connect Downtown Danbury to transit options and neighboring residential areas.

Figure 34: Desired Downtown Pedestrian Network



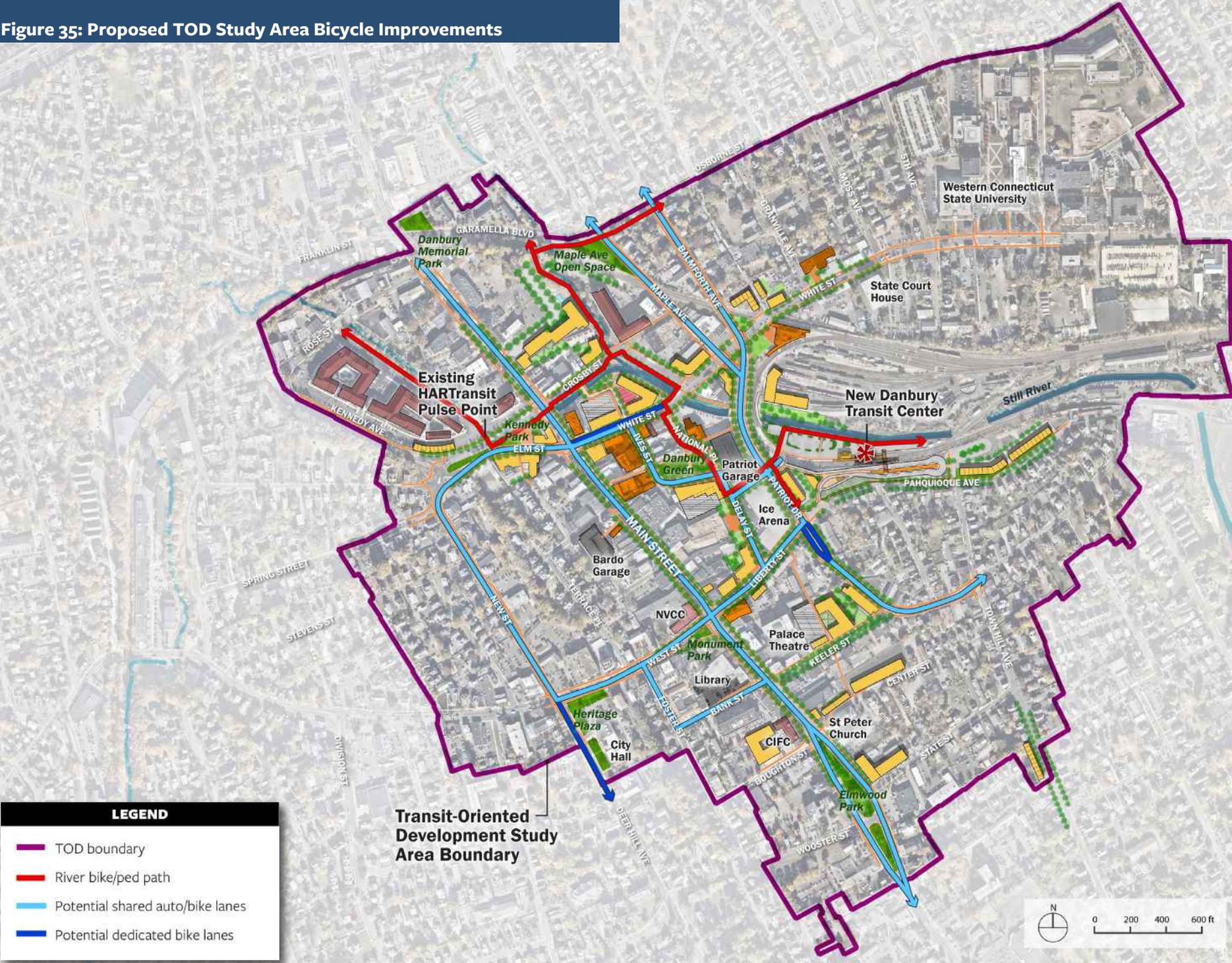
These improvements will promote infill development and adaptive reuse of existing structures and will promote supportive land uses around the rail and bus station by improving the walkable environment. A vibrant walkable downtown also helps promote the city center as an urban area center for the arts, entertainment, and cultural activities as well as a place to live, work, and learn. The City must continue to promote and incentivize development downtown as a vibrant, resilient, and desirable place to be and to travel to. As development projects move forward, streetscape improvements by private parties should be reviewed for consistency with the TOD vision.

LEVERAGING THE STILL RIVER IN STREETScape DESIGN

The Still River runs through Downtown Danbury. While a portion of it is contained in a box culvert, other portions are exposed. The exposed sections of River are located well below the grade of the adjoining road. Where feasible, visible access to the Still River should be provided and incorporated into adjacent redevelopment and streetscape improvements. The City of Danbury has accomplished this under a current bridge replacement project. The replacement bridge has been designed with slatted guardrail atop the River in lieu of the existing concrete parapet wall. This design feature will increase the visibility of the River to pedestrians. Use of the design element should be continued.

The map in Figure 34 shows in red an envisioned new bike and pedestrian path along the Still River, discussed in the next chapter as the “Riverwalk Trail.” The Riverwalk Trail concept can provide opportunities for pedestrians and bicycling along the Still River and may also extend along tributaries to the Still River. This trail could provide clear connections to the Danbury Train Station, to the Pulse Point, and to new development envisioned in the previous chapter as part of the land use and development framework. Incorporating opportunities for closer access to and enjoyment of the Still River and its tributaries can only enhance the downtown streetscape network.

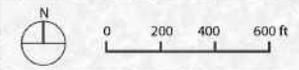
Figure 35: Proposed TOD Study Area Bicycle Improvements



LEGEND

- TOD boundary
- River bike/ped path
- Potential shared auto/bike lanes
- Potential dedicated bike lanes

Transit-Oriented Development Study Area Boundary



Opportunities for Improved Bicycling Infrastructure in Downtown Danbury

The City of Danbury has a complete streets approach to improving bicycling infrastructure in Downtown Danbury. Biking within downtown Danbury and bicycle connections to surrounding neighborhoods and other areas of the City and beyond should be considered as roadways are planned, redesigned, and constructed. Bicycling provides an alternate means of transportation in addition to health benefits and appeal as a recreational activity.

Figure 35 identifies possible bicycle connections in the TOD Study Area in the form of protected bike lanes or shared travel lanes. While a protected bike lane or portion of the travel roadway designated for bicycles only is the preferred method of providing such facility, it is often difficult in urban settings where the street right-of-way is fixed and/or narrow. This is the case on many streets in Downtown Danbury where the width of the roadway is narrow and, in some locations, on street parking is necessary. In this instance, it may be feasible for bike users to share the travel lane with automobile and other vehicular traffic. This common concept, identified in a travel lane by a sharred-arrow or “sharrow” insignia marking allows for the sharing of the roadway but with a pronounced acknowledgment that other vehicle types are also on the roadway.

While further analysis in the form of a pedestrian and bicycle corridor study will likely be necessary to determine which streets in Downtown Danbury can accommodate bicycle traffic within the right-of-way, important streets for biking include Patriot Drive, Balmforth and Maple Avenues, Liberty Street, Main Street, New Street, West Street, Delay Street, White Street, Bank Street, Keeler Street, Ives Street, and Deer Hill Avenue. On some routes, adequate roadway width may be available to provide a dedicated bike lane while on other streets sharrow lanes may be accommodated. These routes also provide important connections to rail and bus transit travel options.

There are important opportunities to extend a safe bicycle network beyond Downtown. Destinations to consider include Rogers Park at the southern end of Main Street, Western Connecticut State University, and other Danbury neighborhoods. A comprehensive bicycle network plan for all of Danbury could help confirm these opportunities.

Bicycle parking or bike racks should also be provided in public spaces or on private property as part of a development in order to accommodate and satisfy the demand for bike use. The City may wish to consider, at the appropriate time, an amendment to the zoning regulations to require on-site bicycle parking and/or storage facilities as use increases and demands warrant.

Smart Parking as Part of Transit-Oriented Development

Well-managed and well-distributed parking is an important part of encouraging transit-oriented development in Downtown Danbury. On-street parking in the area, particularly on Main Street, should continue to serve customers and visitors. The City of Danbury manages public parking assets through the Parking Authority. As redevelopment occurs and there is more demand for on-street parking, the Parking Authority can modify management techniques such as time limits, hours of operation, and pricing to encourage turnover of parking spaces and adequate availability of supply.

PARKING INVENTORY

A task of the TOD Study was to inventory parking utilization in the TOD Study Area. Figure 36 identifies parking spaces in Downtown Danbury within the TOD Study Area. There is a total of approximately 6,500 parking spaces of which approximately 4,900 are on private sites. The remaining 1,600 are on public land either on-street parking spaces or in public lots and garages, as follows:

- 936 spaces in the Patriot and Bardo Public Parking Garages;
- 328 spaces in public parking lots at the Danbury Train Station, Danbury Library, and Lots 8, 9, and 13; and
- Approximately 360 spaces of on-street parking.

As shown in Figure 36, there is more parking available in the northern area of Main Street than in the southern area. Public parking lots in the TOD Study Area are well-utilized and are generally filled to capacity. There was surplus parking available in the Patriot and Bardo garages based on the recent observed use pattern and discussions with the Parking Authority. This would indicate that opportunities for shared off-premise parking may be available as nearby redevelopment proceeds or, as demand warrants, for commuter use as rail connections are improved.

Observations and discussions revealed the following information related to the public parking garages:

Patriot Garage

- 550 spaces
- Utilizing $\frac{2}{3}$ of capacity
- Peak demand between 9 am–5 pm weekdays for workers and commuters
- 20 residents park overnight. This garage has the most capacity to serve as an off-premise or shared parking facility for new development.

Bardo Garage

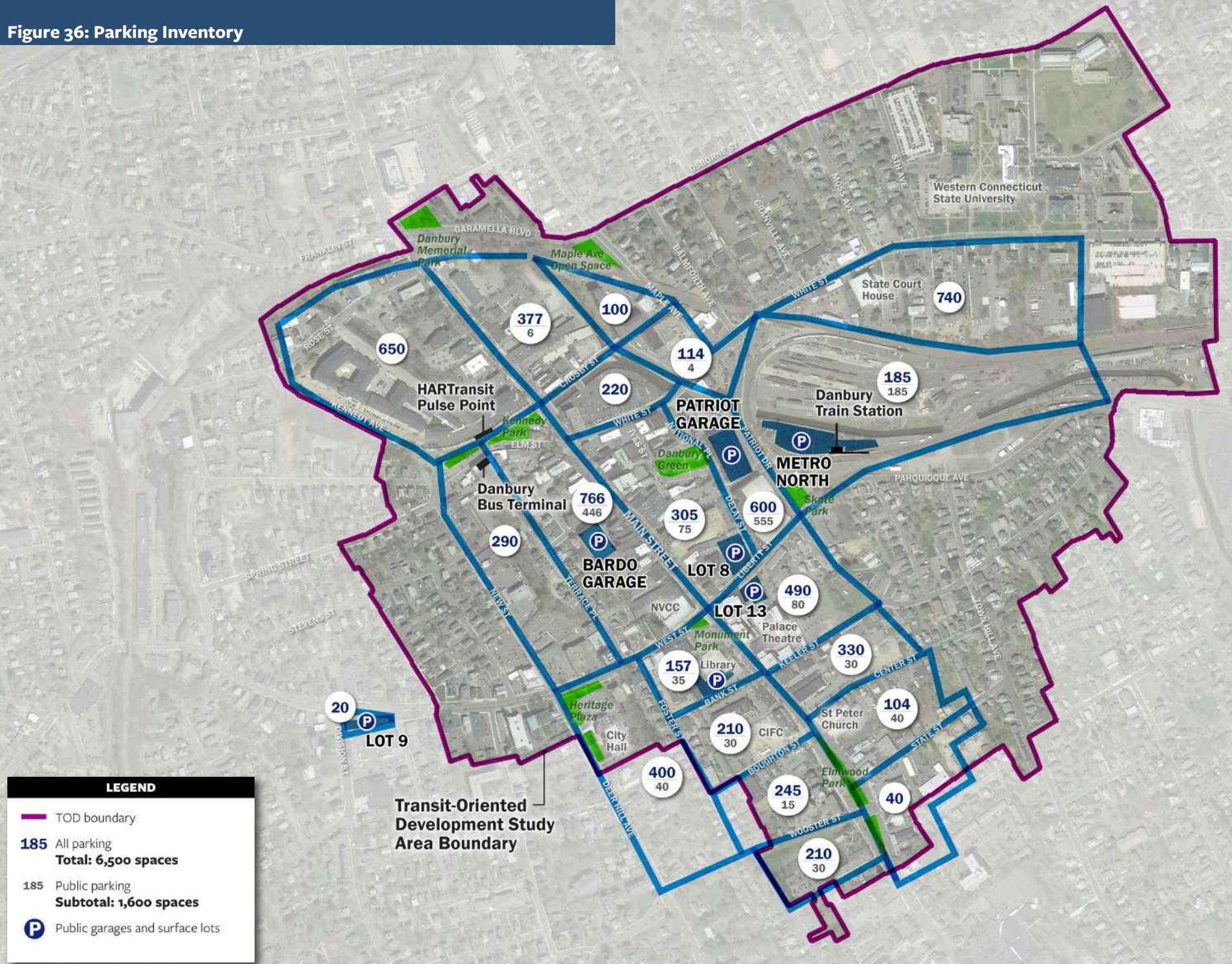
- 386 spaces
- Utilizing $\frac{2}{3}$ of capacity
- Peak demand between 9 am–5 pm weekdays
- Half-filled by residents nights and weekends. Capacity exists to serve as off-premise or shared parking facility for new development.

FUTURE PUBLIC PARKING

As noted in the previous chapter, several of the surface parking lots owned by the City of Danbury and managed by the Parking Authority are good redevelopment sites for transit-oriented development. If in the future these surface lots are redeveloped, Danbury will likely need to provide additional public parking to ensure there is adequate supply.

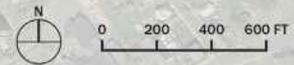
As the distribution of public parking within Downtown Danbury is uneven, future public parking structures may well be needed in the southern area of the TOD Study Area to support redevelopment in that area and to ensure an effective distribution of parking availability within walking distance of a variety of destinations. A long-term parking study for Downtown Danbury would address issues of supply, demand, and distribution.

Figure 36: Parking Inventory



LEGEND

- TOD boundary
- 185** All parking
Total: 6,500 spaces
- 185** Public parking
Subtotal: 1,600 spaces
- P** Public garages and surface lots



ZONING CHANGES FOR SMART PARKING

As detailed on page 62, the City of Danbury can pursue amendments to the Zoning Regulations to encourage smart parking that supports the TOD Vision for transportation and infrastructure in the TOD Study Area. These changes include expanding the distance radius for off-premise parking in Downtown, coordinating parking requirements for similar uses, and providing flexible or reduced parking minimums. The City of Danbury can also support car-sharing services by reducing off-street parking requirements for a use when a car-sharing parking space is provided and offering parking spaces in City surface lots and parking garages for car-share services.

URBAN DESIGN & PUBLIC SPACES

Add and enhance great public places in Downtown Danbury through thoughtful design and wayfinding, including clear walking connections to transit.

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The Benefits of Quality Urban Design

Quality urban design means streets and park spaces that are designed to welcome people. The success of these spaces depends not only on the design of walks, plantings, lighting, and other elements within them, but also the design of building forms and landscapes of the land parcels surrounding the spaces. It further depends heavily on the allocation of space and investment in different transportation modes—walking, driving, biking, and transit—within street widths. Street and park spaces that welcome people help downtowns make the most of their unique ability to collect a wide variety of people, host activities, and offer transportation choices in a compact, connected area. Safe, welcoming walking connections put people in reach of each other and transit and minimize the amount of space and resources devoted to cars, increasing the economic and community value of a walkable district. For Downtown Danbury, this means that quality urban design is a powerful tool to enhance the value of existing properties and businesses, attract more investment in real estate and commerce, gain better benefit from transit, and encourage people from nearby neighborhoods and the broader region to participate in a greater number of community and cultural activities.

The City of Danbury and downtown stakeholders already apply many practices that promote good quality urban design and improve public space. Priorities for continued application of these practices are described in the next chapter. Several new initiatives that would be highly valuable in maintaining and improving qualities of place in Downtown Danbury are described later in this chapter. Following those, specific applications of current and new initiatives in seven priority downtown locations are recommended.

Continued Initiatives for Urban Design and Public Spaces

Zoning regulations play an important role in helping ensure that the placement and design of buildings, landscaping, and parking on development parcels contribute to quality urban design. Good urban design further strengthens the enduring value of new development and existing properties. Zoning Regulations and existing codes in Danbury promote good urban design but should be reviewed, amended, and strengthened, as necessary, to ensure uses permitted are those that help activate the street, are designed to build community identity, and help highlight Downtown's historic architecture by:

- Encouraging new development on vacant sites and parking lots in order to produce much safer, more appealing walking environments. Sites that lack attractive buildings or landscaping discourage people from walking on sidewalks next to them.
- Requiring active ground-floor uses, with highly transparent storefront-style design, along street segments where specified by zoning, and other optional locations. This enhances public spaces by providing destinations, visual interest, and safety that encourage walking.
- Emphasizing design standards for good ground-floor housing design—an increasingly important need as additional housing is developed on streets where permitted. This will enhance the street environment with community identity and interest while accommodating adequate privacy for ground floor living spaces. Design elements such as stoops, compact front gardens, and raised first floors should be considered. Unless otherwise not feasible, off-street parking and service areas should not be visible from the street.
- Ensuring new development and building renovations respect and reinforce Downtown Danbury's profusion of historic architecture and help maintain its historic identity. The Main Street Historic Overlay Zone provides standards that deserve continued application.

- Allowing for architectural expression in non-historic areas that complements, and is compatible in scale and material with, existing structures.
- Increasing the level of design review of development project proposals to ensure high quality urban design. This will contribute to the value of existing and future development as well as to the quality of public space.

Continued maintenance, improvement, and programming of Downtown Danbury's sidewalks, parks, and other public spaces for people are also important priorities to transform good assets into greater public spaces. Priorities include:

- Continuing and enhancing stakeholder collaboration. The City of Danbury and CityCenter Danbury already work closely together on activities aimed at enlivening public spaces. The recent Urban Sculpture Park on Main Street, a partnership between CityCenter Danbury and the City of Danbury, is an example of how public art can be a part of downtown revitalization and TOD. This public-private partnership should be continued and expanded to include other property and business owners and cultural organizations.
- Continuing physical improvements to sidewalks. While Downtown has a good basic sidewalk network, certain streets require critical improvements as recommended in the Transportation & Infrastructure chapter. Sidewalks and crosswalks should be added in several locations where missing or are desirable to accommodate new development. Sidewalk paving should be repaired or replaced where deteriorated. Street trees should be added where missing. Consider adding decorative lighting where it would have prominent impact.
- Continuing stewardship of parks and streetscape to beautify Downtown Danbury. The City of Danbury maintains street trees, hanging flower baskets, and ornamental plantings at many locations Downtown. Ongoing maintenance should include attention to pruning street trees to keep retail businesses visible. The City and stakeholders,



The Urban Sculpture Park is a public art project along the historic Main Street corridor developed in 2017 through collaboration with CityCenter Danbury. The park consists of six sculptures located in green areas with an additional two sculptures on the sidewalk, all by different sculptors.

especially CityCenter Danbury and its members, can mutually benefit from opportunities for stakeholders to help provide and maintain additional ornamental plantings, street furniture, or other amenities.

- Continuing activities in park spaces to serve Downtown's growing and diverse population. Many events already occur regularly, such as concerts, the farmers' market, and festivals. Moving forward, community members have expressed interest in a broader range of cultural event programming. Existing public spaces, including the Library Plaza, could possibly accommodate more intensive use.

New Initiatives to Enhance Urban Design and Public Spaces

In addition to continuing and expanding existing priorities and initiatives, the City of Danbury and Downtown stakeholders can support new initiatives for urban design and public spaces throughout the TOD Study Area. The initiatives described below have potential applications in many locations.

PUBLIC ART

Danbury should establish a public art policy and implementation plan and program citywide, with a focus on art in Downtown Danbury. Across the country, many communities invest in public art accompanying major transportation projects, as part of streetscape and beautification projects, and as a form of creative place-making. The TOD strategies envisioned for Downtown Danbury create many opportunities for public art, including at the Danbury Transit Center, as part of streetscape improvement projects, and as part of public spaces. Establishing a formal policy and program will ensure opportunities for public art are included in redevelopment and have synergies with other City activities. A formal policy would help ensure new public art is of high quality, located to have strong impact, and meets other priorities identified by stakeholders. Continuing to encourage the installation of art in vacant storefronts for beautification and to create visual interest for pedestrians is another instance where art can support TOD.

NEW PUBLIC SPACES AND PARKS

Downtown Danbury has a number of small green spaces and plazas, or pocket parks, such as Library Plaza, Monument Park, and open space on Maple Avenue as well as slightly larger parks such as Elmwood Park, Danbury Memorial Park, Kennedy Park, Heritage Plaza, and the Danbury Green. All of these park spaces should continue to be supported with regular maintenance, programming, and improvements as needed.

As redevelopment proceeds, the City of Danbury should work with project proponents to include pocket park space and plazas as part of development as an urban design feature. A downtown dog park may be a

needed amenity in the long-term as the residential population increases and may be feasible accompanying a larger TOD project. Opportunities to increase the amount of recreational space should be explored including providing better pedestrian and bike connections to destinations such as Rogers Park and trails outside the TOD Study Area.

The Riverwalk Trail should be built to remedy gaps in the sidewalk and crosswalk network between the existing HARTransit Pulse Point, the Danbury Train Station, and concentrations of housing—while also revealing the Still River as an important resource. Replacement of opaque parapet walls along the Still River channel with transparent railings, as has been done at the bridge on Crosby Street, would dramatically improve perception of the Still River.

WAYFINDING

Downtown Danbury can be hard for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers to navigate due to an irregular street network and scarcity of signage to



Improvements to Monument Park at West Street and Main Street, including landscaping, new benches, a new flag pole, new pavement surface, and re-installation of a fence around the historic Soldier's Monument have created an improved public space that is already well-used by pedestrians. These improvements are a model for how other public spaces and parks should be improved to increase use.

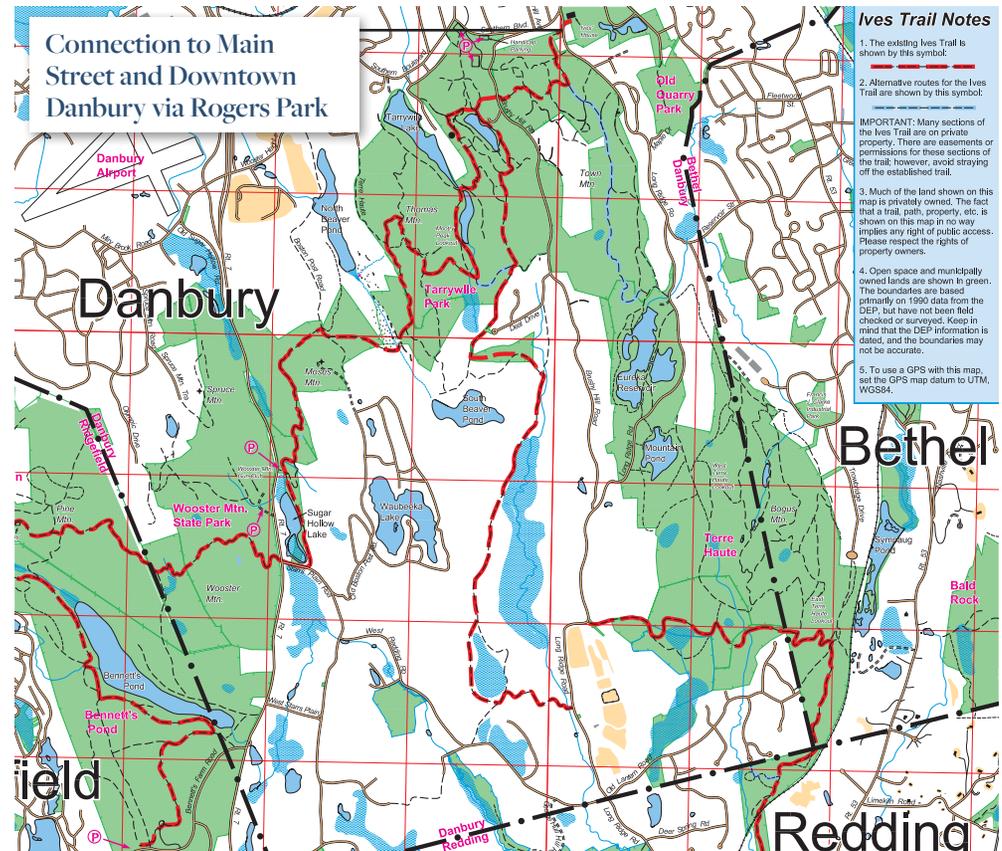
transit and other destinations. Installing a coordinated signage system that provides directions to transit and other destinations, particularly scaled to pedestrians, would significantly improve the experience of walking Downtown and using transit. Wayfinding signage also provides an important design opportunity to apply a consistent identity throughout Downtown.

REGIONAL CONNECTIONS AND PATHS

Improvements to the recreational path network can connect Downtown Danbury to the larger region. The proposed Riverwalk Trail will be highly useful by itself as a valuable connection and destination to walk. Yet, it could be even more valuable as part of a larger recreational path network serving Danbury and the region. Community members expressed strong interest in the possibility of adding recreational path segments connecting Downtown and the Ives Trail with other existing or potential recreational paths. These include the popular paths along the Still River in Brookfield, an existing path in Brewster, NY, the Norwalk River Valley Trail which is proposed to reach Rogers Park and connect into Downtown via Main Street, and other possible routes serving Danbury neighborhoods. Danbury should work with its neighboring jurisdictions to connect the Riverwalk Trail and other pedestrian or bicycle improvements to paths in other areas.

STAKEHOLDER INVESTMENT AND WORKING TOGETHER

Streetscape and other public improvements in the TOD area should be coordinated with stakeholders such as CityCenter Danbury and project proponents as appropriate. The City of Danbury should enforce an overall urban design vision while encouraging other stakeholders to contribute to beautification. Development projects can provide quality, pedestrian-friendly design features, landscaping, and uses such as retail and outdoor dining that make walking more pleasant. The City of Danbury maintains the public streetscape and provides improvements such as planters and benches. The City may work with partners, including property owners or a group such as CityCenter Danbury, to provide some element of maintenance in the future.



The Ives Trail and Greenway is a 20 mile trail network connecting Danbury, Ridgefield, Bethel, and Redding. Map courtesy of WestCOG.

Priority Areas for Urban Design Initiatives

Seven Downtown locations are highlighted as high priority areas for urban design and streetscape improvements. Investments in urban design elements will be particularly valuable in achieving an appealing pedestrian network connected to transit, encouraging economic development, and expanding opportunities for recreational and cultural activity. Different combinations of initiatives described earlier in this chapter are applied to the priority locations. These seven locations, shown in Figure 37, are described and illustrated in detail on the following pages:

- 1 Main Street: A Historic Setting for Contemporary Lifestyles
- 2 Post Office Walk: Lively Space for Music, Food, and Fun
- 3 Kennedy Park: A More Vibrant Place for Culture and Community
- 4 A Safe, Easy Walk to the Danbury Transit Center
- 5 The Still River and a Section of Riverwalk Trail
- 6 Liberty Street: The Walking Path Connecting the Danbury Transit Center, Main Street, Visitor Destinations, and Neighborhoods
- 7 Walkable Residential Streets Bringing Neighborhoods and Downtown Together

1 Main Street: A Historic Setting for Contemporary Lifestyles

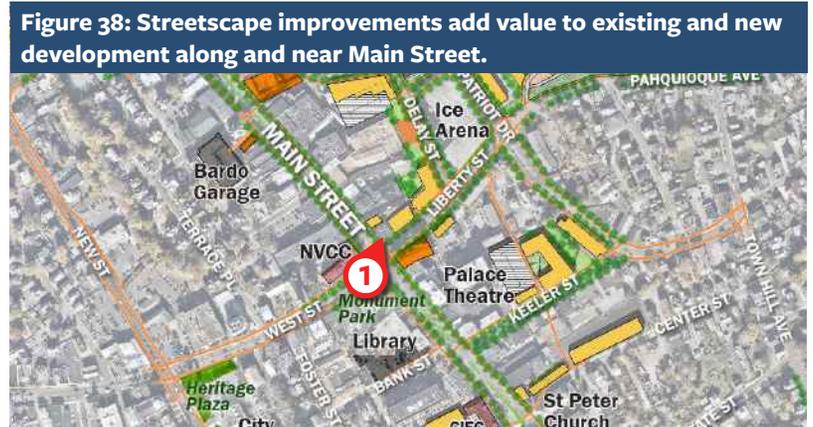
Danbury's Main Street is one of the most attractive main streets in Connecticut. An impressive collection of historic buildings frames Main Street as a signature public place. Mature street trees, a landscaped median, seasonal ornamental plantings, and public spaces at Monument Park, Library Plaza, and Elmwood Park help to make the street the heart of Downtown Danbury. It is clearly a place for people, not just a State highway. Nevertheless, relatively few people are visible enjoying this place at any given time. Several targeted streetscape improvements, in combination with efforts to increase the residential population near Main Street through complementary infill development and other initiatives of this TOD Study, can help Danbury take better advantage of Main Street's assets.

The extra-wide sidewalk area on the west side of Main Street south of Elm Street offers special opportunity for public programming in areas not needed for pedestrian circulation. A sculpture installation by CityCenter Danbury and new outdoor restaurant seating already take advantage of this opportunity. Businesses and organizations should be encouraged to collaborate with the City on additional programming like this, wherever space allows and with required approvals. Program possibilities besides outdoor dining and public art include temporary outdoor retail displays, mini book exchange libraries, poster kiosks announcing public events and information, ornamental plantings, bike racks, and general public seating. Main Street's prominent public spaces and intersections will make improvements such as these especially visible.

Basic pedestrian circulation would benefit from a consistent system of wayfinding signage at key intersections, with directions to transit, major public destinations such as the Danbury Green, the Danbury Public Library, public parking garages, and other neighborhoods and destinations. Signage or other features making Post Office Walk more prominent would be especially helpful, as the walk is an inconspicuous but critical connection through the long block between White and Liberty Streets. Pedestrian circulation would also benefit from more consistent

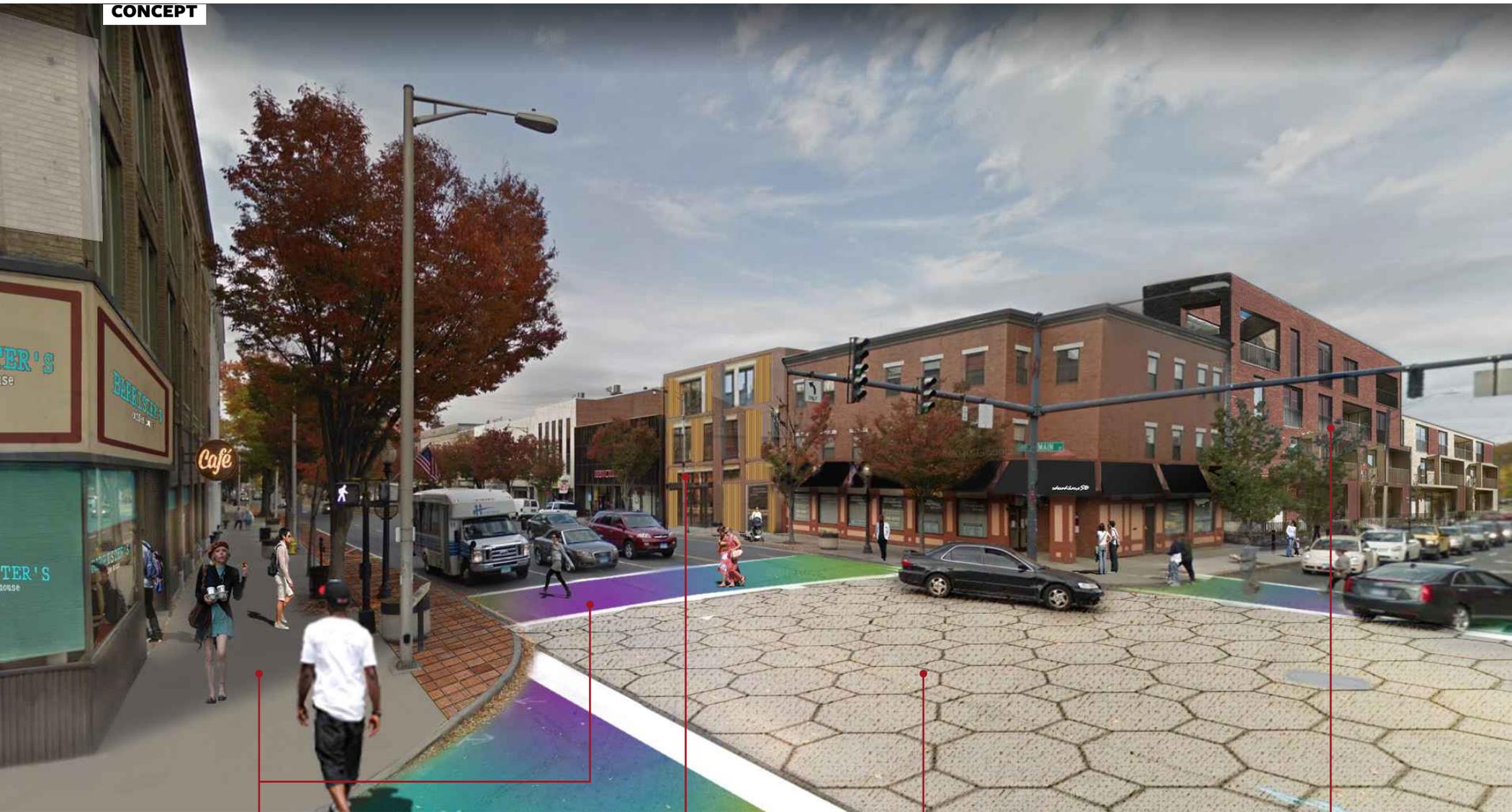
lighting at night, through improved light fixtures and/or tree pruning. Crosswalk and intersection improvements can increase safety and could include signature paving graphics that beautify Downtown Danbury.

Finally, efforts to increase occupancy of adjoining building parcels would eliminate prominent street-level vacancies and increase the population using Main Street. Added housing on blocks flanking Main Street would be especially helpful in keeping the street active on evenings and weekends, increasing market opportunity for existing and new retail, and clearly making the street feel like a neighborhood center, among its other roles. All of these elements are shown in the concept rendering on the opposite page at the location indicated in Figure 38.



Main Street and Liberty Street

CONCEPT



Conceptual crosswalk & sidewalk improvements building on the Main Street streetscape

Infill development along Main Street is complementary to historic buildings

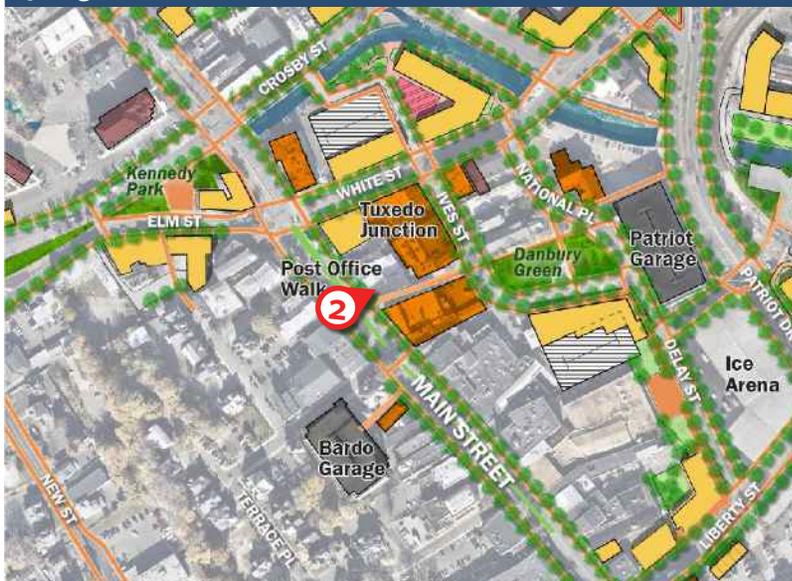
Signature paving graphics as part of intersection improvements

Infill development along Liberty Street is complementary to historic buildings

② Post Office Walk: Lively Space for Music, Food, and Fun

Another prominent location for linking public space improvements to catalytic redevelopment is along Post Office Walk between Main Street and Ives Street, as shown in Figure 39. It provides a direct connection between the Main Street corridor and the Danbury Green. Post Office Walk could be improved with refreshed and new design elements, including lighting, landscaping, art, and seating. The City-owned former Tuxedo Junction building directly adjacent to Post Office Walk should be renovated and reactivated with a destination use that reinforces the concentration of entertainment, cultural, and dining activities in the area. Uses might include a theater or public art space, community theater, indoor exhibition space, or some other public concept. This programming will turn Post Office Walk into a destination public space itself, as well as a valuable walking connection.

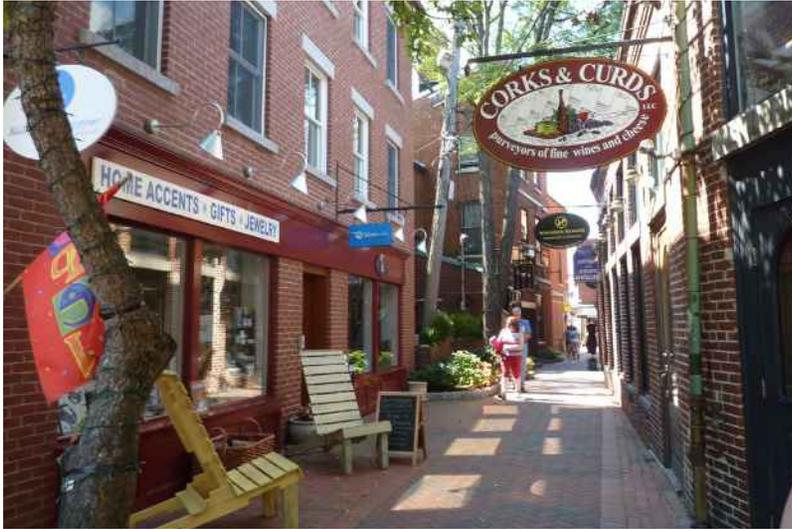
Figure 39: Improvements to Post Office Walk and redevelopment of the Tuxedo Junction Building can improve pedestrian access and synergize uses.



Tuxedo Junction Building



Post Office Walk is a key pedestrian connection between Main Street and the Danbury Green/Ives Street area. Programming of the Tuxedo Junction Building, the brick building on the right of the top photo, should engage this public space.



Alleys can provide inviting settings for shopping and dining, as in Portsmouth, NH (top) and Georgetown, DC (bottom).

The City of Danbury and its partners could improve Post Office Walk with overhead lighting, such as in these example images from Allentown, PA (top) and Philadelphia, PA (bottom).

3 Kennedy Park: A More Vibrant Place for Culture and Community

Kennedy Park is a model of how to improve pocket parks and increase recreational space within Downtown Danbury. Ongoing cultural programming and creative use of the space has reinvigorated the immediate area. Additional urban design initiatives to further increase use of the public space and the buildings that surround it include park-side redevelopment and ongoing active programming of the park space. The existing building at the corner of Kennedy Park, Elm Street, and Main Street is a highly-visible opportunity for redevelopment as a destination, with important public street frontage or park space on all sides of the parcel. The location is shown in Figure 40. Redevelopment of the building, as shown in the proposed rendering below, should include new design features, such as additional windows, entrances, and art or signage on the park-side of the building. New infill development along Elm Street should also have windows and entrances facing Elm Street and Kennedy Park. With increased visibility, Kennedy Park becomes an outdoor living room for surrounding uses, as shown below. In addition to events, the City may consider incorporating additional design features and amenities into the park over time such as movable furniture, lighting, and public art.



Building activated on park side with windows, entrances, and art

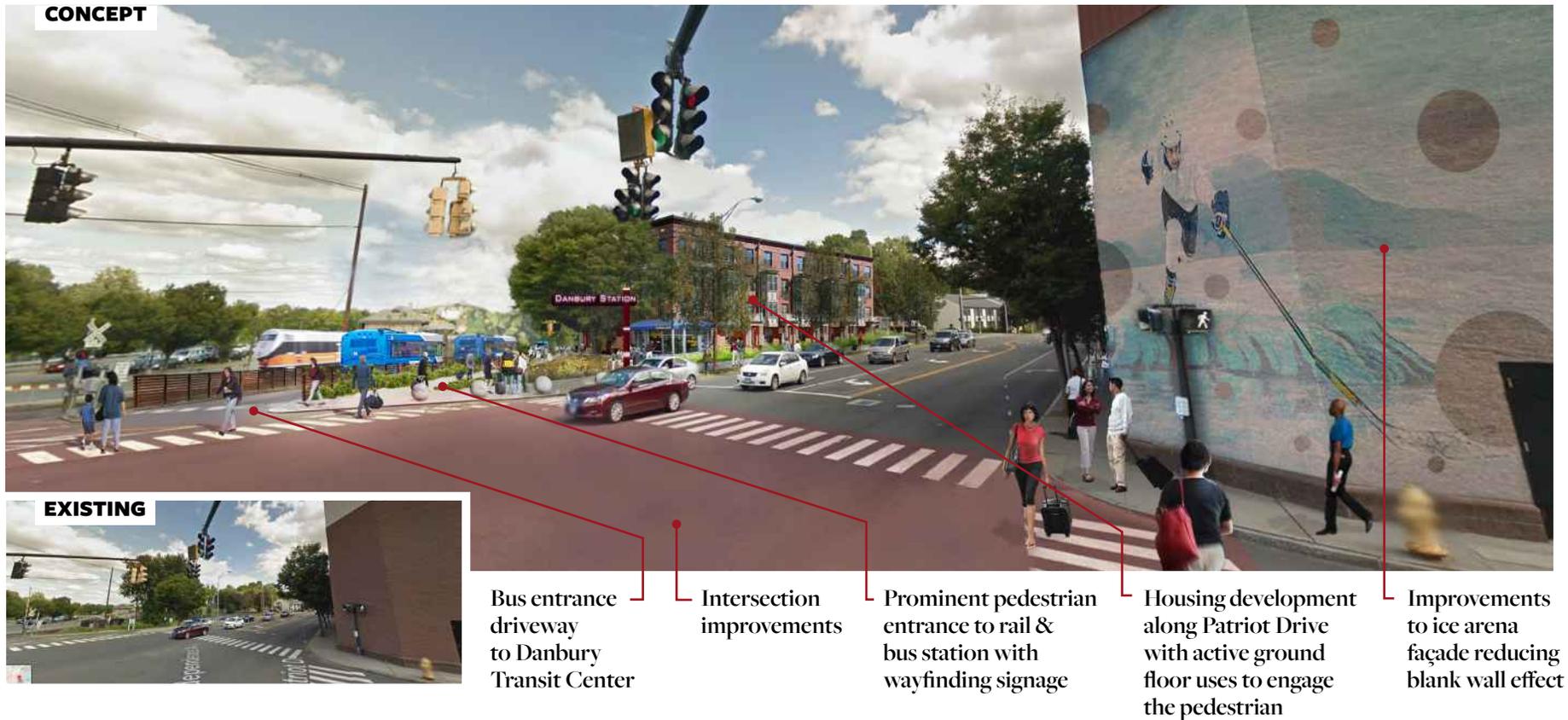
Infill development along Elm Street

4 A Safe, Easy Walk to the Danbury Transit Center

Urban design initiatives at this location, as indicated in Figure 41, will make the train station more accessible and visible with a prominent pedestrian entrance, crosswalk markings, and a more pleasant walking environment for passengers. As shown in the concept rendering below, new mixed-use development along Patriot Drive is pedestrian-oriented and could include passenger amenities such as a cafe use. In cooperation with building owners, the ice arena façade is beautified with a mural or other decorative elements to reduce the deadening effect of its blank walls.

In the short term, the City should improve the pedestrian connection between the Pulse Point and the Danbury Train Station with clear wayfinding signage, repaired sidewalks, lighting, and marked intersections.

Figure 41: Streetscape and pedestrian improvements at the Danbury Transit Center create safe walking access to transit.





The Still River and a Section of Riverwalk Trail

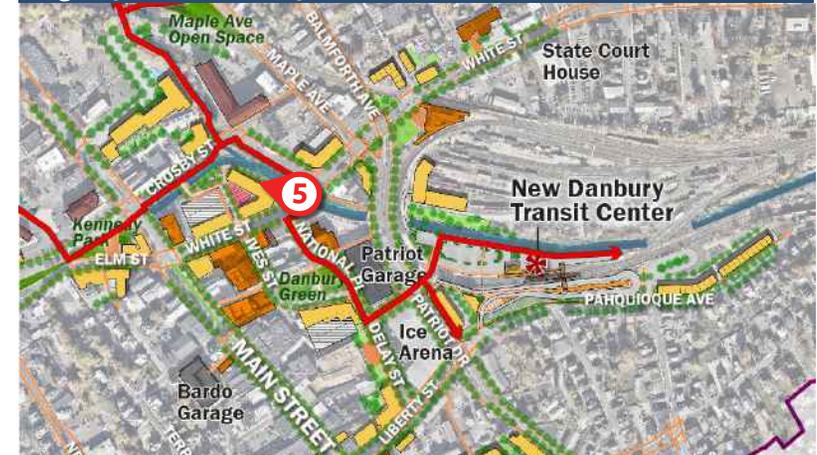
The Land Use & Development section detailed how former light industrial areas around the Still River and its tributaries have or are transitioning to other uses. These areas represent some of Downtown Danbury's best opportunities for transit-oriented development. Urban design elements within new development, improved public spaces, connections, and streetscape in this area are critical to successful TOD.

The Still River is channelized, making the area safe from floods. In some areas through Downtown, the channel is encased in concrete or under roadways. Other sections are open to the air. Decorative elements and changes to the appearance of the riverside area can turn it from a purely defensive piece of infrastructure to part of the public space network with a new public path. New openings in the concrete parapet wall can drastically improve visual connection to the water. A new Riverwalk Trail alongside the Still River can link new developments to each other and to the Danbury Transit Center. Over time, trail extensions could potentially link to other downtown neighborhoods, the Norwalk River Valley Trail,

and even neighboring Bethel and Brookfield along the Still River and its tributaries.

The concept rendering on page 111 shows the features of the Riverwalk Trail, surrounding new development, and pedestrian improvements including more prominent crosswalks, a wider sidewalk, protected bike path, and lighting. The location at White Street and Lee Hartell Drive is shown in Figure 42. The concrete parapet wall is shown as an open fence.

Figure 42: A new Riverwalk Trail could connect many of Downtown's largest potential development sites to transit.



Example image showing development in Providence, RI along a channelized waterbody with a trail amenity.



White Street at Lee Hartell Drive

301 Main Street redevelopment

12-20 Crosby redevelopment

CONCEPT



Additional and more prominent crosswalks linking to transit

New residential development with design features such as porches and decks and ground-floor retail

Recreation path for pedestrians and bicyclists with river views

New residential development with design features such as porches and decks and ground-floor retail

The Riverwalk Trail can be a center of public activity and an amenity attracting high-value TOD on adjoining parcels. New ground-floor retail would enliven the Riverwalk Trail and extend Downtown's pedestrian-oriented retail network from Main and Ives Streets to White Street and Lee Hartell Drive. Development concepts for 301 Main Street and 12-20 Crosby Street are described in detail in the Land Use & Development chapter.

6 Liberty Street: The Walking Path Connecting the Danbury Transit Center, Main Street, Visitor Destinations, and Neighborhoods

Liberty Street is a major pedestrian corridor from its intersection at Main Street to the public parking garage on Independence Way, the Danbury Ice Arena, White Street, and the Danbury Train Station. The location is shown in Figure 43. The rendering of Liberty Street on the opposite page shows how potential infill development could be oriented towards the street to ensure a pleasant walking environment and easier connections between Main Street and surrounding uses and destinations. The conceptual development is shown on parcels currently occupied by surface parking.

The City of Danbury could provide pedestrian and bicycle improvements in the public right-of-way, such as a bike lane and streetscape improvements, that help build clear connections to adjacent destinations. Streetscape improvements could include pedestrian-scaled lighting, more street trees, wider sidewalks, and wayfinding signage that directs pedestrians to the Danbury Train Station and public parking. The rendering also shows how the Danbury Ice Arena façade could be beautified with art.

Design features such as frequent pedestrian entrances, windows, and landscaping provide human scale and visual connections for pedestrians. Mixed-use development at the corner of Liberty Street and Main Street already provides active ground-floor retail uses and amenities. The presence of more people visible to each other indoors and outdoors reliably improves actual and perceived safety, further encouraging walking.

Traffic studies would need to be conducted to assess the feasibility of lane adjustments or removal as represented in the concept rendering.



Liberty Street

Figure 43: Urban design feature and streetscape improvements create a clear connection to and from the Danbury Transit Center along Liberty Street.



CONCEPT



Infill development is oriented towards Liberty Street with ground-floor retail uses and residential amenities

Public art or improvements to the ice arena façade reduce the blank wall effect

Danbury Train Station and proposed Transit Center

Painted bicycle lane

Streetscape improvements including street trees, wider sidewalks, pedestrian-scale lighting, and wayfinding to the Danbury Train Station

Infill development is oriented towards Liberty Street with ground-floor retail uses and residential amenities

7 Walkable Residential Streets Bringing Neighborhoods and Downtown Together

The rendering on the opposite page shows how infill development should be oriented towards Keeler Street to ensure a pleasant walking environment and easier connections between the Main Street corridor and surrounding neighborhoods in the TOD Study Area. The location is shown in Figure 44. Infill development on side streets should be oriented towards the street and should include ground floor uses and designs that activate the public right-of-way. Design features such as decks and pedestrian-oriented entrances help provide a connection between the sidewalk and new development. Parking in the development, whether including public parking spaces or only serving the development, should be screened on the ground floor along Keeler Street by other uses and landscaping to ensure an active, attractive walking environment. On this site there is potential to retain existing mature trees that provide shade and beauty on the site as part of redevelopment.

The City of Danbury could provide pedestrian and bicycle improvements in the public right-of-way, such as sharrow markings and street trees that help build clear connections between residential neighborhoods, Main Street, and the Danbury Transit Center.



Keeler Street



Figure 44: Pedestrian-friendly infill development and streetscape improvements make Keeler Street more walkable.

CONCEPT



Infill development oriented to the street with residential features such as porches and decks

Potential parking as part of development screened on the ground floor by other uses and landscaping, with mature trees retained on site

Shared bicycle and travel lanes with sharrows markings

Streetscape improvements including new sidewalks and new street trees

DIVERSITY & COHESION

Make Downtown Danbury a thriving cultural destination and easily accessible for all populations within the City and the region.

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Downtown Danbury: A Cultural Destination

Historically, Downtown Danbury was the center of Danbury's cultural community where a mix of culturally and ethnically diverse people resided and places, organizations, and public venues were located that supported culture and community-building. It was, as a result of industry and immigration, a cultural destination. There is no doubt that today with its culturally-diverse neighborhoods, businesses, educational institutions, and cluster of historic resources, Downtown Danbury remains a cultural destination. The 2010 Main Street Renaissance Task Force Report identified the diversity of the population, strong immigrant community groups, and cultural pride as an important strength of Downtown Danbury. To broaden and strengthen the appeal of Downtown Danbury as a cultural destination where cultural venues and programs cater to and are accessible to all populations, there must continue to be evident celebrations of Danbury's diversity and strategic initiatives to engage the community in celebration. As a vibrant cultural destination people will choose to live, work, and visit Downtown Danbury.

Downtown Danbury is home to important public spaces including Elmwood Park and the Danbury Green, institutions such as the Danbury Public Library and secondary schools, as well as countless churches, restaurants, cultural organizations, and other small businesses. There are historic venues for education such as the Danbury Museum and Historical Society site and its the Marion Anderson Studio and for entertainment such as the Palace Theatre. There are also modern venues for recreation and entertainment such as the Danbury Ice Arena. Each venue contributes to the cultural fabric of Downtown Danbury.

Also located in Downtown Danbury are many important civic and social service uses that support diversity and cohesion, including City Hall, health clinics, senior services, State employment offices, and other government offices. Continuing to have important social services and government functions in Downtown Danbury and near the hub of public transit for the region ensures that these services are accessible

to the widest array of residents, including those dependent on public transportation for access.

For TOD to be successful, Downtown Danbury must be a destination. Its cultural history and historic structures offer opportunities for the downtown to re-emerge as the primary focus of City life where activities and interactions abound and converge to create vibrancy. With an increasing and varied demographic population in residence, cultural venues present, and transit options available, Downtown Danbury is poised for this role and to accept development density. Promoting and enhancing a well-functioning built environment that incentivizes development, celebrates community diversity, capitalizes on cultural history, and caters to the needs of different groups of people to create an inclusive, interactive, and accepting environment is critical to successful TOD and to the health of the greater community. The relationship between the built form in Downtown Danbury and those who live, work, and visit is complex but provides important opportunities for synergy and growth.

To attract greater density and visitors to the TOD Study Area as a destination, the needs of various groups must be accommodated. For Danbury, this includes promoting diversity and cohesion by identifying specific initiatives or actions aimed at celebrating Danbury's cultural history and its increasingly-diverse future. Celebrations must capitalize on historic resources in Downtown Danbury as well as broader land use strategies that promote development of a variety of housing types, access to diverse jobs, a mix of land uses, physical infrastructure improvements, use of alternate modes of transit, and recreational opportunities. Making Downtown Danbury a destination can be furthered by continuing to engage stakeholders in downtown activities, promoting diversity in art, marketing Downtown Danbury's varied cultural business economy, and programming events at venues that highlight its cultural diversity. These activities will bring people Downtown and strengthen social relationships between different groups by nurturing acceptance and promoting a sense of belonging, both critical to the dense urban form and variety of land use that comprise a downtown.



Halloween on the Green is a popular cultural event in Downtown Danbury. As part of the TOD Study, community members commented that they would enjoy a Halloween event targeted towards college students and adults in addition to the family-based Halloween on the Green. Photos courtesy of CityCenter Danbury Facebook page.

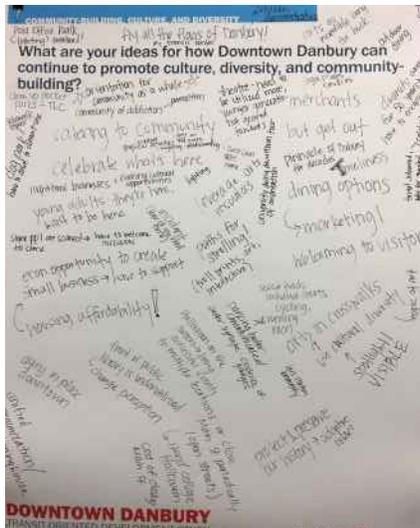


A Taste of Greater Danbury is a major two day event in Downtown Danbury with a focus on Danbury's diverse culinary options as well as live music and entertainment. Ongoing events in Downtown include the summer concert series, holiday celebrations, and parades. Photos courtesy of CityCenter Danbury Facebook page.

Making Downtown Danbury a thriving cultural destination and easily accessible for all populations in the City and within the region is the goal of the diversity and cohesion theme. All people living, working, schooling, shopping, and visiting Downtown Danbury should be comfortable and welcomed Downtown. The following initiatives, many of which reflect priorities expressed by the public during the course of preparation of this TOD Study, will help achieve this goal.

Engaging Community Stakeholders to Promote Inclusion

Many organizations exist in Downtown Danbury that promote stakeholder involvement in activities in addition to the City government, such as CityCenter Danbury, the Association of Religious Communities, the Western Connecticut Cultural Alliance, and the Multicultural Center of Danbury as well as the numerous cultural organizations who own buildings Downtown. These organizations need to continue engagement



Community members shared many ideas to promote diversity and cohesion as part of Public Meeting #2 for the Downtown Danbury TOD Study.

so that planned changes are supported and residents, businesses, and visitors' needs and concerns are heard and addressed. As the population in the Downtown Danbury community develops a shared sense of identity, others will be attracted to locate there.

This TOD Study process included several community engagement opportunities from individual interviews to public meeting forums. As previously noted, notice of public meetings

were advertised in multiple languages respecting the varied populations who many have interest in the planning process and revitalization of Downtown Danbury. These forums provided opportunities for input on the theme of diversity and cohesion and how to reestablish Downtown Danbury as a cultural destination.

To continue community engagement and stakeholder involvement in Downtown Danbury, collaborations between and among government agencies, businesses, and social organizations should be advanced so that the needs and aspirations of both older and newer communities can be heard and consensus built to achieve the long-term goal.

Art as a Conduit to Display Diversity and Cohesion

Public art and private spaces in Downtown Danbury provide a canvas to celebrate diversity and promote cohesion. Attracting people to live, work, and visit Downtown Danbury requires that the overall place exude both vitality and vibrancy. Art, as a form of creative place-making, can be this colorful conduit that celebrates and displays unity and brings people to Downtown.

A public art policy and implementation program could be a vehicle utilized to promote the use of art to celebrate diversity and promote cohesion. Such a program should be organized, thoughtful, and respectful of the collective goal of the community in terms of this element and others. As noted in the previous section, across the country, cities and towns are investing in art and locating it within the public domain as an element of urban design. Streetscape improvements and beautification projects as well as new park designs offer locational opportunities for artwork installations. In addition to signs, banners, flags, wall murals, and sculptures, artwork in many municipalities has found a home on the mundane, but necessary, traffic control boxes. The same can happen in Downtown Danbury. Creativity in crosswalk design



Local arts organization *Escape to the Arts* has a storefront at the corner of Main Street and White Street in Downtown Danbury. Photo courtesy of CityCenter Danbury Facebook page.

at specific locations in Downtown Danbury and the use of flagpoles at select locations to display flags of several nations may also present opportunities to celebrate diversity. Visible art displays celebrating cultural diversity in the public domain will make Downtown Danbury a unique and special place and will attract people to come Downtown.

Art installations in vacant storefronts in Downtown Danbury can also provide an opportunity to celebrate diversity and connect existing cultural venues in addition to engaging the community and downtown stakeholders. Themed artwork promoting diversity and cohesion and Downtown Danbury's cultural history can be installed while stores or spaces are empty. A program to establish and manage art in vacant storefront windows offers a community engagement opportunity that can extend, for example, to both primary and secondary school art programs and local cultural and arts organizations.



Decorative banners at Liberty Street and Town Hill Avenue, incorporated into a streetscape improvement project, celebrate the cultural heritage of neighborhood residents and are an example of how art can be used to display diversity and cohesion.



CityCenter Danbury hosts an annual competition for holiday decorations in storefront windows in Downtown Danbury, resulting in art such as these hand-drawn illustrations on the windows of Mothership on Main at 331 Main Street. Art could also be used to decorate and enliven vacant storefronts in the TOD Study Area. Photo courtesy of CityCenter Danbury Facebook page.

Downtown is a Place for Everyone

As a cultural destination, Downtown Danbury must remain accessible and enticing for all age groups. This has both physical and programmatic implications. Those old and young and those in between, including those with mobility impairments, must feel comfortable living, working, and visiting Downtown. Ensuring walkability and providing public spaces suitable to all are critical components to TOD. Travel routes must be safe and comfortably accessible, transit options must include services for those who are disabled, and venues must provide for needed accommodations. These physical improvements must remain a continued priority in addition to land uses policies that promote accessibility. Connecting neighborhoods to Downtown Danbury's cultural destinations with improved streetscapes that contribute to a sense of improved public space will help further its position as a cultural destination.

In addition to physical accessibility, event programming in Downtown Danbury should engage a range of ages, interest groups, and cultural backgrounds. A program aimed at introducing residents and visitors to Downtown Danbury and all it offers, similar to a college orientation tour, has been suggested as an opportunity to broaden its appeal to more people.

Encouraging Entrepreneurship

Neighborhoods in and around Downtown Danbury are home to a large population of varying cultures. As a result, many businesses have been established in the immediate area to serve and meet the needs of specific cultural groups. Entrepreneurs did not need much encouragement as a readied population was there to be served. However, as storefronts became occupied, the opportunity for broad success across various cultures remained limited due, in part, to language barriers. Advertising signs and restaurant menus for some businesses are not in English. Conversely, other businesses lack Spanish, Portuguese,

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"Mahrajan"

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GRILL (2 plates of any
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GRILL (2 plates of any
sort of food)

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sort of food)

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A diverse range of cultural programs and festivals in Downtown Danbury engage a range of ages, interests groups, and cultural backgrounds.

Reunión de empresarios Latinos de Danbury

Patrocinado por: United Way of Western CT y Ventura, Ribero & Smith

Participe de esta actividad e informese acerca de "El proyecto del vecindario de Park Avenue School". Este evento de enlace social puede ayudarle a contactar a sus clientes que viven en el distrito de Park Avenue School, proveer oportunidades para que su negocio tenga un impacto en el éxito de los niños de este vecindario.

Miércoles, 24 de junio del 2015
de 5 pm a 7 pm

En el lobby de las oficinas de los abogados Ventura, Ribero & Smith, 235 Main St., Danbury, CT.
El parqueo está localizado detrás del edificio en Oday St.

¡Todos los propietarios de negocios del centro de Danbury son bienvenidos!

¡Habrá bebidas y aperitivos complementarios!

Por favor confirmar su asistencia con Caroline LaFleur
United Way of Western CT al 203-792-5330 ext. 245.

strongstart
VENTURA, RIBERO & SMITH
danbury

Danbury Latino Merchant Mixer

Patrocinado por: United Way of Western CT y Ventura, Ribero & Smith

Join us to hear about the Park Avenue School Neighborhood project! This networking event can help you connect with customers who live in the Park Avenue School District and provide opportunities for your business to impact the success of children in this neighborhood.

Wednesday, June 24, 2015
5 pm to 7 pm

Lobby of the Ventura, Ribero & Smith Law Offices, 235 Main St., Danbury, CT.
Parking is located behind the building on Oday St.

ALL downtown business owners are welcome!

Appetizers and refreshments provided.

RSVP to Caroline LaFleur at United Way of Western CT at 203-792-5330 ext. 245.

strongstart
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danbury

Business organizations in Danbury that encourage entrepreneurship should continue multilingual outreach. Photos courtesy of CityCenter Danbury Facebook page.

and other language accommodations necessary to serve non-English speaking populations. Compounding the written language barrier, in many instances restaurant wait staff did not speak English so translation abilities were limited.

To overcome these barriers and promote Downtown Danbury as a cultural destination, where culturally-diverse businesses flourish, business organizations that aid entrepreneurs such as CityCenter Danbury and the Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce as well as the City of Danbury should encourage business practices that include multilingual components to expand appeal.

Another aspect of entrepreneurship is the attractiveness of Downtown Danbury as a place for shared-business space, second time entrepreneurs, and retail to serve existing businesses. The varied mix of land uses, cultural organizations and venues, available public parking, and a growing population provides a creative environment, a client-base, and workspace alternatives for starting a business. As business organizations work to support entrepreneurship, these organizations should ensure multilingual outreach to diverse populations of potential entrepreneurs.

Programs to introduce downtown stakeholders to restaurants to which they are unfamiliar, such as CityCenter Danbury's "Dine Around Program," should also be continued and promoted and can help make Downtown Danbury a destination for diverse cuisines.

When marketing and advertising Downtown Danbury across various mediums, these same organizations and others specific to cultural tourism should, in addition to promoting Downtown Danbury's cultural diversity, include methods of travel to Downtown Danbury by bus, rail, car, walking, and biking. By doing so, Downtown Danbury restaurants, retail uses, and businesses can become stronger attractions across a broader population, easily accessible, and remain valuable assets for the TOD Study Area.

Support an Expansion of Events and Programs

Throughout the year, specific celebrations are held on the Danbury Green sponsored by cultural organizations. There are also just as many celebrations aimed at attracting a more general audience such as the children-oriented event Halloween on the Green and summer weekend Concerts-on-the-Green series. Every September the Danbury Green, Ives Street, and Railroad Place become a cultural destination as A Taste of Greater Danbury is held drawing thousands from within Danbury and outlying areas. The Danbury Public Library, Danbury Music Center, and other public buildings are programmed with events that cross cultural interests. Kennedy Park, during the summer months, held the highly successful Chow Down Thursday food truck festival providing lunch alternatives to downtown workers and residents. The Farmer's Market that is sponsored in part by grant funding recently moved from Kennedy Park to the Danbury Green due to its overwhelming success. All of these events, as well as others sponsored by CityCenter Danbury, the Palace Theater, Western Connecticut State University, the Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut, Naugatuck Valley Community College, the Danbury Museum and Historical Society, and others bring people to Downtown as a destination. Opportunities to add more events for all people should remain a continued focus of all involved in event programming.

Event programming for venues in Downtown Danbury should continue and expand opportunities to include activities for those of various age groups and cultural interests. Both public and private venues, including outdoor spaces, provide for alternate space needs and other accommodations associated with various events. For events of any size, Downtown Danbury provides an urban setting accessible by foot and bike with ample available public parking and access by train and bus travel.

Expanding hours of operation and the use of both public and private spaces for cultural activities offer additional opportunities to solidify Downtown Danbury's location as a cultural destination.

Making Downtown Danbury a thriving cultural destination, accessible to all in the City and region requires focused strategies to leverage the success of existing community partners, events, programs and venues. Cultural destinations and programs exist and are successful in the Downtown including the Museum in the Streets project, a collaborative efforts between the City of Danbury and the Danbury Museum and Historical Society. The recent installation of the Hatter monument in front of City Hall and the Heritage Plaza concept also reinforces Danbury's commitment to celebrate its history and cultural diversity. These efforts provide a reason to visit or locate in Downtown Danbury as a cultural destination. New ideas can emerge over time for programs that link and utilize various cultural venues such as the Danbury Museum and Historic Society, Elmwood Park, the Palace Theater, the Danbury Public Library, Western Connecticut State University, Naugatuck Valley Community College, and Kennedy Park. Along the path of these venues, notable historic buildings help to further celebrate Downtown Danbury's rich diversity.

Programs should be supported that both introduce and re-introduce community residents, students, businesses and visitors to Downtown Danbury, ways to get there, and ways to get around. All efforts to entice people to live, work, and visit Downtown Danbury because of its rich diversity and the celebration thereof will add to the vibrancy and success of TOD.

TAKING ACTION

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Implementing the Downtown Danbury TOD Vision

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Taking action is the process of implementing the initiatives that will achieve the Downtown Danbury TOD Vision in each of the four strategy areas: Land Use & Development, Transportation & Infrastructure, Urban Design & Public Spaces, and Diversity & Cohesion. The initiatives emerged from findings of the TOD Study's technical analysis and community outreach as the most appropriate responses to Downtown's TOD opportunities and challenges. They provide specific direction to help downtown stakeholders make their efforts as effective as possible. Tables in this chapter organize the initiatives by strategy area, and indicate principal responsible and affected parties and funding sources for each one. Initiatives range from ones that can be implemented quickly to maintain revitalization momentum with early successes, to others that build a solid foundation for larger achievements over time. They all maintain focus on the TOD Vision.

CATEGORIES OF INITIATIVES

Within each strategy, the initiatives are categorized as one of three types: zoning regulation refinements, public improvements, or economic development. Zoning regulation refinements are initiatives that modify development regulations to fulfill the TOD Vision. Changes to the regulatory structure will incentivize development and better align regulations with physical, economic, and market realities facing development in Downtown Danbury.

Public improvement initiatives directly improve public places, transportation infrastructure, and other physical assets. Capital improvements to the infrastructure in Downtown Danbury will improve safety, pedestrian and bike access, and enhance development opportunities, all of which benefit transit users, local businesses, and the quality of life for residents.

Economic development initiatives include efforts by the City of Danbury and its partners to promote development in the TOD Study Area through strategies such as the Deferral of Assessment Increases program, business outreach, marketing, and event programming. Economic development initiatives can be targeted at a range of scales from small business to regional transportation improvements. Advancing the co-located Danbury Transit Center and developing and instituting rail service extensions offer opportunities to encourage increased transit use which will provide economic benefits to Downtown Danbury.

INITIATIVE PRIORITIES

The initiatives are categorized based on timeline for implementation into high-priority initiatives, secondary priority initiatives, and ongoing initiatives.

High-priority initiatives are policies, investments, and other actions that will have a catalytic effect on TOD in Downtown Danbury and are ready to begin implementation within the next 1-3 years. Some of the high-priority implementation initiatives, such as advancing the preferred transit co-location alternative, will require more than 1-3 years to complete due to the size and complexity of the project, whereas it may be possible to complete many high-priority initiatives for zoning ordinance refinements within 1-3 years. While the high-priority initiatives will vary in terms of the total time required to complete each one, the City of Danbury and its partners can make significant near-term progress towards TOD by their advancement.

Secondary priority initiatives include efforts important to advancing the core themes of TOD in Danbury that require more time, resources, and participation of partners to implement them. Secondary priority initiatives should be a focus for implementation within 3-5 years of completion of the Downtown Danbury TOD Study.

Ongoing initiatives are efforts currently underway in Downtown Danbury that should continue on a sustained basis to promote TOD. Some ongoing initiatives may evolve over time, but ongoing initiatives require continued commitment by the City of Danbury and its partners to ensure success.

FUNDING SOURCES FOR INITIATIVES

Zoning regulation refinements require significant effort and leadership by City of Danbury staff but have fewer ongoing costs as compared to other initiatives once implemented. Since the primary cost of these initiatives is staff time, the funding source is noted as the City of Danbury General Operations.

Funding sources for public improvements will vary with the scale and intent of the public improvement. Most public improvement initiatives require funding capital costs of construction or development.

An important source of federal money for transportation improvements is grant programs such as the TIGER Discretionary Grant program. This is a highly competitive program and projects are selected on the basis of their beneficial impacts. Additional federal grant programs include the Bus & Bus Facilities Infrastructure Investment Program, Urbanized Area Formula Grants, the Surface Transportation Block Grants Program, and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program. These grants are for large projects; therefore, rail service enhancements and co-location of bus and rail services at the Danbury Transit Center are likely the initiatives most eligible for federal funding.

The State of Connecticut has a variety of funding sources for public improvements. Connecticut's Department of Transportation (CTDOT) is charged with providing a safe and efficient intermodal transportation network that improves residents' quality of life and promotes economic viability. CTDOT funds transportation and streetscape improvements and is an important partner in pursuing and disbursing federal funding.

Regional organizations such as WestCOG may be a source of funding for planning work to advance public improvement initiatives and may also support applications for federal and State funding.

The City of Danbury Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is another potential source of funding for public improvements. The City's CIP and Capital Budget identifies and funds capital projects, programs, and studies that promote the orderly development of the City.

Smaller public improvements such as targeted streetscape or public art are often enabled or improved when private and non-profit partners such as CityCenter Danbury collaborate with the City of Danbury to help secure funding for public improvements.

Sources of funding for economic development initiatives will vary based on the scale and goal of the economic development initiatives. The State's Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) is Connecticut's lead agency responsible for strengthening Connecticut's competitive economic position. The DECD provides Connecticut communities with funding and technical support for local community and economic development projects. The DECD promotes and supports transit-oriented development. Federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), administered through the State, may also provide a source of funding to implement initiatives. In addition to State funding, sources of funding for economic development initiatives include staff time under City of Danbury General Operations, CityCenter funding, and other opportunities for grants or loans that support specific programmatic efforts.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

The City of Danbury is the primary agent of implementation for most TOD initiatives, but the active participation of partners and stakeholders will be necessary for success. The State of Connecticut, HARTransit,

Metro-North, and WestCOG are important funding and project partners on many high-priority initiatives. CityCenter Danbury, cultural institutions, educational institutions, and property and business owners play an essential supporting role in many initiatives. Some initiatives may be championed by a partner organization with the City of Danbury's support.

It should be noted that over time and based on physical, social, and economic conditions, priorities may change and new initiatives moved to the forefront. However, this planning document and the process by which it was developed will continue to provide the framework to achieve the long-term TOD Vision for Downtown Danbury. Sustained involvement of the Task Force in vetting the details of initiatives proposed in the TOD Study and championing initiatives will help actions remain focused and provide the support needed over the long-term. Success in realizing transit-oriented development in Downtown Danbury requires confidence in the TOD Vision and ongoing support for the actions necessary to achieve its intent.

Table 11: Land Use & Development

Goal

Provide opportunities and incentives for land development in the TOD Study Area that will encourage a mix of land uses at densities that promote transit use.

Responsible and Affected Parties

City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG
-----------------	------------	----------	-----------------------	--------------------------	------------	----------------------	--------------------------	---------

Funding Sources

Action Task

HIGH PRIORITY INITIATIVES

Zoning Regulation Refinements

AMENDMENTS TO PARKING REGULATIONS

Encourage the use of existing parking structures to meet residential parking requirements.	●								City of Danbury General Operations
Lower parking space requirements where possible to encourage shared use of spaces.	●								City of Danbury General Operations
Increase radius for use of off-site parking spaces to meet required parking.	●								City of Danbury General Operations

BUILDING HEIGHT AMENDMENTS

Amend building height restrictions to accommodate buildings heights that are sensitive to historic and neighborhood context while also practical for potential market-driven development.	●								City of Danbury General Operations
---	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	------------------------------------

AMENDMENTS THAT FURTHER ENCOURAGE MIXED-USE

Consider zoning amendments in zoning districts within the TOD Study Area to allow mixed-use, multi-family development where such use is not currently permitted and amend the Zoning Map, as appropriate, for industrial parcels.	●								City of Danbury General Operations
Explore creating a density bonus for mixed-use/mixed-income development.	●								City of Danbury General Operations
Clarify and strengthen zoning regulations, as appropriate, to continue to require uses on the first floor that activate and provide direct access to bordering sidewalks and public spaces within the TOD Study Area.	●								City of Danbury General Operations

Table 11: Land Use & Development

Goal

Provide opportunities and incentives for land development in the TOD Study Area that will encourage a mix of land uses at densities that promote transit use.

Action Task	Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources
	City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG	
HIGH PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
Economic Development										
Update the Deferral of Assessment Increases program application submission requirements in the Code of Ordinances to require applicants to provide more detailed project financial information for consideration by City Council.	●									City of Danbury General Operations
SECONDARY PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
Economic Development										
Support reuse of the former Tuxedo Junction site for public events.	●	●		●	●					City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; CityCenter; Grants for the Arts as appropriate
Public Improvements										
Undertake a long-range parking study to include consideration of relocation of public surface parking into structured parking to provide additional infill sites for mixed-use development.	●									City of Danbury Capital Projects; City of Danbury General Operations
ONGOING INITIATIVES										
Zoning Regulation Refinements										
Review regulations to ensure zoning requirements to address locational and design needs of an aging population including siting housing near social services, activities, and public transportation; pedestrian accessibility; and the provision of housing options.	●	●				●			●	City of Danbury General Operations
Economic Development										
Continue marketing efforts to attract businesses and development to the TOD Study Area.	●	●							●	City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter
Continue to support the Deferral of Assessment Increases program for projects within the TOD Study Area that meet TOD objectives.	●	●							●	City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter

Table 11: Land Use & Development

Goal

Provide opportunities and incentives for land development in the TOD Study Area that will encourage a mix of land uses at densities that promote transit use.

Responsible and Affected Parties

City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG
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Funding Sources

Action Task

ONGOING INITIATIVES

In partnership with organizations and private entities, encourage a concentration of destination dining and entertainment options in the Ives Street area.	●	●					●		<i>City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; Private Funding</i>
Coordinate tracking of development in the TOD Study Area including new businesses, residences, and other uses.	●	●			●		●	●	<i>City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter</i>
Continue outreach to encourage infill redevelopment.	●	●					●		<i>City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter</i>

Public Improvements

Provide infrastructure to ensure walkability for all community residents and downtown visitors.	●								<i>City of Danbury General Operations; Private Funding</i>
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Table 12: Transportation & Infrastructure

Goal

Expand access to convenient transportation choices and enhance walkability and biking within the TOD Study Area and surrounding neighborhoods.

Action Task	Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources
	City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG	
HIGH PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
Public Improvements										
Advance the preferred transit co-location option for the Danbury Transit Center.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; HARTransit; ConnDOT; Federal Grant Programs; Flexible Federal Funding Programs; Joint Development; Revenue Bonds.
Initiate streetscape renovation projects on high priority corridors including survey, planning, design, and phased construction as funding is available.	●		●						●	City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; Competitive Grants
Reinstall benches at existing HARTransit Pulse Point to improve accessibility and passenger comfort.	●					●				City of Danbury General Operations
Participate in, expand, and support opportunities for rail connections to the Metro-North Railroad Harlem Line.	●		●			●	●		●	City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; HARTransit; ConnDOT/State Programs; Federal Grants; Federal Funding Programs
Review crosswalk locations, markings, and lighting within the TOD Study Area to promote walkability and safety.	●	●	●		●	●				City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects
Evaluate multi-modal travel paths to key destinations in Downtown Danbury to improve accessibility and connections between uses.	●									City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects
SECONDARY PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
Public Improvements										
Seek funding for the preparation of a City-wide pedestrian and bicycle corridor master plan.	●		●						●	City of Danbury Capital Projects; WestCOG; Competitive Grants

Table 12: Transportation & Infrastructure

Goal

Expand access to convenient transportation choices and enhance walkability and biking within the TOD Study Area and surrounding neighborhoods.

Action Task	Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources	
	City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG		
ONGOING INITIATIVES											
Zoning Regulation Refinements											
Review regulations to encourage car-share opportunities in Downtown Danbury.	●	●								City of Danbury General Operations	
Amend the regulations to require bicycle parking as appropriate.	●									City of Danbury General Operations	
Economic Development											
Continue to promote improvements to the Danbury Branch line to increase train ridership.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; HARTransit; ConnDOT	
Support continued operations of public bus services within the City and region.	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; HARTransit; ConnDOT	
Public Improvements											
As necessitated by demand, consider constructing structured public or promote public/private parking in the southern portion of the TOD Study Area.	●	●	●						●	●	City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; Competitive Grants
Ensure accessibility for all user groups when approving designs for streetscape and property improvements or transit connections in Downtown Danbury.	●										City of Danbury General Operations; Private Funding
Continue the capital program funding for streetscape improvements.	●	●	●		●						City of Danbury Capital Projects
Seek opportunities for other funding sources for streetscape improvements.	●	●	●		●	●	●		●		City of Danbury General Operations, Competitive Grants, State Funding

Table 13: Urban Design & Public Spaces

Goal

Add and enhance great public places in Downtown Danbury through thoughtful design and wayfinding, including clear walking connections to transit.

Action Task	Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources
	City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG	
HIGH PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
Zoning Regulation Refinements										
Review regulations and amend as necessary to encourage development to capitalize on adjacent public space through active ground-floor uses, fenestration, and other design features that engage the street. Where allowed, new ground-floor residential development should include porches, stoops, or other design features that help place “eyes on the street” while maintaining residential privacy.	●	●						●		City of Danbury General Operations
Economic Development										
Implement a public art program and coordinate art installations in the public right-of-way and, as appropriate, on private property.	●	●		●	●			●	●	City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; CityCenter; Private Funding; Competitive Grants
Public Improvements										
Coordinate streetscape and other public improvements in the TOD Study Area with input from various stakeholders as appropriate.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; CityCenter; Private Funding; Competitive Grants
Explore opportunities to replace the concrete parapet wall along the Still River with fencing to create a visual connection to the water. Incorporate visual access with public amenity and active public space.	●								●	City of Danbury General Operations; Competitive Grants
Improve the pedestrian connection between the existing HARTransit Pulse Point and the Metro-North Railroad Station.	●	●								City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; CityCenter; Private Funding
Prune trees as appropriate where obstructing storefront visibility or decorative lighting.	●									City of Danbury General Operations

Table 13: Urban Design & Public Spaces

Goal

Add and enhance great public places in Downtown Danbury through thoughtful design and wayfinding, including clear walking connections to transit.

Action Task	Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources
	City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG	
HIGH PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
Replace streetscape improvements on Ives Street and Post Office Walk to encourage public use and improve pedestrian safety and accessibility. Consider decorative overhead lighting on Post Office Walk.	●	●							●	City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; CityCenter; Competitive Grants
Establish a wayfinding or signage plan to direct people to downtown destinations including public parking and modes of transit.	●	●	●			●	●			City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; HARTransit; ConnDOT
SECONDARY PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
Zoning Regulation Refinements										
Review regulations and land use approval review processes to ensure support of improvements to buildings that are sensitive to the historic ambiance of the downtown and the Main Street Historic District while balancing private objectives.	●	●							●	City of Danbury General Operations
Review regulations to ensure support of historic preservation principles and encouragement of adaptive re-use of historic buildings.	●	●							●	City of Danbury General Operations
Economic Development										
Promote construction and marketing of a multi-purpose riverwalk adjacent to the Still River.	●	●						●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; Private Funding

Table 13: Urban Design & Public Spaces

Goal

Add and enhance great public places in Downtown Danbury through thoughtful design and wayfinding, including clear walking connections to transit.

Action Task	Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources
	City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG	
ONGOING INITIATIVES										
Economic Development										
Support redevelopment of buildings in the TOD Study Area that meet TOD objectives to achieve the Downtown Danbury TOD Study Vision.	●	●						●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter
Public Improvements										
Continue to seek opportunities to create pocket parks and increase recreational space in the TOD Study Area.	●								●	City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; Competitive Grants
Consider developing an urban dog park in a downtown location.	●	●								City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects
Continue use of public spaces for community activities, particularly at Kennedy Park and on the Danbury Green.	●	●		●	●					City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; Cultural Organizations; Competitive Grants
Explore opportunities to increase utilization of Library Plaza in coordination with Library staff and downtown organizations.	●	●								City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; Cultural Organizations; Competitive Grants
Explore opportunities to link Downtown Danbury to pedestrian or bicycle paths in other areas such as Brookfield, Brewster, and the Norwalk Valley Regional Trail.	●		●					●	●	City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects; WestCOG; ConnDOT; Competitive Grants

Table 14: Diversity & Cohesion

Goal
 Make Downtown Danbury a thriving cultural destination and easily accessible for all populations within the City and the region.

Action Task	Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources
	City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG	
HIGH PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
Economic Development										
Ensure that public art displays consider diversity themes in design as appropriate.	●	●		●	●			●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; Private Funding; Competitive Grants
Ensure walkability and accessibility in streetscape improvement design.	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Program; CityCenter; Competitive Grants
Promote and/or expand media opportunities to re-introduce residents, students, businesses and others to Downtown Danbury.	●	●		●	●	●		●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; Competitive Grants
Extend evening and weekend hours for cultural venues and businesses to attract people to Downtown Danbury.	●	●		●				●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; Competitive Grants
Public Improvements										
Incorporate design elements celebrating cultural diversity in streetscape improvement projects.	●	●								City of Danbury General Operations; City of Danbury Capital Projects
SECONDARY PRIORITY INITIATIVES										
Economic Development										
Encourage programs, events, and festivals in the TOD Study Area that engage a wide variety of ages and cultural interests.	●	●		●	●			●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter
Establish programs to celebrate cultural diversity by linking access and use between various cultural and public venues and businesses.	●	●		●	●	●		●		City of Danbury General Operations; Competitive Grants

Table 14: Diversity & Cohesion

Goal

Make Downtown Danbury a thriving cultural destination and easily accessible for all populations within the City and the region.

Action Task	Responsible and Affected Parties									Funding Sources
	City of Danbury	CityCenter	Conn DOT	Cultural Institutions	Educational Institutions	HARTransit	Metro-North Railroad	Property Business Owners	WestCOG	
ONGOING INITIATIVES										
Economic Development										
Continue to assist small businesses with locating in Downtown Danbury and encourage business practices that promote cultural diversity.	●	●		●				●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; Private Funding; Grants/Loans
Continue stakeholder involvement and expand engagement to additional Downtown Danbury constituencies and partners.	●	●		●	●			●		CityCenter
Encourage destination restaurants and retail uses that reflect Danbury’s cultural diversity.	●	●		●				●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter
Develop a program to encourage arts displays in vacant storefront windows as permitted by zoning regulations.	●	●		●	●			●		City of Danbury General Operations; CityCenter; Grants

DATA SOURCES

The Downtown Danbury TOD Study utilized a number of U.S. Census Bureau data sets in order to analyze population, demographics, and characteristics of housing in Danbury and the TOD Study Area.

2000 Census, 2010 Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey, 2011-2015 American Community Survey, and 2012-2016 American Community Survey data utilized in the TOD Study can be accessed utilizing the U.S. Census Bureau's American Factfinder tool:

<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

From this index, it is possible to search multiple ways. City-wide numbers can be accessed through the Community Facts search bar by searching for "Danbury city, Connecticut". The Guided Search tool allows for searches for specific data sets, such as the 2011-2015 American Community Survey, at more detailed geographies, such as the Block Groups that make up the TOD Study Area.

The TOD Study Area Block Groups include 2101-01, 2101-02, 2101-3, and 2102-2 within Fairfield County, Connecticut.

Data for the Downtown Revitalization Zone analyzed as part of the Housing Market Assessment utilizes data from the U.S. Census, Department of Labor, and Department of Commerce as interpreted by ESRI, a proprietary spatial data analysis software. This data was provided by W-ZHA, the market analysis sub-consultant on the TOD Study. Additional regional economic information utilizing the 2010-2014 American Community Survey as well as regional economic development priorities were drawn from the Western Connecticut Economic Development Plan 2017 Comprehensive Economic Development Plan. This WestCOG document was adopted by the State in 2017 and is available as of March 28, 2017 through WestCOG here: https://westcog.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/CEDS2017_Adopted.pdf.

Census Annual Population estimates for the City of Danbury can be accessed through the U.S. Census Bureau's QuickFacts tool:

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045217>

This link will land on the main homepage for QuickFacts. Enter in "Danbury city, CT" in the search field to find results for the City of Danbury. A more specific link can be found here:

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/danburycityconnecticut/PST045217>

The above U.S. Census web links were current as of March 27, 2018 and have been provided at the index landing page for future access. Continued future access to these tools is managed by the U.S. Census Bureau.

