

TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD

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**STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND
LAND USE PLAN UPDATE RECOMMENDATIONS**

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CLOUGH, HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES LLP

TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD

STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN & LAND USE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

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I. Introduction

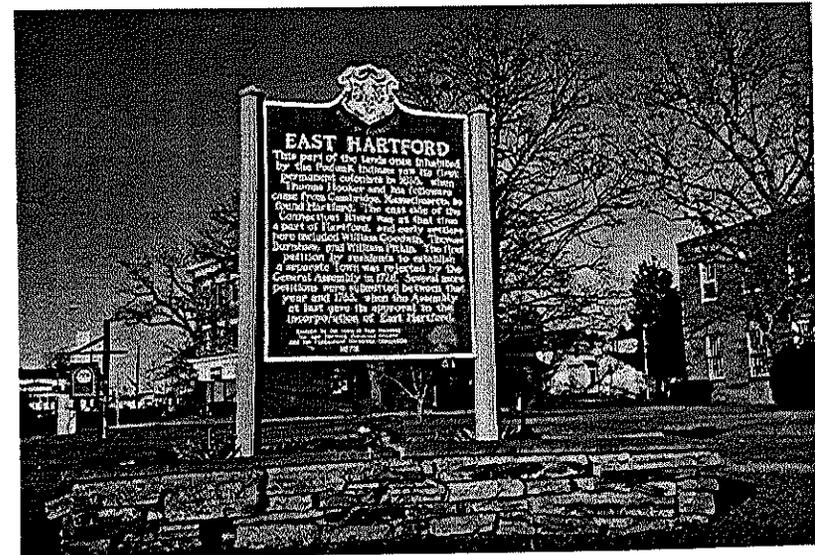
I.1 PROJECT GOALS

The Town of East Hartford has over the past several years undertaken several economic initiatives to improve its economic environment. Some of the initiatives are the development and redevelopment of the waterfront, the Burnside Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan, the Main Street Business District Redevelopment Plan, and more recently, the proposed stadium for the University of Connecticut. These and other initiatives are being carried out by the public and private sector and sometimes as a partnership.

While these initiatives are moving forward, there is no major coordinating mechanism to optimize community resources and to achieve a common, community vision. In short, there is no Economic Development Strategy to efficiently and effectively mobilize and optimize community resources.

The goal of this study is to provide for an East Hartford Strategic Economic Development Plan. In order for the Plan to succeed, it has been determined that the Plan shall:

- Provide for an opportunity for all residents and businesses to participate in the process to develop the Plan
- Provide a process for consensus building to develop and support the Plan
- Build on linkage between projects, activities and plan elements for coordination and optimization
- Build on current initiatives
- Provide for an implementation structure



I.2 PLANNING FRAMEWORK

In order to produce a successful Strategic Economic Development Plan, an organizational structure and planning process had to be developed and established. The Town of East Hartford's Economic Development Commission and the Planning and Zoning Commission have oversight responsibility for the development of the organizational structure, planning process and the work program to develop a Strategic Plan.

The East Hartford Economic Development Commission met on November 18, 1999 to review some models of successful organization structures and planning process. The structure they adopted called for a Strategic Economic Plan Steering Committee. (*See Figure No 1.1*) The Committee is made up of twenty-three members representing the many economic initiatives underway, various community organizations, industry and business firms, education leaders and developers.

The Committee has oversight responsibility of the planning process and work products. It also reviews and comments on the draft plan and resolves conflicts. Under the Steering Committee, eleven Action Teams or Sub-Committees were created to represent the elements of activities that together comprise the economic universe of the Town of East Hartford. Membership, which was open to any resident in the community, on the Action Teams represented a cross-section of the community.

The Action Team's responsibilities were to appoint a Chairman, Presenter and Recorder for each Team for each workshop and to present their results at the General Assembly of each workshop.

The planning process consisted of five community workshops in which the general public was encouraged to participate along with the Steering Committee and the Action Teams. The workshops provided a forum for the planning process and were facilitated by the Consultant. The four workshops and their subject matter were as follows:

1. Orientation for the Action Teams and the general public. An Inventory and Analysis was presented for each Action Team's review after which the Teams identified Issues and Opportunities.
2. Development of Vision Statements, as well as Goals and Objectives, to achieve their vision for their particular subject matter.
3. Development "Big Ideas" that grew out of potential activities and projects from past workshops. "Big Ideas" closed the gap from the current state (issues and opportunities) to the future state (vision, directions.) The "Big Ideas" were ranked in accordance by ease to implementation and support from various components of the community. This ranking lead to a strategies for implementation.

4. Identification, and means to measure, the linkage between the “Big Ideas” of all Action Teams. This linkage of “Big ideas” was a necessary step in the development of a strategic plan. In effect it was a way determine the community’s ability to turn “Big Ideas” into reality.

5. Review of the draft Strategic Economic Development Plan

Several workshops had over one hundred attendees, and many positive comments were received complimenting the process and participation. This Plan is the product of the efforts of the participants of these community workshops.



General Assembly at Planning Meeting

Strategic Economic Development Plan Town of East Hartford

Strategic Economic Development Plan Organizational Structure for Community Participation

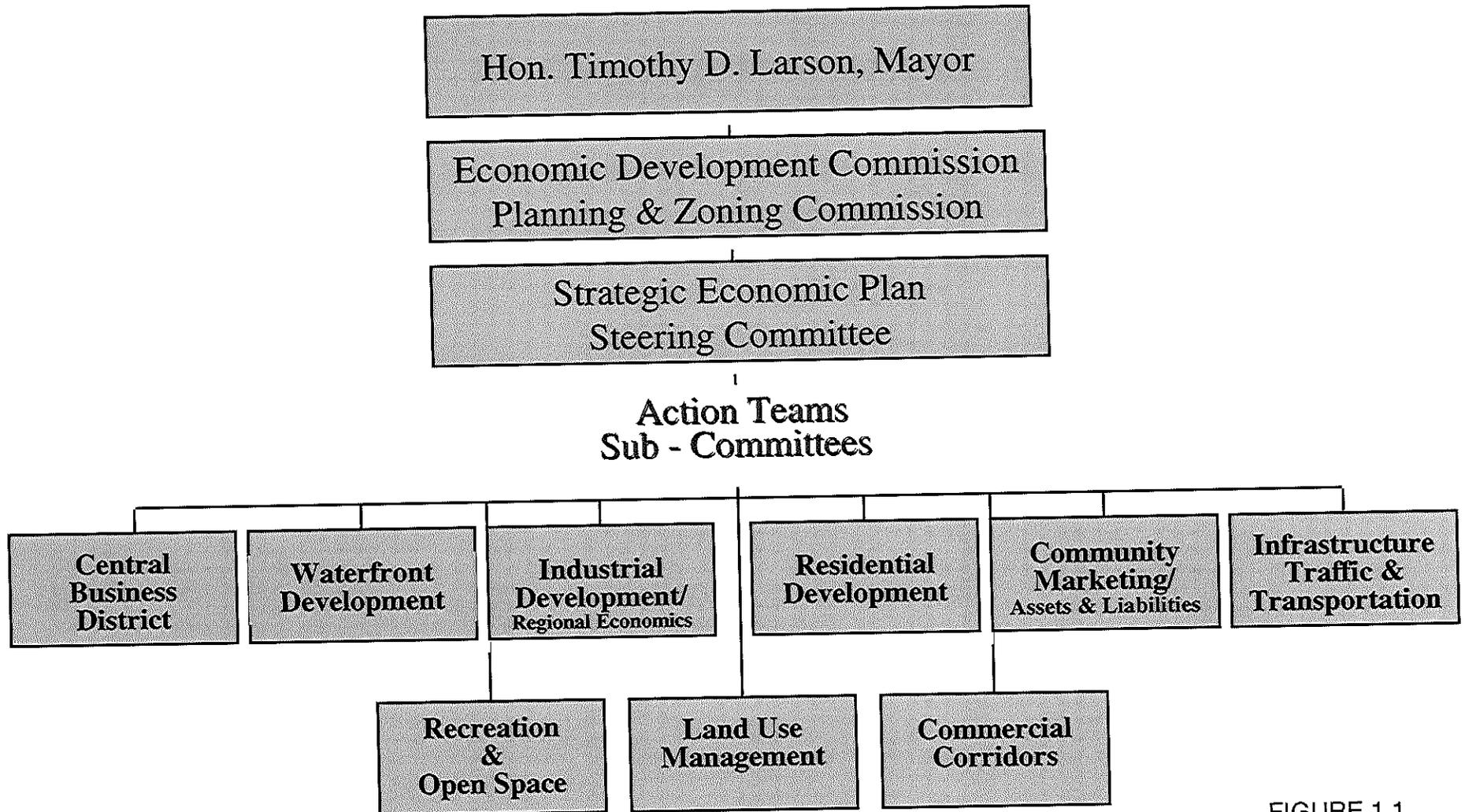


FIGURE 1.1

I.3 REGIONAL ECONOMIC CONTEXT

I.3.1 REGIONAL AND LOCAL ECONOMICS

East Hartford, a town of just over 47,000 people, is strategically located at the crossroads of Interstates 91 and 84 just east of the City of Hartford, the state capital. Because of its location and proximity to the capital, East Hartford must be viewed from a larger perspective in relation to economic development. It would be unrealistic, therefore, to consider economic potential of East Hartford without first considering strengths and weaknesses of the state and the region

1. Connecticut State:

The state with nearly 3.3 Million residents is the 29th most populous in the US. Insurance, aerospace, shipbuilding, biomedical, and business services drive the economy. However, the high cost of doing business in the state has also led to a major exodus of manufacturing over the past decade. From 1984 to 1996 the state lost over one-third of manufacturing jobs, the steepest decline in the nation.¹ Overall, the State and the region's economy continued to improve during the late 1990's. By late 1999² the unemployment rate at

¹ DRI McGraw Hill Standard and Poors, State Economies, 4Q 1999

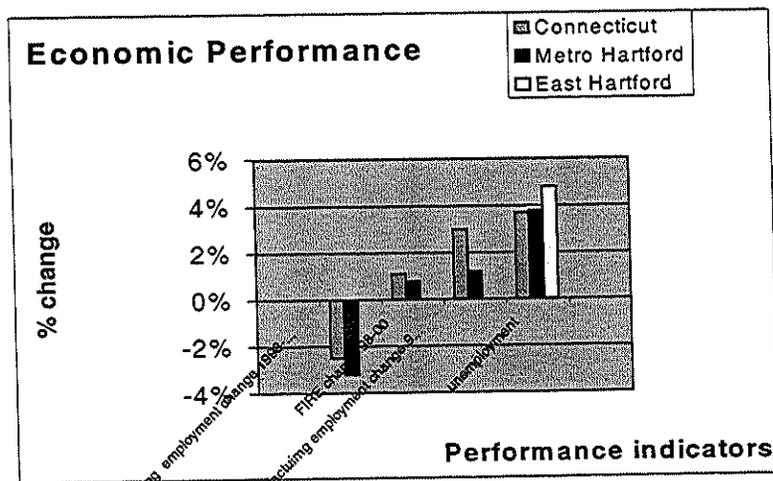
² DRI McGraw Hill Standard and Poors, State Economies, 4Q 1999

3% created a very tight labor market. In addition, the Gross State Product (GSP) grew at 2.4% indicating a continuance of a growing economy.

However, the state was still feeling the effects of the earlier Asian crisis as aircraft orders from Asia continued to be deferred. The cyclical nature of the aerospace industry, which is a large component of the GSP, has United Technologies (UTC) undergoing a major restructuring effort at Pratt & Whitney, Sikorsky and Hamilton Standard. However UTC has also announced a major acquisition. This combined effect of these two actions will affect East Hartford directly but it is not clear to what extent.

Every corporate layoff is difficult in the short term but in the longer term the skilled labor force that is available can be turned into an asset in terms of attracting new business to the Town

Some key economic facts about the state that have an influence on East Hartford include:



- The high Tech quotient (per DRI McGraw Hill Standard & Poors, State Economies) was considered top rated for Connecticut — which makes the State an important player in this field and suggests opportunities for the Town
- Financial Services are moving, to some extent, out of New York City and into Connecticut--- gains were made in Stamford, and Hartford, after years of decline, showed growth in 1998. Aetna, American Life, and Executive Risk all added workers last year, although Aetna’s immediate future is ambiguous. However, Federal Government cuts in Medicare and higher costs have put the squeeze on the HMOs based in Hartford. East Hartford may be able to offer less expensive back office space to support these trends.

- Both Fleet and Citibank are opening service centers in Hartford for a total of 1000 new area employees
- Over 27% of the State GSP, is derived from financial services and another 21% other services—making these extremely important sectors of economic growth and issues that should be considered in economic planning by the Town
- Overall wage rates are the highest in the nation, 25% above the US average, and cost of living is high—to some extent reducing the attractiveness for employers especially in the manufacturing sectors where East Hartford has a concentration
- Connecticut ranks 4th in educational attainment in the USA giving the state an advantage for financial service oriented work.
- FIRE (financial, insurance, real estate and services) are expected to continue to grow in Hartford metro. Clearly, opportunities lie in the services, financial services and related sectors where the Hartford area has rebounded (see chart below) while manufacturing is declining

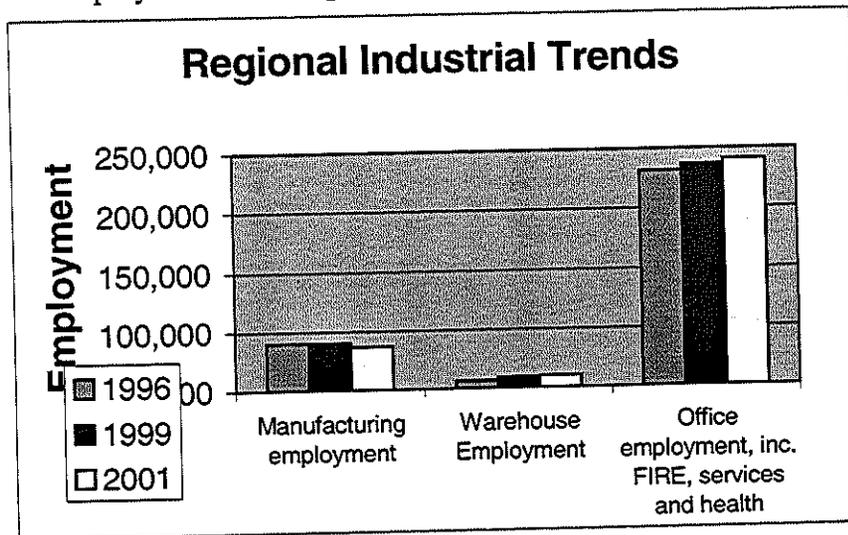
GROWTH IN FIRE SERVICES
(Historical & Projected)

Year	1996	97	98	99	2000	2001	2002	2003
	-5.5	-2.4	0.4	2.1	1.6	1.8	1.2	0.8

STATE NON-MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT
(Historical & Projected)

Year	1996	97	98	99	2000	2001	2002	2003
No of Employees	509k	516k	520k	530k	536k	542k	546k	550k

Over the last decade, Connecticut has lost over one third of its manufacturing jobs, the highest decline in the USA. Overall, manufacturing is expected to continue to decline in the state and the Hartford area for the next 17 years (to 2016) at rates between -1% and -2.5% per year. The future lies in the services and financial and related sectors where Connecticut has rebounded especially in the Hartford and Stamford areas. The chart below reflects the decline in manufacturing employment and the growth in service employment



2. Hartford Metro Area:

Hartford and East Hartford as part the Metro area contribute greatly to the regional economy. The Area's economy improved significantly in the late 1990's as total employment increased and new business starts in 1997 increased over the prior year by over 19%.³ Plans for widespread development in Hartford indicate an influx of capital from investors and developers. This influx will result in changes to the Hartford skyline for the first time in decades. The Adriaen's Landing project, proposed at \$1.3 billion, consists of retail, entertainment, hotel and residential and will boost the regional economy. East Hartford, located on the opposite bank of the river from this project, will share in the economic boost that this project will give to the area. Pedestrian access from Hartford, via the Founders Bridge walkway, provides a link to East Hartford. This access, for residents and visitors that are expected to visit Adriaen's Landing will promote the economies on both sides of the river.

The following Metro industrial indicators are important: in establishing a picture of opportunity for East Hartford; declining unemployment, declining manufacturing, and increasing warehouse employment

³ ULI Market Profiles 1999 Hartford Metro

HARTFORD METRO ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Year	1996	1999	2001 forecast	US rank of top 114 metro areas in 2000
Unemployment rates	6.1%	4.3%	4.5%	US average in 1999 4.8%
Manufacturing employment	90,400	90,400	86,900	42
% change	10.1	-3.5	-1.8	95
Warehouse Employment	56,400	59,200	60,000	56
% Change	4.6	1.3	0.6	104
Real Estate Industrial Vacancy Rate	6.7%	10.7%		

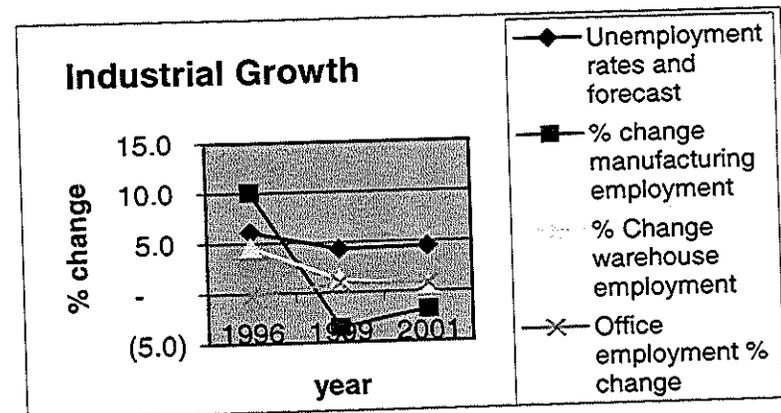
Source: DRI Mc Graw Hill, 1Q 99 Hartford Metros Focus

TOP 10 FASTEST GROWING INDUSTRIES

DESCRIPTION	% growth 97 to 2001	Share of US industry % of total
COMPUTER PROCESSING AND SOFTWARE	6.8	1.6
Personnel Supply Services	4.8	1.6
Security and commodity brokers	3.9	0.5
Other medical services	3.4	1.9
Research and consulting services	2.6	0.8
Accounting and misc. prof.	2.2	0.5
Air Carriers and related services	2.1	0.3
Amusement and recreational services	2.1	0.8
Construction	2.1	3.4
Real Estate	2.1	0.8

3. Hartford Metro Manufacturing Economy:

Economic indicators continue to show manufacturing sectors in the region are declining. As such, East Hartford needs to target the growing industries such as high tech. To market the area community assets such as quality of life, cost of doing business, taxes and most importantly availability of a skilled workforce must be emphasized.



Standard & Poors DRI “ indicate that “Hartford’s industrial sector has run out of gas, preventing the metro area from entering the fast lane of economic growth in the foreseeable future.” Factors negatively impacting industrial production are:

- Rising labor costs
- Price competition

These factors resulted in area manufacturers shedding jobs at a rate 3.5% per year. Pratt and Whitney have cut 5% of its workforce, including local jobs. Their overall restructuring

This P&W restructuring (announced 8/12/99) will move a military jet engine business to East Hartford from Florida, but a repair operation will move from East Hartford to Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. In addition, manufacturing operations will move from North Haven to East Hartford.

Additionally, Coca-Cola is planning a major East Hartford expansion for several hundred new jobs.

Major Local Employers (Manufacturing highlighted)

Employers (1997)	Employees (1997)
Pratt & Whitney Division, of UT	6600
FDIC	530
United Technologies	770
Fleet Bank Services	600
CSC Financial	400
Riverside Health Services	320
Addressing Services	335
Output technologies	250
Coca Cola Bottling	210
ACCENT Color Sciences	135
Air Touch paging	134
Cellu-Tissue Corp	125

4. Greater Hartford Real Estate Economy

Some regional real estate factors for East Hartford to consider are: major development projects, services concentration, and favorable rental rates for office. These all point to opportunities for the Town in terms of capturing business. In more detail they are:

- The Metro area is home to over 1.1 million residents or 34% of the State population
- Hartford’s ambitious new master plan and waterfront renewal has over \$300 million dedicated to rebuilding the city. The waterfront, anchored by Adriaen’s Landing, a new retail, entertainment, hospitality conference center, is just minutes from East Hartford
- Metro area low cost office and retail rents are attracting some new users
- According to Standard and Poors DRI, Hartford metro’s strengths are: a large pool of skilled workers with advanced degrees and a good transportation system
- The area’s weaknesses are the high cost of labor and energy and high tax and regulatory burdens
- The area has a higher than US average concentration in financial services and durable manufacturing. Financial services and related business is expected to grow while manufacturing is expected to shrink
- Average annual wage in 1998 was \$38,700, ranking it 13th of the top 114 metro regions in the country.

TOP EMPLOYERS IN METRO HARTFORD

UNITED TECHNOLOGIES

- Aetna
- Travelers Group
- Fleet Financial
- Cigna
- Hartford Hospital
- ITT
- UConn Heath Center
- Northeast Utilities
- St. Francis Hospital

5. East Hartford Industrial Opportunities

As noted earlier, over the last decade Connecticut has lost over one third of its manufacturing jobs, the highest decline in the USA. Manufacturing is expected to continue to decline in the state and the Hartford area for the next 17 years (to 2016) at rates between -1% to -2.5% per year. Opportunities for future development lie in the services and financial and related sectors where the Hartford area has rebounded...⁴

MANUFACTURER SURVEY:

The Town of East Hartford preformed a survey of 18 Manufacturers and industrial space users who employed from 1 to 564 workers. The survey asked several questions related to:

⁴ DRI Mc Graw Hill Metro Economies 1Q 2000

anticipated spending on equipment, business changes, public programs, workshops of interest and town services towards industry; a summary of several keys points are as follows:

Issues

- Pros: Good location for access to transportation
- Cons: High Mill rate; tightening labor market

Needs

- More tax incentives especially for equipment purchase, property taxes, for example
- Improvements of the Connecticut Blvd, Park Avenue areas and downtown were mentioned as being needed

The Future

- Businesses that catered primarily to residents were the least positive with being in East Hartford; Those businesses that utilized the labor force and attractive rents were more positive in their responses
- Most businesses projected slow growth

Problem:

- The businesses that are more community oriented, such as printers, or include direct retail sales as part of their business, appeared to lack sufficient affluent or business type customers to support their services

6. Industrial Real Estate in East Hartford:

Manufacturing is a shrinking sector in the US economy. Labor costs and business costs are not conducive to attracting manufacturing to Connecticut or the Northeast. However, East Hartford is strategically located with excellent highway access, rail and international air access which could result in increases in industries that benefit from these factors.

The East Hartford industrial real estate market will probably remain fairly constant in the future as the loss of manufacturing jobs will be balanced by increases in industries that are attracted by the reasonable rents and good access.

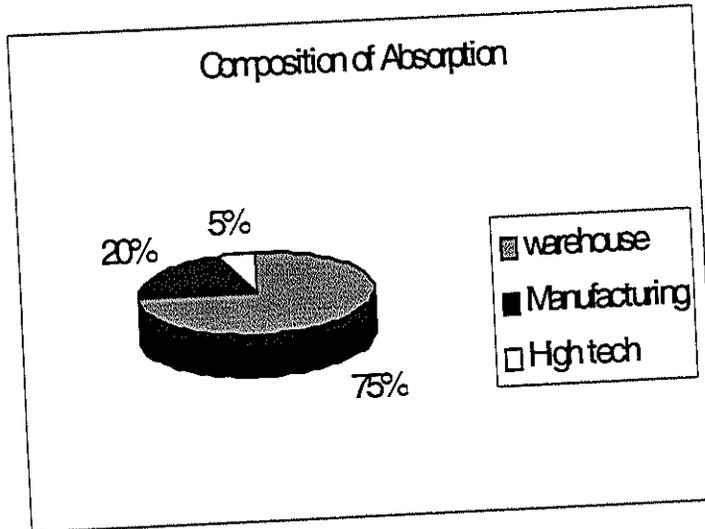
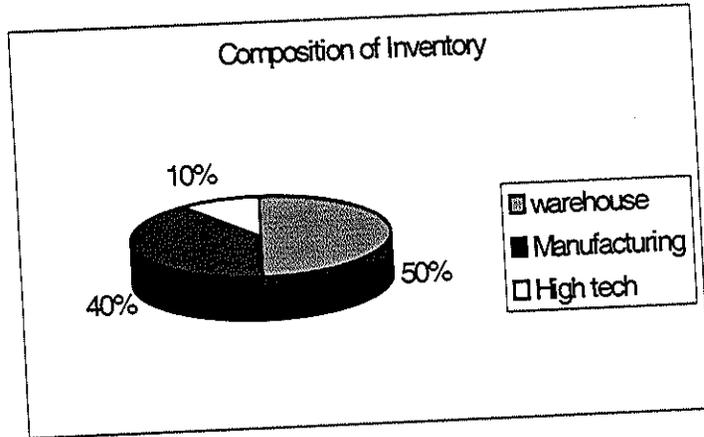
The skilled labor force available due to cuts at Pratt and Whitney is good for employers. However, new employers in certain industries will find it difficult to compete for these workers with wages and benefits. They will also be in danger of losing these employees if economic conditions change for the aerospace and other large high tech industrials.

Incentives from government may help to keep the market attractive over other local markets. However, demand does not seem to the need for additional space at this time.

In summary, a substantial amount of industrial real estate is older, and may not be suitable for many new users. Small and medium sized users may find East Hartford a good location due to its reasonable rents, even with less than perfect space, but with great highway access and a Town that is friendly to industrial users.

Rental Price and Description of Industrial Space

Rental Rates	\$2.5 to \$5.5/SF, mostly around \$3/SF, low rates compared to most markets
Sales Asking Rates	\$20/SF to \$32/SF
Size Ranges	26,000 to 150,000 SF
Ceiling Heights	14 to 15 ft, with one at 24'
General Notes	Most building built in 1950s or 60's and may be out of date—highest rent is for new buildings, (1990 vintage) on Prestige Park Rd



As seen from the previous two pie charts, warehouse demand is far greater than warehouse supply. This indicates a future demand for warehouse and distribution space—an opportunity for East Hartford.

7. *Summary of Areas Economic Assets and Liabilities*

▪ Local and Regional Economic Assets

- Strong local industrial economic base
- Waterfront amenities
- A large educated and skilled workforce
- Universities and cultural centers
- Area Financial services
- Area Biotech and high tech
- Good transportation access
- Local government friendly to new business
- Economic development incentives available
- State is ranked high for High Tech quotient
- Pharmaceutical and Biotech making strong gains in area
- Financial services and related banking support services are moving into the Hartford area
- Rentschler Field is large contiguous parcel that could be attractive to business or as catalyst to growth in local economy through expanded housing, new business, etc.

▪ **Local and Regional Economic Liabilities**

- E. Hartford lags area in wealth, education and housing values
- High and rising labor costs
- Concentration of employment in the currently volatile aerospace business.

Some of the potential areas of opportunity are high tech, distribution, and services. However, many issues must be considered in the effort to capitalize on these opportunities, such as: supporting the existing industrial base; encouraging industrial and service oriented development; lessening dependence on manufacturing as a whole; focusing on specific areas such as e-commerce, high tech and distribution; creating conditions that support services, back office, high tech and related research and development.

Development focus areas may include:

- Burnside Ave. for small services
- Connecticut Blvd. for distribution and retail
- Main Street for retail and local services

Consider existing development areas for industrial users:

- Connecticut Blvd.
- Park Avenue
- Prestige Park
- Enterprise Zone

In addition, industrial development could also compliment other developments in the large established enterprise zone

including the prime 600 acres of Rentschler Field and south of Silver Lane. The Cherry Street area near the waterfront could be developed as more high-tech loft or live-work lofts and a reduction in industrial space.

I.3.2 RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL CONTEXT

1. Commercial Real Estate in East Hartford:

Commercial real estate (office) and retail real estate in East Hartford primarily serve the local population. Most offices are small and most retailers are local. Generally, the concentration of retail has been reoriented to the Malls along I 84 primarily in Manchester. Most of the Class A office is in downtown Hartford, with some riverfront commercial in East Hartford.

Opportunities for East Hartford within the regional context lie in retail and commercial real estate. East Hartford can capture some of the regional demand by marketing its favorable commercial rents, and easy access to transportation; A summary of real estate information is as follows:

Office:	
Rental Rates:	\$18 to 20/SF, alt. Source \$11 to \$15/SF
Sales Asking Rates	Size Ranges: 26,000 to 150,000 SF
Vacancy Rates:	10 to 11% (4Q 98), rise of 2% over 1997 for East Suburbs
Inventory Hartford East Suburbs	1,690,000 SF (4Q 98)

Available Inventory for Hartford East Suburbs	185,00 SF (4Q 98)
General Notes:	Prime area around Founders Plaza and East River Drive

Source: Cushman and Wakefield, Inc. and 1998 Boma Exchange Report

Given that the Suburban East market is fairly small, it is difficult to determine it's future prospect within the greater Hartford region. The Hartford CBD real estate market, is still quite volatile, with fewer large Class A spaces available, but with a large stock of B space available at just slightly higher rates than the suburbs. The West suburbs are the strongest and most desirable sub-market with less than 2% vacancy. They are most likely to attract the upper end space uses. On the other hand, the North suburbs have around 30% vacant space, resulting from the downsizing of many insurance companies. Much of this space is cheaper than the other sub-markets and contains over 400,000 SF of inventory, much of which is class, A suburban space. As such, East Hartford may want to position itself to fulfill the function of a service oriented back office to Hartford. At the same time, East Hartford must also consider these regional factors in mapping its future development and not attempt to create an oversupply of product.

Prime areas will remain those near the river near quality office buildings and with views such as the Founders area. Developers should realize that the current remoteness to amenities will require new projects to include amenities such as dining, sundries, mail and postal services to make the development more attractive in the market place.

2. Retail in East Hartford:

Retail in East Hartford is concentrated around Main Street. Most of the retail tends to service the local community including restaurants, drug stores, printers, convenience stores and an abundance of auto parts stores, both on Main and side streets. These auto parts stores are in addition to the auto sales strip along Connecticut Ave. A recent inventory of space is delineated in the chart below.

1995 INVENTORY (East Hartford Assessor and Amadon & Associates)

TYPE OF USE/SIC	Number	%	Area in SF 000
HARDWARE 52	8	2	50.2
General 53	3	1	107.5
Food 54	25	7	227.1
Automotive 55	36	10	182.5
Apparel 56	11	3	52.2
Furnishings 57	30	9	123.4
Restaurants 58	58	16	171.1
Misc. Retail 59	77	22	214.8
Other 2	19	5	99.4
Vacant 3	27	8	103.7
Services 70	58	16	138.9
Total	352	100%	1,471

There is only minimal for retail from visitors and the regional population. There is also little destination-oriented retail, such as cinemas, quality restaurants or other entertainment. The following are highlights of the demographics that support the operations:

- Day population 32,021 people
- Resident population 47,311 people
- Visitors—minimal impact to retail
- Future tourism generated by waterfront and Science Center (attendance over 380,000 according to Deloitte & Touche report of 9/96)

PRIMARY RETAIL LOCATIONS

- Main Street and Burnside Avenue
- Connecticut Blvd.
- Minor side street and neighborhood retail

PRIMARY COMPETITION

- Downtown Hartford
- Manchester Malls along I 84

The key issues with regard to the potential increase in East Hartford retail is the positioning of Main Street and how to make it more attractive to both local residents, day population and visitors. There needs to be a consideration of an attraction element (new focus) which will draw visitors to the downtown.

SUMMARY OF MAIN STREET ISSUES

Assets

- Proximity to Hartford
- Easy highway access off I 84
- Town Square
- A downtown
- Architectural and historic fabric

Liabilities

- Poorly programmed retail—too many of some types and none of others, including too many auto parts stores inappropriately located, and few good restaurants, limited entertainment, etc
- Poor quality retail space—old and tired look
- Unattractive streetscape and appearance
- Perceived or possibly actual safety concerns
- Limited stores hours of operation
- No major draw—mostly convenience and service oriented retail

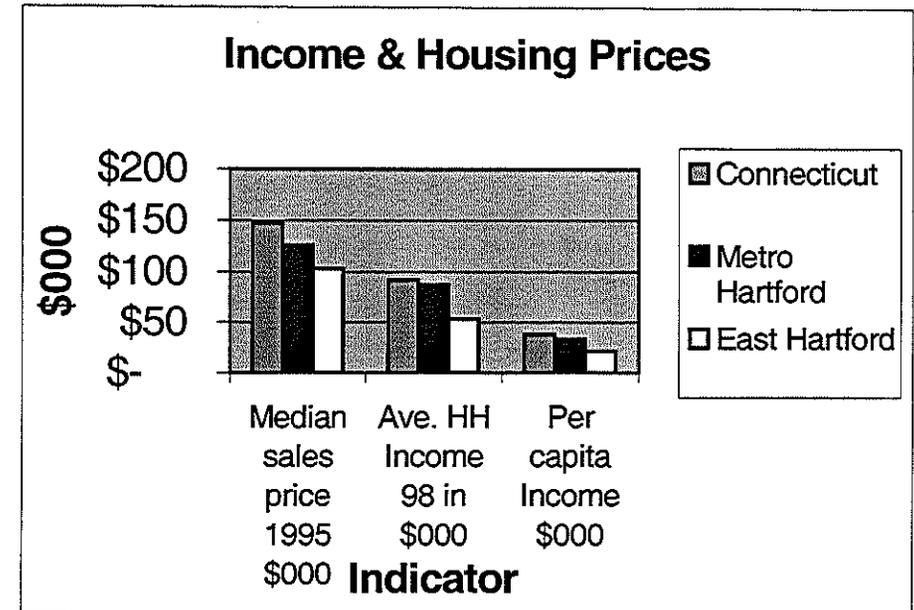
PROGRAMMING CONSIDERATIONS:

Demographics: Overall, East Hartford has a younger population that the State as a whole. The wealthiest age groups, the baby boomers, now aged 35 to 49, are smaller by proportion in East Hartford. However, the families in 25 to 34-age bracket are larger by proportion, probably due to the lower costs of housing in the Town.

As such, in terms of retail and residential development, the Town may want to consider what this means in terms of its strengths and how to exploit them.

Consider:

- Major advertising of cost of housing, education etc.
- Improve educational scores to improve housing attractiveness to young facilities
- Program Main street to meet the of this younger population



Demographics:					
Population	total	15-24	25-34	35-49	50+
East Hartford	47,400	9.0%	17.3%	22.1%	32.7%
CT. State	3,271,000	8.8%	15.5%	24.7%	28.4%

Source: Sales and Marketing Management, Survey of Buying Power 1998

FINDINGS:

- Effective buying power indicates that East Hartford can support a significant amount of retail, probably between 800K to 1.7 M SF of appropriately programmed retail. The current retail is poorly programmed and unattractive, and therefore East Hartford sales are being lost to malls and other towns and cities.
- Manchester, with a large concentration of malls, is able to achieve 5 times the retail sales as East Hartford with only 8% more in resident population. East Hartford residents spend a large proportion of their retail dollars in Manchester malls
- In addition, some retail sales figures skew East Hartford because they include automotive sales which, according to Sales and Marketing Management Survey of Buying Power 1998, account for \$246M in sales (over and above figures in table to follow).

Even if only 30% of resident sales were in East Hartford, that figure would support an additional 600,000 SF of retail alone, easily the size of a regional mall.

BUYING POWER FACTS:

Buying Power:	East Hartford	Hartford Metro	Manchester	Hartford County
	(NDS retail report 1999)			SMM 1998
Population	47,311	1,107,100	51,200	823,000
Households (some estimated inc. Hartford)	19,124	461,292	20,600	315,000
HH Income ave. In \$	53,272	80,640		
Per Capital Income\$	21,745	33,600		
People per household	2.47	2.4		
Total EBI (effective buying income) per SMM	879,677,000	NAV	1,051,302,000	17,081,150,000
EBI factor	0.83	0.83		
Calculated EBI	845,582,194	30,874,804,800		
Retail Sale Potential factor	0.5	0.5		
Retail Sales Potential	\$ 422,791,097	\$15,437,402,400		
Actual Sales	\$ 250,089,000		\$1,282,241,000	\$ 9,439,056,000
Sales per SF	\$ 200.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250	\$ 250
Capture rate of group	30%	0.01	0.05	0.005
SF supportable	634,187	617,496	256,448	188,781
Actual Inventory (estimated at NIC automotive sales) using \$250M in sales at ave. sales of \$200/SF	1,250,445	NAP	NAP	NAP
		Low	High	
Retail supportable in East Hartford in SF		822,968	1,696,912	

Problem:

- Most retail, especially on Main Street, is not connected
- Poorly programmed to meet the demand
- Un-maintained
- Perceived safety issues
- Pedestrian safety and ease of crossing Main Street

Other issues to consider include:

- Population--Declining residential population that is expected to continue to decline
- Change in demographics—it is perceived that the white population is declining faster than the entire population—actual percentage drop over last 9 years is 10% The Hispanic race base has grown the most by over 30% in 9 years
- Retail sales and programming needs to consider these population trends in future visioning

POPULATION CHANGES

Year	1980	1990	1999	2004 proj.	1980 to 1990 changes	1990 to 1999 change
Total Population	52,563	50,452	47,311	46,269	-4%	-6%
White		86.8%	82.5%			
Black		8.4%	10.2%			
Asian and Pacific Islander		2.2%	3.5%			
Other Races		2.6%	3.8%			
Hispanic (any race) (NIC in total)		6.0%	9%			
Total		100.0%	100.0%			

Hispanic Race base			4191
White			58%
Black			3%
other			39%

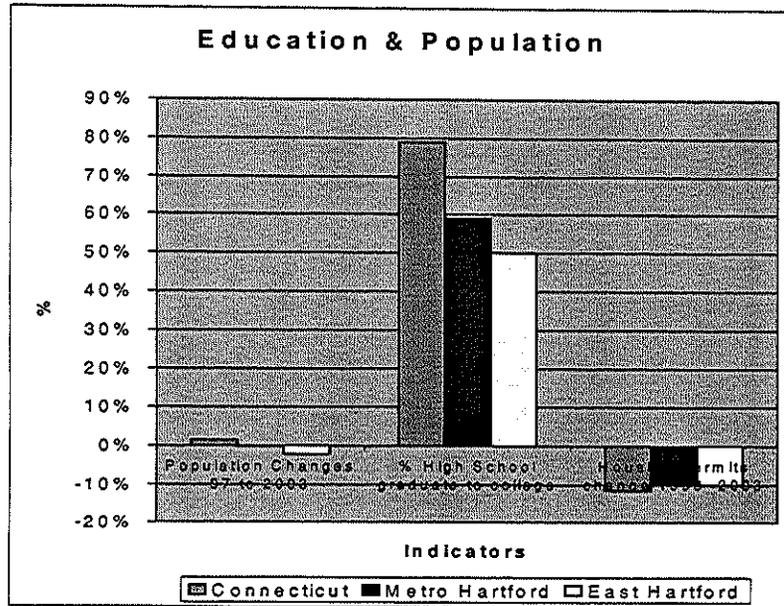
Occupation:

Overall, the strong industrial base of East Hartford is apparent with 27% of workforce employed in: precision production & craft, machine operator, transportation, material handling, and laborers. In addition, over 21% of the workforce are employed in executive, managerial or professional specialties—these are probably the highest paying professions. Lastly, 34% of workers are in administrative support, or sales, which pay less and are often part-time.

For retailers, these breakdowns indicate the need for a balance of price conscious and value oriented retail with some limited mid to higher end programming

Education and Wealth:

Education and wealth are important factors when understanding how to program retail that will be successful in a community. Over 21% of household have income over \$75,000/year which is well above national averages. However, less than 1.7% are in the upper or wealthier income brackets at

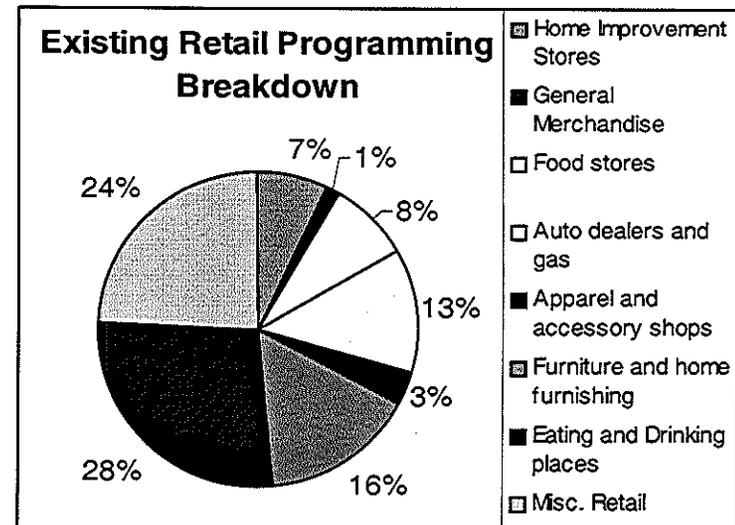


over \$150,000/year.

Education	Percentage
Graduate Degree	4%
Bachelor Degree	9%
Associate Degree or some college	22%
High school graduate	38%
Less than HS graduate	26%

To retailers, the education and wealth of East Hartford points to good value, but not cheap merchandise. Retail should cater to a younger couple or young family who are the majority of the population (50% married, over 25% are 25 to 35 years, 24% are households headed by a woman with children, and 30% of the population is single, mostly men).

RETAIL PROGRAMMING:



Existing retail programming is limited in the high demand apparel and general merchandise business. There is far higher than average business in the auto supplies and service area, and over 24% are in miscellaneous retail. This includes services, such as travel, beauty, insurance, etc. Any new programming should focus on diversification of retail stores, more food and entertainment destinations, and services for residents. These services should be relocated to upper floor levels to create more on street level retail establishments.

II. Issues and Opportunities

II.1

GEOGRAPHIC AREAS: RIVERFRONT

The East Hartford Riverfront is one of the most valuable resources in the Capitol Region. Its proximity to what is arguably the region's greatest scenic resource—the Connecticut River—lends real estate value to adjacent sites for a variety of uses.

The River represents the central north-south axis to which both Hartford and East Hartford relate, a corridor for transportation and economic development as well as open space.

Riverfront Recapture, Inc. (RRI) was established in 1982 as the not-for-profit development and management organization which coordinated public, private and civic efforts to reunite Hartford and East Hartford with the river. RRI acted as client for a participatory planning effort and as developer for a variety of projects ranging from specific waterfront park, recreation and access improvements (such as the recently-completed deck and Founders Bridge connection, designed by Carol Johnson & Associates) to linear linkages between these nodes of activity—walkways, bikeways, passive open space.

The Riverfront also represents an east-west development framework, relating Hartford to East Hartford—both focus on this central swath of green and blue, and improvements such as

the Founders Bridge pedestrian connection represent focussed corridors which can structure land use and development on both sides of the river.

Currently the Riverfront and adjacent properties host a variety of uses, from housing to office to retail and warehousing, and in the future educational and institutional uses will add diversity to the commercial focus.

Following is a description of these uses, grouped by geographic subareas along the Riverfront:

1. CENTRAL RIVERFRONT: RESIDENTIAL/ OFFICE/ HOTEL DEVELOPMENT

The central area, adjacent to the Founders Bridge, is a key location to take advantage of private and State investment in 'Adriaen's Landing' on the opposite Hartford Riverfront, the new development plan which was approved by the legislature in early May. Available East Hartford sites for new or renovated development will gain value from this key Hartford project, which will contain a new convention center, hotel and themed retail/ entertainment development within easy walking distance as well as transit or auto linkage.

The central linkage between East Hartford's Riverfront and Downtown Hartford are the two bridges, Bulkeley Bridge (which carries I-84) and Founders Bridge (a more localized auto link to Hartford's State Street). Founders Bridge also contains a major pedestrian walkway, recently constructed along the south side of the bridge in conjunction with the deck

over I-91, which links Hartford's Downtown to the riverfront edge.

The East Hartford Riverfront area currently contains a variety of uses, most of which were developed over the last fifteen to thirty years, built as individual projects without reference to current development opportunities.

These uses include the following:

Founders Plaza

Begun in the early 1960's, this project has intermittently added buildings on infill sites. It was developed by dedicated local officials as an urban renewal project, at a relatively suburban scale (even its high-rise tower is located in a large park-like setting surrounded by both surface and structured parking). It has evolved from a single holding into a multi-ownership development, with many individual businesses owning their own sites.

Although most sites seem now to be built out, the project is not constructed to its ultimate zoning, and therefore has additional capacity for development. In terms of tenants, it is very successful—for instance, according to its leasing agents, the tower building is currently at 99% capacity.

Although it was very successful in terms of its original objectives, it was not built as part of an overall plan which anticipated today's development opportunities. Because of

this, the site is not well linked to the recent Riverfront development or to Founders Bridge pedestrian access, and does not concentrate density or ground-level activity in such a way as to take advantage of this new potential.

Riverpoint

Riverpoint is a residential tower built on the riverfront edge immediately south of the Founders Bridge. Developed originally by Phoenix, which owned the site, it is a condominium project, with individual units owned by residents or investors.

The tower sits atop a parking deck and concrete dam built to replace the earthen dike which was part of the original site. This elaborate dike structure is necessary to separate the Founders Plaza and other areas to the east from the ravages of Connecticut River floods—a physical system under the strict protection and control of the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Conservation and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

The total site has the capacity, and indeed was planned from the beginning, for a second tower to the south. The parking deck and other common service features were built with this expansion in mind. The town would like to see this remaining site developed in conjunction with the adjacent property described below.

Adjacent Town-owned Land

To the south of Riverpoint is a 6-acre riverfront site. It is locally known as 'the Linpro site' as a result of an unsuccessful development attempt by the Linpro Corporation in the mid 1980's, stymied by a combination of market and environmental hurdles.

The Town has recently issued a 'Request for Qualifications' for developers, asking for creative ideas for the 6-acre site resulting from a combination of this property and the undeveloped portion of the "Riverpoint" site described above, and has received three responses, proposing a variety of mixed-use, commercial, residential and institutional uses.

Hotel and Offices north of the Founders Bridge

To the north of the bridge, separated from the Founders Plaza and Riverpoint area by a wide and busy limited-access highway, may be found a variety of other individual developments.

These include offices built along the riverfront—again, planned prior to recent opportunities for linkage to the Riverfront and adjacent development.

This area also contains a 198-room highway-style hotel development, recently renovated as a Sheraton hotel to take advantage of immediate opportunities. However, due to its site

plan, without major reconstruction the hotel will still be an isolated development accessible primarily by auto.

2. COMMERCIAL/ INSTITUTIONAL USES TO SOUTH

To the south of the area described above, additional uses are planned to complement existing commercial development.

The area is framed by the Riverfront, which includes the attractive development of East Hartford's 'Great River Park', a tree-shaded area adjacent to the water's edge featuring a boat launch, picnic areas, and adjacent parking.

Riverfront amenities built in conjunction with the park include a small amphitheatre adjacent to the Commerce Center development described below. Walkways and bikeways link this area south to the Charter Oak Bridge and north to the Founders and Bulkeley bridges, as well as east along the Hockanum River park development.

Commerce Center

The large Commerce Center tract, owned by the Konover Corporation, currently contains one medium-rise office building, which has over the last ten years been consistently occupied at a 90% or better level. The property is planned for continued commercial development in a plaza-focused 'office park' style adjacent to the Riverfront, taking advantage of the institutional development described below.

Future plans call for up to five additional office buildings, a hotel, and structured as well as surface parking, all linked by a riverfront-related plaza.

Magnet Middle School

The Magnet Middle School, now well into detailed design and scheduled for a September 2002 opening, will be an important educational resource for the Greater Hartford region. In addition to East Hartford, it will draw from Hartford, Glastonbury, Manchester, and South Windsor.

The concept of the school is based on its strong links to facilities such as the use of the Riverfront as a natural laboratory and links to the Science Center if adjacent. It will share parking and services with the associated development.

Science Center

The Science Center, which was also planned as an integral part of the Commerce Center development, is a tourist attraction that can have ripple effects of opportunity. Preliminary attendance estimates project up to 600,000 visitations/year (many of which will be school tours, but also weekend activity by families and individuals). The facility is designed to include a planetarium, an Imax theatre and a gift shop, and will be a major point of off-peak support for the planned restaurant and hotel. It is linked to the Roaring Brook Nature Center in Canton.

After having been temporarily sidetracked by issues having nothing to do with the merits of the museum itself, the Center is now aggressively moving towards fundraising and implementation. It has developed conceptual architectural plans which would tie it closely to the adjacent Commerce Center development, but its location is not yet permanently established. ÷

3. RIVERFRONT NORTH/ SOUTH: FUTURE REDEVELOPMENT AND OPEN SPACE

The 'North Meadows' consists of two zones above the central riverfront area: the business area north of Governor Street, and the open space and associated areas north of the rail line.

Business Area North of Governor Street

This area is noted for its locational advantages and views of the river, although it is hampered by small parcels and multiple ownerships, by poor quality construction and development, and by its need for roadway and infrastructure improvements.

Formerly an urban renewal district, the area is now developed as a number of small ownerships-- warehousing and small light industrial uses. Its main disadvantage is an intricate street and utility layout, which mitigates against easy land assembly or redevelopment. However, it is at the end of the northern stub of the central 'mixmaster' interchange, from which a potential Main Street bypass has been considered-- this could provide new market demand for convenient sites. And should a long-

term commuter linkage evolve along the rail line to the north, the area is in the geographic position to benefit.

Open Space/Associated Areas North of Rail Line

This area, mostly flood plain and/ or agricultural uses, lies on the riverfront outside the dike. It has poor auto access, but could be assisted by the potential for a Main Street bypass as described above.

It is bounded by established neighborhoods, and if a new roadway were created, careful control of land uses along the new road would be necessary to prevent development pressure from instigating preservation/ growth issues.

Development Area South of Charter Oak Bridge

To the south of the central area and to the west of the UT/ Pratt and Whitney facilities and Route 2 near Colt Street, the southern riverfront area also has long-term potential. Some of the oil tanks are being removed and the positive economic impact of Rentschler Field development as a mixed-use employment site will lend market opportunities to this area. The extension of riverfront walks and open space will also help make this area more accessible and attractive.

4. ADJACENT EAST-WEST LINKAGES

In addition to the three north-south riverfront areas described above, the east-west relationship to adjacent areas is also

important. These can take place along various natural linkages or development corridors leading back from the waterfront.

Natural Linkages

The Hockanum River Linear Park is the largest and most central natural linkage into the Connecticut Riverfront. The Town of East Hartford, with associated State and Federal funding, is gradually developing the linear park as a venue for open space preservation, natural conservation, recreation fields, and walkway/ bikeway connections.

Other potential east-west corridors include the other natural creeks and brooks that flow parallel to the Hockanum into the Connecticut, and which connect the riverfront into adjacent economic development sites and neighborhoods. To the north, these include Burnham Brook and Goodwin Brook; to the south, Willow Brook, Pewterpot Brook, and Porter Brook. As smaller versions of the Hockanum approach, each of these can connect development opportunities with features such as walkways, amenities, and environmental conservation easements.

Development Corridors/ Connections

Similarly, development corridors, usually coterminous with transportation connections, are important east-west linkages to the Riverfront.

II.2 GEOGRAPHIC AREAS: DOWNTOWN

A major commercial migration occurred away from the Central Business District, East Hartford's Downtown, which was originally the center, the heart and the main place of business activity. With the development of the large Pratt and Whitney site to the south of Silver Lane and the migration of retail to major malls in neighboring towns such as Manchester, much of the program that made the Downtown the center was taken away. Retail facilities no longer were provided a natural clientele and soon relocated to outlying areas with major malls and a larger client draw. Some restaurants and services remained, but the sparse selection of offerings and variety as well as the lack of entertainment venues has created limited draw to the Downtown.

ISSUES:

The Downtown workshop team cited the following as the major areas of concern for Downtown.

1. Revitalization of Main Street
2. Creation of traffic patterns conducive for pedestrians
3. Restoration of the historic character of the Downtown
4. Development of a marketing plan for the Downtown

1. Revitalization of Main Street.

Limited retail diversity in the Downtown has resulted in limited consumer use. Most stores close early and there are few selections in restaurant or entertainment venues. The workshop team voiced concern that the revitalization of Main Street is dependent on a more diversified retail mix.

2. Creation of Landscaped Median and Traffic Patterns Conducive for a Pedestrian Main Street

Main Street is also a State Highway, Route 5, and as a result has a number of large trucks traveling at high speeds. Any changes in the speed limit or slowing of traffic through the use of speed bumps would have to involve the State Department of Transportation. Observations during one afternoon and evening by The Williams Group timed a wait of 5 minutes to cross the street during rush hour. Obviously an new north-south road to take through truck traffic off Main Street would affect this situation. A new landscaped median, as called for in the 1989 Plan of Conservation and Development, would improve the image and pedestrian quality of the street. More pedestrian friendly traffic signaling, sidewalk access, and speed limit slowdowns must be implemented to encourage retail shopping or even leasing by new retailers.

3. Restoration of the Historic Character

Workshop team members recognized the intrinsic historic significance of many of the buildings in the Downtown. Many of these buildings are at risk due to deferred maintenance and

general neglect. Vacant dilapidated buildings repel retail clients and lack of retail customers causes owners to neglect maintenance. It was felt that a façade restoration or maintenance incentives initiated by the Town would encourage the preservation of one of the Town's valuable natural assets.

4. Development of a Marketing Plan for the Downtown

Along with the revitalization of the physical features of the Downtown buildings, a marketing plan to change the current perception of the Downtown must be created and implemented.

OPPORTUNITIES

The issues that affect the Town as a whole are the same issues that affect the Downtown area. Projecting a safe and vital image in the Downtown, one that presents a Downtown Main Street that is pedestrian friendly, aesthetically pleasing, and diverse in its retail/entertainment offering is critical for the future of any planning process. Main Street Plus, a volunteer citizens revitalization group is currently pursuing many of the ideas presented below.

1. Scheduled Events in the Downtown

Events that would act as a draw to retail clients or that would act as a destination draw, such as a farmers' market, antique or flea market, could be used to give impetus for Downtown revitalization and a change in image. Such events are usually well organized and supported with funding resources through a

local Merchants Association or Business Improvement Association. In the event that the current Downtown could not afford that, perhaps the Town should help to organize and finance such events. These on-going events can occur simultaneously with the façade and physical restoration, even encouraging townspeople to review the changes as they occur.

2. Control of Traffic in the Downtown

Traffic control, the potential for a median, and alternative routes to truck traffic should be studied by an independent agency to alleviate the current highway nature of what needs to be a pedestrian street. Options to slow traffic need to be encouraged and introduced.

3. Use of Area Features in the Downtown

It was universally agreed that the historic nature of East Hartford should be celebrated as an asset. The local Town Green should be reinstated as a gathering place for festivals, markets, concerts, to encourage the awareness of local history. The Great River Park should be the site for events to attract visitors and locals alike to help create a renewed civic pride.

4. Concerted Publicity and Imaging Campaign

Coincident with the physical changes in the buildings, events that occur regularly to draw visitors and locals, publicity must be generated to change the image of the Downtown. Local newspapers should be made part of the team to publicize increased security and improvements to the area. The publicity and image campaign has to be a concerted and coordinated effort by all of the major local resources.

II.3 GEOGRAPHIC AREAS: COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

The Action Team met on November 18, 1999 to consider commercial areas other than the Downtown, Rentschler Field or the Waterfront. They briefly reviewed some economic data and identified key issues, problems and opportunities.

Most communities recognize that the Downtown does not meet the needs of the total community or address special commercial operations. Neighborhood commercial activities meet the resident's demands for convenience goods and services. In addition, highly traveled corridors are a magnet to attract special commercial businesses as well as services. The transition of existing land uses in corridors has resulted in serious land use conflicts and physically unattractive gateways.

A few studies of commercial areas have been done in the last decade: The Main Street Corridor Study (1995), The Burnside Ave. Corridor Development Plan (1997), Burnside & Areas 1.2 & 3 Economic Development Initiatives (1999).

The Burnside Ave. Corridor Plan calls for a Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan to reduce land use conflicts, rehabilitate buildings, redevelop sites, physically enhance the corridor and reduce traffic conflicts. The Main Street Corridor Study analyzed the economic relationship of Main Street to its regional context and presented recommendations for future

development. The plan recommended the optimal mix of shops, services, and attractions for families to make it a successful commercial area. Pedestrian mobility, building and street appearance, and traffic and parking issues were addressed. The Corridor Study did not include Main Street to the north of the railroad bridge or south of I-84.

The land use survey done for the 1990 "Plan of Development" showed that 4% of the total land area of the Town of East Hartford is dedicated to developed commercial land. The Town is nearing its "built-out" stage and only 69 acres of vacant developable land for commercial use is available.

In March 2000, a windshield survey was taken of some of the commercial areas and corridors. There is a wide range of physical layouts and conditions in commercial areas.

School Street Square seemed neat and new, with an architectural theme that visually unified the plaza. By contrast, Silver Lane Plaza and Plaza II seemed old and shabby. The buildings were architecturally bland and uninteresting, and the mix of stores did not seem balanced or enticing.

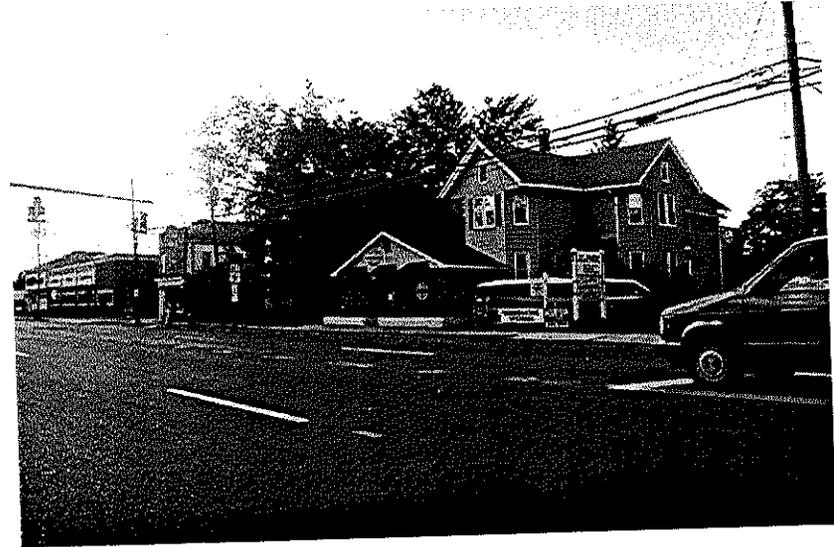
Burnside Avenue, Silver Lane, Main Street and High Street are all corridors of mixed use. Residential areas of different intensities and ages are now mixed with commercial and industrial uses. Where residential use becomes unfeasible, single family homes may be boarded up, giving a strange "ghost town" effect to an otherwise lively street.

The conflict of land use along these corridors has developed gradually overtime and is representative of "urban sprawl" where uncontrolled development has been allowed to happen. Commercial and industrial uses will not "leap frog" down a street if relegated to specific areas (such as the intersections of major streets or plazas and industrial parks). If business location decisions are made only by the individual businessman, then imperfect information will lead to some bad locational choices. When the business does not succeed, the building may be abandoned and its property value diminished.

There will always be a need for neighborhood stores. People don't want to drive too far to buy some milk or get a prescription. However, the mix of stores and their location in the Town should be determined by a land use plan based on the needs of the residents, practical land use divisions, traffic circulation plans and aesthetic considerations.

ISSUES

The Action Team sited vacant commercial properties and the poor physical appearance of commercial corridors and buildings as a key problem. This is related to the loss of neighborhood commercial businesses and inappropriate use of residential housing stock. They felt that traffic circulation in these areas was a problem. They also felt that there was a lack of cooperation between Town government and small businesses.



Area along Burnside Ave

OPPORTUNITIES

The Action Team identified the purchasing power of the residents as a key opportunity. Census data from 1990 shows that the median household income of \$36,584 in East Hartford is above the national average of \$30,056 but below the Connecticut average of \$49,199.

They felt that the promotion of park and recreation facilities should be tied to commercial areas. They felt that there was an opportunity to restructure or streamline Town government assistance to small entrepreneurs to improve business properties, purchase buildings and grow business.

II.4 LAND USES: INFRASTRUCTURE/TRAFFIC

In the November 18th Planning Meeting the Infrastructure, Traffic and Transportation Action Team studied data included in the 1990 Plan of Development and discussed perceived problems and opportunities. The Action Team focused on the efficient movement of people and goods in and around the Town of East Hartford to create a sound transportation system to attract visitors, new businesses and residents.

As in most North American towns, the favored mode of transportation for the worker is the private vehicle. East Hartford's roads are filled with commuters driving themselves to work. Of the 26,826 daily commuter trips, 20,415 commuters (76%) drove alone, while 3,645 (14%) rode in carpools and 1,596 (6%) used public transportation. Nearly 77% of all workers take less than 30 minutes to get to work.

The 1990 Plan of Development included studies of some of the major corridors. With the exception of the expressway network, Main Street carries the heaviest volumes of traffic on a daily basis. Average Daily Traffic (ADT) along the Main Street corridor ranges from 5,000 vehicles (south of Brewer Street) to over 35,000 trips (north of Connecticut Boulevard.) By comparison, Forbes Street averages approximately 10,000 vehicles daily. In the east-west direction, Silver Lane and Burnside Avenue exhibited ADT's of 18,000 and 14,000 respectively.

The Plan recommended that if Rentschler Field were to become available for development, provision would be made for an additional north-south arterial connecting Silver Lane and Brewer Street.

Statistics show that 99% of all housing units are on a public water system and 98% are on a public sewer system.

A windshield survey was taken in March 2,000 to assess the conditions along the main corridors and local roads. The first impression for the visitor in crossing the Connecticut River is inadequate signage and confusion. The visitor is not informed about which way to turn for the Downtown, and main streets are not well marked. For instance, when coming over the Charter Oak Bridge, the first-time visitor does not know which way to turn to go into town or find any of the east-west streets. Silver Lane is not well signed or identified and the visitor guesses that it is the right road. A street sign identifying Silver Lane is not in evidence for about a mile along Silver Lane.

Mid-afternoon traffic volumes on all corridors seemed moderate and there were no delays at any traffic signals. In fact, traffic flow along Main Street seemed light but steady. Main Street appears very spacious. As The Main Street Corridor Study (Amadon & Associates, Inc. Hartford CT, 1995) points out, Main Street was originally divided by a elegant median strip containing massive elm trees which provided a strong sense of enclosure, shade and beauty. The elm trees were removed as part of a modernization of Main Street in the early 1920's. Main Street is now a very wide street with more than adequate room for vehicular movement, but

also a wide combat zone for pedestrians. There are control buttons for pedestrians to push to stop the traffic, but getting across in time can be a big problem. At the time the windshield survey was taken, a pedestrian with a stiff knee was heard yelling to the traffic to "hold on, hold on" so that he could cross in time. Restoring the median strip and putting in other traffic calming measures or creating new left turning lanes are options for the Town to consider.

Traffic on residential local was almost non-existent in the mid-afternoon. Neighborhoods seemed very peaceful and quiet.

The conditions discussed above were observed in mid-afternoon. Peak rush hour would no doubt present a different picture for the visitor. The driver of the survey car had no trouble accessing Bulkeley Bridge to leave East Hartford. When I-91 was reached, real traffic jams were encountered, and the driver realized what a safe haven East Hartford was in comparison.

The Action Team identified several problems, issues and opportunities which emerge from the facts and conditions discussed above.

ISSUES

The north-south flow of traffic on Main Street and access management of key corridors was a key issue. The need for a roadway system to support Rentschler Field development was identified. Lack of mass transit and communication with

Connecticut Department of Transportation (CONNDOT) was also identified. The only utility issue identified was inadequate storm sewers on Prospect and Bonner Streets.

OPPORTUNITIES

East Hartford's central location in the Capital District and good regional highway system for access was identified as a key asset. The rail corridor was also identified as an asset to transportation. Adequate water and sewer utilities and good public works and town services were also identified as key assets.



Right turn to Bulkeley Bridge from Prospect

II.5

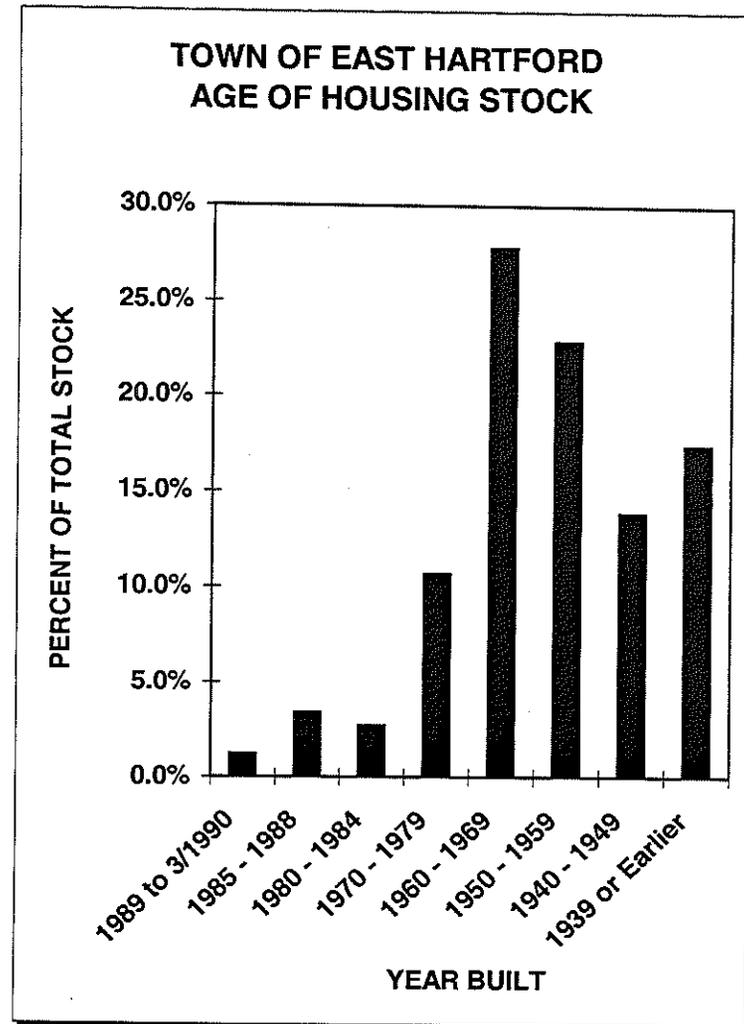
LAND USES: RESIDENTIAL

In any Strategic Economic Development Plan the availability of housing is an important component for a successful plan. Available and affordable housing is needed to attract new business and industry and to house their employees (both workers and management.) The Town of East Hartford needs to plan to meet future housing needs for existing residents and future employees who will move to East Hartford in conjunction with new business development. At the November 18th Planning Meeting the Residential Development Action Team reviewed existing conditions and statistics for housing.

Of the 21,274 housing units in East Hartford, 96% or 20,343 units were occupied according to the 1990 Census. Of the occupied units, 12,108 (60%) were owner occupied, while 8,235 (40%) were renter occupied. Single family homes comprised 51% of all housing units, while the rest are a combination of town houses, apartments and mobile homes. Apartment buildings having ten or more units (4,344) form a significant portion (20%) of East Hartford's housing stock.

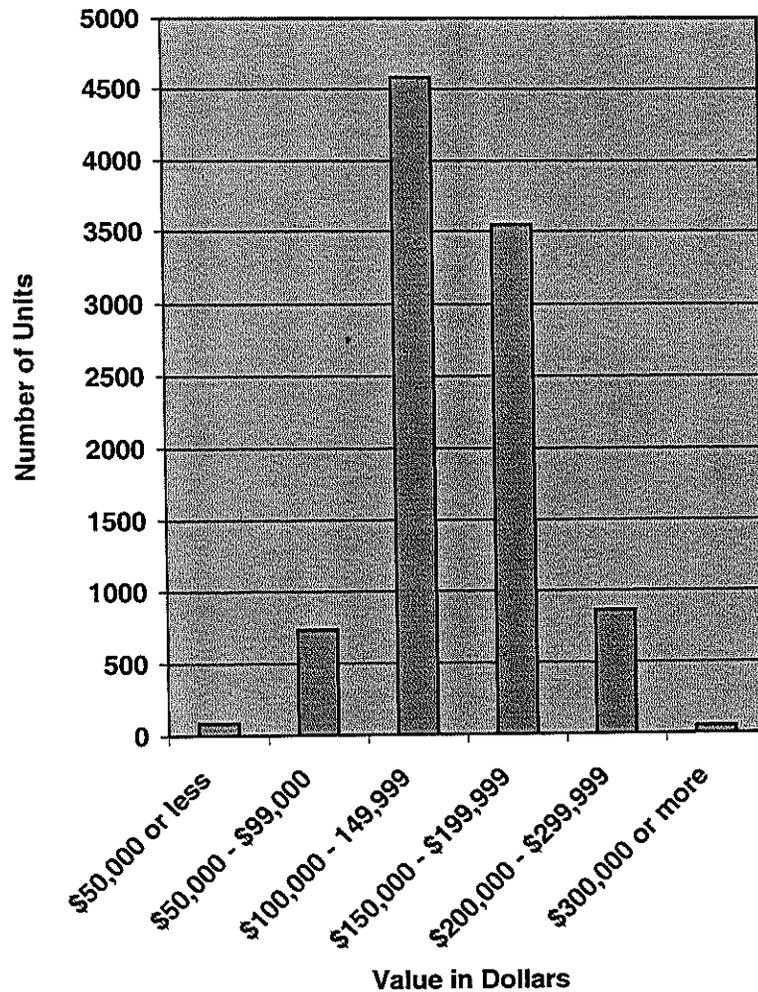
Most of the housing stock was built prior to 1970 as is shown in *Table II-2 - Age of Housing Stock*.

TABLE II - 2



Source: 1990 Census of Housing & Population

**TABLE II - 3
HOUSING VALUES - 1990
TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD**



In 1990, the median housing value was \$146,200 and the median rent was \$574. Most of the houses fall into the middle value range, with few houses on the low or high end according to the 1990 Census Data. See *Table II-3 Housing Values*. The community is fairly stable. Of all households, 66% have lived in their present homes since 1980. See *Table II - 4*

**TABLE II - 4
HOUSEHOLD STABILITY
TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD 1990**

Year Householder moved into Unit	Number	Percent
1989 - 3/1990	3,705	18.2%
1985 - 1988	5,369	26.4%
1980 - 1984	2,486	12.2%
1970 - 1979	3,314	16.3%
1960 - 1969	2,583	12.7%
1959 or earlier	2,885	14.2%
Total Households	20,342	100.00%

Source: 1990 Census of Housing and Population

There are 931 vacant units for a 4.4% vacancy rate. The Town of East Hartford is nearly built out. It is estimated that in 1990 there were 561 acres available for residential development that was estimated to yield 1,500 dwelling units for an estimated population of 3,750.

Source: 1990 Census of Housing & Population

A windshield survey was taken to assess the overall condition of the housing stock. The community of East Hartford presents itself as a neat, quiet, yet vigorous community engaged in a variety of pursuits. Most of the southeast quarter of East Hartford is dedicated to single family housing. Quiet tree-lined streets with neat cape cod, split-level or colonial homes are typical of this area. Most homes are in very good condition with well-kept yards. Some residents may have recreational equipment such as motor boats stored under plastic wrap in the side or back yard. At the time of the survey, residents were observed pushing infant strollers or walking the dog in a seemingly safe and pleasant environment.



Corner of Burke & O'Connell Streets

Large apartment buildings line Burnside Ave along with other uses. These also appear to be in good shape for the most part. One apartment complex in the Downtown area was especially attractive with red brick and white trim and shutters with nice landscaping. Older housing stock of two and three stories is scattered in various neighborhoods and districts in all areas of East Hartford.

A few mobile home parks are located by the Connecticut River. They have been packed in to a very small land area between the main streets and the river. In some cases the access roads are very narrow and the interface with surrounding properties is minimal.

In transitional areas, where commercial uses are being built in formerly residential areas, boarded-up houses or stores may be seen. There may be many reasons for the disuse or abandonment of the building, including unwillingness of the owner to sell the property, no buyers interested, and bankruptcy of a commercial owner. Particular properties may be neglected and in need of paint or repair. Similarly these properties may have some refuse or discarded household items piling up on the porch and front yard. These effects may be what some team members refer to as "blight".

However, for the most part, East Hartford does not have any major slum or deteriorated area that is observable by the casual visitor. Instead, it appears to be a well cared for community in general. Property deterioration seems to take place on a house by house basis, and the property that needs attention stands out by comparison to its well cared for neighbors. Luxury or

“upscale” housing is not readily seen by the visitor, although the windshield survey did not take into account most of the residential roads in East Hartford. Building “upscale” housing for prospective higher income employees is among the issues listed by the Action Team.

The only existing historic district in the community is along Naubuc Avenue. Attractive, picturesque homes in a rural setting are characteristic of this area. The 1990 Plan of Development recommends possible historic district designation for other areas such as those near Central Avenue and Garvan Street, some portions of North Main Street, and the Hockanum River Mill complex.



Home in the historic Naubuc District

ISSUES

The Residential Action Team identified several residential issues and problems. The first three issues reflect the existing status of East Hartford’s housing conditions. First they identified a need for maintenance of older residential structures and properties. Secondly, they identified a need for more owner/occupied housing, and thirdly a need for more upper middle income housing for upward mobility and to attract new business. They also felt that East Hartford needed more community activities and events to make the Town more appealing.

OPPORTUNITIES

There were three unrelated opportunities or assets that the Action Team identified. One asset that made East Hartford a good place to live was the high quality of social and community services including great schools, an excellent park system and good Town services. Another asset was the regional highway system that provides easy access to other areas in the Town and other regions. Opportunities are linked to the redevelopment potential for Rentschler Field and development possibilities for the Waterfront. The Team feels that upper middle income housing should be a required component of any development package.

II.6

LAND USES: INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

One of the greatest strengths of East Hartford is its strategic location for industry. Access to major highway systems and transportation centers makes East Hartford ideal for warehousing and industrial businesses. Local labor is well trained and industrial rents for space are still considered reasonable. A quality of life for local workers and owners of businesses is enhanced by the Riverfront. The location can provide scenic and recreational resources for employees and residents.

East Hartford is strategically located at the crossroads of Interstate I-91 and I-84. Five exits, from the Charter Oak Bridge to exit 59 off I 84, allow flexibility in terms of access through the east-west axis of East Hartford. I-91 as the major north/south highway through Connecticut and I-84 as the major east/west access make East Hartford an accessible Town. State highways provide North/south access, most notably route 5 that is linked to the Interstate 84.

Truck transportation access is a major asset in terms of attracting warehousing types business and business that move a significant amount of products.

According to BOMA¹ 1999, demand for good quality industrial and warehouse space remains strong. Therefore, East Hartford

¹ BOMA 1999—Building Operators and Managers Association 1999 Experience Exchange Report

is in a position to take advantage of this opportunity by encouraging or incentivizing users. The Town has industrial space and growth opportunities at reasonable rents (\$2.50 to \$3.50/SF rental rates).

The Regional and Local Economic Resources and Industrial Development workshop (known in the report as the Industrial Development workshop) were concerned that the strength of East Hartford be managed to meet future demand and that the Town remain a regional leader.

ISSUES

The following issues and concerns were listed as significant for the workshop members:

1. Image and Identity
2. Single or Few Sources or Employment
3. Training for New Industry
4. New Business Attraction
5. Public transportation
6. Zoning/Impact Mediation

1. Image and Identity.

The issue of identity for East Hartford is not only one for now, but for future attraction of new business. In order to sell oneself, one needs to understand what one is. East Hartford is a Town of 50,000 but with its skilled labor base, it has the

demographic and economic diversity of a larger city. Larger cities have more resources and can more effectively solve some of the more problematic issues such as crime, education needs, and housing. Discussion revolved around issues of how to market and define the image of East Hartford.

2. Single or Few Source Employment

United Technologies is the largest and predominant employer for East Hartford. While the company is a tremendous asset to the community economically, the workshop agreed to a feeling of vulnerability should UT make any major changes in its workforce. A survey of smaller industries in town felt that they had fewer resources available to them and that they were not encouraged as they should be.

It was considered essential to attract and cultivate new and encourage existing small businesses, especially those representing the new high-tech, e-commerce and Internet service related companies.

3. Training for New Industry

The perception was that the existing labor pool may not have the skills and training for new high technology based business. The perception emerged from some workshop members that without further training, they would be left out. As such, the group wanted to ensure that adequate incentives for training to the existing workforce in the Town be provided.

4. New Business Attraction.

Attracting new business and reestablishing the existing small business job base was a high priority. The workshop agreed that establishing business clusters might make it easier for new businesses to become established. The vision was for the business clusters or cluster zones to be created by the Town, marketed and potentially sold to developers to manage the concept. In addition, the business cluster should be near the fiber optic line, which runs to Rentschler Field.

In order to become a "fertile field" for new businesses, East Hartford's local government needs to cooperate in the creation of an environment which attracts new businesses and keeps the existing businesses. Key issues are: Ease of permitting for new projects; easy access to incentives and information; access to a public representative to assist in business relocation and a marketing program that highlights the business assets of the town.

5. Public Transportation

Public transportation was considered inadequate for local residents as a resource for work. Increased bus routes and trolley routes should make locations more accessible to more people especially in key business nodes such as Main Street, Silver Lane, Burnside, and Connecticut Blvd.

6. Zoning/Impact Mediation

Comprehensive zoning planning to insure that the growth of industry in East Hartford did not adversely impact the quality

of residential and commercial life is necessary and of concern to the workshop participants. Buffers to shield residents from noise, pollution, traffic, and to act as a positive impact on real estate values should be encouraged.

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities for industrial development can be used for overall economic growth opportunities as well. The following is the workshop participants' list of opportunities.

1. Strategic Access

East Hartford's highway access and interstate access should be seen as a tremendous opportunity and marketing tool to attract new businesses and maintain existing businesses.

2. Skilled Labor Force

United Technologies spends a great deal on employee training. Marketing East Hartford as having a well-trained labor force and incentivized training programs in place for other businesses can help to attract new businesses and retain existing industries.

3. Quality of Life and Sense of Community

Businesses look for communities that can provide a quality of life for its employees and a sense of community. Many of the workshop participants stated that the Town has a bad image with its residents. It is critical that the revitalization plan helps

create and market a strong sense of community through improvement in education, reduced crime rates, creation of a community pride through increased and visible civic activities, and physical revitalization of Downtown.

4. Developable Site

In 1990, East Hartford had only 809 acres of readily developable vacant land. This was 6.9% of the total Town land area. Rentschler Field opens up approximately 8% more of the total Town land area for redevelopment as a large parcel package. This presents a unique and challenging opportunity for East Hartford to plan for and recruit the type of development that would be a major economic contributor to the tax base as well as a showcase example of urban redevelopment.

II.7**LAND USES: RECREATION/OPEN SPACE**

East Hartford's open space network is a key amenity for economic development. Its current assets—natural land and developed recreation space—also represent future opportunities for enhancement or expansion which can link with the Town's economic development potential.

Importance of Open Space as an Amenity for Economic Development

Open space and recreation development contribute to economic development in four major ways:

- It encourages new businesses and keeps existing businesses
- It represents a symbol of the community's quality of life
- It provides an attractive town design and environment
- It is part of the infrastructure for new development sites

Conversely, economic development can also contribute to open space and recreation development:

- It can create linkages to the open space framework
- It can encourage developers to set aside open space within their parcels
- It can provide increased tax revenues for park and recreation development and operations, as well as for open space acquisition.

Current Open Space Assets/ Future Potential

East Hartford's natural environment and developed recreation space has great potential:

RIVERS AND BROOKS AS NATURAL FRAMEWORK

The environmental armature of the community is its network of brooks and rivers, which flow east-west into the Connecticut River at the Town's western border.

Riverfront Recapture has turned the Connecticut Riverfront into a major regional asset. Serving as a funnel for local, state and Federal action, it has preserved land, created walkways and bikeways, and established nodes of activity—amphitheatres, boat launch areas, nature study areas—which serve both East Hartford and surrounding towns. Regional walkway linkages to the north and south will extend this amenity into a larger area.

The Hockanum River, continuing its largely Town-sponsored development in a similar fashion, creates an east-west linear park through the central town which is a focus for community recreation and institutional activities.

A series of parallel smaller tributaries connect the riverfront into adjacent economic development sites and neighborhoods. To the north, these include Burnham Brook and Goodwin Brook, to the south, Willow Brook, Pewterpot Brook, and Porter Brook.

OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION OF VALUABLE LAND

By conserving key parcels such as flood plain land, environmental features and agriculturally valuable land, the Town can reinforce the framework of rivers and brooks with larger parcels. This will preserve the visual and scenic quality of the Town as well as its land use balance between urbanized and natural space.

CITY PARKS: ACTIVE AND PASSIVE RECREATION

East Hartford has a variety of parks and locations: over 28 parks totaling over 650 acres, ranging in size from 1 acre to over 100 acres.

These park spaces accommodate a number of active sports: football, golf, tennis, skating, handball, softball, cross-county, hiking, and fishing. They also provide needed quiet space for more passive activities.

They include spaces for cultural and community activities including music shell, amphitheatre, senior center, and indoor athletic facilities.

GATEWAYS/ CORRIDORS: VISUAL QUALITY/
SCENIC VIEW PROTECTION

These sites include playgrounds, playfields, community parks serving both neighborhoods and the Town as a whole, and district parks serving regional users.

Finally, the town has the potential to better define its entry gateways as a way to extend welcome to community visitors and put its best foot forward.

This attention to image can take place not just on the riverfront edge, but along major corridors and northern, southern and eastern entries as well. Efforts can focus on landmarks, key views, and streetscaping, and set priorities for improvements and preservation.

ISSUES

The following issues were cited by workshop participants as most significant:

1. Management of facilities and programs

East Hartford needs additional focus on administrative issues regarding its enviable stock of open spaces. Expanded and enhanced recreational programs can allow more townspeople to take advantage of this resource.

2. Funding for maintenance of Town open space and facilities.

In order to provide increased administration, additional funding sources need to be found in order to maintain existing assets (not to mention expanded assets).

3 Overbuilding adjacent to riverfront and other waterways.

There was a concern over how to prevent killing (or at least injuring) one of East Hartford's important golden geese, its environmental setting, through the potential negative impact of excess development on open space.

OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES

Similarly, the following opportunities were identified as most significant:

1. Recognize the value of the Riverfront and other waterways as an amenity for development of recreational assets such as marinas or other facilities.

The Town needs to define a strategy for expanding recreation facilities near the Connecticut or Hockanum Rivers.

2. Expand open space within the Town and preserve agricultural land where available.

Adding to the amount of preserved space, through purchase, easement, or dedication is seen as an important goal.

- 3 Leverage public money with donations from citizens and civic organizations.

Open space preservation and recreational facility development take money—more money than the Town alone can provide. A partnership effort is needed.

**II.8
ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR
LAND USE MANAGEMENT**

The Land Use Plan for the Town of East Hartford was created in 1927. Zoning and subdivision regulations, a building code and the creation of a town-wide building department soon followed. As the Town matured, physical and economic conditions changed, new opportunities arose and visions of the residents were modified or newly created. The land use plan was then updated to reflect those change, so that future growth was managed in the most efficient and elegant manner, and the Town matured in the desired pattern. By law, municipalities must update their development plan at least once every ten years.

This Plan Update, which emerged from the 1999 Town of East Hartford Planning Meetings, documents current concerns, visions and recommendations as an addition to the solid foundation laid in 1927 and subsequent updates.

In an initial meeting, on November 18, 1999, The Land Use Management team reviewed basic zoning and land use data and identified the problems, issues and opportunities that had not been previously addressed by the Town or have recently developed into major issues.

Land use and Zoning information from the 1990 "Plan of Development" was presented as a base for discussion.

Table II-5 shows the percentage of various land uses in the Town. Figure II-1 presents a map of the current land use.

**TABLE II 5
TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD
LAND USE SURVEY DATA**

TYPE	ACREAGE	PERCENT
Residential		
Low Density	4,015	34.09
Medium Density	830	7.05
High Density	236	2.00
Commercial	467	3.97
Transportation/ Utilities	139	1.18
Industrial	1,449	12.3
Public/Semi-Public Institutional	356	3.02
Public Building, Facilities, Schools	952	8.08
Public Parks & Open Space	619	5.26
Roads	1,255	10.66
Vacant Land	1,458	12.38
TOTAL	11,776	100

Source: Buckhurst Fish Hutton Katz, Inc. 1990 Plan
Windshield Survey February 1989



Plan of Development
Town of East Hartford

Buckhurst Fish Hutton Katz Inc.
Greiner, Inc. Engineers
Quennell Rothschild Associates



Source: Metropolitan District Commission, Hartford 1988

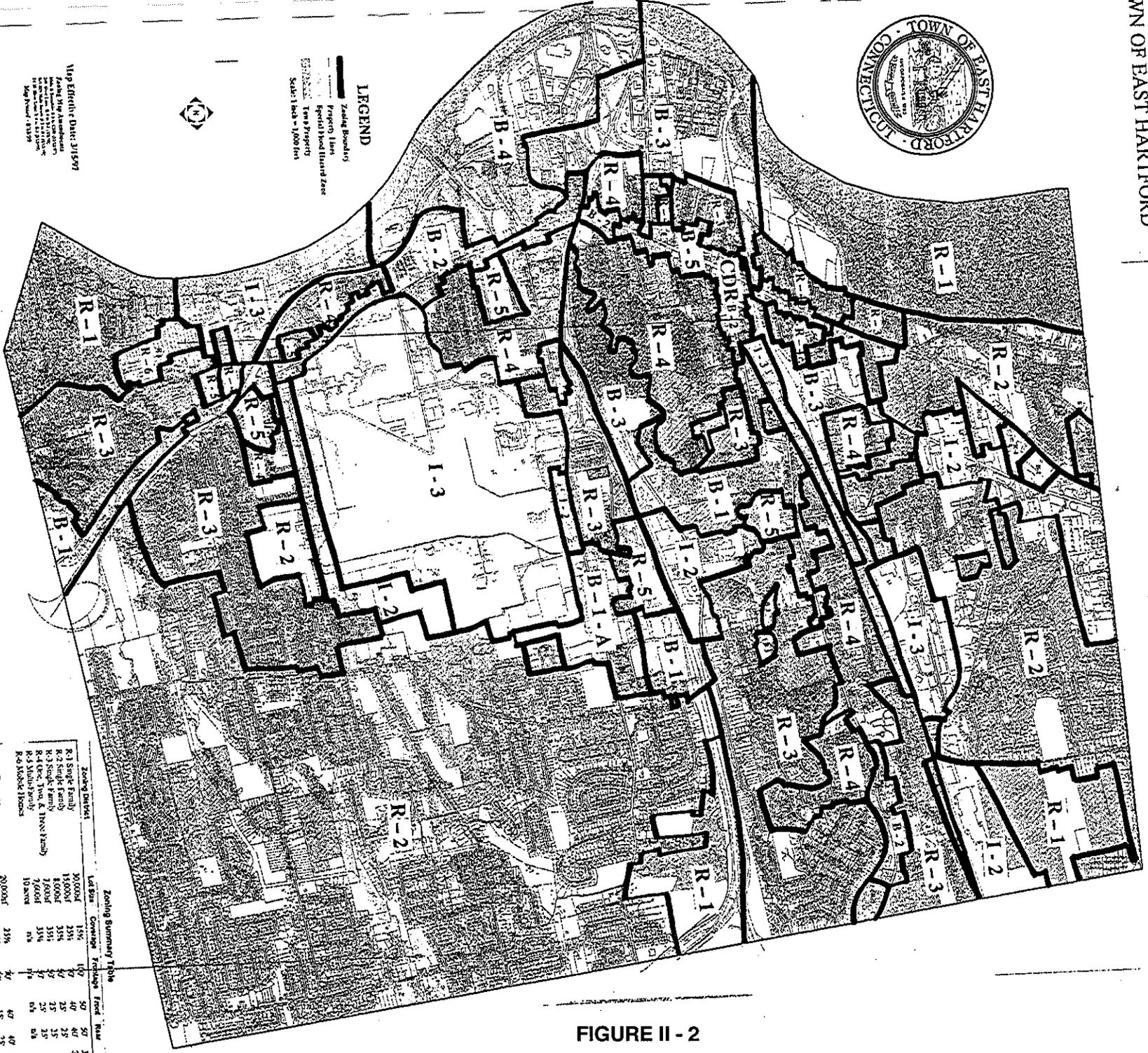
Land Use

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Commercial

- Transportation/Utilities
- Industrial/Warehouse
- Public/Open Space
- Institutional
- Vacant Land

FIGURE II - 1

ZONING SUMMARY MAP W.N. OF EAST HARTFORD



LEGEND

- Zoning Boundary
- Property Line
- Special Flood Hazard Zone
- Town Property

Scale: 1 inch = 1000 feet

Map Prepared: 01/20/97
 Date of Last Revision: 01/20/97
 Project Name: W.N. OF EAST HARTFORD
 Project No.: 1000000000
 Map No.: 1000000000



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FIGURE II - 2

Zoning District	Lot Size	Coverage	Setbacks	Flood	Max	Side	Height
R-1 Single Family	30,000sf	15%	50'	40'	40'	30'11/2"	35'
R-2 Single Family	15,000sf	15%	40'	25'	25'	20'0"	35'
R-3 Single Family	4,000sf	15%	40'	25'	25'	20'0"	35'
R-4 One, Two, & Three Family	7,000sf	15%	40'	25'	25'	20'0"	35'
R-5 Mobile Homes	10,000sf	15%	40'	25'	25'	20'0"	35'
B-1 Business	20,000sf	15%	40'	40'	40'	20'0"	50'
B-2 Business	1,500sf	15%	15'	15'	15'	15'0"	100'
B-3 Business	10,000sf	15%	15'	15'	15'	15'0"	100'
B-4 Business	10,000sf	15%	15'	15'	15'	15'0"	100'
B-5 Business	40,000sf	15%	15'	15'	15'	15'0"	100'
Other Business	40,000sf	15%	15'	15'	15'	15'0"	100'
I-1 Industrial	1 acre	15%	15'	15'	15'	15'0"	50'
I-2 Industrial	20,000sf	15%	15'	15'	15'	15'0"	50'
I-3 Industrial	40,000sf	15%	15'	15'	15'	15'0"	100'

Of the total land area of the Town of East Hartford, 43% is dedicated to developed residential use, nearly 4% for commercial use and 12.3% for industrial use. Developable vacant land was estimated at 809 acres. This land does not lie in the floodplain, but includes some wetlands. *Figure II 2* shows the current zoning map (1997). *Table II - 6* below presents the Zoning Districts and lot size requirements.

**TABLE II-6
ZONING TABLE – TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD**

ZONING DISTRICT	LOT SIZE	COVERAGE
R-1 Single Family	30,000 sf	15%
R-2 Single Family	15,000 sf	25%
R-3 Single Family	8,000 sf	35%
R-4 1,2 & 3 Family	7,600 sf	35%
R-5 Multi Family	7,600 sf	35%
R-6 Mobile Homes	10 acres	N/A
<hr/>		
B-1-A Business	20,000 sf	25%
B-1 Business	5,000 sf	75%
B-2 Business	7,500 sf	75%
B-3 Business	10,000 sf	75%
B-4 Business	10,000 sf	75%
B-5 Business	10,000 sf	75%
CDR Business	40,000 sf	PZC
<hr/>		
I-1 Industrial	1 acre	50%
I-2 Industrial	20,000 sf	75%
I-3 Industrial	40,000 sf	75%

Source: Zoning Map of East Hartford 3/15/97

The 1990 Plan targeted the central area including the river corridor for high intensity mixed-use growth including commercial, recreational, residential uses and open space. Development at the riverfront was to be linked with development in the Downtown via Connecticut Boulevard and Governor Street. The science center planned for the South Meadows will play a strategic role in Riverfront and Central Area development by providing a major public educational and recreational attraction.

The 1990's saw the expected shrinkage of Pratt and Whitney employment at Rentschler Field. The redevelopment of Rentschler field along with the Waterfront and Central Area redevelopment continue as the two most significant economic thrusts of current strategic planning. Accompanying these major area-specific plan components, other Town-wide issues and opportunities were identified by the Land Use Action Team as crucial to the general and economic welfare of East Hartford. These are presented below.

ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

1. The aesthetic image of the Town.

All land uses showed evidence of what some team members call "blight." The perception of blight and the call for remedial action is emerging as one of the most important issues facing East Hartford. The topic of blight was not an issue in the 1990 Plan, and it can be inferred that citizens are becoming more aware of their environment and more demanding of the aesthetic image of their town. This is especially crucial in marketing East Hartford to potential businesses as an attractive

place to work and live. Residential neighborhoods might be marred by unpainted houses, unkempt gardens and litter. Business sectors might suffer from the visual cacophony of signs and unrelated façades, as well as litter and lack of landscaping. Parks and open spaces might be neglected resulting in unpruned trees, untended flower gardens and unmowed lawns. Industrial areas might show signs of aging infrastructure and buildings, lack of landscaping and green spaces.

This is by no means a universal problem. East Hartford remains an attractive and well-maintained community, but it is an increasing perception, especially along key entry corridors and gateway areas.



Area on Silver Lane

2. Traffic – intensity of development and accessibility to highways

Because East Hartford is an essentially economically sound community, many local commercial and business trips are generated each day, in addition to the personal trips of the residents. Commuter activity to and from Hartford is also a major contributor to traffic volumes and patterns. Situated at the heart of the Capital District, East Hartford's major highways and arterial roads carry a considerable amount of traffic each day. Drivers experience frustration in competing with commercial traffic in accessing major highways and getting through intersections as well as negotiating local roads and shopping areas.

Conversely, accessibility is a key factor that major firms will consider in making location decisions for new plants or offices. Poor circulation patterns, and confused residential and commercial traffic is not an environment attractive to potential employees or shipping managers. A Town that can offer major transportation routes that are easily and safely accessed has an advantage.

3 Residential and commercial land use conflicts

The team felt that “hodgepodge” or “spot” zoning has led to visual and functional conflicts in many neighborhoods. Commercial traffic in residential neighborhoods, uneven setbacks, unrelated building types, and unregulated signage are all signs of unplanned mixed use.

Additionally, conflicts arise from land uses that exist side by side on a larger scale. Commercial or industrial areas may adjoin residential neighborhoods. They may be unbuffered, or share the same access roads and other services. Intruding noises, visual discord, hectic activity and road congestion are all signs that land use has not been well planned.

4. Parks, open space and neighborhood mix

Team members were concerned that future development would encroach upon existing parks or vacant open space that should be earmarked for parkland or natural habitat. Where development does occur, they were concerned that a quality environment be created with a large percentage of the site left as open, vegetated space. They also felt that a variety of parks should be available to all the neighborhoods, offering a wide range of amenities to the various age groups and types of users.

5. Distribution of land management resources

Sometimes it appears as if one sector of the Town is receiving attention and resources at the expense of others. The Town is a complex mix of residential, commercial and industrial uses, and the team felt that land management resources should be allocated as fairly as possible across the wide range of needs.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Environmental components and circumstances which generate urban problems are often the same factors that present opportunities. The congestion and conflicts discussed in the previous section partly stem from the diversity of land uses and

the location of East Hartford in the Capital Region. The shrinkage of Pratt and Whitney was no doubt viewed as a major economic loss for East Hartford. These same factors, viewed from the flip side, have now been identified by the Land Use Action Team as the most significant opportunities for future development.

1. Connecticut River and East Hartford's Location in State

Rivers have historically generated great cities. Water transportation has been the key factor in the location and growth of most of the world's greatest cities. Roads and railways followed the river course, connecting cities in major transportation corridors. Today, East Hartford is situated in



Access to Major Highways at Governor

one of the major hubs of New England. It is serviced by Interstate Roads and the Bradley International Airport. The team recognized this as one of the major factors that contribute to East Hartford's opportunity to grow and evolve in the 21st century.

Some of the vacant land along the river is ideal for mixed-use development. Proper land use management tools and guide lines will insure the best use and design for this area.

Additionally, the Connecticut River provides one of the major potential recreational resources for the Town. Traditionally, water and the surrounding land areas provide a backdrop and playground for residents of all ages and social positions. In earlier times, picnicking, boating, swimming, fishing, public concerts and events have all been enjoyed at the water's edge. Unfortunately, urbanization and industrialization have claimed the rivers and harbors for commercial and industrial use. It is only in the past few decades that residents have recognized the great value that the open and unspoiled waterway could add to the urban landscape and neighborhood. The Action Team recognizes that the Connecticut River is a resource that, if well managed, can be a great resource for recreation as well as commerce.

2. Diversity of Land Uses

A community with a diversity of land uses is convenient. Residents value living in a community where shopping areas, restaurants, schools, places of work, parks and recreational destinations are all within a short commute.

Secondly, a diversity of land uses allows for variety and interest in the environment. If well-designed and maintained, all of the elements of the urban landscape (homes, office buildings, parks and landscaped areas) contribute to a vital, attractive environment.

And finally, a diversity of land uses contributes to a sound tax base, where commercial and industrial uses are contributing a substantial share to the community's revenues.

3. Rentschler Field (the Pratt & Whitney Plant site)

In 1990, East Hartford had only 809 acres of developable vacant land that was not in the floodplain (25% of which should be discounted due to wetlands and other impediments.) This was 6.9% of the total Town land area. Rentschler Field opens up approximately 8% more of the total Town land area for redevelopment as a large parcel package. This presents a unique and challenging opportunity for East Hartford to plan for and recruit the type of development that would be a major economic contributor to the tax base as well as a showcase example of urban redevelopment.

II.9 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ACCORDING TO MARKETING ISSUES

One of the most important tasks for East Hartford is to market the Town and all of the positive elements that make it desirable. Public perception is a problem for East Hartford as it is for many Towns. Once perceptions have been created a large effort is required to change them.

ISSUES

The following issues were listed as the most significant:

1. Create Effective Town Marketing
2. Access to Local Government
3. Education and Crime
4. Downtown Issues
5. Residential Mix

1. Create Effective Town Marketing

Current marketing efforts were perceived as being inadequate. It was decided that a professional team should be hired to work with a local government/marketing representative. This would provide the ability for East Hartford to best advertise itself to businesses and future residents. Primarily, the marketing team would require data on the Town to include services, education,

housing prices, quality of housing, etc. that could be crafted into marketing information for various targeted recipients.

2. Access to Local Government.

There was concern voiced by workshop participants that local government seems inaccessible for information on public services and existing resources. An effort needs to be made to change the perception and eliminate the problem.

3. Schools and Crime.

East Hartford has had a negative image regarding school performance and a high crime rate. In fact, the statistics for reduced crime and improved scores are positive. Marketing efforts should focus on improving the negative perceptions. This could be done with advertisements or news articles. Local brokers could assist in this effort. These two criteria contribute heavily to business leaders' decisions to locate a business and to evaluate a quality of life in a community.

4. Downtown Issues

Marketing East Hartford's Downtown can be done while renovation and re-retailing is in progress. The lack of sufficient retail variety and food/entertainment venues does not encourage visitors. A perception of a lack of security in an unoccupied Downtown keeps many residents away. Traffic on Main Street is discouraging to retail shopping. These issues need to be addressed so that Downtown can be marketed. A marketing program could focus on the improvements as they are being planned and implemented.

5. *Residential Mix*

East Hartford's residential mix is 40% rental. Of the available vacant housing units, 56%² are rental. If the concept is to encourage home ownership, more single family units or condo units need to be provided in a price range that is economically in tune with the market need.

OPPORTUNITIES

Issues that create a negative perception of the Town can be mitigated through a marketing program. Workshop participants outlined a number of positive assets for East Hartford.

1. Historical Significance
2. Diversity
3. Recreation
4. Location

1. *Historical Significance*

East Hartford was one of the colonial towns along the route from Boston and is filled with buildings representing every period in America's early history. This architectural fabric is an important asset that should not be overlooked. The town history could be part of a calendar with important events and photos of key important buildings. This would inspire a sense

² Population Facts, Census 90 updates and projections, by National Decision Systems

of history and pride in the community on the part of the residents and could be used to market the town to visitors.

2. *Diversity*

Today population diversity is considered an asset by many individuals. Many cities have been revitalized by families returning to them who want the character and diversity that is not present in many suburban towns. East Hartford can use its diversity to attract new families. The diversity must also be combined with marketing of education and housing and other key elements that attract families.

East Hartford's current diversity breakdown is as follows: 82% white, 10% black, 8% other (total 100%), with 9% Hispanic from a variety of races (black, white and other). Economic diversity is as follows; 21% of families have income over \$75,000/year, 44% earn \$35,000 to \$75,000 and approximately 25% earn below \$35,000; average household income is \$53,000/year.

3. *Recreation*

An asset and opportunity for marketing that cannot be overlooked is the Riverfront and the parks within the Town. (See Riverfront and Recreation and Open Space section for details). Few towns can boast a riverfront park and pedestrian bridge over the water to the state capitol.

4. Location

An asset and opportunity that was insufficiently discussed in the workshop was East Hartford's proximity to Downtown Hartford. Hartford has limited Downtown housing which could be provided by close-by East Hartford. Part of East Hartford's market demand potential for housing could be provided by Hartford's work force, making the market deeper and more attractive for local builders in East Hartford.

The riverfront housing in East Hartford is closer to Downtown Hartford than most other options for luxury multifamily living. East Hartford has affordable single family housing and is a convenient commute to Downtown Hartford. Median property values of \$153,000 make it attractive and affordable³ especially for young families.

³ National Decision Systems

III. Visions, Goals & Objectives

III.1

GEOGRAPHIC AREAS: RIVERFRONT

As a summary, the following vision statement was defined from workshop comments and reviewed by participants:

Vision Statement

“The Riverfront will be a catalyst for East Hartford economic, educational and recreation development:

Economic: Continuing real estate activity—offices, residential-- in South Meadows area, built around people attractions such as Science Center, hotels, restaurants, marina or boating facilities

Educational: Science Center, expanded Magnet Schools and other museum attractions developed as ‘learning corridor’ with transit linkages to Hartford and UTC/ Stadium

Recreation: The Connecticut and Hockanum River parks will preserve their natural environment, but offer facilities and access for active and passive recreation, built around expanded attractions such as nature preserves, walking and bike trails, and boat launches.

Vision Statement cont.

“New transportation linkages—mass transit, water taxis, and parking connections as well as lighted trails and boardwalks-- will make Riverfront facilities accessible to local and regional users”

Based on the vision statements described above, goals and objectives were created for each element—finding areas of common agreement that could point the way for creating consensus on strategies and next steps.

GOAL:

To take advantage of the location, views and amenities associated with the Riverfront as leverage for economic development and tax base for the Town of East Hartford.

OBJECTIVES:

- To define development programs for the Science Center, residential, and commercial development—office, retail/ restaurants-- that take advantage of regional riverfront plans and adjacent Hartford market and facilities.
- To protect and enhance the open space and environmental quality of the Riverfront and associated linkages as a selling point for tourism and for development-- including dealing with CRA odor issues.

III. 3 GEOGRAPHIC AREAS COMMERICAL CORRIDORS & AREAS

At the December 6th Planning Meeting, the Action Team for Other Commercial Areas formulated the following Vision Statement, Goals and Objectives:

Vision Statement

“The main commercial corridors be physically attractive with landscape, streetscape, building appearance, lighting; safe and attractive for pedestrian movement for a place to shop and live. A strong Town government/small business partnership with an ombudsman to assist businesses to grow and new businesses to purchase and refurbish vacant commercial buildings There should be transit links between commercial corridors and Main Street should be a viable commercial center. The Town of East Hartford as the research center of the world.”

GOAL

“To plan and develop viable and attractive commercial areas outside of the Central Business District to meet the needs for goods and services of the residents of East Hartford and visitors to East Hartford.”

OBJECTIVES

- To identify those areas outside of Downtown for commercial development or redevelopment including commercial corridors.
- To support projects for redevelopment of existing commercial corridors such as the Burnside Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan and the necessary funding
- To develop guidelines and development regulations for conversion of residential properties to commercial
- Inventory and evaluate existing vacant commercial properties and develop remodeling and market program
- To estimate the purchasing power (demand) of East Hartford residents and determine deficiencies in supply.
- Develop organizational structure and process for Town government/small entrepreneur partnership for hands-on assistance for development, expansion and marketing.

DISCUSSION

The vision, goals and objectives fall into four main categories as discussed below:

- 1) To identify areas and properties for new commercial development. Research is a desired business

Because so little undeveloped land is available in East Hartford, new commercial development will have to occur in

major areas ripe for redevelopment (such as Rentschler Field) or in small infill projects. Commercial areas with specialty stores that draw consumers from a larger area sometimes grow naturally in a Town, or else have been planned and constructed for that purpose. If the residents wish to develop commercial areas dedicated to a specific commercial or industrial activity such as research, the area will have to be carefully chosen and marketed.

2) To ensure safe and attractive main corridors using land management tools such as landscape and streetscape guidelines and guidelines for the conversion of residential land to commercial uses.

Residents want to avoid the type of uncontrolled conversion that is now visible on major corridors such as Burnside. The conversion strategy should include a study to determine if current needs are already being met with existing commercial establishments. If existing neighborhood stores or plazas are going out of business, there is no need for the conversion of more property to similar commercial uses. Landscape and streetscape guidelines could be part of zoning overlay district requirements.

3) A market analysis of supply and demand for East Hartford Residents.

A market analysis would help determine the role internal demand plays in the total economic picture of East Hartford. It

would be a part of the Conversion Strategy discussed above. This should be balanced with an analysis of what role outside visitors and prospective large-scale businesses would play in Hartford's future economic development.

4) To support small scale redevelopment including a Small Entrepreneur Program and Funding Programs.



School Street Square – Ellington Road & School St.

III. 4 LAND USES: INFRASTRUCTURE

At the third planning meeting on December 6, 1999, the Infrastructure, Traffic & Transportation Action Team formulated the following Vision Statement, Goals and Objectives:

Vision Statement

“That the Town of East Hartford will have a transportation network and traffic circulation system for ease of travel in a north-south direction, along commercial corridors and to and from Rentschler Field. To have a mass transportation system that connects activities and major destinations in the Town and west shore of the river.”

GOAL

“To assure adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of current and future demands (2020) of residents and Business.”

OBJECTIVES

- To develop and implement a traffic circulation and parking plan to meet the needs of the Town to the year 2020

- To develop and improve alternative means of transportation such as mass transit, bikeways, pedestrian trails and water transportation.
- To provide for a north-south arterial parallel to Main Street
- To develop a roadway system to support Rentschler Field Development
- To implement access management techniques for major corridors
- To maintain adequate capacity for water and sewer systems.
- To develop an inter-modal transportation system.

DISCUSSION

The vision statement, goals and objectives center around the follow main themes:

1. To develop a transportation system, providing an efficient traffic circulation and parking plan, providing ready access to all parts of the town and other regions, and linking all modes of transportation

A corridor study has already been done for Main Street and Burnside Ave. A comprehensive traffic study could be done to incorporate the recommendations from those studies into a Town-wide Traffic Control Plan. The plan would provide general guidelines and traffic control measures and techniques

(such as access management), pinpoint locations with problems and prescribe controls for specified streets and locations. The plan would also recommend alternative transportation modes and linkages such as mass transit, bikeways, pedestrian trails and water transportation. Statistics show that currently, most people drive to work alone. Perhaps incentives will need to be developed to encourage commuters to take advantage of inter-modal systems such as an improved Park & Ride Program when they are developed.

2. To provide additional arterials, namely a north-south arterial parallel to Main Street and a north-south arterial connecting Silver Lane to Brewer across Rentschler field.

The complete roadway system for Rentschler Field will depend on what type of redevelopment will go in there. If residential subdivisions and mixed-use development are part of the master plan, a different roadway pattern will be needed than if a single industry locates there. However, a single north-south access road will be and, in fact, seems to be currently needed to provide a way across this large area of land, regardless of its use.

A complete study of Main Street traffic patterns needs to be done before a major capital expenditure is made to construct an alternate route. Providing traffic controls on Main Street may be a highly adequate and preferable method to streamline traffic flow there.

3. To maintain the high level of utility service for current and future residents and businesses



View north on Main Street to Burnside

III.5**LAND USES: RESIDENTIAL**

At the third planning meeting on December 6, 1999, the Residential Development Action Team formulated the following Vision Statement, Goals and Objectives they would like to see incorporated into the Land Use Plan Update.

Vision Statement

“That the Town will have several hundred new units of upscale housing to meet the needs of current residents and to attract new residents. That successful programs are in place to increase the current number of owner occupied units and decrease the number of renter units so that households have a vested interest in the Town. To have successful programs in place to assist homeowners of older housing to refurbish the exterior and interior of their buildings and provide for continuing maintenance, including historic buildings. To have a pedestrian friendly environment.”

GOAL

“Through the provision of new and existing housing stock to meet the needs to market and attract new businesses and to expand existing businesses including the housing needs of workers, middle managers and upper management. Also, to meet the need of current households for provisions of housing stock for upward mobility and to retain younger households. To rehabilitate older existing housing stock to a standard or higher condition and to increase the percent of owner occupied housing within the Town of East Hartford.”

OBJECTIVES

- To identify potential areas for new upscale housing for development and to meet the needs of employees of new and expanded businesses as well as current households.
- To develop homeownership programs for current households to reduce the percent rental units and to increase the percent of owner occupied housing.
- To develop programs for the rehabilitation of owner occupied substandard housing and for continuing maintenance and upkeep.
- To create a positive image of the Town by identifying and describing its assets for marketing and to improve its self-image.
- To mitigate land use conflicts between residential and commercial uses.

DISCUSSION

The Vision, Goals and Objectives for Residential Development fall into several main categories.

1. Provision of Upscale Housing

The housing stock in East Hartford is in very good condition. However, only a small fraction of the housing appears to fall into the “upscale” or luxury category. Hartford is a very nice stable community that is in a “built out” stage. The major problem for the provision of any type of new housing is the lack of available land. The team has identified Rentschler Field and the Waterfront Development as possible sites for upscale housing and would like to make it a requirement for any future redevelopment of those areas. A study may be needed to identify other available and feasible areas of undeveloped land for this purpose. If the Town undertakes this study, it may become part of a general marketing and information packet produced by the Town.

2. Develop homeownership programs for current households to reduce the percent of rental units.

Housing statistics pose a dilemma for ownership conversion. Of the 20,343 occupied housing units, only (51%) or 10,810 are single family houses. Of the same 20,343 occupied housing units, 12,343 units (60%) were owner-occupied. It can be assumed that most of the single-family homes are owner occupied. Since 49% of the housing units are in apartment

buildings or other multiple-unit buildings, innovative programs would have to be developed to encourage some type of cooperative or condominium-type ownership.

3. To develop programs for the rehabilitation of owner occupied substandard housing and for continuing maintenance and upkeep.

There are various tools and programs already available that might apply to certain neighborhoods in East Hartford. First, there are HUD monies available for housing rehabilitation based on income levels. The most successful grant applications target neighborhoods where 70% of the residents are in the low to moderate income levels.

Secondly, there are Town-wide ordinances in place to regulate the types of activities and objects that can occur in front or side yards that are visible or accessible to the public. Most communities have ordinances that prohibit junked cars, appliances and other offensive or dangerous items. Some zoning regulations specify what activities may or may not take place in yards. The zoning and general Town ordinances should be consulted to determine what rules and regulations are already in place. If sufficient regulations are on the books now, Code Enforcement should be called on to enforce specific violations.

Lastly, there are neighborhood associations that create and publish neighborhood goals and objectives, and encourage all the residents to cooperate on a voluntary basis. The best

neighborhood programs keep the parks and streets clean and well kept, and give aid and “elbow grease” to neighbors who ask for help.

4. To create a positive image of the Town by identifying and describing its assets for marketing and to improve its self-image

An overabundance of assets and possibilities exist in East Hartford at present. The visitor is greeted with a myriad of images – from the New England flavored Naubuc Historic District to the gleaming facades of Founders Plaza, to the neat “middle American” neighborhoods of the south-east quadrant. Creating a positive image involves identifying and choosing the elements and images that are most reflective of the identity the residents wish to market.

In addition to visual images, there is also cultural atmosphere that can be created. This category encompasses a wide variety of possible programs and ventures. There are countless activities that towns and neighborhoods have undertaken across the country to boost their town or neighborhood image and “sell it” to prospective residents and businesses. This can be done on a neighborhood basis by a neighborhood association or can be done by the Town as part of a marketing program. Beautification programs including planting of trees and cleaning parks, block parties, street carnivals, historic tours, establishing Town greens or monuments, holding concerts and picnics are only some of the ideas that have been repeated with success in many small towns.

East Hartford can also create a distinct image to attract a certain following, whether it focuses on antiques, arts and crafts, flowers, music, business, industry or something truly unique.

5. To mitigate land use conflicts between residential and commercial uses.

This may be one of the most problematic areas to mitigate because conflict occurs in so many different ways and in so many different areas. Some visual conflict is inevitable when an area is in transition from residential to commercial and different uses exist side to side. This is happening now on lower Main Street, High Street and other main corridors.

General mitigation guidelines and tools can be drawn up, but the specific conflicts must be pinpointed before the mitigation measures can be applied. Measures such as berms, green space buffers, traffic control, sign control, zoning regulations and others tools should be available and applied when needed.

III.2 VISION FOR LAND USES: INDUSTRIAL

Vision Statement

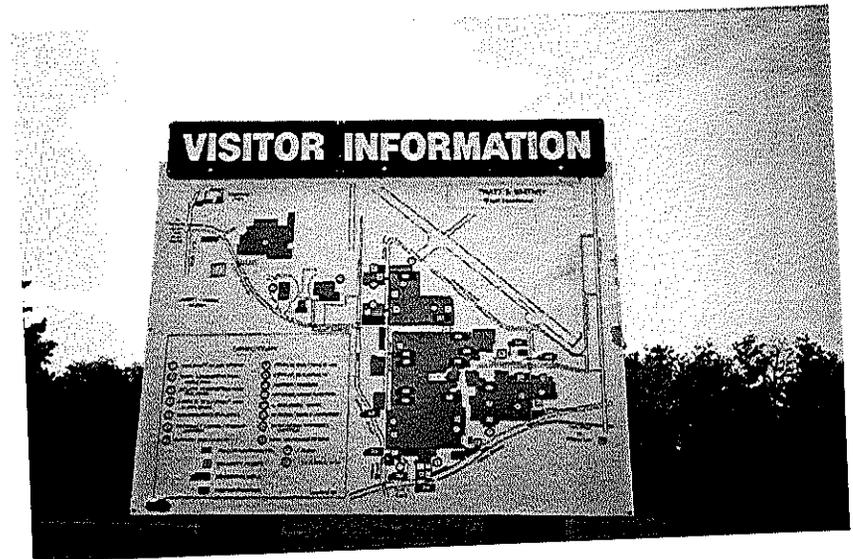
"To "think big" by creating a fertile field for business in East Hartford. The vision of East Hartford as a place to establish and grow new and existing businesses including the e-commerce industries.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

In order to achieve the vision the Action Team identified a number of goals and objectives.

- Development of a more diversified industrial and manufacturing base to be less dependence on a few major employers.
- Take advantage of the transportation location for distribution and industry.
- Encourage growth in high tech, internet services and e-commerce
- Develop Rentschler Field as a business hub or park
- Development of business clusters through zoning
- Improvement of infrastructure to support high tech including further distribution of fiber optics
- Improvement of public transit for local employees

- Development of an atmosphere of cooperation between business and local government



Current posted map of Rentschler Field

III.7

LAND USES: RECREATION/OPEN SPACE

As a summary, the following vision statement was defined from workshop comments and reviewed by participants

Vision Statement

“The Town will establish an action program for acquisition and preservation of new open space—based on the attitude of ‘doing what is best for East Hartford’:

- *Additional larger scale parks and preserved open space*
- *Interconnected ‘greenways’ linked by walkways*
- *Creation of a new East Hartford Land Trust as not-for profit vehicle*
- *Zoning requirements for % of developed sites as open space*

Vision Statement, cont

“The Town will maximize access and utilization of its parks and recreation facilities for all residents:

- *Taking advantage of stadium opportunity: adjacent uses/ eventual potential for covered facility*
- *Capital improvements such as walking trails, cross-country ski trails, lighted playfields*
- *Better parking, transit access, accessibility for disabled*
- *Expanded budget for better management and maintenance*
- *Additional year-round recreation programs, cultural and educational activities for all age groups, diverse interests*

GOALS

To maximize the economic development amenity value of East Hartford's extensive open space/ recreation system-- individual parks, river and brook greenways, individual and group recreation opportunities.

OBJECTIVES:

- To enhance or develop key regional open space assets in East Hartford such as the Riverfront or the potential of Rentschler Field, and to find ways to attract regional funds for maintenance and programming.
- To preserve key open space sites-- agricultural lands, key gateway views—and enhance local recreation programs and facilities, including boat launches, cross country skiing, and restaurant/ concession potential.
- To encourage greenways linking neighborhoods and employment areas to the Riverfront as a focus for recreation activity—walkways, marinas, playing fields.
- To maximize appropriate accessibility—auto, pedestrian, public transit, waterborne-- to open space resources.
- To provide zoning protection for open space resources and zoning incentives for adjacent properly-scaled economic development.
- To market East Hartford's comprehensive open space system and recreation programs as a major quality of life amenity to retain and attract businesses.

- To use open space and streetscape as a way to reinforce downtown and commercial corridors as visually attractive investment sites.



III.8 FUNCTIONAL AREAS: LAND USE MANAGEMENT

At the third planning meeting on December 6, 1999, the Land Use Management Team formulated the following Vision Statement, Goals and Objectives they would like to see incorporated into the Land Use Plan Update.

Vision Statement

“For East Hartford to have the aesthetic and social characteristics of a “Town atmosphere” with restored neighborhoods, well maintained homes, trees on Main Street, pathway and bikeway links, more open space, aesthetically pleasing signage and well executed land management regulations to maintain the attractive appearance of “Our Town.”

GOAL

“To commit resources to plan and implement the necessary land management tools to achieve a physically attractive and well-maintained community (aesthetics image) – in effect, to raise the bar.”

OBJECTIVES

- To develop the organizational structure and planning process to develop land management tools such as design guidelines, access management, open space landscaping, streetscaping, lighting, historic preservation, zoning, overlay districts, waterfront development, corridor enhancement and to address land use conflicts
- Incorporate a traffic circulation and parking plan to address intensity of development and accessibility to highways
- Mitigate land use conflicts (i.e. residential and commercial)
- Incorporate maintenance of property as a land management tool
- Incorporate mitigation fee for adverse impacts
- Develop tools to build neighborhoods

DISCUSSION

The Vision, Goals and Objectives for Land Use Management fall into several main categories.

1. Residential Land Use

The first major focus is the maintenance and protection of residential neighborhoods. Residents desire well maintained homes and properties in residential neighborhoods that are buffered from commercial or industrial uses. Residents would like to see the neighborhood identity and image strengthened through newly created management tools.

Specific projects include preserving old housing, restoring deteriorating neighborhoods, creating new higher income housing on larger lots, separating residential areas from

highways and commercial or industrial areas with buffers, planting trees along neighborhood streets and creating neighborhood centers.

2. Open Space

The second major focus is on the preservation, enhancement, and utilization of existing parks and the creation of new open spaces. Residents desire a network of well-maintained and landscaped parks and open spaces accessible to all neighborhoods by bikeways and footpaths. They also wish to set aside more land for additional open space.

Specific projects include the creation of bikeways and footpaths to connect neighborhoods and parks, creating adequate playground areas in existing and new parks, creating town squares and plazas, and preserving existing agricultural land.

3. Transportation

A traffic circulation and parking plan is crucial for the orderly flow of commercial, industrial and residential traffic. The plan should address intensity of development and accessibility to highways.

Specific projects include providing ample parking downtown and at the riverfront, creating adequate and organized signage, enforcing the speed limits, and adding landscaped islands to Main Street and other corridors and collectors to slow traffic.

Specific areas to be addressed are Main Street, Silver Lane, the Science Center and CocaCola Main Street.

4. Central Area Development

Although the Team advocates waterfront and downtown corridor development and enhancement, they want to develop an organizational structure and management tools to regulate this development. The management tools should include design guidelines, signage coordination, zoning, overlay districts, historic preservation, access management, open space requirements and landscaping, and mitigation of adverse impacts.

Specific projects include developing a railroad town, creating pedestrian malls, high tech malls and creating an Economic Development Commission to oversee development.

In discussing all of the above areas, The Action Team considered a wide range of land use management tools that may or may not be in place in East Hartford now. As in most towns, basic tools such as zoning, historic preservation, and code enforcement are currently used to maintain the environment according to standing ordinances. If more refined techniques such as overlay districts are required, they will have to be designed, adopted and implemented for specific areas.

An overlay district is one which imposes more stringent requirements than the underlying districts. This tool is useful in targeting specific items to be protected or encouraged in specific areas. The boundaries of the overlay district may or

may not duplicate the boundaries of the underlying districts. For instance, a Corridor Overlay District along a particular street could include special design guidelines to enhance its commercial appeal. The district may cross over several underlying districts including commercial, industrial, or residential, and would impose the same additional guidelines to all, leaving the original requirements of the districts intact.

Likewise, access management is tool that can be used in specific locations, after a traffic analysis is done. Traffic volumes, peak traffic hours, local and remote destinations, the location and use of parking lots and traffic and pedestrian circulation patterns are all factors to analyze before specific controls can be put in place. Controls such as the number of curbcuts allowed, types of parking patterns allowed, medians to slow traffic, turn lanes, signs and signal lights to direct traffic are all means to manage traffic on specific roads. Access management – controlling access to specific locations via main entrances and exits to parking lots, shared driveways and the provision of rear access to property – is but one of the traffic management tools that can be used to alleviate congestion and confusion.

The ideas presented above can be recommended broadly in the comprehensive plan, but neighborhood or corridor management needs to take place on a case by case basis.

III.9

VISION FOR FUNCTIONAL AREAS: MARKETING

Vision Statement

“Utilize a professional marketing team in conjunction with volunteer and local government representative to create an image program for the Town as a diverse crossroad community with affordable housing ,recreation opportunities, high quality education, and superior access to transportation hubs.”

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

In order to achieve the vision there are a number of goals and objectives

- Develop professional marketing resources
- Improve image and perception to insiders (residents) and outsiders (visitors)
- Exploit crossroads opportunities
- Market both to potential residents and businesses and existing residents and businesses
- Market development opportunities including the riverfront and Rentschler Field



Refurbished buildings on Main Street

IV. Defining Strategies to Achieve Desired Vision

A series of steps, summarized in the following sections of this report, were undertaken to define 'priority strategic initiatives' for the Economic Development Strategy.

- The first step in defining strategies to achieve the desired vision is to identify 'big ideas', or initial strategies, to 'close the gap' between the current state (defined by the inventory of issues and opportunities) and the desired future state (the vision agreed upon in the plan workshops). This step is documented in an introductory chart.

For each plan element, a variety of ideas were defined to be tested by each task force as to support, phasing, and relationship to strategies for other categories.

- The first analysis had to do with The initiatives were then examined with respect to support and phasing. Proposed ideas were analyzed with respect to a series of needed prerequisites for implementation--public, private or civic sector readiness and ability to assist with making ideas into reality:

Stakeholder support
Community support
Town government support

Market support
Implementation activities
Funding
Synergistic linking
Potential to expand tax base
Employment opportunities

Task force participants assisted the team in grading each strategic idea with respect to each of these categories. The summary results indicated which of the strategies for each task force element are ready to be implemented, as opposed to which of the strategies require more lead time for preparation and cultivation of support. These resulting initiatives are described in detail at the end of this section.

- The final step was to consolidate these prioritized initiatives into three final recommended priority initiatives for each task force, described in the 'Implementation Framework' chart in Chapter 5 and in more detail in the Executive Summary.

The results of this analysis are discussed below for each element of the overall economic development strategy.

**IV.1 GEOGRAPHIC AREAS:
RIVERFRONT**

The chart at the left identifies the ‘big ideas’ for the riverfront, defined in the public workshops as ways to ‘close the gap’ between the current conditions on the riverfront and its future vision.

Current State (Inventory)	Closing the Gap (Big Ideas)	Future State Vision
Science Center Planned for Commerce Center Site	Investigate how to leverage Science Center or other museum on central Riverfront site	East Hartford-based Museum is integral part of Greater Hartford Region
Magnet Middle School underway at Commerce Center but no other Riverfront institutional uses	Investigate program feasibility and potential sites for facilities and linked riverfront-related “Learning Corridor”	Riverfront as venue for variety of museums or institutional development, including Middle Magnet School.
Offices near but not related to riverfront, only one central riverfront residential project	Identify, develop or redevelop sites for river-related office and residential use	Riverfront as amenity for expanded office development and higher-end housing
CT River, Hockanum trails, boat launch, amenities	Expanded trail links and programs tied to new development proposals	Extensive linked trails and amenities related to adjacent development
Auto access only, nearby parking not always available	Investigate short-term, long-term transit links and shared parking	Accessible riverfront featuring links to inland areas, region via various travel modes
Preserved riverfront land but odor problems from CRA plant	Work with regional entities to solve pollution problems	Attractive riverfront with minimal detrimental features
Time consuming and difficult to develop sites along river	Create defined procedures to protect river but allow efficient development	Environmentally protected river with appropriate adjacent development

*Strategic Initiatives Refined as a Result of
through Analysis of Implementation Potential*

As a result of the implementation analysis by the Riverfront task force, ideas were tested in terms of various levels of community and public support or other factors.

Following is a description of these resulting strategic initiatives, listed in the order resulting from the implementation analysis (ranging from initiatives with most immediate potential to those with longer-term potential):

- **WORK WITH REGIONAL ENTITIES TO SOLVE POLLUTION**
The most immediate priority was dealing with pollution problems that may affect the riverfront—especially those having to do with odor from the recovery plant on the opposite shore. Strongest available support is from stakeholders, community and town government, but impact on economic potential and market support are important factors.
- **IDENTIFY, DEVELOP SITES FOR RIVER-RELATED OFFICE AND RESIDENTIAL**
To capitalize on economic, tax base and employment opportunities, riverfront amenity sites need to be aggressively packaged and marketed, with strong community and town governmental support.

- **INVESTIGATE PROGRAM FEASIBILITY AND POTENTIAL SITES FOR FACILITIES AND LINKED RIVERFRONT-RELATED 'LEARNING CORRIDOR'**
Building on strong synergistic links to the committed 'Magnet Middle School' adjacent to the Science Center site, developing the area with an educational theme could attract other cultural/ not-for-profit uses, whether Science Museum, Museum of Technology, or other institution, as well as corporate support for associated job training and local worker empowerment.
- **CREATE DEFINED PROCEDURES TO PROTECT RIVER BUT ALLOW EFFICIENT DEVELOPMENT**
It is important to provide understandable and efficient rules for development of riverfront sites that both preserve environmental features and give developers realistic opportunities to develop sites adjacent to the river. Such an approach has strong community and town support.
- **INVESTIGATE SHORT-TERM, LONG-TERM TRANSIT LINKS AND SHARED PARKING**
Access for East Hartford workers to potential riverfront sites is an important component to attracting new businesses. At the same time, tourism related institutions along the riverfront would also benefit from more efficient access.

- **EXPANDED TRAIL LINKS AND PROGRAMS TIED TO NEW DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS**
Continuing the 'Riverfront Recapture' type of open space development could create physical links along the waterfront that would reinforce links between adjacent sites. These are less immediate priorities, although important to both town and local stakeholders.
- **INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBLE RELOCATION OF SCIENCE CENTER TO MORE CENTRAL SITE**
Although citizens feel strongly about the Center, this relocation proposal did not receive as high a rating in terms of local support—the location of the Science Center is understood to be up to its board and not the community. At the same time, however, the idea of a major tourism/ cultural attraction such as a Museum of Technology or other new institution, at the foot of the Founders Bridge complementing Adriaen's Landing, was a compelling vision. also seen as a less immediate priority—existing links between the Science Center and the riverfront and magnet middle school are strong, and while linkages and town support are also available for other sites, there is less community support for such a shift at this point in time.

In general, the task force perceived strong linkage justification and available town support and employment benefits for all of the above proposals, but existing implementation organization and funding were seen as lacking.

Other ideas suggested by participants include: Leasing (not selling) publicly-controlled development parcels, facilitation of riverfront access, not-for-profit parking, taking note of the science center and riverfront-related church/ school visitor market for retail and concessions, and creating a 'sportsman's park' in the North Meadows area

IV.2 GEOGRAPHIC AREAS: DOWNTOWN

In order to thrive and prosper in the next decade and beyond, the East Hartford's Downtown needs to define a vision and create an identity. An important question is what function and role Downtown should play in the town's future and how Downtown will relate to the town's neighborhoods and the larger metropolitan area and region.

Downtown is remembered by long time residents with a nostalgic fondness. Before the malls were built in nearby Manchester, Downtown was the place to meet friends and neighbors, visit public and library facilities and shop without having to travel to Hartford. In recent years with retail competition from new malls and value oriented retail centers in Vernon and Manchester, there are few, if any, people walking the streets after 5 p.m. Businesses are rarely open weekday evenings or on weekends.

According to an Amadon & Associates, Inc. study of 1995 "Main Street ... is long, wide expanse serving a number of small shops, personal service businesses and restaurants ...the street has returned to its pre-1920's condition without some of it's former style and grace." Although this is a condition shared with many cities and towns across the country, East Hartford has the opportunity to transform its Central Business District (CBD) by reaching for a consensus on goals, seeking the support and cooperation of the public and private sector, and creating systems to insure the plan's implementation.

The Strategic Economic Development workshop participants envisioned a return to a safe and stimulating place that would be active day and night, with specialty retail goods and services, themed restaurants and community and cultural events, with town parks and pedestrian connections safe from street traffic.

East Hartford's historic, ethnic and cultural diversity is key to the realization of the vision of Downtown as a Gateway to the Town. The Downtown's historic buildings, with architectural, and cultural significance can provide the basis for productive reuse as retail, housing, and support service facilities.

CONTEXT

The East Hartford Downtown includes the area bounded by approximately Burnside Ave to the north, the Connecticut Blvd. to the south and north on Main Street. An argument can be made for its extension south to Silver Lane.

Downtown has the potential to support \$422 Million in sales. In fact, all of East Hartford supported actual sales of \$250 M¹ in 1999

Many of the vision ideas, including creation of a central median, parking improvements, and creation of a major open space/ development node at the Connecticut Boulevard intersection, date from the 1989 Plan of Conservation and Development.

¹ National Decision Systems 1999 Town Wide Population Facts

Recent initiatives include a 1996 Main Street Business Development Plan, a 1995 Main Street Corridors Plan, the building of a Town Green and a recent plan to develop the corner of Main Street and Connecticut Blvd. into three mixed-use retail/commercial buildings.

Strategies

Once there is a vision for the future, some “big ideas”, and goals and objectives, the next step is to develop a strategy that contains specific tasks. The following tasks were listed by the workshop teams:

- **Create and implement a collective and unified CBD plan** to improve the visual, historical and spatial quality of Downtown, and to create an increased sense of pride in Downtown through implementation of a façade and signage program. Downtown would involve the Connecticut DOT to help with construction of streetscape improvements, preparation of a parking management plan, and traffic mediation through downtown.
- **Develop a market strategy** to improve the overall business climate of Downtown with the goal of improving the retail mix, boosting investor confidence and encouraging the retention and expansion of existing businesses. This would be accomplished through preparation of recruitment materials, market research, preparation of a CBD retail plan and aggressive recruitment of businesses that fit the plan.

- **Recruit a large and diverse leadership and advocacy “Steering Committee”** from the business and residential communities to guide the organization through the creation of committees and outreach programs to involve the community.

Priorities

1. CREATE AND IMPLEMENT A COLLECTIVE AND UNIFIED CBD (DOWNTOWN) PLAN

- Preparation of a CBD retail plan to guide the placement of appropriate uses within the commercial district.
- Reactivate and connect historically worthy buildings to business core as a regional attraction.
- Showcase Main Street as an attractive gateway to the Town with street and building improvements.
- Stimulate local economy through the reuse of underutilized building stock to create quality office space and diverse retail, food and services.
- Implement a façade and signage program.
- In concert with physical improvements in Downtown, an aggressive campaign should be launched to strengthen Downtown’s existing businesses through business retention initiatives. Any recruitment of new businesses within Downtown should be consistent with the retail plan.

- Strengthen Main Street by undertaking a comprehensive program of streetscape improvements with a landscaped median park extending for several blocks. Continue to coordinate Town activities with the CONNDOT including improved street lighting, more visible street signage and appearance of key CBD gateway entries.
- It was mentioned repeatedly in public workshops that good street lighting is key for the perception of public safety in Downtown at night.
- Make CBD more visitor-friendly. The East Hartford Chamber of Commerce should be more accessible and active with a new location on Main Street.
- Continue to revitalize Downtown as a link to the waterfront. A revitalization of the waterfront has begun and will result in a new waterfront image.
- Develop a comprehensive graphics system for parking. Improve existing parking lots by upgrading lighting, paving and landscaping. Respond to specific parking needs and issues of businesses and owners.
- Analyze other ways of getting in, out & around Downtown, including a CBD trolley service linking the waterfront and other commercial corridors. Insure that Downtown is accessible to all who visit, work or live here and seek to create a mix of parking and transit options to meet the various needs. Continue to improve the ease of movement for pedestrians.

- Aggressively market and promote Downtown to building owners, real estate professionals, and businesses seeking to locate or expand in Downtown.

2. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A MARKETING STRATEGY

Physical improvements would not be complete without a strategy to help to promote downtown as the physical changes take place. Merchants and organizations that have spent time and funds on improvements need to see results.

- Encourage Downtown retailers to develop joint promotional campaigns, coordinated hours of operation in evenings and on weekends, participate in Downtown community events, and improve the quality of information available to shoppers and other visitors about places to shop, eat and services.
- Promote Downtown as a unique shopping area with special retail ambiance defined by Downtown's historic architecture – a local specialty center, attracting regional uses.
- The Adriaen's Landing project with new convention center and hotel is close to the East Hartford CBD. This strength should be developed and promoted to bring tourists, conventioners and local residents into the town.
- Organize a cohesive approach to "post-event" activities. Sporting and entertainment events should be complemented

by restaurants, coffeehouses and bars to give people the option of a full evening on the town.

- Market Downtown's assets within the town, within the state and across the nation. With its proximity to Adriaen's Landing and the riverfront, Downtown is an excellent place to live, work and relax. The town also can boast of substantial a cultural diversity and aesthetic beauty unrivaled by any town of comparable size in New England. A comprehensive marketing campaign should capitalize on these assets to enhance the town's image.
- For Downtown to be successful it must feel vibrant & alive and be full of people. Market Downtown as the premier destination for shopping, dining & entertainment by surveying Town area customers for market information and reviewing Downtown advertising campaign.
- Develop an East Hartford Economic Development Center." That would have Downtown as a major focus. This could provide a one-stop shopping center where all information would be available for would-be developers, business owners and entrepreneurs in Downtown area. Outreach efforts to existing businesses and marketing efforts for potential businesses will be part of this program. For efficiency purposes, this might be a town-wide center. The resources of existing organizations should be utilized rather than creating new agencies.
- Encourage public input into the decision-making process for CBD development.
- Increase access of ethnic and racial minorities into business development in Downtown area. By encouraging all

members of the community to participate in Downtown as a celebration of East Hartford's diversity, the variety will become an effective marketing tool and will help generate an interesting ethnic retail mix.

3. RECRUIT EXPANDED PARTNERSHIP "STEERING COMMITTEE"

Neither the private sector nor non-profit sector can work without the full cooperation and assistance of local government. The local government needs an advocacy group that provides advice to the fledgling business improvement association, assists with funding direction and most importantly promotes the plan to the local government for support and for coordination with other development projects.

- Develop a sense of responsibility and accountability on the part of business owners, building owners and town government. As a first step, implement the "Keep Downtown Clean and Beautiful" program.
- Promote the "Steering Committee" as the primary advocate and voice for Downtown interests by continuing to develop a strong partnership with Downtown programs & services, improving relationships with the media, and developing a relationship with the State of Connecticut on a broad range of Downtown issues.
- Increase member participation and input into Downtown by initiating a new member visitors program, initiating a Steering Committee orientation program, recruiting new

participants for events and adding a statistically significant member survey.

CONCLUSION

Revitalization of Downtown can best be accomplished through a co-sponsorship of the public and private sector with a commitment, financial and otherwise, from both sectors to make this plan succeed.

To insure success, all strategic initiatives should address elements such as circulation, parking, land use, architectural and design standards, physical enhancements, and development standards, as well as addressing a specific section on historic buildings and pedestrian connections, diversity issues, and management. The town has begun implementation of some initiatives, primarily street enhancements and creation of parks and riverfront development.

**STRATEGIES FOR CLOSING THE GAP
DOWNTOWN AREA**

<i>CBD Current State(Inventory)</i>	<i>Close the Gap(Big Ideas)</i>	<i>Future State (Vision)</i>
Poor maintenance of historic fabric	Reactivate and connect historically worthy buildings to business core as a regional attraction	Preserved historic buildings and attractive Main Street
Main Street lacks a strong appeal for residents and visitors creating a poor perception of downtown	Implement concepts for street improvements, better lighting and security, and scheduled events.	Showcase Main Street as an attractive gateway to the Town with street and building improvements
Many vacant spaces/buildings and physical gaps between stores	Stimulate local economy through reuse of underutilized buildings to create quality office space and diverse retail, food and services	Less vacant building stock and an improved Main Street economically
Lacks CBD organization to initiate events and to organize improvements	Bring chamber of Commerce back to CBD	An organization to secure funding and manage change
Main Street lacks appeal and destination oriented attractions	Fund/modernize the downtown's living room--the Raymond Library	A major destination center to attract people to downtown

IV.3

GEOGRAPHIC AREAS: COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

The Action Team considered implementation feasibility for each of the "Big Ideas" for commercial corridors and areas. The following ideas emerged as the most supportable.

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A PHYSICAL ENHANCEMENT PLAN FOR MAIN COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

The action team believed that this proposal would receive strong community and Town Government support. The *Burnside Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan* and the *Main Street Business District Redevelopment Plan* are good examples of this approach.

The Burnside Avenue Plan has just completed a façade treatment design plan as part of its physical enhancement. The Plan objectives clearly define those activities necessary for the revitalization of this corridor. These activities coupled with a sound educational and marketing program for the property owners, businesses and residents in this corridor should result in a successful program. Private and Public investment in the Burnside Corridor should continue until the Plan objectives have been achieved.

The methods and approaches that have succeeded at Burnside could be used as a model to implement the Main Street Plan. Meanwhile, a Corridor Plan Plans could be developed for Silver Lane, Main Street extensions, and then Connecticut Boulevard. These are the main commercial corridors and gateways for East Hartford.

Corridor guidelines need to address land use, building appearance, lighting, landscaping, and auto circulation/ pedestrian safety issues. Additional ideas included transportation lines and transit links to make shopping in the commercial corridors easier.

CREATE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR TOWN GOVERNMENT/ SMALL BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP

The Action Team rated this proposal as the second highest for early implementation. An opportunity exists in the development and implementation of the Corridor Plans to incorporate a program to assist small businesses. This program would include resources available, financial assistance, and assistance in developing business and marketing plans. The Action Team suggested that the Town provide for an ombudsman on staff. This person could serve to coordinate available federal, state, local and volunteer resources as well as providing technical assistance.

IDENTIFY BUSINESS RETENTION/ NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH IDENTIFICATION OF SUPPLY/ DEMAND MARKET
ESTIMATE PURCHASING POWER OF EAST HARTFORD RESIDENTS DETERMINE NET DEMAND FOR RETAIL TRADE AND SERVICES, IMPLEMENT MARKET PLAN

The disposable income of all residents of East Hartford for the purchase of retail trade and services exceeds that for the number and size of retail sales and service establishments in East Hartford. This provides for an opportunity to create new businesses and expand existing establishments to meet part of that demand.

A study and analysis of the 1997 Economic Census can determine the amount of disposable income for the residents of East Hartford and an estimate of their propensity to spend by S.I.C. Categories for retail sales and services. This is the demand side of the equation. The same census records the number of establishments by S.I.C. Category and their sales. The net difference indicates a surplus or deficit.

Identifying the need for specific retail sales and services to meet demands demand can be incorporated into the market program to attract new businesses and encourage the expansion of existing businesses.

**STRATEGIES FOR CLOSING THE GAP
COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS & AREAS**

<i>Current State (Inventory)</i>	<i>Close the Gap (Big Ideas)</i>	<i>Future State (Vision)</i>
Poor physical appearance of corridors, incl vacant buildings and conflicting uses	Corridor plans: Main St. including Lower and Upper Main St. Silver Lane, Connecticut Ave. Implement findings of Burnside Corridor study.	Aesthetically pleasing corridors with the right mix of uses and services to meet the demand of residents
Uncoordinated transit and transportation means for residents.	Transportation and Traffic analysis for corridors to determine need and preferred modes and routes and schedules for transit	Well connected neighborhoods and commercial areas, with readily available transportation alternatives
Unplanned fit of stores and services to needs of residents and visitors Stores going out of business/vacant buildings.	Market analysis to determine best fit of services and stores to neighborhood needs. Determine visitor needs in corridors.	Commercial corridors with the variety and quality of shops and services to fit resident's needs. Thriving businesses and vital streets.
Entrepreneurs acting on their own without assistance from local government	Small business/Town Government partnership Program to help small businesses make business and marketing plans, identify and obtain financing	Business opportunities clearly identified for the entrepreneur. Businesses thriving growing, and meeting the needs of the residents

IV.4 LAND USES: INFRASTRUCTURE

DEVELOP ROADWAY SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT RENTSCHLER FIELD DEVELOPMENT: CONNECT TO OTHER ARTERIALS

This is the highest priority of the Action Team to achieve the community's goal for economic development. The development plan for Rentschler Field will forecast the type and intensity of development proposed by which the traffic generated can be forecasted as part of the future traffic circulation plan. This is necessary to determine roadway systems and estimated costs to support future roadway development. This documentation is necessary to lobby financial support from state and regional agencies. A traffic analysis recently addressed the proposed stadium but not full development of the Field as a large scale mixed land use project.

PREPARE AND IMPLEMENT A TRAFFIC CIRCULATION AND PARKING PLAN

The Action Team identified this initiative as having very strong stakeholders, community, town government, and market support for implementation. The preparation of a Town Wide Traffic Circulation Plan that incorporated future development (i.e. Waterfront, Rentschler Field and Commercial Corridors) is necessary to determine location and cost of improvements to provide for convenient and safe access for travel and to attract

visitors. The traffic plan serves as a coherent policy and provides the documentation for support of federal, state and local agencies for future funding.

The Traffic Circulation Plan can be used to attract and optimize public and private investment for economic development.

IMPLEMENT ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION- TRANSPORTATION - DEVELOP A MASS TRANSIT SYSTEM TO CONNECT MAJOR DESTINATIONS

The Action Team recognizes the need for planning future alternative means of transportation to key areas of economic activity such as Main Street, Burnside Avenue, The Waterfront, Rentschler Field and Greater Hartford. The forecast and analysis of future alternative transportation modes can be incorporated into the Town-Wide traffic plan to determine the impacts in the reduction of vehicular traffic and road improvement costs. Future corridors and stops can be identified for future preservation of right of ways.

NORTH/SOUTH ARTERIAL PARALLEL TO MAIN STREET

For several years the Town has recognized the need for a North/South traffic alternative to Main Street. This is necessary to remove the traffic congestion, for safety, and to provide easy access to other designations. The through-traffic

on Main Street (including Downtown) effects pedestrian safety, deteriorates quality of life, discourages retail customers and results in an unattractive area for the community to congregate. Again the need for a Town-Wide Traffic Plan incorporating the forecasted demands for future development will provide the needed documentation to support the need for a parallel corridor, identify a preferred corridor and estimate of cost. Then the town will have a coherent and supported plan interfaced with the federal, state, and local agencies for funding and implementation.

ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT ACCESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES IN MAJOR CORRIDORS

In order to mitigate traffic conflicts in our major corridors such as Burnside Avenue, access management techniques such as shared driveways, service roads, rear lot deliveries and controlled turning movement have strong support for early implementation. Access management would result in having the Commercial Corridors more attractive for retail customers and safer for pedestrians. The access management techniques could be developed and incorporated in the land use regulations through overlay districts.

**STRATEGIES FOR CLOSING THE GAP
INFRASTRUCTURE**

<i>Current State (Inventory)</i>	<i>Close the Gap (Big Ideas)</i>	<i>Future State (Vision)</i>
No roadway system for Rentschler field development	Develop a roadway system to support Rentschler Field	Rentschler Field as a productive area of town, well served by a planned roadway system
Main Street clogged with through traffic Unsafe for pedestrians	Provide an alternative arterial parallel to Main Street for North-South through traffic	A Town where Main Street has traffic related only to the shops, businesses and entertainment there, while through-traffic uses an alternative route
Corridors clogged with traffic, difficulty and delays in travel	Develop and implement a traffic circulation and parking plan to meet the needs of the Town to the year 2020	Ease of travel on all corridors in East Hartford through a traffic circulation plan and access management.
Lack of a good Mass Transit System	Develop and improve alternative means of transportation including mass transit, pedestrian and bike trails and water transportation	Access to all parts of town and the city of Hartford through a wide choice of transportation modes.
Little coordination with CONNDOT	Establish a good working relationship with CONNDOT	Regular communication and planning efforts to coordinate federal, state and local traffic and transportation issues

IV.5 RESIDENTIAL

A major priority is to provide for more upper middle income housing to provide upward mobility of those households of middle and upper management attracting new business. Opportunities to meet this need was cited in the development of the waterfront and Rentschler Field as large scale mixed use projects. This program approach received high marks for stakeholders, community, town government and market support. This approach has strong linkage north of the market, waterfront and land management elements of the Plan.

The following is a description of the resulting strategic initiatives; listed in the order resulting from the implementation analysis (immediate potential to implement to long-term potential).

- **MORE COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS**

The Town currently provides for community activities and events. This was verified by the high grade this approach received for current activities being implemented. This approach calls for the coordination, expansion and marketing of these activities to attract new residents and retain existing ones. This approach has strong linkage with the market element of this plan and should be incorporated into that activity. It received strong community and Town Government Support as well as high marks for synergetic linkage.

- **FIRST TIME HOME OWNERSHIP PROGRAM TO INCREASE OCCUPIED HOUSING**

As urban areas populations become more diverse, the key for residents to have a vested interest in the economic wealth or the community is through home ownership. The approach is to provide for affordable home ownership to those families that marginal qualify for conventional mortgages. A coalition of local banks, town government and state agencies are necessary to develop and implement successful programs. This approach has strong community and Town Government support.

- **MAINTENANCE OF OLDER RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES AND PROPERTIES**

The appearance of older residential structures and properties are necessary to achieve an attractive community, restoring pride in neighborhoods, maintaining market values and managing urban blight. Designating specific neighborhoods for a comprehensive approach of providing technical and financial assistance in a systematic manner has met with success. This activity demonstrated major community and Town Government Support. However, stakeholder support was not strong. This indicates a need for a marketing and public relations program to increase stakeholder support. This approach would have strong linkage with Land Use Management Tools and Marketing.

- **MARKET MARKETING PROGRAM TO ATTRACT RESIDENTS**

There is a strong competition among communities to attract new residents in support of economic development. The key activity to accomplish this task is aggressive marketing of the assets of the Town of East Hartford and its vision of the future. A marketing program to attract new residents scored high in market and town government support. This activity should be part of a Market Plan under the Market Element of this Plan.

- **ATTRACTIVE BUFFERS BETWEEN COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL USERS**

Good land use regulations are the key for establishing attractive buffers between residential and commercial users.

The transition from residential to commercial use requires special treatment to maintain a residential character. This can be accomplished through the Land Use Management element of the Plan in the development of zoning districts, overlays, design guidelines and incentives have a more physically attractive community. The workshops demonstrated that there is strong community and Town Government Support for this approach.

In summary, the Workshops indicated, for the proposals under the Residential Action Team as part of a Strategic Economic Development Plan, that there is strong

Community, Town Government and Market Support. These housing activities also ranked high as a potential to expand the tax base and provide employment opportunities.

- **AVAILABILITY OF "UPSCALE" HOUSING**

Most of the housing stock in East Hartford is attractive and in very good condition. However, there is only a small fraction of housing that can be called upscale. Upscale housing to attract new business by providing housing for managerial level employees was regarded as another way of marketing East Hartford.

**STRATEGIES FOR CLOSING THE GAP
RESIDENTIAL**

<i>Current State (Inventory)</i>	<i>Close the Gap (Big Ideas)</i>	<i>Future State (Vision)</i>
A perceived need for more community activities	Promote neighborhood and community organization. Plan block parties, fairs, social events, picnics, neighborhood social circles and other activities that foster a spirit of community	Neighborhoods that are active, friendly, and pave a variety of activities for families and children. Neighborhoods that are a drawing card for new business location decisions
Some older residential structures and properties are in a state of disrepair	Identify government programs and creative local assistance to help targeted neighborhoods or individual home owners make necessary improvements	Attractive, well kept homes and neighborhoods throughout the Town, maintaining market values and managing urban blight, restoring a sense of pride in neighborhoods
A large portion of the housing stock is renter occupied.	Provide affordable home ownership to residents who desire this responsibility, through local and state programs	Home ownership available to all responsible residents
Not enough upscale homes for potential employers and present upward mobility	Construction of upscale homes in appropriate areas	A wide choice of housing opportunities, including the opportunity to buy a upscale home in an excellent area.
Intrusion of other uses and activities into residential areas	Provide guide lines for buffers between commercial and residential uses through Land Use Management tools, including zoning districts, zoning overlays, design guidelines and incentives.	Attractive, quiet and safe neighborhoods shielded from other uses and activities

IV.6 INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

East Hartford's local industrial base and its potential for future development are a strong foundation for the vision of the Town as a "fertile field" for business. The tasks and strategies to be implemented are as follows:

- Define Objectives
- Create Zoning /Impact Mediators
- Create a Development Plan
- Target Business Opportunities
- Develop and Implement a Marketing Program

1. *Define Objectives*

East Hartford has declared the desire to retain existing businesses, develop a distribution cluster, and attract high-tech industries. The actual objectives describing number of jobs to create, types of jobs desired, nature of the jobs and industries that support these jobs, tax revenue objectives, and other goals must be determined and identified. These goals can then become part of a comprehensive targeted approach for implementation.

2. *Create Zoning/Impact Mediators*

Specific types of industry should be located in areas where residential and commercial development will not be adversely impacted. Traffic patterns should protect residential privacy and security while reinforcing the needs of business and the labor force's need for access to work. A comprehensive

zoning plan for the Town would include sensitivity to issues of noise, environmental pollution, landscaping, etc.

3. *Create a Development Plan*

Rentschler Field is the single largest site/area for development. The future of the site requires a well-conceived plan for re-development that considers access, traffic, and subdivision into multiple tenancy or mixed use that would benefit the larger Town.

In addition to Rentschler Field, there are other areas where industry is clustered, such as Silver Lane, Prestige Park, Park and older industrial areas near the Bulkeley Bridge or near the rail line. Each of these areas needs a plan for the future. A comprehensive plan would include these existing areas and consider assemblage of additional parcels to benefit the existing businesses. Clustering businesses whether existing, or those to be developed, would be considered in the planning. Ideas for creating enterprise zones with tax incentives or incubator parks to encourage new businesses can be explored.

4. *Target Business Opportunities*

Section 9, Marketing, describes the steps to create a comprehensive marketing plan. In this section, the task is to analyze the assets of East Hartford in terms of labor force, both existing and potential, land use opportunities, life quality issues, transportation, cost of land and construction, and match these assets to a specific industry or business market. The marketing plan would include a methodology for implementing

these targeted industries most suited to East Hartford. Not only the current assets, but the proposed assets would be analyzed.

5. Develop and Implement a Marketing Program

While most of the marketing for industrial development will be part of the overall marketing strategy of East Hartford, the subheading for continued economic marketing should include data describing information of interest to businesses and their decision makers. A vehicle for constant updating and communication of this data should be established and responsibility assigned for maintenance. The use of advertising and a web site should be considered.

**STRATEGIES FOR CLOSING THE GAP
INDUSTRIAL USES**

<i>Industrial Current State(Inventory)</i>	<i>Close the Gap(Big Ideas)</i>	<i>Future State (Vision)</i>
Dependence on a few large employers	Leverage investment in infrastructure to attract high tech and e-commerce and distribution	Industrial infrastructure including high tech, internet services and e-commerce—east Hartford as a “fertile field”
No industrial vision for Rentschler Field	Achieve a coordinated redevelopment of parcels adjoining Rentschler Field and waterfront to maximize public and private benefits and recruit quality developers	Rentschler Field as a business hub or park with associated business clusters.
Inadequate cooperation between business and government. No program to attract new businesses. Lack of transit system to support work force.	Reinforce East Hartford as an Enterprise Community through a targeted business recruiting program	Cooperation between business and local government. Improved public transportation system for workers.
Perception that existing businesses, especially small business, are ignored	Encourage existing business to stay and grow	East Hartford as a place to establish and grow new and existing businesses.

IV.7

**USES: OPEN SPACE/
RECREATION**

The chart at the left identifies the 'big ideas' for the open space/ recreation category, defined in the public workshops as ways to 'close the gap' between the current conditions and future vision.

Current State (Inventory)	Close the Gap (Big Ideas)	Future State (Vision)
Attractive but unconnected parks and open spaces	Define system of greenways, waterways and walkways to link existing and new spaces	Interconnected network of parks and open space throughout Town
Small scale parks and riverfront-related larger open space	Add additional centrally-located large open spaces: Rentschler Field, Hock. R.	Balance of large and small, active and passive open space throughout Town
Prime agricultural land presently farmed but at risk	Identify programs to help landowner keep productive agriculture use	Permanently preserved agricultural land within Town
No plans yet for local access or use of new Stadium & related facilities	Identify ways for East Hartford residents to access and use stadium facilities year-round	Stadium facilities are key attraction in East Hartford: well-programmed local as well as regional resource
Only operative way to obtain open space is public sector acquisition	Encourage private donation of open space to not-for-profit land trust, set-aside zoning regulations	In-place partnership of public/private/civic sponsors to acquire key open space sites
Maintenance of open space limited by municipal budget constraints (except Riverfront)	Find regional sources of funding for regional uses, local partnership sources for local uses	Appropriately-funded maintenance of open space for both regional and local users
Open space use limited by availability of recreational programs	Define innovative ways to program facilities on year-round basis	Maximum use made of open space and recreational resources
Recreation sites exist independent of even adjacent commercial land uses	Link recreational with commercial opportunities	Commercial sites have high value due to integrated open space

Strategic Initiatives Refined as a Result of Analysis of Implementation Potential

Ideas were tested in terms of various levels of community and public support or other factors.

Following is a description of these resulting strategic initiatives, listed in the order resulting from the implementation analysis (ranging from initiatives with most immediate potential to those with longer-term potential):

- FIND REGIONAL SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR REGIONAL USES, LOCAL PARTNERSHIP SOURCES FOR LOCAL USES

Appropriate sources of funding for various levels of open space uses exist—Riverfront Recapture is an example of a regional use funded by regional corporate and governmental grants. Similar local partnerships can be created for local programs—stakeholder support is critical, coordinated by the town.

- DEFINE INNOVATIVE WAYS TO PROGRAM FACILITIES ON A YEAR-ROUND BASIS.

East Hartford is proud of its recreational facilities, but task forces felt they were too seasonal. It is important to make the most of existing assets on a year-round, weekday as well as weekend, evening as well as daytime basis, using private and civic support to the town.

- IDENTIFY WAYS FOR RESIDENTS TO ACCESS AND USE STADIUM FACILITIES YEAR-ROUND.
This is associated with the previous strategy. Although the town has no direct control over the stadium, it can act as a user in terms of programming off-season activities and in structuring adjacent activities. This would provide consistent rather than intermittent employment and economic activity.
- ENCOURAGE PRIVATE DONATION OF OPEN SPACE TO NOT-FOR-PROFIT LAND TRUST, SET-ASIDE ZONING REGULATIONS.
Connecticut has one of the strongest rosters of land trusts in the nation. Creating a specific vehicle for East Hartford can allow earmarking of donations of land and funding. Providing a stick as well as a carrot through zoning regulation can work in tandem with a voluntary program.
- ADD ADDITIONAL CENTRALLY-LOCATED LARGE OPEN SPACES: HOCKANUM RIVER, RENTSCHLER FIELD
The Hockanum River plan, like Riverfront Recapture, provides ongoing development of centrally located linear open space. However, what is needed are large playfields or other open spaces, which should be encouraged as part of buffers and environmental preservation at Rentschler Field.

- DEFINE SYSTEM OF GREENWAYS, WALKWAYS AND WATERWAYS TO LINK EXISTING AND NEW SPACES

As with the riverfront discussion, continuing the 'Riverfront Recapture' type of open space development could create physical links that would reinforce connection between adjacent sites, using natural features such as streams and wetlands, as well as physical links between parks and other institutional open space. These are less immediate priorities, although important to both town and local stakeholders.

- LINK RECREATION WITH COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Although this is a key strategy, added to the list as a result of task force discussion, it was also seen by task force members as a long-term project, involving zoning restructuring to ensure linkages and set-asides, as well as a long term marketing effort.

In general, the task force perceived strong town support and general community support for all of the above proposals, but existing implementation organization and funding were seen as lacking.

IV.8 LAND USE MANAGEMENT

- **DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR WATERFRONT AND COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS**

This proposal ranks highest for all implementation components from stakeholder support to employment opportunities. The delineation of the area for waterfront development and for redevelopment of the corridors is necessary to determine appropriate zoning districts for a mixed land use approach and the development of design guidelines. The design guidelines should be formulated with the environmental, development and business communities to achieve the balance of protecting the environment and addressing the marketplace. Design guidelines for the Waterfront should include the design of lighting, landscape and streetscape to provide for a comprehensive identity for the waterfront.

- **TRAFFIC PLAN TO ADDRESS INTENSITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF DEVELOPMENT**

This proposal received major stakeholder, community and Town Government Support as well as linkage to other plan elements.

Forecasting the traffic generated by intensity and type of development forecasted for the Waterfront, Commercial corridors and Rentschler field as well as current traffic loading is necessary to develop an internal traffic

circulation plan for these specific areas and an external traffic circulation plan for the Town. Those road improvements needed to meet these future plans can be determined as well as an estimate of their cost and time line for implementation.

- **DEVELOP ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE TO DEVELOP LAND MANAGEMENT TOOLS TO MAINTAIN ATTRACTIVE APPEARANCE OF OUR TOWN**

Workshop participants see as the key to quality development and maintain a physically attractive community as part of a Strategic Economic Development Plan; the development of an organizational structure (staff) within the Town Government to develop, implement and administer Land Management Tools.

These tools are zoning, subdivision, overlay districts, design guidelines, signage and maintenance of properties.

The citizens of East Hartford desire to "raise the bar" as part of their Plan. It is important that stakeholders be involved in the formulation and adoption of these tools.

- **DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS FOR MAINTENANCE OF PROPERTIES**

This proposal is an extension of and in support of the above approaches to "raise the bar" for a physically attractive and quality community. Current requirements for maintaining the exterior of buildings, and assurance of decent interior

living conditions should meet desired community standards. These requirements should be clearly understood and justified. A public education and marketing program should be formulated as part of a comprehensive program for neighborhood rehabilitation.

All four approaches described above received very high scores for support and early implementation. Town Government support received the highest preparedness score to implement these approaches, followed by stakeholder support.

**STRATEGIES FOR CLOSING THE GAP
LAND USE MANAGEMENT**

<i>Current State (Inventory)</i>	<i>Close the Gap (Big Ideas)</i>	<i>Future State (Vision)</i>
Vacant land ripe for development near the Riverfront and redevelopment opportunities in all the corridors	Develop and implement design guidelines for waterfront and commercial corridors	A waterfront district that is a show piece of urban design to serve the recreational and business needs of residents and become a marketing image for East Hartford. Corridors that are attractive and efficient.
Traffic delays on all roads in East Hartford, creating problems for residents, businesses, and commercial traffic	Traffic Plan to address the intensity and accessibility of development. New areas of development such as Rentschler Field should include internal and external circulation plans.	All area of Town connected by well designed and smooth functioning roads, efficient travel on all roads with little delay
Perceived "blight" in all areas of town including unkempt homes and property, litter, aging commercial and industrial building and lack of landscape	Create an organization within Town government to develop, implement and administer Land Management Tools, incl. rezoning, subdivision, overlay districts, design guidelines, signage and maintenance of properties	East Hartford as an attractive, clean and well designed community; residential, commercial, industrial and recreational areas all well kept according to standards for those areas.
Land Use Conflicts town-wide	Provision of Land Management Tools as above	Each area logically separated so that appearance and functions of each land use are optimized.

IV.9 MARKETING

ALL OF THE PROBLEMS RELATED TO MARKETING OF EH RELATE TO POOR PERCEPTION. HOWEVER, YOU CANNOT JUST JUMP INTO A MARKETING PLAN, ONE NEEDS TO STEP BACK, REVIEW WHAT IS "IN PLACE" AND DEVELOPMENT A PLAN THAT CLOSES THE GAP THAT IS BASED ON OVERCOMING THE ISSUES OR THE CURRENT STATE.

Marketing Overview

The need to market East Hartford to both residents and potential newcomers and visitors has been recognized throughout the workshops as a priority. A marketing plan would take into consideration all aspects of the Town: economic development, public relations and communication, public services, planning and redevelopment. Marketing plans are created once objectives are established and goals have been determined. These goals are tested in the market place and refined as needed. After this, tasks and strategies are developed with timelines, budgets, and assigned personnel or community groups to monitor and implement.

1. Create The Vision

The vision of East Hartford emerging from the workshops was that of a "crossroad community", celebrating its demographic diversity, its recreational resources, taking pride in its educational system, and feeling secure about personal safety within the community. In addition the vision sees East

Hartford as a Town able to support economic development by providing business with all the resources required to be called a "fertile field" for business commerce.

2. Inventory of Existing Conditions

A marketing plan requires not only a vision and objectives, but also an inventory of existing conditions. A marketing plan cannot "close the gap" unless it thoroughly understands the existing situation, issues, problems and the demographic, economic or physical conditions that have created the issues in the first place. The Town's economic state, demographic mix, economic mix, real estate inventory, business profile, infrastructure support for communication and transportation, political constraints and climate, tax and revenue incentives or impediments, development plan, land use and zoning regulations as well as other information should be included in the inventory or existing conditions.

It is the inventory which gives East Hartford a clearer picture of what is existing, what is missing, what can be fixed, what must be changed, what the cost for change is, what priority to assign to individual tasks, etc. The result of the inventory is a comprehensive survey that can be used to market the Town while the revitalization proceeds. A set of criteria could be established against which existing conditions are evaluated. These criteria could be used to determine which projects and systems will require the most attention or financial resources, or which systems, processes, or buildings are adequate or should be abandoned.

3. Research

The second piece to the Marketing Plan and overall strategy is to research the direction as stated in the objectives for the Town and the impact of implementation. If economic development is a priority and the type of industry which would find East Hartford attractive requires a certain type of building or site or additional infrastructure, is East Hartford willing to spend the amount of money required or train the necessary labor force? Should the objective be moderated to meet the other priorities listed in the workshops? The research portion of the Marketing Plan helps to verify the objectives and vision with concrete information about cost, timing, and other impacts. It is the results of this research that are used to create a list of tasks and strategies.

4. Tasks and Strategies

Tasks and strategies will be broken into divisions or areas and developed further within the sub-groups. For example, the economic development sub-group will have a list of tasks and strategies which are particular to the sub-group such as inventory, overall development plan, targeted business groups, advertising strategy, etc. Many groups will overlap in their tasks and additional communication and sharing of information will have to take place. It is critical that the marketing plan is a result of an overall master plan that takes into account all of the various components and interests that make up East Hartford. The workshops were an effort to make public the communication process and to have all interested parties able to voice their concerns.

Once the masterplan for marketing is created, the plan would be distributed to subgroups with assigned tasks for their development of strategies within the larger framework. A master schedule of implementation would be created and monitored. Subgroups would create an additional schedule reflecting their own tasks which would be coordinated with the master schedule.

This master schedule would illustrate those tasks which are dependent on other tasks in order to proceed. For example, the economic development or industrial group could not proceed with targeting business prospects until a development plan is completed or an inventory of existing vacancies, labor force, or data affecting business have been collected.

However, many tasks can proceed without dependency on other tasks. A calendar of events could be developed or a newsletter describing the plans for revitalization could serve as favorable publicity for the Town and help to motivate residents to continue to invest their energies in East Hartford. Organizing business groups and creating a Town-wide agency should happen immediately to help with the development of subgroup strategies.

The marketing plan is a living process and should include a strategy for regular monitoring and reevaluation. Each subgroup can be responsible for the method of monitoring but this should be constantly communicated to those in charge of the overall strategic plan and marketing plan.

**STRATEGIES FOR CLOSING THE GAP
MARKETING**

<i>Marketing/Community Assets and Liabilities Current State (Inventory)</i>	<i>Close the Gap (Big Ideas)</i>	<i>Future State (Vision)</i>
Perception that the opportunities at the riverfront and Rentschler field are not being exploited to their maximum and with the Town's economic planning interests in mind	Exploit the investment in development opportunities at the waterfront and Rentschler Field	A riverfront that is an exciting recreational and economic generator for residents and visitors and a Rentschler Field that economically enhances the community while maintaining a buffer between commercial and residential zones
Most residents unaware of redevelopment and revitalization projects such as Burnside and Main Street/Connecticut Blvd. Development plans ("Home Place")	Increase public awareness of significant revitalization projects	A public that is aware of new projects and residents that become "cheerleaders" for the Town.
Overall poor perception of the Town by many residents and most visitors and outsiders	Implement Vision statement- Utilize a professional marketing team in conjunction with volunteer and government rep to create a program for Town as a diverse crossroad community with affordable housing, recreation opportunities, good schools and great access	Town is, in both perception and actuality, a diverse crossroads with affordable housing, abundance of recreation, good schools, and great access

V. Putting It All Together: Implementation of the Economic Development Plan

V.I INTRODUCTION

Based on the Strategic Workshop held on January 6, 2000 and the results of the nine (9) Action Teams, a Strategic Plan for Economic Development began to emerge.

- The big ideas for Land Use Management, for the Traffic Circulation Plan under Transportation and Infrastructure; and for Marketing call for early implementation. These activities do not require large capital costs.
- The Riverfront, Residential and Open Space are perceived as more of an intermediate term for implementation. These generally require more capital funds. However, many activities are in place in the Riverfront to move it forward despite its large capital costs. Some of the proposals under the Residential Action Team are low cost such as programs for home ownership.
- The Commercial Corridors, Industrial Development and the Central Business District are perceived as more of a long-term implementation strategy. This also may be due to the

multiple resources that need to be coordinated and implemented to provide support for their success.

The composite ranking of the implementation components indicates that there is strong stakeholder and Town Government support to carry out a Strategic Economic Development Plan based on the results of the workshops. This Plan would also expand the tax base and provide for employment opportunities.

While the results indicate there is community support, the Plan needs to be marketed to have **strong** community support. Strong stakeholder, Town government and community support for the Plan would translate to strong support for public and private funding initiatives.

It also becomes evident during the planning process that many of the initiatives take place in defined geographic areas such as the Riverfront, Downtown, Rentschler Field and the Commercial Corridors.

As a result of the Workshops on Issues and Opportunities, Vision, Goals and Objectives and Strategies, the following Strategic Economic Development Plan Framework begins to unfold as follows:

1. Early implementation of needed economic development tools

- Land Management Tools
- Traffic Circulation Plan
- Market Plan/Organization

These Tools can optimize the resources necessary to support economic initiatives for a successful Plan. The tools are a lower cost activity and should be implemented early in the Plan.

2. Many initiatives are concentrated in geographic areas that have defined project area boundaries. These are:

- Riverfront
- Downtown
- Burnside Avenue Corridor
- Main Street Corridor
- Silver Lane Corridor
- Rentschler Field

The corridor also serves as a link with geographic areas; both the Waterfront and Rentschler Field provide opportunities for large-scale mix use projects.

3. Residential, Industrial and Open Space initiatives represent those land uses that are incorporated into those geographic areas in support of economic development.

V.2 LAND USE STRATEGY

Based on the analysis of issues and opportunities, coupled with the input from over 100 participants in the various task forces, a basic strategic concept has emerged: for economic development in East Hartford's emerging development areas of the Riverfront, Main Street and Rentschler Field, linked to each other and to development in Hartford by key roadway corridors.

This concept for these key areas is coupled with conclusions regarding a town-wide land use approach for East Hartford as a whole.

A) STRATEGIC CONCEPT: THE CAPITOL LOOP: A REGIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Riverfront Recapture has been an immensely successful effort to create a north-south focus for the Greater Hartford—a spine of green and blue through the region's center.

With the UConn stadium now designated by the State of Connecticut for Rentschler Field as part of economic redevelopment of the 475 acre former Pratt & Whitney airfield, this important public-private initiative can anchor a similar east-west economic development corridor, which could enjoy similar success to the Riverfront as a linking structure for the region.

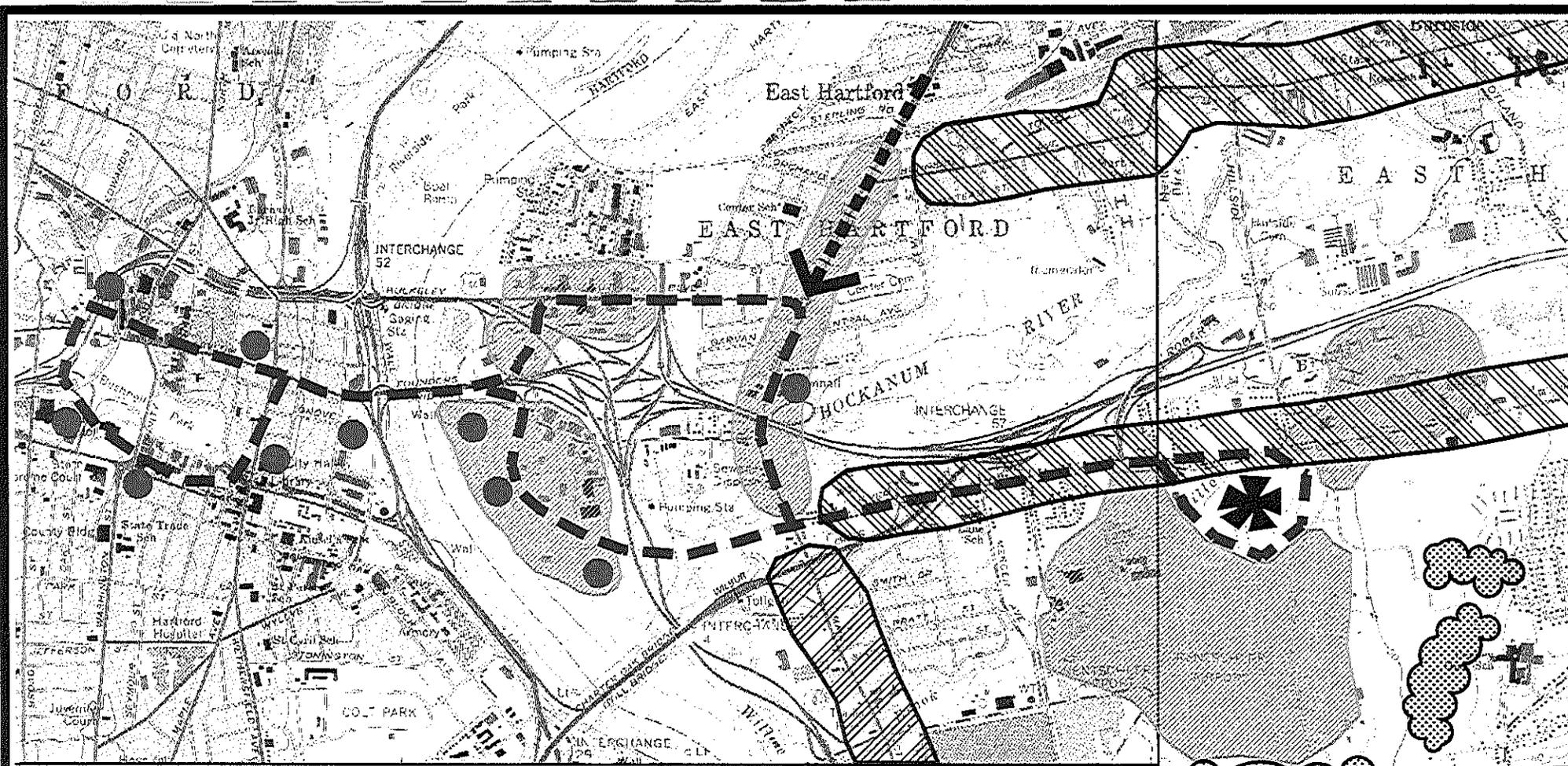
This is a long-term vision, a conceptual idea put forward as a spur to establishing potential directions for both East Hartford and regional growth for the next century. It represents a way to tie together many exiting amenities and projects in both East Hartford and Hartford. It could take many forms and specific routes, and would be to a large degree shaped by both adjacent economic development potential along the corridor and by transportation/ transit potential to make the corridor a real activity route, not just a line on a map:

- As an immediately- achievable approach, a corridor using the existing Founders Bridge would contain loops at either end linking Hartford and East Hartford locations, including the new stadium/ employment site.
- From the associated transportation perspective this corridor could be a designated bus-way or jitney connection.

As shown on the attached map, a series of regional economic development activities would punctuate this corridor:

- 1) at the eastern terminus, the new stadium— which should be an actively-programmed institution, serving the region as a whole with much more than five Saturday collegiate football games. (Other uses should include concerts, active spectator or player-oriented sports, including soccer, track and field, and other community activities). As a huge pool of parking, this facility also represents a valuable resource for East Hartford and the region.

The facility should relate to the northern portion of the



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: STRATEGIC CONCEPT

 "CAPITOL LOOP"

 KEY ACTIVITIES / INSTITUTIONS

 STADIUM

 NEW / ENHANCED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

 OTHER CORRIDORS

 OPEN SPACE

 TRANSIT

FIGURE V.1



CLOUGH, HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES

ENGINEERS, SURVEYORS, PLANNERS & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

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111 WINNERS CIRCLE - ALBANY, NEW YORK - 12205

site, near the I-84 interchange, and like many other recent urban stadiums could be the center of simultaneously- developed associated activities--commercial retail, restaurants, and other uses. (These should take place not on the UT site itself, but as redevelopment of the adjacent commercial district on the north side of Silver Lane).

Such a location for the stadium and associated uses would also relate to the nearby Hockanum River ¹greenway.

A revitalized Silver Lane could be the linking element for this eastern portion--attractively landscaped, at times on a new, southerly right-of-way to bypass residential neighborhoods, with new or enhanced uses along its length, developed with agreed-upon guidelines providing for careful siting and consistent design of new development and associated parking.

The Main Street intersection is another opportunity for a higher-density activity node along this corridor, connecting to the north as a median-enhanced specialty shopping street as proposed in the 1989 comprehensive plan.

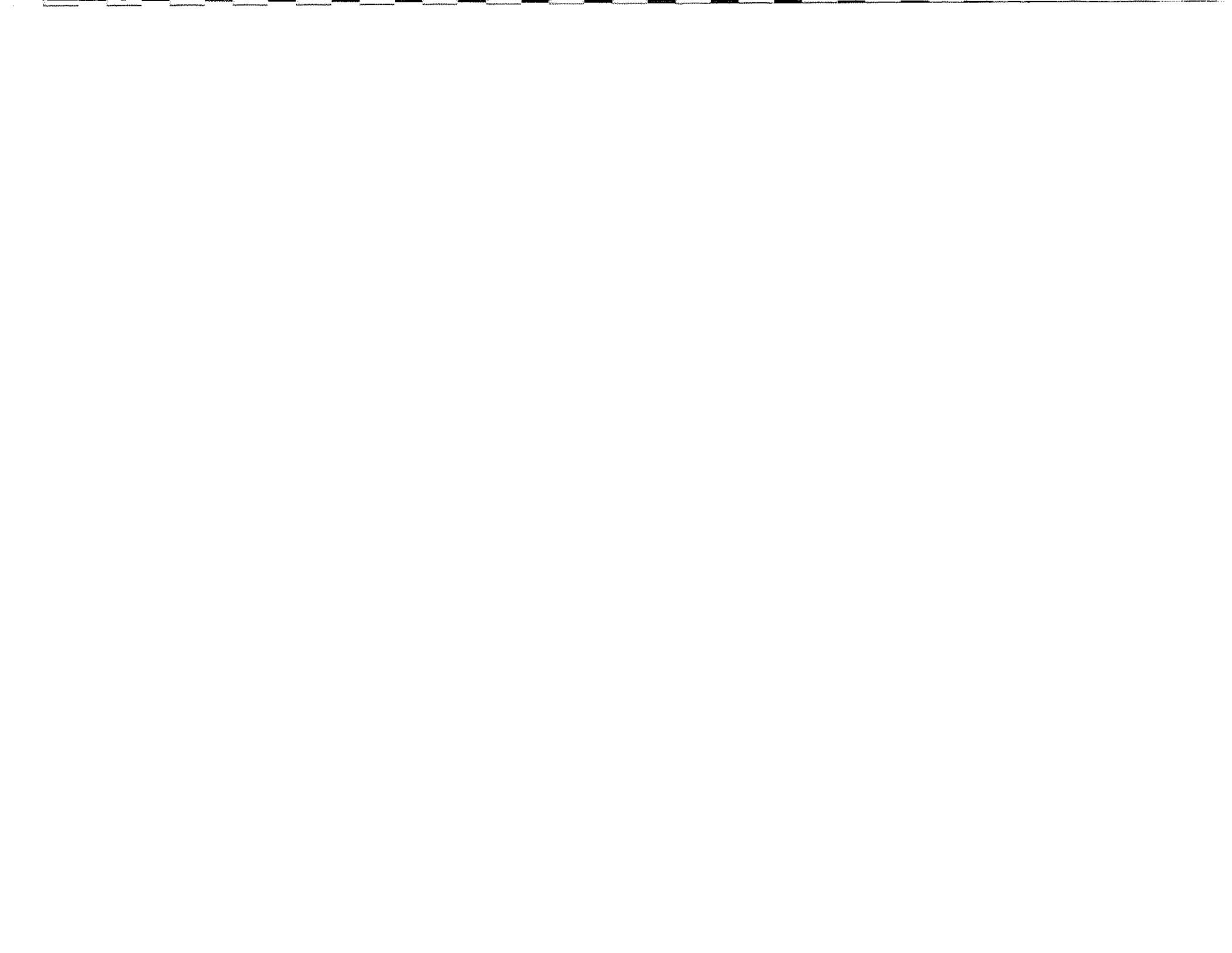
¹ For the remainder of Rentschler Field, the opportunity is for a large mixed use employment center, with street linkages back to Route 2 and north as a bypass to Main Street, but also with large amounts of public open space as buffers to adjacent neighborhoods and as recreational amenities to nearby schools and communities.

- 2) In the central portion of the corridor, heading west as an extension of Silver Lane, East Hartford's Connecticut Riverfront 'Great River Park' is the major activity--walkways, bikeways, boat launches, and other features developed through Riverfront Recapture.

The adjacent Commerce Center is proposed to contain pedestrian-related retail/ restaurant or other commercial development, including the longer-term potential for an additional hotel, as well as the currently- proposed site for the new Science Center. Development of the regional magnet middle school at its Commerce Center location is underway for a year 2002 opening.

The loop continues north to the Founders Bridge connection to Adriaen's Landing, the riverfront park amenity provides incentive for additional residential and office development. This could be similar in scale to the existing Riverpoint condos or Commerce Center offices, but under revised design/ siting guidelines to provide a dense and pedestrianized node of activity. Sites can include:

- the Town-owned development site to the south of and combined with the southern portion of the Riverpoint site,
- Founders Plaza redevelopment, enhanced with expanded density, pedestrian-scaled restaurants and retail attractions, and additional structured parking (this area, now almost 40 years old



- since its initial development, has additional zoning capacity), and the existing 3-acre vacant parcel, now used for surface parking, north of Founders Plaza.

These sites should also be investigated for possible additional cultural/ tourist development to complement and extend Adriaen's Landing. Suggestions at a recent public meeting for a 'Museum of Technology' (with contributions from UT (and others) could be considered.

As the northern section of the loop, the route would link Silver Lane along Main Street to Connecticut Boulevard, effectively incorporating downtown into the concept. Although it is not feasible to include the entire length of Main Street, this southern section picks up Town Hall and the new open space/ retail center at the Connecticut Boulevard intersection. The idea for a "Main Street Trolley" brought out in task force meetings could interface with the larger 'loop' at this point.

- 3) The eastern anchor of the proposed corridor would contain Hartford downtown institutions and features. At the Hartford side of the Founders Bridge, the Adriaen's Landing project and associated riverfront development represent an important new node—a convention center/ mixed use destination development adjacent to the just-completed river deck and amphitheatre/ boat dock.

The loop would continue through downtown, 'connecting the dots' of the Old State House, the Wadsworth Atheneum, the Bushnell, the Capitol, the train station, the Civic Center site which will soon be torn down, Constitution Plaza, and back.

What is described above is a framework for development—a way to link transit and pedestrian connections to available priority sites for new mixed uses:

- at the eastern (Rentschler Field), central (East Hartford Riverfront) and western (downtown Hartford) nodes described above,
- and also along the corridors connecting and intersecting these nodes—Silver Lane, Main Street, downtown Hartford streets.

Priority sites at these nodes or along these corridors should be developed under thoughtfully prepared development guidelines and with public assistance and incentives to encourage appropriate private and civic uses.

B) TOWN-WIDE LAND USE

The following plan illustrates the Town-wide land use approach that incorporates the above strategic short-term initiatives with longer-term development opportunities. A detailed and updated land use plan and related implementation strategy for the Town should be prepared as part of the upcoming Plan of Conservation and Development revision.

The approach for land use is to base recommendations on the existing uses and the current land use plan from the 1990 Plan of Conservation and Development, but to utilize a 'mixed-use district' approach for specific key areas of riverfront, downtown, important corridors, and Rentschler Field.

This land use approach therefore includes the following key areas:

- The riverfront as a 'riverfront mixed-use district,' allowing commercial, institutional and residential development as part of a special district that allows for sharing between sites of services such as parking and access as well as an emphasis on pedestrian linkages within sites, to river walkways and to adjacent sites.

In the short term this mixed-use development would focus on the area immediately south of the Founders Bridge (including Commerce Center), but in the longer term could include the area north of Governor Street.

- The central business district (CBD) along the Main Street corridor should also be treated as a mixed use district ('downtown mixed use'). This will allow similar uses to the riverfront but at a more consistent low-rise density, including upper floor residential above shops and urban design criteria to define pedestrian linkages and maintain street frontage.

The southern boundary of this district should be extended to meet the Silver Lane corridor at its

intersection with East River Drive, and the northern boundary to meet the Burnside corridor and adjacent rail line.

- Current commercial corridors should be carefully studied with respect to their redevelopment potential and relation to adjacent context.

In general, a new land use designation such as 'mixed use corridor' should be utilized, but again with specific design approaches in place for each specific corridor.

For instance, Burnside Avenue is another important street which could benefit from a "mixed-use corridor" designation in order to implement its detailed urban design study. Its uses vary along its length, but a consistent approach to such items as façade design, signage, landscaping, and access can help the corridor's appearance and marketability as well as safety and functionality.

Silver Lane, because of its importance as a link to the new stadium and Rentschler Field development, also needs a detailed urban design study. The potential for minor realignments to bypass sensitive residential areas should be considered, and strategies to link the current shopping center/ cinema development to the north across the roadway to Rentschler Field development to the south should be implemented. A mixed-use corridor approach can maintain and buffer desired uses (such as attractive residential uses) while setting the stage for

appropriate redevelopment of vacant or underutilized properties. It can also establish traffic controls to mitigate impacts from stadium or future employment use at Rentschler Field.

Other corridors such as upper and lower Main Street and the Governor Street/ Connecticut Boulevard corridor should also receive the same attention.

- Rentschler Field development is under the control of its owner United Technologies, with the exception of the area designated for the new UConn stadium. An internal study of its development potential is currently underway, and information shared to date indicates that a 'planned mixed-use district' land use designation would be appropriate. This could allow maximum flexibility to the owner/ developer of the parcel and set the stage for productive consultation with the Town as development proceeds.

This designation should extend to adjacent properties such as the commercial areas to the north of Silver Lane.

- Open space corridors, as described elsewhere in the report, represent the environmental armature of the Town's development structure.
- Open space designation should be used in the plan to represent interconnected natural corridors, along which walkway/ bikeway linkages can be created to connect

adjacent development sites and residential or institutional linkages.

The Connecticut and Hockanum riverfronts should be shown as continuous open space corridors, setting the stage for potential public purchase or designation of easements. Similarly, the smaller brooks that flow into the Connecticut should also be shown as open space corridors, developing over time, linking neighborhoods and uses along their length to each other and to the riverfront.

Other open space should be developed as edge buffers to large development tracts such as Rentschler Field and as expanded park-like settings for public facilities such as schools or institutional buildings. Using environmentally sensitive land—wetlands or land needed for storm water management—can further this approach.

And gateway entries and corridor landscaping along major roadways through the Town should also be part of the open space/ land use concept.

- Institutional uses—schools, governmental facilities, and other public or not-for-profit uses—should be key sites connected by these open space corridors.
- Residential uses are left as they are—East Hartford is proud of the stability of its neighborhoods and needs to reinforce and strengthen its housing stock and increase

the proportion of higher income to lower income units, redressing a current imbalance.

In summary, the land use approach recommended by this economic development strategy is a conceptual framework for connecting various existing or potential uses. Its emphasis is on *linkage* rather than on isolated development parcels.

Within this approach, priority development can be emphasized. The next section discusses these priorities and linkages with respect to the three main geographic areas studied in this strategic process.

V.3 PRIORITIES AND LINKAGES

Following is a discussion of priority strategic recommendations, organized in terms of the three geographic economic development areas, which were part of the study:

- the riverfront
- the downtown area
- other commercial corridors

Concepts and criteria for each geographic area are analyzed in relation to task force topics dealing with town-wide uses:

- traffic and transportation
- open space
- residential development
- industrial development

(Functional task force topics of marketing and land use management will be discussed in section V.3)

The potential redevelopment of Rentschler Field for the UConn Stadium and associated economic development is being studied by independent consultants for the landowner; the project team was asked by the Town to avoid duplicating effort at this time. The previous discussion of regional linkages, which dealt with the potential of Rentschler Field in the context of an overall development framework, was shared with the other consultants preparing its plan; this analysis was conceptually incorporated into their preliminary Stadium recommendations to the

governor and legislature. The integration of these and other parallel studies should be one of the key mandates of the upcoming Plan of Conservation and Development.

A) RIVERFRONT

Concept and Criteria

The potential of the Riverfront has been greatly increased by recent initiatives in adjacent areas:

- to the west, the proposed Adriaen's Landing development in Hartford and the completion of the Founders Bridge pedestrian link to East Hartford,
- to the east, the proposed UConn stadium and associated Rentschler Field development.

The attached graphic illustrates recommended priorities and linkages to further enhance the economic development potential of the area:

- **Reevaluation of circulation patterns and roadway connections to better integrate area access, including enhanced connections to science center/ magnet school/ commerce center**

Auto access off the Founders Bridge from Hartford to the riverfront area is not as straightforward as would be desired, especially in terms of direct access to the Commerce Center site. As diagrammed in the attached graphic, a more immediate connection between the eastbound off-ramps into the riverfront area would

create a new boulevard-like road through the center of Founders Plaza. This expanded right-of-way would serve development to the east and west and lead directly to the south.

As shown, it would also de-emphasize East River Drive along the dike edge, making possible expansion of adjacent sites, as discussed below.

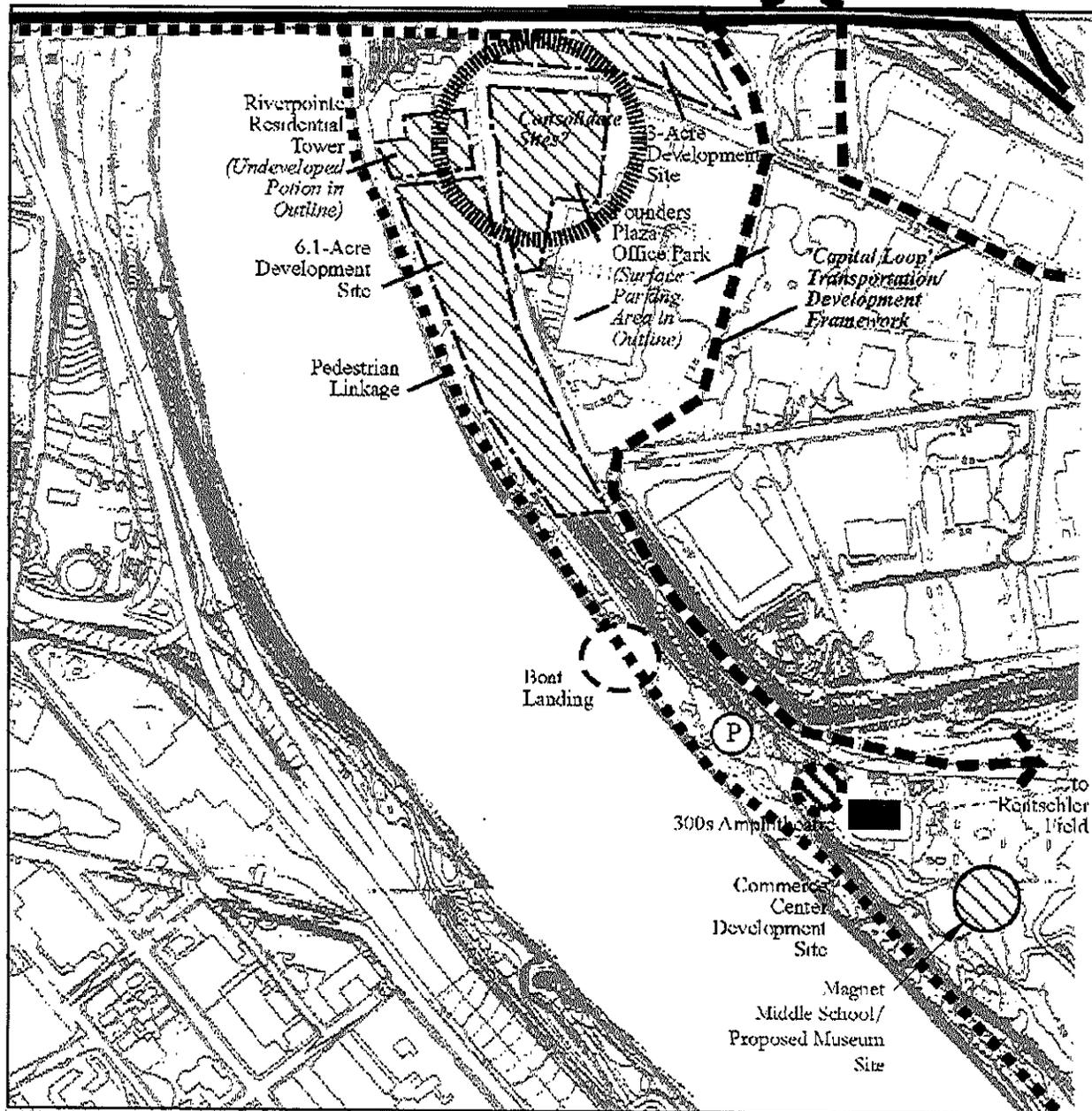
- **Expanding proposed development opportunities on the 6-acre riverfront site**

The Town, which owns the current vacant site south of Riverpointe and is now undertaking a search for potential developers, should encourage with the chosen developer consideration of a plan with the following characteristics:

- *Looking beyond the immediate site to potential linkage or expansion with adjacent sites:*

These adjacent sites would include the Riverpointe parcel to the north, the approximately 3-acre parcel between Pitkin Street and the interchange (now being used as surface parking), and portions of Founders Plaza itself.

The project should investigate not only linkage, but possible actual consolidation of parcels into a larger urban development site. If combined



Riverfront: Priorities/ Linkages

East Hartford Economic Development Strategy

Clough, Harbour & Associates
The Williams Group
Hutton Associates Inc.

April 2000

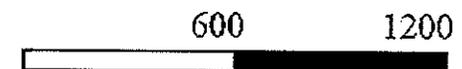


FIGURE V.3

with road realignments such as described above, such expansion could consolidate the 3-acre parking site and the unbuilt portion of the Riverpoint site with underutilized portions of Founders Plaza (the open area and surface parking immediately adjacent to the corner, but also possibly renovation and inclusion of adjacent buildings, which reportedly have excess zoning capacity).

This site expansion would facilitate development of an extremely tight and narrow site, constrained by the dike to the west (even if reconfigured) and the East River Drive roadway to the east.

- *Creating a pedestrian-oriented development in terms of both design and use:*

Such expansion would also make possible creation of a pedestrian-scaled development focussed on landscaped plazas both a ground level and at the dike level.

Such plazas could be filled with trees and surrounded by retail or restaurant uses, with a possible museum/ educational site on the 3-acre parking lot directly connected to the Founders Bridge and to Hartford's 'Adriaen's Landing'. Upper level plazas would sit atop structured parking.

- **Targeting development or redevelopment of sites along the 'capitol loop' corridor connecting to Rentschler field**

In the larger picture, putting in place the initial phases of the proposed regional strategy is very important.

The previously discussed riverfront development is an important component. However, part of the strategy of creating the development framework characterized by the 'loop' concept is to highlight and facilitate development or redevelopment of other sites.

Along the loop, these development or redevelopment areas include potential sites on the East River Drive/ Main Street/ Pitkin Street corridor, as well as along Silver Lane further to the east.

Specific Use Relationships

- **Traffic and transportation**

Circulation improvements to be considered were discussed above, but transit linkages are an important part of the concept. Bus or jitney connections, with more frequent shuttle service at rush hours or game times, can serve uses along the route as well as the Rentschler Field/ Riverfront/ Downtown Hartford anchors at either end or the middle.

- **Open space**

Open space corridors and linkages are also important components. At present, the riverfront development at Founders Plaza might as well be in central East Hartford in terms of its relationship to the riverfront—built prior to Riverfront Recapture and Great River Park development, the buildings do not acknowledge the river or even connections to the walkway and park on just the other side of the dike. Commerce Plaza, less impacted by dike barriers, has an adjacent plaza and amphitheatre that relate to the river.

New development or redevelopment should have explicit criteria ensuring frequent and attractive ways to access the waters edge and orient upper floors to attractive views.

Landscaped plazas rising in stages with ramps and stairs can unobtrusively bring pedestrians up to dike level and down to the waterfront. What is not wanted is the 'fortress' style of development, which uses ground level walls and private linkages as a way to exclude public access. Adequate internal security should be to sufficient to protect building tenants from external problems.

- **Residential Development**

The potential for a variety of uses on the riverfront can make the area a truly vibrant urban center. The spectacular views of the Hartford skyline and the easy connection to Great River Park are important amenities.

At least one additional tower adjacent to Riverpoint can take advantage of the planned-shared facilities such as parking and other services. And there is potential for up to three additional towers on the 6-acre site to the south, although other uses may also be considered.

Similarly, the Commerce Center development should consider the potential for housing as an alternative or adjunct use to the planned commercial development. Sharing concierge service or parking with the proposed hotel could provide a beneficial marketing edge.

Such development would be a useful way to provide additional higher-end housing, a major objective of both the strategy and of ongoing Town policy.

- **Industrial Development**

Industrial development, unless water-dependent, is not an appropriate use for valuable waterfront land. However, marine-related uses could find appropriate sites in a non-dike-constrained area such as Commerce Center, possibly in conjunction with marina development.

Marina development was considered in early plan iterations for Commerce Center, but ultimately set aside because of floodwater storage and other objections raised by regulators. However, such a use still remains an attractive goal of both the public and the developers (mentioned often in task force workshops), and should regulatory criteria be met in innovative ways (through tradeoff of adjacent land or other such negotiated agreement), a marina would be a desired community amenity.

V.3.2 CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT—DOWNTOWN EAST HARTFORD

Linkages

There are two distinct types of physical linkages that are essential to the revitalization of the downtown. External linkages are links from the downtown to other parts of town, such as south to Rentschler Field for example, and internal linkages, which are links within the downtown.

External Main Street Linkages:

Currently the downtown is linked to the Interstate 84 conveniently with an exit labeled "Main Street Route 5". This link is an important access for both residents and visitors and should be maintained.

As plans and projects for the Riverfront intensify, the link between Main Street and the Riverfront becomes more important. Physical links by road should be direct and easy to encourage people to travel between the Riverfront and Main Street. In addition, a rubber tire trolley may be an easily implemented tool that will aid in the connection between the tourism based developed Riverfront and Main Street. The concept is to have visitors connect with recreation opportunities and enjoy the historically revitalized Town during the visit.

Internal Main Street Linkages:

Essential to the revitalization of Main Street is the creation of internal pedestrian links. Currently a Main street block typically consists of a store, a space, a vacant shop, services etc. There is very little continuity between retail and food, or traditional forms of retail. It is therefore crucial to have shops and food, including restaurants and markets, be connected so that pedestrians can park their cars and walk from one shop to the next. Large gaps between places of destination force people to park, shop, drive and re-park. Not only is this inconvenient, it eliminates spontaneous shopping and creates a less than good perception of Main Street. Moreover, it creates a traffic and parking mess. Not only are residents less likely to shop under the park-shop-drive-park scenario, but visitors are less likely to visit and to shop. Main street needs to be like a mall with interesting places to visit and shop. The retail area should run from Connecticut Blvd. at the south end of Main Street to Burnside Ave. at the north end, with anchors at both ends.

Anchors should include larger destination type stores, restaurants, entertainment destinations, larger grocery stores, department stores, discount retailers or drug stores.

Linkage Tools:

Downtown linkage tools fall into two major categories: Programming and Physical improvements. Physical improvements include streetscape improvements and façade improvements that will improve the entire visual perception of the street and also create a visual continuity of downtown. Typical improvements may include an attractive sidewalk material, trees, plantings, etc. These elements will indicate to the shopper that there is a common theme on the street and will also project an image of a clean, safe, maintained area where merchants have pride in their shops.

The second linkage tool is programming. Not only should the shopper have a continually pleasant street environment to walk along and have a continuous wall of shops and restaurants to visit, but the programming of the shops/stores/services is key to the success of the street. An issue for East Hartford is that many stores are vacant or storefronts are programmed with services such as accountants, legal services, etc. Services should be encouraged to move to second floor spaces, as people will visit these services regardless of street level frontage. More animated types of retail that encourage people to visit downtown should be encouraged. For example, markets and bakeries often perform well in downtown and attract both residents and visitors. It is recognized that the malls have captured much of the apparel market and many large discount

category killers type stores, but local specialty shops often perform well in the downtown environment. Restaurants that would add activity to the evening hours were high on the list of residents wishes. Cinemas and nightclubs can also promote activity day and night. As such, programming is a tool that cannot be overlooked but unfortunately cannot be accomplished without cooperation of building owners and merchants. Therefore, a merchant and downtown association/organization is typically the means by which such changes are instituted. More details can be found in the Marketing Tools section of the report.

Marketing Linkages:

As discussed in Marketing Strategies and Tools and Techniques, marketing is an essential tool to the promotion and revitalization of downtown East Hartford.

In addition to advertising, programs and organizational tools that are included in the marketing process, events, such as festivals and farmers markets are tools that can be utilized immediately, before physical improvements and programming changes, to encourage renewed interest in downtown.

Priorities

Downtown Revitalization Plan:

The Main Street Plan and redevelopment of the corner of Main Street and Connecticut Blvd are important first steps to the revitalization of downtown East Hartford. However, in order to continue with the progress of these efforts, a priority should

be given to the preparation of a complete downtown revitalization plan that would include elements that have been discussed as tools. The plan should include a plan of physical improvements, façade improvements, programming, marketing and funding sources. In addition, the plan should include details of the structure of an organization that would be capable of implementing a plan.

V.3.3. COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

Concept and Criteria

Commercial Corridors generally consist of the urbanization of mixed land uses along the major arterials or collector roads of the community's street network system. They evolved from the Center Urban Areas to the more suburban areas. They also serve as gateways to the community and they have played an important role in the economic vitality of our cities.

Unfortunately, with the increase of through-traffic over time and the changes in lifestyle, the corridors have become an unattractive place to live and do business. Cities have been successful in taking concentrated efforts to reverse this decline and restore our corridors as viable areas to live, to do business, and work.

There are four corridors in the Town of East Hartford that can be identified as mixed-use (commercial, residential,

institutional and open space) projects to enhance the economic potential and the physical appearance of the Town. These are:

Burnside Avenue Corridor:

This corridor runs from Main Street to Scotland Road as a project area for a manageable revitalization project. The Avenue is an easterly gateway to the Town and land use consists of commercial retail and services, office, residential, institutional, industrial and open spaces.

Main Street Business Corridor:

This corridor begins at the intersection of Chapel Street and runs north to the intersection of Burnside and continues to the railroad tracks. This area was defined for the Main Street Business District Redevelopment Plan and will be covered under the Central Business district Task Force. This corridor may be extended in the future to connect with Silver Lane.

Silver Lane Corridor:

This is a main east-west corridor from Main Street east to Forbes Street, a distance of 1.8 miles. Land uses consist of residential, retail and service, commercial, office, institutional and industrial. It has the potential to serve as an internal linkage to Main Street and the Waterfront for Rentschler Field.

Specific Use Relationship

These three corridors serve as linkage connecting Burnside Avenue with Main Street, and Silver Lane with Rentschler Field to Main Street and the Waterfront.

Burnside Avenue Corridor:

The Town of East Hartford Redevelopment Agency drafted and adopted the "Burnside Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan" for the revitalization of that corridor. The Plan describes the project area, property to be acquired, proposed land use, proposed zoning, plan objectives, obligation of redevelopers, relocation of project occupants and the type of redevelopment actions.

The Plan is to be financed by appropriations of town funds in combination with grant funds from Federal and State programs and any land disposition proceeds. There is not a detailed budget and timeframe to carryout and complete the Plan. The Redevelopment Agency is responsible for administering the Plan and project area. There is no structural organization defining staff or agencies and their responsibilities.

In some areas, the Plan is very detailed such as the Property Rehabilitation Standards, and in other areas it is very general, such as the case of how the Plan is to be carried out. The Plan has all the basic fundamentals that other successful corridor plans have incorporated. The Agency has recently completed a façade design plan that will greatly enhance the physical appearance of part of the corridor.

It is recommended that the following activities be considered in the administration and implementation of the Corridor Plan:

- The drafting of a detailed budget of cost to complete the project including capital costs, loan program for façade and rehabilitation, technical assistance for rehab and small

businesses and annual operation costs. A timeline for completion of the project (i.e. three to five years.)

- A traffic analysis to determine traffic improvements and cost such as intersection improvements, left turning movements, coordinated signals, pedestrian signals and crosswalks, parking, and future mass transit turn-outs. This could be incorporated into the scope for the Town-wide Traffic Circulation Plan.
- Detailed design concept and preliminary engineering showing proposed landscaping, streetscape, lighting, intersection improvements, traffic signals, parking and urban open space. This, in combination with the current façade design plan would be the physical enhancement plan. Several communities have successfully applied for TEA-21 Enhancement Grants (90% Federal and 10% local) to fund a physical enhancement plan for similar corridors.
- Development and implementation of a revolving loan fund under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program for building rehabilitation. The revolving fund will be replenished over a five year cycle and provide funds for several years for subsequent projects (i.e. Main Street and Silver Lane.)
- As an Entitlement City under the CDBG, the town is eligible for Section 108 Loan Program. These funds can be used to create a revolving fund for micro-enterprise loans to small businesses to acquire equipment, market their goods, acquire land and buildings and many other business activities. Again, the revolving loan fund will provide funds

for several years after the initial investment to carry out similar projects in other areas.

- Incorporate other activities that exist or are to be created such as a home ownership program to enhance the success of the project.
- Develop an organizational structure to identify key staff and agencies and their responsibilities to administer and implement the Plan.

The Town has drafted and adopted a sound Framework Plan to revitalize the Burnside Avenue Corridor and has invested funds to carry out some activities. The key is to develop a comprehensive approach to ensure success and to use their experience as a model and the revolving funds for resources to carry out similar projects in the Town.

Main Street Business District Redevelopment Plan:

The Town of East Hartford Redevelopment Agency has drafted and adopted a Business District Redevelopment Plan. The elements of this Plan are similar to those for the Burnside Corridor Plan. Some of the recommendations for the Burnside Plan may be appropriated for the Business District. The Business District revitalization is addressed in Chapter V.3.2.

Silver Lane Corridor

It is recommended that while the Burnside Corridor Plan is being implemented that a Silver Lane Corridor Plan be formulated for adoption. The experience, administrative

structure and resources from the Burnside Project can be applied to the Silver Lane project in a sequential manner. We can also take advantage of the opportunity in the development of a Town-wide Traffic Circulation Study and Plan to identify improvements on Silver Lane to mitigate traffic conflicts and improve traffic flow.

These project incorporate the major commercial areas and corridors in the town and their revitalization will result in the physical and economical enhancement of the community as well as serve a linkage between commercial nodes and major attractions.

V.4 TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

V.4.1 MARKETING TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Multi targeted marketing programs emphasize Business Development Strategies, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Image Development and Special Events Planning. But at the core of just about any community's problems lies the issue of image, and simply throwing money at it will not help unless a clear and compelling image has been formulated and communicated. As recommended in the Marketing Strategies Section, a comprehensive marketing masterplan for East Hartford should be implemented in a phased approach initially focusing on image improvement and public support. As the program builds a base, subsequent phases should focus on high image building areas including the downtown, Rentschler Field and the riverfront, followed by targeted business development strategies.

Marketing Overview

A general overview begins with strategies for marketing that can be broken down into the following categories of tasks in order to describe more accurately all of the steps that are necessary in a fully development Town marketing program.

- Marketing Approach and Image Building
- Marketing Game Plan
- Public Relations
- Industry/Business Targeting and Contact Program
- Local Business Retention and Expansion
- Development Issues Matching Marketing Plan
- Strategic Planning and Marketing Process

Marketing Approach and Image Building

Project Goals:

Define marketing sub-goals that will help to achieve the overall vision of the Town as a "Diverse crossroads." Some of the following goals have already been defined to a great extent in the workshops.

- Ultimate project goal is to increase economic development
- Determine the Town's assets and liabilities in order to attract new industry, encourage retail and restaurants, attract new residents, etc.
- Enhance the downtown image by investing in historic preservation
- Develop a riverfront masterplan that maximizes tourism, promotes a sense of pride and attracts residents
- Engage a professional marketing firm with civic marketing experience to outline a program that mobilizes the

community in to action by enlisting volunteers, business owners, merchants and stakeholders.

Develop a Marketing Masterplan:

- Create an East Hartford Marketing Partnership and organize planning sessions.
- Facilitated by a professional marketing firm, prepare an action-oriented Work Plan to build community consensus, and develop an action plan with a clear vision, a mission and objectives.
- Update an overall Downtown Masterplan focusing on Downtown as a pedestrian environment with emphasis on streetscape, calming traffic, landscaped medians and historic preservation
- Develop a promotion, fundraising and public relations action plan.
- Historic preservation and commercial storefront design in the downtown are integral to the revitalization process. A major priority is to develop a process to improve and manage the design changes in the Downtown including design review, preservation ordinances, storefront and sign enhancement matching funds program.
- Develop a market strategy to improve the overall business climate with the goal of improving the retail mix, boosting investor confidence and encouraging the retention and expansion of existing businesses through preparation of recruitment materials, development of marketing research,

and develop a Town wide business clustering plan to guide the placement of appropriate uses within key districts.

- Consider the implementation of a Business Improvement District (BID) or Special Service District to help organize, fund and implement Downtown improvements.

Make East Hartford more attractive to investment by...

- Assisting with direct incentives to industries, merchants, and building owners
- Sewer connections
- Land Acquisition
- Masterplan for development
- Enterprise and empowerment zones

Information readiness

- Information database
 - Brochures and advertising

Business & Industry Targeting Requirements for a Marketing Program:

- Checklist--What to get in order to begin targeting
 - Access to information in database, sortable format
 - Quick response to information requests
 - Quality marketing tools
 - Web site

- Physical information requirements
 - . Utilities, services and amenities, including sizes of mains
 - . Telecommunications—Town and services
 - . Economic Development Master Plan
- Financial information requirements
 - . Incentive programs
 - . Insurance rates
 - . Tax rates
- Promotional requirements
 - . Local Listing/Regional Listings
 - . Listing with Economic Development Agency
- Land Use Requirements
 - . Availability
 - . Environmental concerns
 - . Land restriction including easements, liens, zoning restrictions
 - . Land characteristics including terrain, elevation, bearing, bedrock, drainage, run off, winds, flood protection
- Accessibility Requirements
 - . Accessibility to customer, employees, support services, supplies
 - . Distance to commercial airport and, and carrier and destination
 - . Rail services
 - . Highways and exits
- Retailers Requirements
 - . Spending power
 - . Demographics
 - . Home ownership
 - . Family profiles
 - . Transportation
 - . Competition
- Quality of Life
 - . Neighborhood—costs, reputation, compatibility
 - . Quality of life and cost of living such as housing costs, crime etc.
 - . Education, quality, higher education, % college and High school

Target Companies Program Development:

- Understand Political Pulse and Community Support
- Develop a Business & Industry target short list
- Create a Development Plan
- Develop a Marketing Plan
- Develop Business & Industry Attraction Criteria
- Develop Potential sources of funding and incentives
- Create Final Action Plan

Marketing Game Plan

- Assessment of locational resources
- Assets
- Liabilities
- Remedial measures for overcoming correctable liabilities
- Identification of target industries
- Target marketing gameplan
- Existing business & industries retention program
- Entrepreneurship development program
- Measurement factors for performance measures, benchmarks, and prospect handling guidelines

Marketing Program Options:

- Direct mail
- Number of mailings
- Several list sources
- Criteria to determine companies to receive mailings

Advertising Options:

- Industry trade journals
- Real estate trade journals
- Geographic business publications
- General image building
- Specific events to attend:
- Attendance regional Economic Development meetings

- *Public Relations*
- Targeted strategy
- Key themes
- Direct mail
- Networking the State community
- Prospecting trips
- Target areas
- Participation of business volunteers
- Special promotional efforts
- Familiarization tours for target companies and consultants
- Red carpet tour for brokers and others
- Luncheons or dinners in selected areas

- *Industry/Business Targeting and Contact Program*
- Questionnaire survey
- In person calls
- Reporting results from the contact program

- Annual report card
- Annual business climate improvement plan
- Site/building development opportunities
- Hotline, web site and customer service center
- Understand Development Issues
- Matching parcel sizes with targeted business & industry use
- Matching infrastructure
- Matching appropriate uses for development sites
- ETC.

Local Business Retention and Expansion Program

While the concept of attracting new business is important, it is also critical to make sure that existing business are looked after. It is much easier to keep an existing business than to attract a new one.

Create a program whereby the following are made available to existing business in an easy format through web site or local advertisement:

- Available incentives and training programs
- Available improvement programs such as façade programs

Develop rewards and recognition for existing business to let them know that the government recognizes their importance in the community.

Finally, develop programs of business outreach and plan a regular scheduled or interviews with key business personal in

order to learn in advance of potential issues, problems, moves or layoffs, whenever possible.

Development Issues Matching Marketing Plan

- Develop a questionnaire survey to understand how to match marketing plan with development issues
- In person calls to potential users and owners to understand their needs, concerns and where information is required

Strategic Planning and Marketing Process

Lastly, the marketing process must complement a strategic plan. The strategic plan should be a physical plan of priorities of development, land use, physical improvements required in advance, such as infrastructure, funding and with a view of the current economy.

Not all of the components of a marketing strategy will need to be implemented at once. For example, if the priority is to revitalize the downtown first and develop an industry and business-targeting program later, then the marketing program should focus on information and tools that will attract retailers, shoppers, and visitors.

V.4.2 LAND USE MANAGEMENT

Land Use Management regulations and guidelines are the graphic and written specifications for the development and redevelopment of land and its amenities. Land Use Management was determined as a result of the Workshops to have major linkage with all of the areas with the functional task force (Action Teams). This indicates that Land Use Management is a major tool to optimize the economic benefits of current and future economic initiatives.

Land Use Management Tools provide for the orderly and quality development and redevelopment of land for its highest and best use to meet the market place. As well as the appropriate distribution of land in support of economic development (i.e. need for upscale residential development) and to preserve and project our environment.

The following are recommendations to be considered as part of a Strategic Economic Development Plan:

Waterfront:

Define the project boundaries for the Waterfront Redevelopment Project and draft and adopt land use provisions for rezoning as a large scale mixed used development. To incorporate those uses and design guidelines as described in the previous chapters under Riverfront. This includes siting of buildings to take advantage of riverfront and the Hartford skyline, vistas, provide public access to the waterfront, open spaces, landscaping, streetscaping, lighting and connectivity.

Also, the siting of the right-of-ways of the internal road system recommended by the Town-wide Traffic Circulation Plan.

Rentschler Field:

This area is currently zoned industrial. The project area should be defined and rezoned as a large scale mixed use development for industrial, commercial, residential and institutional uses. This would provide the flexibility to the area and developers to better address the market. Also, the development of design guidelines to assure the quality of development to meet community standards. Again, the incorporation of road right-of-ways- to meet the needs of development in accordance with the Town-wide Traffic Circulation Plan.

Burnside Corridor:

The Corridor Plan recommends specific rezoning and two overlay districts (one commercial and one industrial). These provisions should be adopted including the incorporation of design guidelines for signage, streetscape, landscape, lighting and parking. These design guidelines should result in a character that identifies the Burnside Corridor. The Plan identifies several design guidelines and the establishment of a design review board. The design of new buildings in the corridor should conform to the character of the neighborhood.

Main Street Business District:

The Redevelopment Plan describes the recommended zoning changes, site planning, architectural guidelines, design review requirements and the urban design objectives. These should be adopted in graphic and narrative form for easy interpretation of developers and property owners. The application and permitting process should also be demonstrated by a flow chart with time frames for easy interpretation. These specific land management tools should be formulated with input from developers, property owners, administrative staff, and other representative community groups.

Land Use Management Tools are the specification or the criteria for quality development or redevelopment to insure the optimization of economic benefits for the whole community. These need to be developed through community consensus to achieve the community's vision and goals.

V.5

PROPOSED BUDGET TO IMPLEMENT STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Strategic Economic Development Plan is very comprehensive and will require substantial investment by both the private and public section over time to achieve the vision and goals as set forth by the community. However, the return in investment will more than justify the contribution from many sources. Returns to the private sector will be in the form of profits and to the public sector through an expanded tax base, employment opportunities for its residents and a higher quality of life for its citizens.

The Plan has identified key tools that in combination act as a catalyst to promote private investment and gain support for public investment over time to achieve the community's visions and goals.

These tools are:

1. **A marketing program** to market the Town of East Hartford, the Strategic Economic Development Plan and to attract new businesses and residents, retain existing residents and to attract visitors.
2. **A Land Use Management Plan Update** to develop and revise land management requirements to guide quality development and redevelopment to achieve the

3. community's vision and goals. In particular, the goal of making the Town of East Hartford a more attractive Town in which to live and work.
4. **A Town-Wide Traffic Circulation and Parking Plan** to meet the needs of forecasting traffic for safe and convenient access to major destinations and neighborhoods with the Town of East Hartford.

It is recommended that the Town Government budget funds to support and carryout these activities as catalyst to generate those economic initiatives that are necessary for a successful plan.

The following budgets and respective work program are recommended to be carried out in the first year of the Plan:

MARKETING PROGRAM

- To develop and implement a three year market program. This activity can be carried out by recruiting a staff member with experience in community marketing or through a request for proposal from experienced consultants. The Work Program may include, but not be limited to:
 - Develop a three year community market plan and budgets
 - Establish and maintain a calendar of community events such as a Waterfront Spring Festival or a Winter Carnival.

Marketing of the events to attract visitors from the region as well as within the town and to increase retail sales.

- Create a video that portrays the community's assets. Include the vision and goals set by the community, Town Government, Community Workshops, schools, recreation facilities, waterfront, access to the region, some results of the Burnside Avenue Project, the CBD Project, hospitals, historic buildings, community events, residential neighborhoods, shopping and the Strategic Economic Development Plan.
- Create a website to include the video material plus pictures of the available retail space, industrial space, commercial and available industrial sites. Statistics on tax rates, incomes, utility costs and labor pool.
- Layout and preparation of promotional materials
- Quarterly newsletters and mailing lists

The estimated annual cost for these activities on a reoccurring basis is:

\$115,000

LAND MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES UPDATE:

The Work Program may consist of, but not be limited to, drafting and adoption of the rezoning, development guidelines and overlay districts for the Waterfront Project boundaries, the Burnside Avenue Redevelopment Project boundaries, the Main Street Central Business District Project boundaries, the proposed project boundaries for the Silver Lane Redevelopment District and the Rentschler Field project area. The drafting and adoption of a development manual with graphics and narrative for easy interpretation, including a flow chart for developers to process their applications and to obtain the necessary permits.

The estimated cost of this activity is:

\$60,000

TRAFFIC CIRCULATION AND PARKING PLAN:

These are studies that have taken place that may be incorporated into the activity, which would be a one-time cost that should be carried out in the first year.

The Work Program may consist of, but not be limited to:

- Forecast the type of intensity of development proposed for the Waterfront and Rentschler Field

- Forecast the traffic loading on the street system and determine roadway improvements necessary for convenient access and safety. Estimated cost and phasing of improvements. Determine internal roadway systems for the Waterfront project area.
- Specific traffic analysis for the Burnside Avenue, Main Street and Silver Lane Redevelopment Project areas. Recommend intersection improvements, access management, additional left turning lanes, pedestrian access and crossings, traffic controls and solutions to parking deficiencies.
- Determine the impacts and feasibility of a mass transit system.

The estimated cost of this one-time activity is: \$70,000

VI. Summary/Next Steps/ Conclusion

VI.1 SUMMARY

The following summary chart (*Figure 6.1 – Implementation Framework*) lists the various strategic initiatives defined by the task force teams and relates them to each other, task force topics, defining linkages and relationships between each topic in terms of the Town as a whole.

It also defines potential implementation participants for each initiative – which sector (public, private or civic) can play which role (lead, support or advisory), in order to organize implementation of each initiative.

VI.2 IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS

The second chart (*Figure 6.2 - Immediate Next Steps*) defines immediate next steps to be taken, as defined in the previous chapter. It addresses the following categories:

- Organization and Administration
- Tools and Techniques
- Priority Areas

Using these categories, the chart presents a description of immediate next steps: town-wide and project specific tasks to set in motion, priority economic development initiatives, including administration/organization, and time line. (*A bar chart depicting the time line is presented in Figure 6-3.*)

VI.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, thanks to the local partnership established through this process—the Town, merchants and businesses, civic and not-for-profit groups, and interested citizens—East Hartford is in a position to proceed with next steps to implement this Strategy

Moreover, in conjunction with the larger regionally-based partnership now in place-- consisting of the State of Connecticut, major corporations such as UT and Phoenix, and a variety of civic organizations such as Riverfront Recapture-- East Hartford, if it chooses and acts, can be the beneficiary of an extraordinary impetus for economic development.

For instance, a number of immediate partnership actions now underway represent opportunities to be seized:

- The Adriaen's Landing project will bring activity and investment to the Connecticut Riverfront immediately adjacent to East Hartford. The Town must immediately set

in motion complementary plans to take advantage of this windfall with intense, pedestrian-related development tied to the Founders Bridge and the Riverfront—new offices, apartments, and a major museum/ tourism attraction.

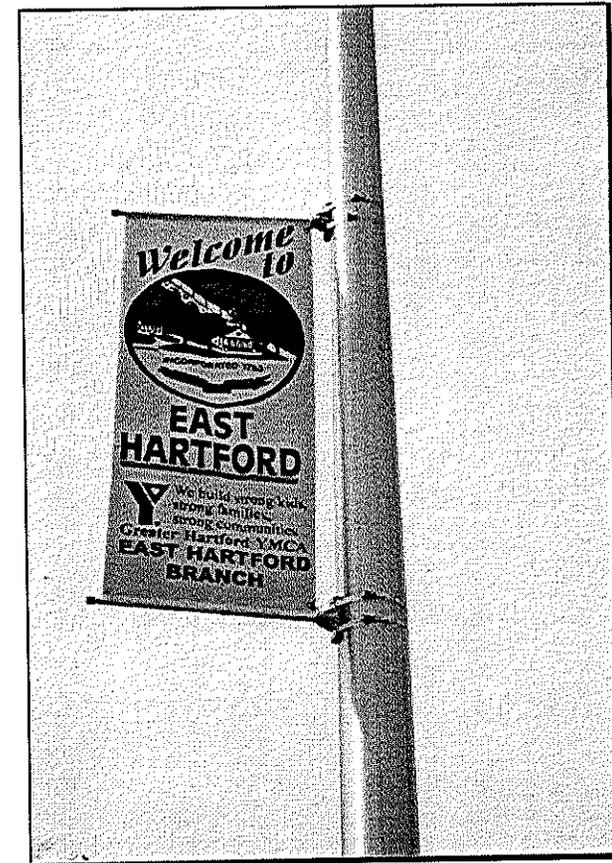
- The UConn Stadium is but the first step in the development of Rentschler Field as a major employment park/ mixed-use development. The participation of UT and the State of Connecticut in this endeavor can provide a potent entity with which the Town can partner.
- The key is to leverage these regional opportunities into even more Town opportunities—balancing preservation and growth along connecting corridors such as Silver Lane, creating a new north-south roadway as an outgrowth of Rentschler Field development, providing economic development infrastructure for downtown by providing attractive medians, convenient parking and other improvements..

The danger is a still-prevalent attitude that somehow East Hartford has missed out before and will do so again—that regional politics and local lethargy will win out in the end.

The only way to combat such self-defeating attitudes is to have an agreed-upon plan that involves a broad base of citizens in a continuous and forward-looking vision process: what do we want our town to be and how can we get there from here?

This Economic Development Strategy sets such a vision process in motion. Community involvement for the upcoming

Plan of Conservation and Development must continue that process. The beneficiaries of this 'positive planning' process will be all the citizens of East Hartford.



East Hartford Economic Development Strategy Implementation Framework Strategies, Participants		A) Riverfront	B) Downtown	C) Corridors	D) Infra/transp	E) Residential	F) Industrial	G) Open Space/Rec.	H) Land Use Mgt	I) Marketing	Roles: Participants by Sector																
											Public	Private	Civic														
Strategic Initiatives																											
A) Riverfront																											
Improve Envir: Transit, pkg/trail links/Pollution odor abatement											+																
Facilitate Office, Residential Development/Improve approvals process															+	+											
Develop Cultural, Educational Facilities at Riverfront, 'Learning Corridor'													+	+				+	+	++							
B) Downtown																											
Create Refined Downtown Plan: Retail Mix, Historic Bldgs, Gateway, Streetscape											+			+													
Develop Detailed Marketing Strategy: Regional/ Local/ Activities/ Promotion															+												
Recruit Expanded Partnership Steering Committee															+			+	+								
C) Commercial Corridors																											
Physical enhancement of corridors: land use, streetscape, auto/ ped/ transit											+	+		++	+	++		+	+								
Public/Private Partnership: town/ small business											++			++		+											
Develop Supply/ Demand Market Plan: identify Expansion/ Reuse /New devt											++			++				+	++								
D) Infrastructure/ Transportation																											
Transp Mgt: Corridor traffic, Main Street DOT partnership												+	+				+	+	+	+							
New roadway links: N-S, RentsField, Rivfrt											+		+			++	+	+	+								
Mix Transp Modes: Encourage transit, walkways											+	+				++	+	+	+								
E) Residential																											
Improve Res Quality: Refurb Old/New upscale/More activities											+	+	+					+	+	+							
Encourage Home Ownership- New Residents/ Owner Occupy- Existing Residents											+	+						+	+								
Buffer Residential/ Commercial Uses as necessary																		+	+								
F) Industrial																											
Develop Objectives & Plan for Quality Devt: Riverfront/ Rentschler/ Corridors											+		+	+					+	+							
Targeted recruitment: enterprise community/e-commerce											+		+							+							
Marketing Plan to attract new/enhance existing businesses													+	+													
G) Open Space/ Recreation																											
Define new preservation techniques: land trust/appropriate funding											+								+								
Increase access, economic benefit of recreation facilities: stadium/ riverfront											+		+	+	++	+				++							
Expand/connect greenways, walkways/central open space/ agriculture											+	+		+	++	+			+	++							
H) Land Use Management																											
Create organization and prepare guidelines for appearance, maintenance											++	++	+	++	++	+	+			+							
Prepare transportation plan to address intensity & accessibility of devt											++	++	+	++		+	+			++							
Mitigate land use conflicts but encourage appropriate mixed-use											+	+	+	+	+	+				+							
I) Marketing																											
Emphasize Waterfront/Rentschler Field Improvements											++	+	++	++	+	++	++	++									
Increase public awareness of other significant projects, deal with blight											+	+	++		++	++	++	++									
Market town as crossroads of uses: resid/ recr/schools/ access											+	++	++	++	++	++	++	++									

++ Major Link
 + Medium Link
 + Minor Link
 ◆ Lead
 ○ Support
 ◆ Advisory

FIGURE 6.1

East Hartford Economic Development Strategy																									
Immediate Next Steps Tasks, Responsibilities, Schedule	◆ Lead																								
	○ Support										□ Plan														
	◇ Advisory										■ Implement														
	Participants																								
	Public Sector				Private Sector						Civic/ Not-for-Profit Sector														
	Town	Reg	State	Fed	Corps	Devs	Landown	Merch	Ch of C	Main St	Vision	Sci Cntr	NH Grps	Civic Orgs	Cult	Hist	Envir	Short-Term-2000				Medium-Term			
																		1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	01	02	03	04
A) Organization and Administration																									
Adopt- Economic Development Strategy																									
Establish East Hartford Vision Partnership- Structure/Mission																									
Establish Subcommittee Structure with Partners																									
Establish or Enhance Local District Partnerships																									
B) Tools and Techniques																									
B1 Land Use Management																									
Complete/ Adopt-Plan of Cons&Devt																									
Complete/ Adopt- Zoning/ Subdivision/ Districts																									
Detailed Planning/ Guidelines- Districts																									
B2 Other Studies & Plans																									
Complete/ Adopt-Transportation Plan																									
Complete/ Adopt-Open Space Plan																									
B3 Marketing																									
Establish Marketing Subcommittee																									
Prepare Marketing Strategy																									
Fund and Implement Strategy																									
C) Priority Areas																									
B1 Riverfront																									
Establish Riverfront District Partnership																									
Work with Regional Pollution Agencies																									
Detailed Planning/ Guidelines																									
Right of way Adjustments/ Access Improvements																									
Opportunities for Consolidated Sites																									
Facilitate Priority Site Devt																									
B2 Downtown																									
Enhance Local Main Street Partnership																									
Detailed Planning/ Guidelines- Districts																									
Work with DOT-Median/ Right of Way Adjustments																									
Secondary Parking/ Rear Access Links																									
Partner, Market Key Properties to Preferred Needed Uses																									
Events and Promotion																									
B3 Commercial Corridors																									
Establish/ Enhance Local Corridor Partnerships (2-3)																									
Silver Lane as Priority District-Detailed Planning/Design Guidelin																									
Right of way Adjustments/ Access Improvements as needed																									
Implement Burnside Ave Streetscape: Matching Funding/ Loc																									
Refine Funding Approach: Sources and Uses of funds																									

FIGURE 6.2
IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS

Next Steps Time Line

East Hartford Economic Development Strategy		Q3-2000	Q4-2000	Q1-2001	Q2-2001	Q3-2001	Q4-2001	Q1-2002	Q2-2002	Q3-2002	Q4-2002	Q1-2003	Q2-2003
Immediate Next Steps Tasks, Responsibilities, Schedule													
A) Organization and Administration													
Adopt- Economic Development Strategy													
Establish East Hartford Vision Partnership- Structure/Mission													
Establish Subcommittee Structure with Partners													
Establish or Enhance Local District Partnerships													
B) Tools and Techniques													
B1 Land Use Management													
Complete/ Adopt-Plan of Cons&Devt													
Complete/ Adopt- Zoning/ Subdivision/ Districts													
Detailed Planning/ Guidelines- Districts													
B2 Other Studies & Plans													
Complete/ Adopt-Transportation Plan													
Complete/ Adopt-Open Space Plan													
Home Ownership Plan													
B3 Marketing													
Establish Marketing Subcommittee													
Prepare Marketing Strategy													
Fund and Implement Strategy													
C) Priority Areas													
B1 Riverfront													
Establish Riverfront District Partnership													
Work with Regional Pollution Agencies													
Detailed Planning/ Guidelines													
Right of way Adjustments/ Access Improvements													
Opportunities for Consolidated Sites													
Facilitate Priority Site Devt													
B2 Downtown													
Enhance Local Main Street Partnership													
Detailed Planning/ Guidelines- Districts													
Work with DOT-Median/ Right of Way Adjustments													
Secondary Parking/ Rear Access Links													
Partner, Market Key Properties to Preferred Needed Uses													
Events and Promotion													
B3 Commercial Corridors													
Establish/ Enhance Local Corridor Partnerships (2-3)													
Silver Lane as Priority District-Detailed Planning/Design Guidelines													
Right of way Adjustments/ Access Improvements as needed													
Implement Burnside Ave Streetscape: Matching Funding/ Local Support													
Refine Funding Approach: Sources and Uses of funds													