

14. SILVER LANE REVITALIZATION PLAN

The Silver Lane Revitalization Plan (SLRP) was funded by a Brownfield Area-Wide Revitalization (BAR) Planning Grant from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), and was completed in July of 2018. The Silver Lane Advisory Committee was formed to guide the study of how to best redevelop the commercial areas of Silver Lane from Main Street to Forbes Street.

The Silver Lane Advisory Committee conducted an existing conditions analysis within the corridor, assessment of the Town's zoning regulations, and reviewed development constraints including wetlands, flood zones, and infrastructure. The Committee also evaluated market conditions and demographics to assess the ability to support future development along the corridor. Opportunity sites that were identified as being best positioned for development or redevelopment were selected, and development feasibility plans were prepared that incorporated a parcel build-out for each site.

The Master Planning process established a future land use vision and priority goals to guide and shape development proposals along Silver Lane. The Silver Lane Revitalization Plan provides recommended actions the Town can implement to achieve its vision, including rezoning the corridor.

This addendum includes selected chapters from the final Plan that provide background, review current conditions, outline the Master Plan, and identify land use recommendations for the Silver Lane corridor.

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SILVER LANE

*"Playgrounds and families
enjoying outside activities..."*

Silver Lane Vision 2040

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Silver Lane is an important corridor within the Town of East Hartford due to its proximity to highways, major employers, and surrounding residential neighborhoods. Initially an agricultural area, Silver Lane developed rapidly beginning in the 1930s when Pratt & Whitney's airfield and manufacturing facility were built. Housing started to become more widespread in the corridor during and after World War II as East Hartford experienced rapid population growth and a housing shortage. From the early 1960s through the mid-1980s, Silver Lane served as a link between Interstate 84 and Interstate 384, which was originally planned to run from Hartford to Providence. During this period, the area around Forbes Street emerged as a regional retail center for eastern Hartford County. Many of the commercial buildings in the study area date from this era. In the mid-1980s, a direct connection between Interstates 84 and 384 was built, allowing traffic to bypass Silver Lane. During this same time period, the Forbes Street exit was closed, limiting highway access for businesses in the eastern portion of the corridor. The loss of the Forbes Street exit,

decrease in traffic volume, and greater competition from the nearby Buckland Hills area caused Silver Lane to transition to a neighborhood-scale retail node.



The Silver Lane Pickle Company operated in the corridor for several decades in the first half of the 20th century



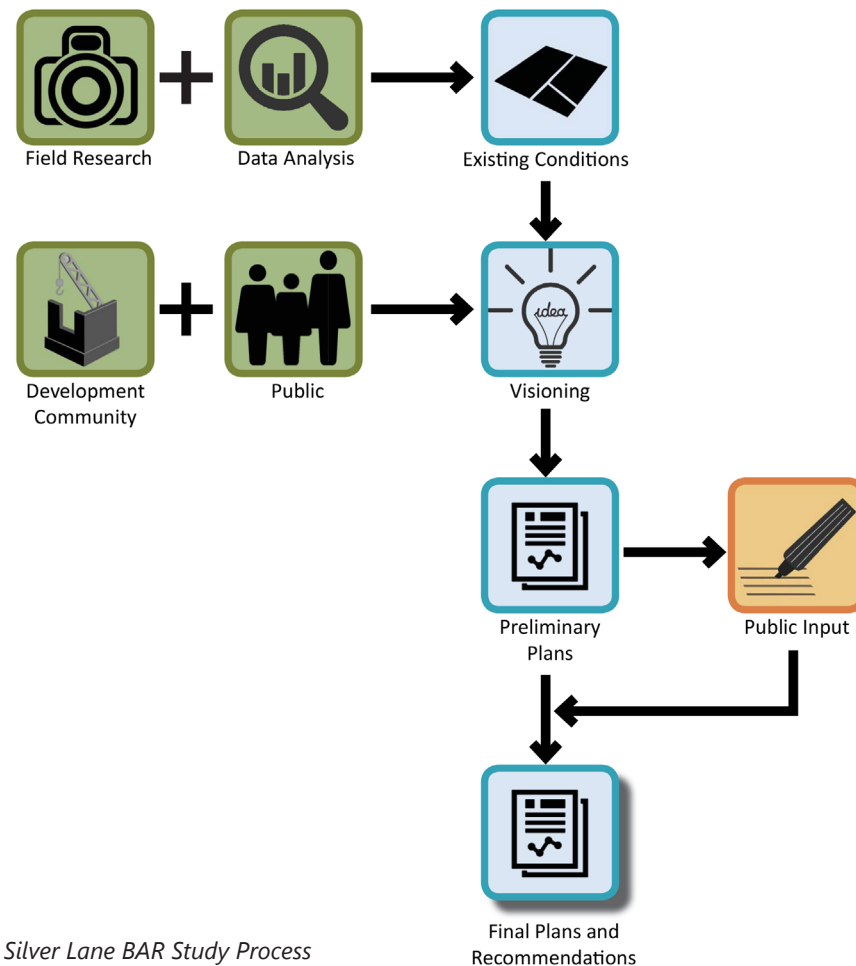
Samuel Forbes House built in 1878, currently at the corner of Silver Lane and Roberts St.

Over the last twenty-five years, much effort has focused on developing Rentschler Field. Planning for the Rentschler Field site began in the mid-1990s following closure of the Pratt & Whitney airfield. In 2002, the state constructed the UCONN football stadium, and in 2007 Cabela's opened its store on the campus. Over the last decade, the United Technologies Corporation (UTC) and Pratt & Whitney have also made significant investments in their campus, including the construction of a new Pratt & Whitney engineering headquarters and an expansion of the UTC research center. UTC also partnered with a developer on a mixed-use master plan for the remainder of the Rentschler Field site; however, the Recession that started in 2008 led to a series of delays, ultimately ending in a retail development group pulling out of the site in 2018. While the future infill development of the Rentschler Field site is unknown at this time, the site remains a mixed-use regional employment, shopping, and entertainment center. While these projects have had positive employment and revenue implications for the town, they have not spurred significant reinvestment in the rest of the Silver Lane corridor.

The Town of East Hartford obtained a Brownfields Area Revitalization (BAR) grant from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to comprehensively plan for revitalization of the Silver Lane

corridor. The BAR planning process analyzed current physical, environmental and market conditions in the corridor, established a guiding vision, identified development opportunities, and recommended actions the Town can implement to realize the aspirations for transformative redevelopment expressed during the planning process.

The Study was guided by the Silver Lane Advisory Committee, an ad hoc committee consisting of elected and appointed municipal officials, Town staff, development professionals, and representatives of public and private organizations active in and around Silver Lane.



Silver Lane BAR Study Process

Recent Initiatives

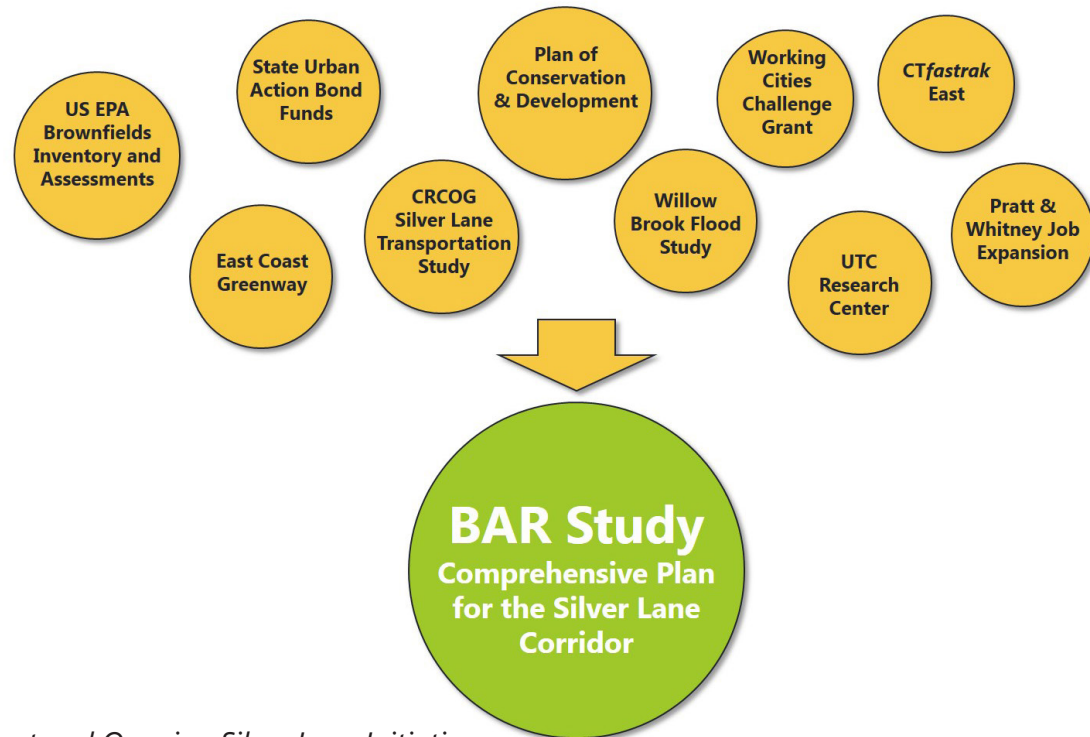
In addition to the BAR grant, the Town has numerous other initiatives either recently completed or ongoing in the Study Area. The Town partnered with the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) to conduct a transportation study of the corridor simultaneously with the BAR study in order to address both land use and transportation planning in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. The Transportation Study will recommend improvements to roads, sidewalks, bike lanes, public transportation, and greenway trails that support the future land use vision for Silver Lane. Transportation recommendations are intentionally omitted from this report, as they will be included in the Transportation Study report. The Town also obtained a federal grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to conduct a brownfields inventory and assessment, and recently completed the Willow Brook Flood Study, which precipitated a revision to FEMA flood zone mapping on the north side of Silver Lane between Forbes Street and Simmons Road. Finally, the Town was awarded a multi-year Working Cities Challenge Grant to build human capital through workforce development and education in the Silver Lane neighborhood.

There are significant financial resources available to help facilitate the revitalization of the Silver Lane Corridor. In 2016, the Town of East Hartford bonded \$3 million for property acquisition and blight removal in the corridor. In 2017, the State of Connecticut committed \$12 million in Urban Action bond funds to support the proposed outlet mall on the Rentschler Field site. With the abandonment of the outlet mall project, these funds are now available for use elsewhere in the Silver Lane Corridor and can support the recommendations put forth in this Plan and the forthcoming Transportation Study.

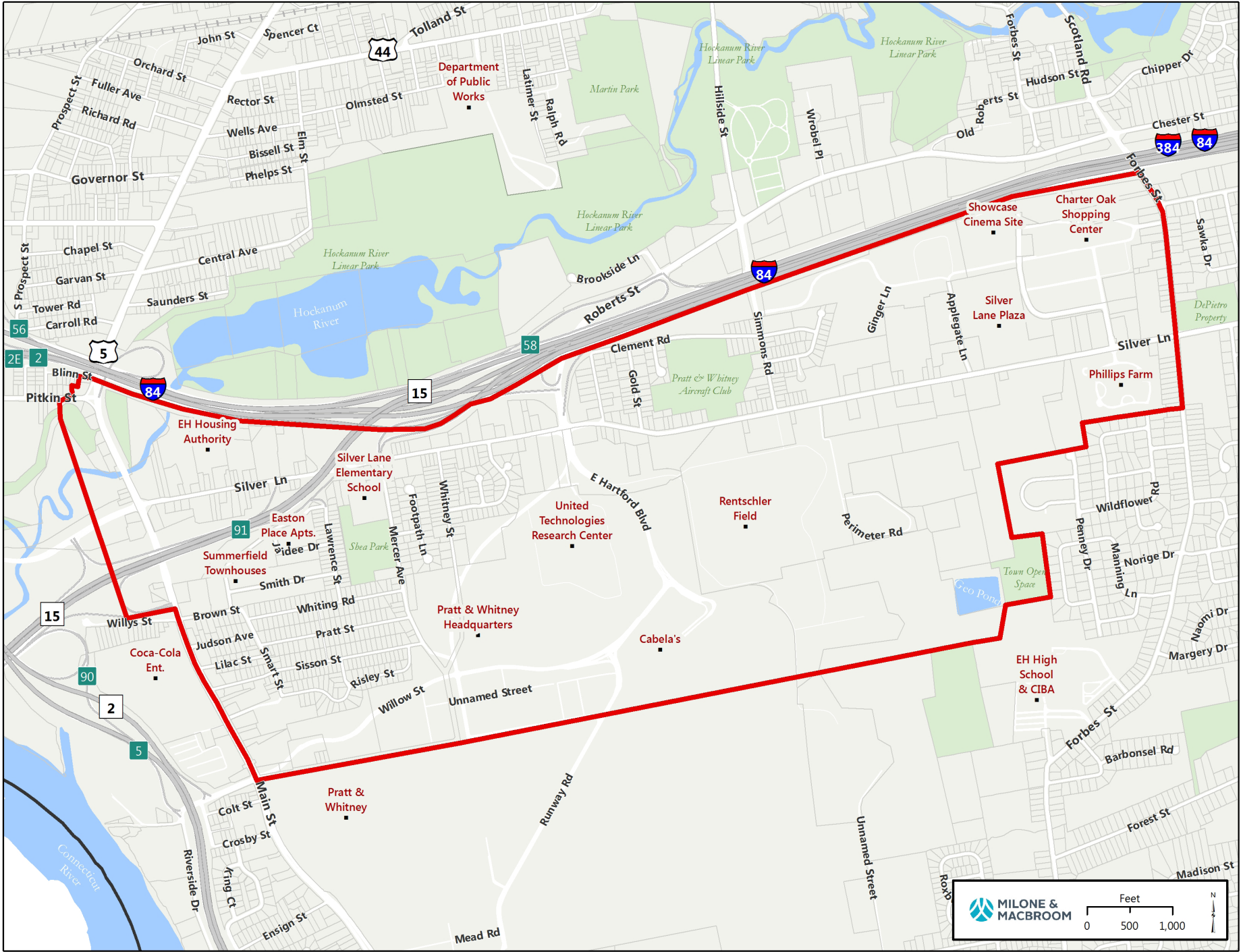
The Study Area

The Silver Lane BAR Study Area was defined as shown in the accompanying map. The study area is roughly bounded by Main Street, Interstate 84, Forbes Street, and the Pratt & Whitney Campus. The corridor along with Rentschler Field were identified in the Town's 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development as an opportunity area for redevelopment and bolstering the overall economic health of the community. UTC has an active Master Plan for the Rentschler Field campus. Therefore this area was excluded from the Silver Lane BAR Study Area.

Other Silver Lane Initiatives



Recent and Ongoing Silver Lane Initiatives



East Hartford BAR Study Area

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SILVER
LANE

*"...there is now the local
vibe of shops, restaurants
and services that we always
hoped for - walkable!"*

Silver Lane Vision 2040

CURRENT CORRIDOR CONDITIONS

The project team conducted extensive data analysis and field research within the Silver Lane corridor (see the full existing conditions report in the appendices). This included an inventory of existing land uses, buildings, and businesses; assessment of the Town's zoning regulations; and a review of physical impediments to development including wetlands, flood zones, and availability of infrastructure. The existing conditions analysis helped the project team and Advisory Committee identify opportunities and challenges in the corridor and begin to formulate goals and strategies to move the corridor forward. The key takeaways from the existing conditions analysis are as follows:

Strengths

- Location proximate to highways and major employers such as Pratt & Whitney
- Large residential population nearby
- Availability of sewer and water infrastructure to support development
- Many ongoing and planned initiatives with connection to Silver Lane

Weaknesses

- Zoning regulations and land use reflect historic development patterns rather than "highest and best use"
- High commercial vacancy rate
- Sizable amount of land constrained by wetlands and flood zones
- Disjointed development pattern and lack of connections between commercial and residential neighborhoods
- Recent development on Pratt & Whitney and Rentschler Field Campus has not spilled over onto Silver Lane

Opportunities

- Ongoing employment growth at Pratt & Whitney
- Future development on the Rentschler Field campus
- Expansion of CTfastrak service east of the Connecticut River
- Completion of East Coast Greenway/Charter Oak Greenway
- Availability of state and local funds to support catalyst project(s)

Land Use and Development Patterns

The wide range of land uses within the corridor reflect the distinct eras of development over the last century. No one land use category dominates; however, uses tend to cluster within the corridor. One notable trend is that existing land uses reflect historical development patterns rather than “highest and best use.” For example, the area near Roberts Street has the highest traffic volume in the corridor and is close to the highway interchanges – attributes commonly found in commercial areas. However this area is primarily comprised of single-family residential uses that were developed in the first half in the 20th century prior to the construction of I-84.

Residential Development

Residential uses make up about 25% of land area and encompass a range of densities and housing types. Higher density housing is generally found west of Mercer Avenue and in the Applegate Lane area, while single-family housing is most commonly found between Mercer Avenue and Simmons Road and east of Forbes Street. Over half of the Study Area’s 2,700+ residential units are located in eight large apartment complexes. Despite being classified as an arterial roadway with moderate to high traffic volumes, there is still a significant number of single-family homes on Silver Lane itself, particularly between the Route 15 overpass and Simmons Road. With the exception of the Phillip’s Farm and Footpath Lane developments, which

were built in the mid-2000s, there has been a lack of residential development in the corridor over the last 30 years. The lack of modern, higher-end rental housing in the corridor makes it difficult to attract middle and upper income workers from Pratt & Whitney and other major employers.



Single-family residential development along Silver Lane near Gold Street

Land Use	Number of Parcels	Area Acres	Percent of Total Land Area	Residential Dwelling Units
Residential	706	283.5	24.5%	2,741
1 Family Residential	514	129.5	11.2%	519
2-3 Family Residential	149	33.7	2.9%	324
4+ Family Residential	36	95.3	8.2%	1,598
Condominium	1	17.5	1.5%	66
Residential Care Facility	2	5.6	0.5%	210
Mixed-Use	4	2.0	0.2%	24
Commercial	56	145.7	12.6%	-
Commercial	53	143.3	12.4%	-
Commercial Office	3	2.4	0.2%	-
Industrial	14	173.8	15.0%	-
Institutional	5	67.4	5.8%	-
Undeveloped Land	69	336.1	29.0%	-
Vacant Land	62	280.5	24.2%	-
Agriculture	2	12.3	1.1%	-
Open Space and Recreation	5	43.3	3.7%	-
Other	3	150.8	13.0%	-
Transportation and Utilities	3	14.4	1.2%	-
Right-of-way	-	136.4	11.8%	-
Study Area Total	853	1,157.3	100.0%	

Generalized Land Use Table

Source: Town of East Hartford Assessor Office supplemented by MMI field verification

Commercial and Industrial Development

Commercial uses comprise about 13% of land area and are found in three distinct nodes: on Main Street, on Silver Lane between the Route 15 overpass and Rentschler Field Stadium, and on Silver Lane between Simmons Road and Forbes Street. The Main Street node consists primarily of auto-oriented retail businesses. This area has high traffic volumes and a low vacancy rate, but offers little opportunity for new development due to environmental constraints and lack of vacant land. The commercial node between the Route 15 overpass and the stadium consists primarily of small take-out restaurants, convenience retailers, and personal services – uses consistent with a neighborhood-oriented business district. The largest commercial node is located between Simmons Road and Forbes Street and is the traditional commercial core of Silver Lane. This area contains a mix of newer neighborhood-oriented businesses and older big-box style development. This area continues to transition away from big-box retail towards a community-oriented business node, and many of the obsolete big-box spaces present an opportunity for redevelopment. Industrial uses comprise about 15% of land area and are concentrated on the Pratt & Whitney and UTC campus. Industrial uses have not spilled over to adjacent properties on Silver Lane.

Undeveloped Land

There are approximately 336 acres of undeveloped land in the corridor, making it the single-largest land use category. Undeveloped land is further classified into three subcategories: vacant land, open space & recreation, and agriculture. Vacant land comprises over 280 acres of land in the study area. More than half of the vacant land is located on the Rentschler Field and Pratt & Whitney campus, including a large tract on the south side of Silver Lane extending from Roberts Street east past Simmons Road. While this land provides parking during events at Rentschler Field Stadium, it is underutilized for a majority of the year, contributing to the disjointed appearance of the corridor and physically separating the commercial node near Forbes Street from Rentschler Field, the Pratt & Whitney Campus, and the high-density neighborhoods to the west. UTC has approved a Master Plan that envisions significant development of vacant land on its campus. However, there has been little activity on the campus since the construction of Cabela's in 2007 and the scale and type of future development on its campus is unknown at this time.



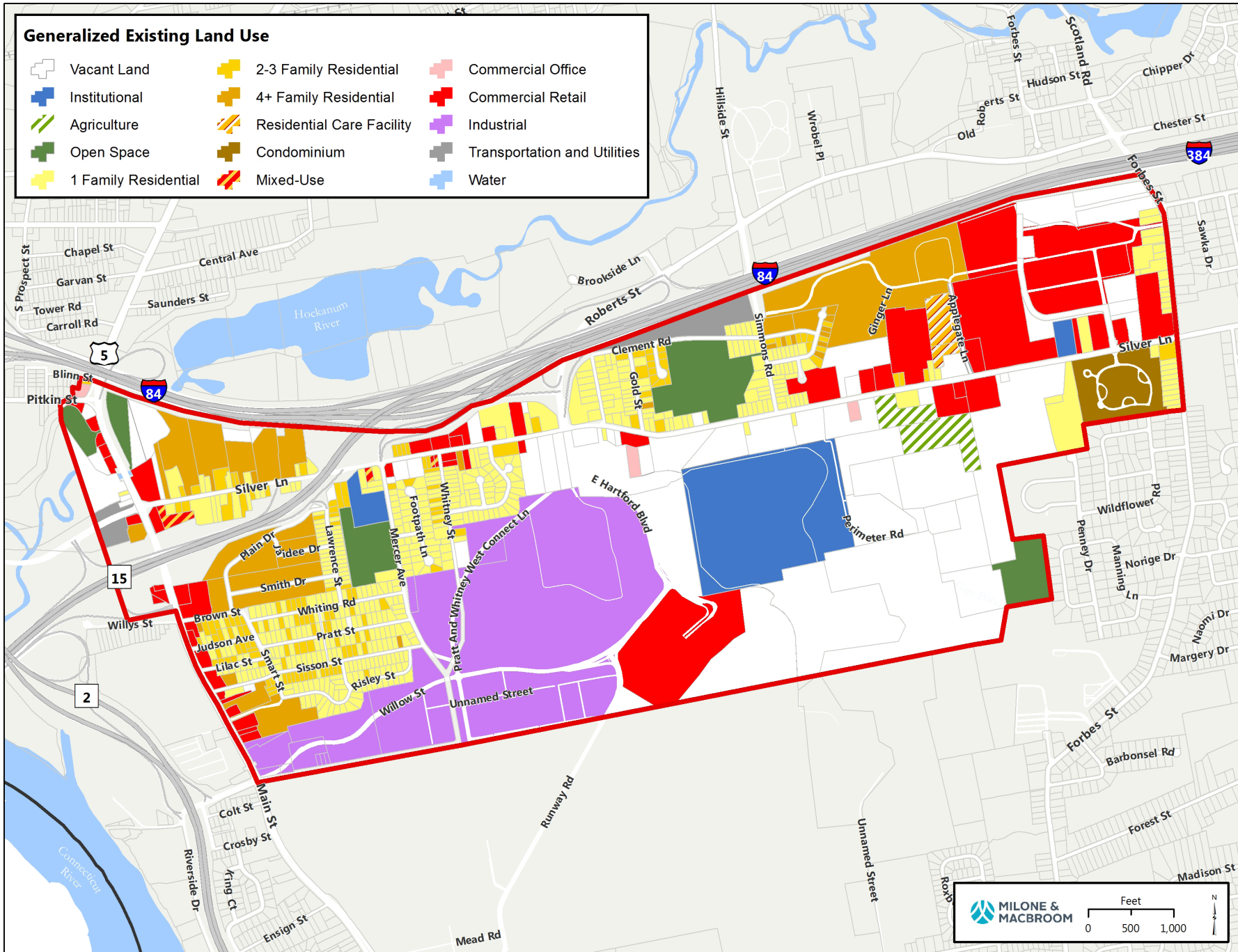
Small retail businesses located along Silver Lane near Whitney Street



The new Dollar General development on Silver Lane was completed in 2017



Vacant land along Silver Lane is used as parking during stadium events, but sits underutilized for most of the year



Generalized Land Use Map

Zoning

Zoning in the corridor is similarly diverse and reflects historical development patterns and not necessarily desired future land uses. Key zoning takeaways are:

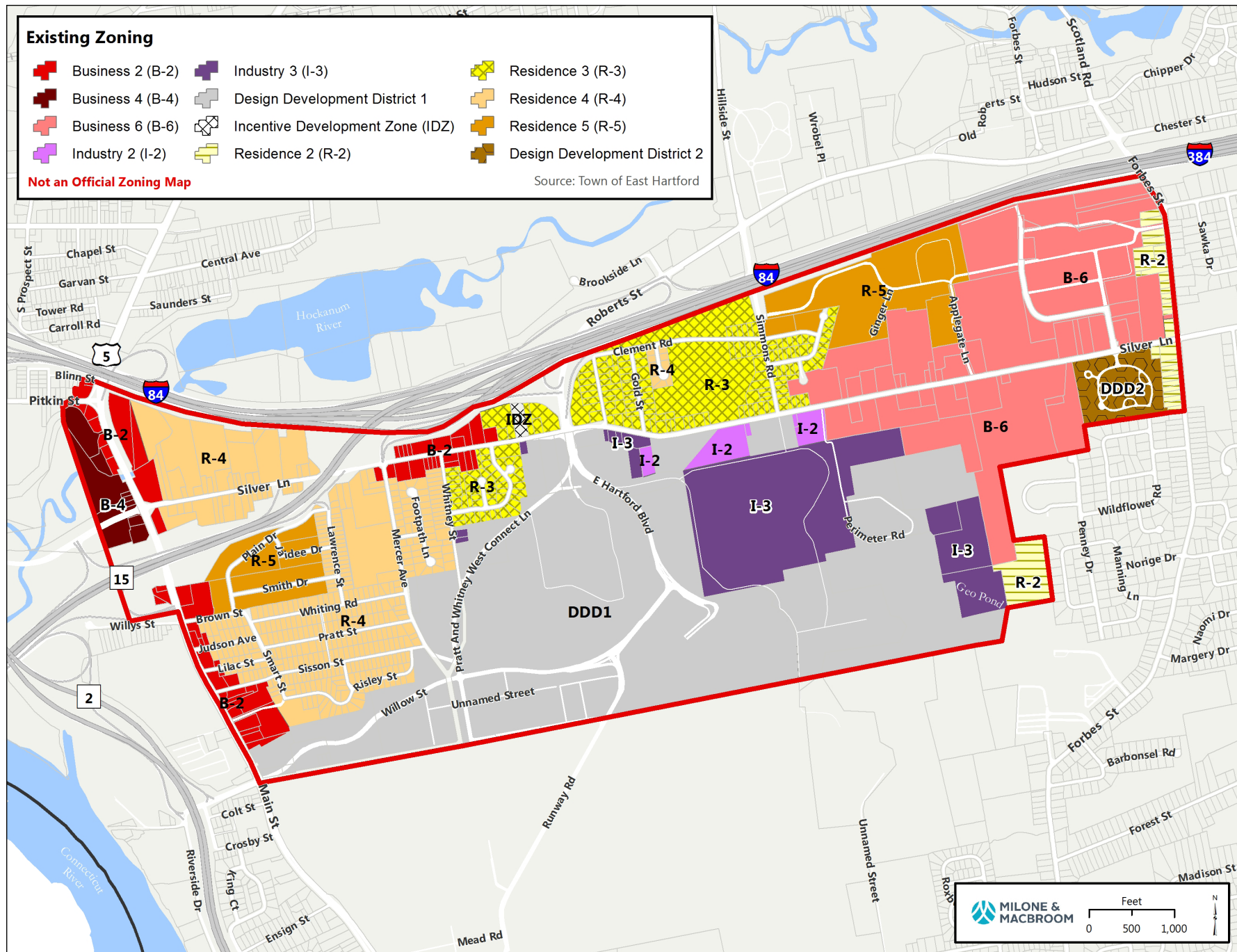
- Design Development Districts (DDD)s occupy about one-third of the study area, and cover Rentschler Field/Pratt & Whitney Campus and the Phillips Farm age-restricted development. DDDs are governed by a PZC approved Master Plan rather than traditional bulk and use regulations.
- Residential zones surround the Silver Lane and Roberts Street intersection. This area has the best locational attributes for commercial development (high traffic volumes, access to highway)
- There are several legacy industrially-zoned parcels located on the south side of Silver Lane near Rentschler Field. None of these properties currently contain an industrial use.
- With the exception of the B-2 and B-4 zones, the existing regulations largely follow a “Euclidean zoning” regime, which emphasizes the separation of commercial and residential uses into distinct areas. The challenge for Euclidean zoning patterns is that they have difficulty adapting to market conditions. For example, the B-6 zone near Forbes Street only permits office uses and commercial retail on lots with large setbacks - most traditionally found in big-box type

development. Thus, the prospects for future development in this area are hindered by the regulations, particularly since the local market for office and big-box retail is poor at this time.

Chapter 8 includes recommended zoning changes for the corridor that align with desired future uses and market realities.

Zone	Number of Parcels	Area Acres	Percent of Area
Residential Zones	686	302.6	26.1%
Residence 2 (R-2)	37	19.5	1.7%
Residence 3 (R-3)	196	81.2	7.0%
Residence 4 (R-4)	440	135.5	11.7%
Residence 5 (R-5)	13	66.4	5.7%
Commercial Zones	117	234.3	20.2%
Business 2 (B-2)	62	38.2	3.3%
Business 4 (B-4)	9	15.6	1.3%
Business 6 (B-6)	46	180.5	15.6%
Industrial Zones	17	99.6	8.6%
Industrial 2 (I-2)	5	9.6	0.8%
Industrial 3 (I-3)	12	90.0	7.8%
Special Zones	32	384.4	33.2%
Design Development District 1 (DDD-1)	30	365.5	31.6%
Design Development District 2 (DDD-2)	1	17.5	1.5%
Incentive Development Zone (IDZ)	1	1.4	0.1%
Right-of-Way	-	136.4	11.8%
Total All Zones	852	1,157.3	100.0%

Existing Zoning in the Corridor
Source: Town of East Hartford



Study Area Existing Zoning Map

Environmental Conditions

Building upon the land use and zoning analysis, the project team assessed environmental constraints that may impact development potential of vacant land and/or redevelopment potential of key sites. The Study Area contains about 83 acres of vacant land in commercial zones (excluding the Rentschler Field campus), of which nearly 60% is environmentally constrained and cannot support development. The Study Area's main environmental constraints are floodplains and wetlands. Wetlands particularly affect undeveloped lands on the south side of Silver Lane east of the Stadium. During the course of this study, wetlands in this area were graphically delineated by a soil scientist to gain a better understanding of their actual extent and true impacts to development.

Floodplains are present along Willow Brook, on the north side of Silver Lane between the Pratt & Whitney ballfields and Forbes Street, and on the south side of Silver Lane in front of Rentschler Field. In August 2017, FEMA revised the flood zone map in this area, following a study of Willow Brook. The floodplain extent was reduced on potential redevelopment sites including Silver Lane Plaza and the Charter Oak Mall.

Willow Brook Flood Study

In 2015, the Town of East Hartford undertook a detailed hydrologic and hydraulic analysis of Willow Brook and evaluated potential flood mitigation measures. The goal of the study was to more accurately define flood hazards in the area, open up additional land for development, and eliminate or reduce flood insurance requirements for property owners.

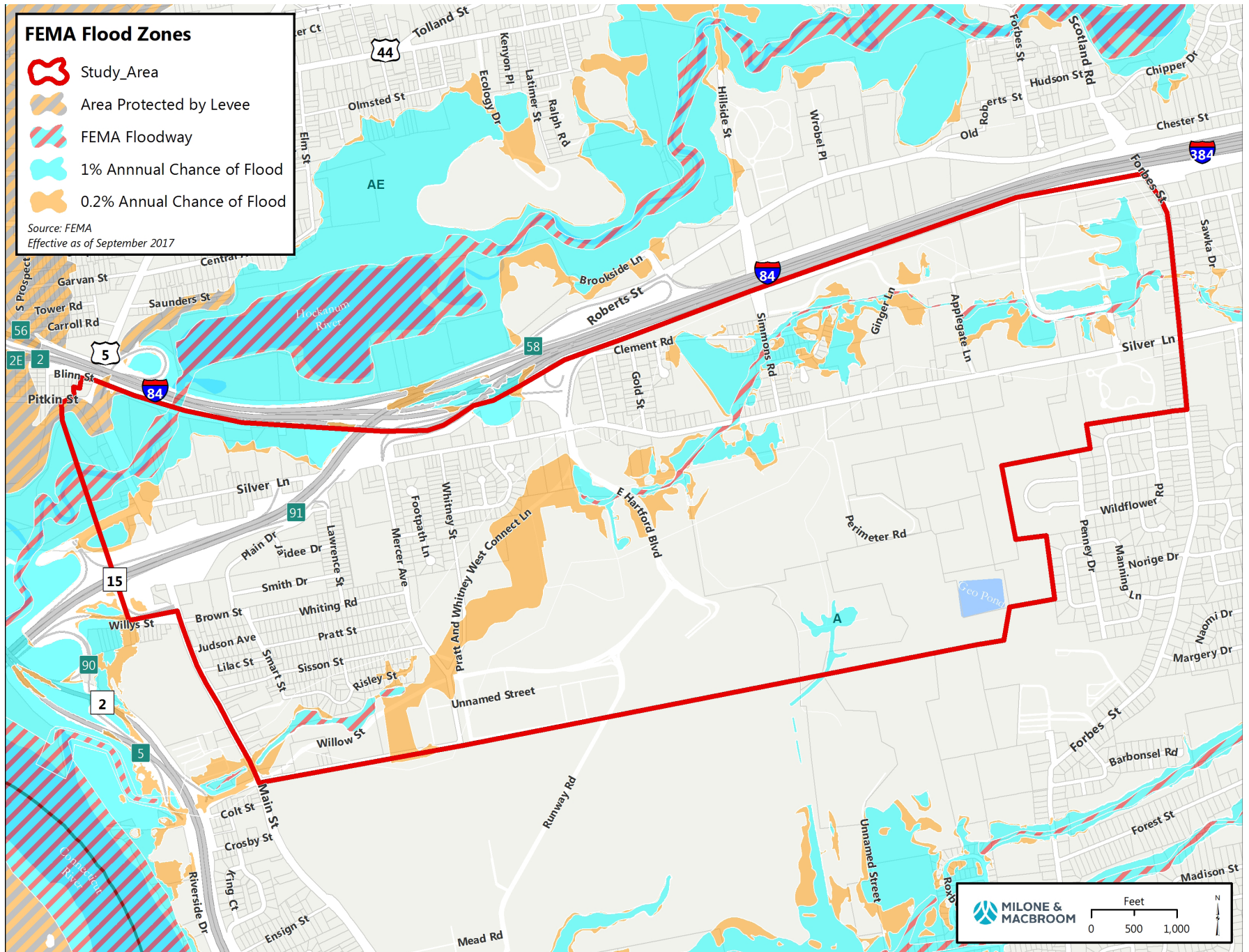
In August of 2017, FEMA accepted the letter of map revision, or LOMR, for the Willow Brook watershed that resulted from the study. The LOMR reduced floodplain extent within the Silver Lane corridor, particularly in the area between Simmons Road and Forbes Street. The LOMR primarily removed or reduced floodplain extent on existing developed properties, although some vacant land

on the Pratt & Whitney ballfields was removed from the 100-year flood zone. Thus the flood study primarily improved the viability of existing properties (by reducing insurance costs) and redevelopment potential (by removing areas from the flood zone, if properties are redeveloped).

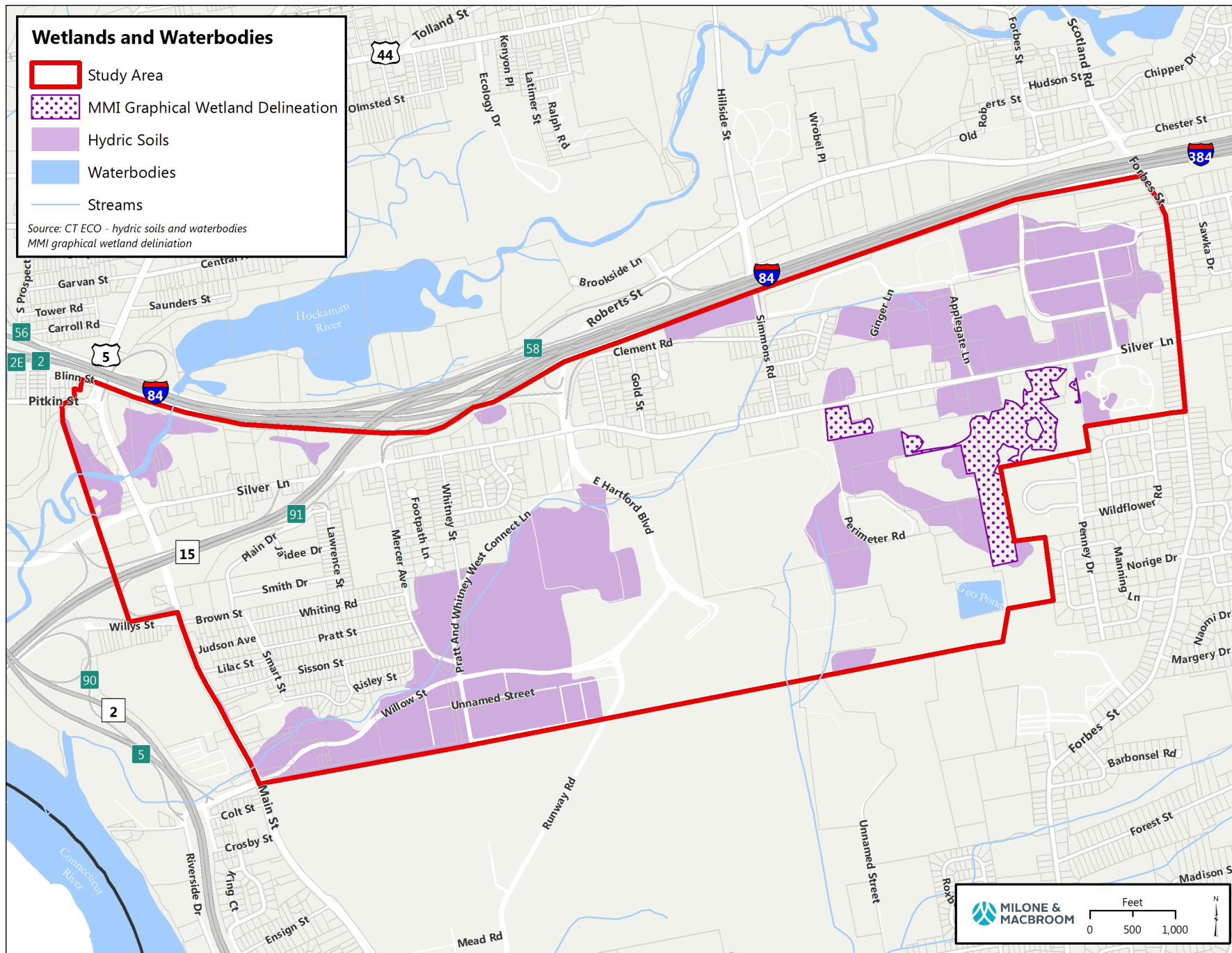
The study recommended additional measures that could further reduce floodplain extent in the study area, including sediment removal, debris removal, removal of bridges, culvert upgrades, repairs to flood control structures, and elevation and/or relocation of flood-prone buildings.



A comparison of previous (red) and proposed revisions to the FEMA flood zones (blue) on Silver Lane



Study Area Floodplains



Study Area Wetlands

Infrastructure

The project team reviewed existing infrastructure in the Study Area and noted any potential impacts to development. The sanitary sewer and water system are adequate for serving existing and desired future development. The primary infrastructure challenge in the corridor is the storm drainage system, which is undersized. Undersized storm-drainage infrastructure combined with the Study Area's low-lying, flat terrain, and poor soils mean that on-site stormwater management must be utilized for much of the corridor. Some improvement may be gained from maintenance such as regular cleaning of existing stormwater lines. Stormwater from the eastern end of the corridor is conveyed under I-84 through the *Hockanum Diversion Structure*, which is located behind Silver Lane Plaza. This structure is in need of a number of repairs as documented in a Structural Inspection Report conducted in February of 2017.



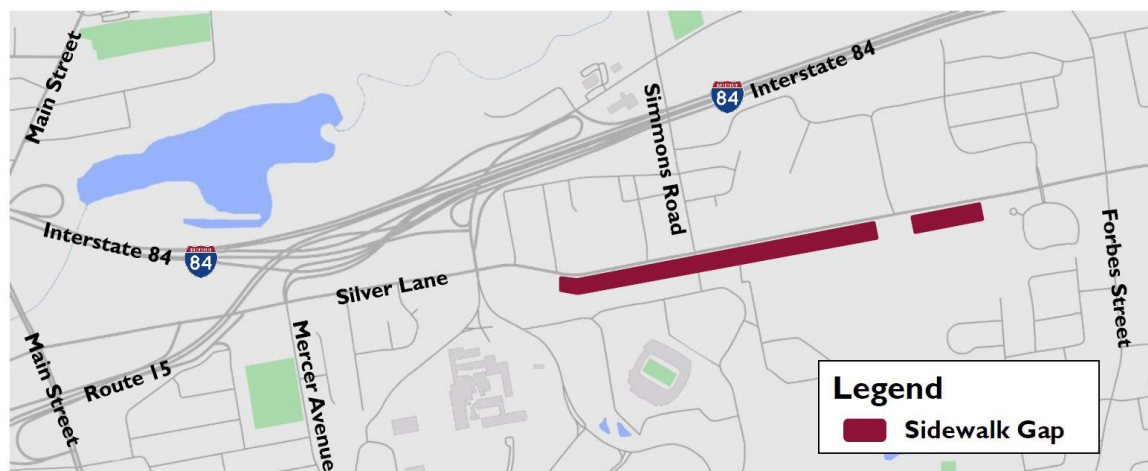
The Hockanum Diversion Structure behind Silver Lane Plaza is in need of repairs

Transportation infrastructure is being studied in detail as part of the CROG Transportation Study. Key transportation takeaways are:

- In general, the existing roadway network adequately supports existing and future development. There may be opportunities for road diets in some areas.
- The area between Mercer Avenue and Gold Street experiences higher-than-average crash rates. The many curb cuts in this area are one of the primary contributing factors.
- Bus ridership in the corridor has increased since the introduction of CTfastrak (Route 121). Most bus stops lack amenities such as benches or covered waiting areas.
- There is a large sidewalk gap on the

south side of Silver Lane between the stadium and Forbes Street.

- There is a gap in the multi-use trail system between Simmons Road and the Riverfront area.
- The intersection of Silver Lane and Roberts Street/East Hartford Boulevard presents a formidable barrier to bicyclists and pedestrians. While crosswalks are present, bicyclists and pedestrians must cross between six and nine traffic lanes.



Sidewalk gaps on Silver Lane.
Graphic courtesy of TranSystems

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"Old plazas/houses torn down, sidewalks the entire length of the corridor, at least one upscale restaurant, higher end apartments/ condos, some new small shopping centers, a community park."

Silver Lane Vision 2040

MASTER PLAN

The Master Planning process consists of three components: developing a future land use vision, establishment of priority goals, and creating a conceptual plan of key opportunity sites. The future land use vision is intended to establish the overall trajectory for the corridor by identifying the "highest and best" uses in different segments and serves as the basis for zoning recommendations. The conceptual plan is a visual representation of the goals and objectives of this report on key opportunity sites. Because of its conceptual nature, future development may not look exactly like what is depicted on the conceptual plan. Rather, it is meant to guide prospective developers, elected officials, and boards and commissions as development proposals are brought forward.

Priority Goals

Improve the Transportation System and Infrastructure

The vision for the corridor requires that all modes, including vehicles, transit, pedestrians and bicyclists, are adequately served through well-designed infrastructure and high quality amenities. Pedestrians are a critical component of

placemaking, and need to feel safe and welcomed throughout the corridor in order to help revitalize the area.

Enhance Visual Appeal of the Corridor

– Urban design - the look, organization and function of the public realm – are integral to an area's sense of place. Blight removal, pedestrian-friendly site design and layout, quality landscaping, quality architectural design and materials, streetscape treatments all merge to create an identity for the corridor that attracts residents, employers and visitors.

Increase Residential Uses

The corridor has a unique opportunity to capitalize on the growing middle to higher-income workforce already located within the corridor (UTC/ Pratt & Whitney) to develop market-rate residential units. Additional residential units can in turn support additional commercial/ retail development.



Investments in public realm infrastructure such as streetscape improvements can improve the visual character of the corridor and enhance the marketability of adjacent properties

Reposition Obsolete Land Uses

Current development in the corridor reflects several waves of development. Some uses no longer serve the purposes they once did, such as when Silver Lane was a significant regional shopping area. Facilitating the next generation of uses on these underutilized and/or vacant properties through regulatory, policy and infrastructural changes, and/or direct investment will help to launch revitalization of the corridor.

Increase Commercial and Mixed-Use Developments

A vibrant, pedestrian-friendly place consists of a mixture of uses, including employment, retail, entertainment, food and services and residential uses in close proximity to one another to foster constant activity and enliven the public realm. Additional commercial development, especially fronting on Silver Lane will help to serve current and future residents as well as help the Town's overall economic base.

Improve Livability and Quality of Life

Numerous elements support a livable community: a variety of housing and employment options, high-functioning natural areas, quality recreational amenities, and other assets that promote the well-being of residents. Ensuring that to the greatest extent possible the social, economic and cultural needs of current and future residents of Silver Lane can be met in the corridor will promote a high quality of life.

Future Land Use Vision

The corridor has three distinct segments, based on existing land uses and traffic patterns. They consist of a residential area from Main Street to the Route 15 overpass; the high-traffic, Rentschler Field Gateway area; and, the traditional commercial core area near Forbes Street. The Silver Lane Committee explored several iterations of conceptual redevelopment plans for the entire corridor that build upon and connect these existing segments or nodes. The final plan presented here reflects community and Committee input on the concepts.

Main Street to the Route 15 Overpass

This area is envisioned to remain a residential area, with a mix of single-family and multi-family housing. Through targeted infill, redevelopment, and renovation of existing structures, the visual appeal of this area will be enhanced, and provide an attractive gateway to Silver Lane. This area should have a pedestrian focus, with ample sidewalks and buildings placed close to the street.

Rentschler Gateway Area

The Rentschler Gateway area is envisioned as a lively, commercial node that caters to the surrounding residential

population, Pratt & Whitney workers, and visitors to Rentschler Field. Additional commercial uses here would capitalize on existing traffic through the Roberts/Silver intersection; however, the concept depends on improved traffic flow and access management in the area to be successful. Buildings are small in-scale and fronting the street so as to create a pedestrian-oriented environment. A placemaking park is shown in front of the Rentschler Field stadium in order to facilitate connections through the corridor. The park is intended to capitalize on an under-utilized property that currently contributes to the discontinuity of the corridor. While the state-owned property needs to continue to provide parking for the stadium, the placemaking park would provide amenities for existing and future residents and visitors of the

corridor, and foster better connections through visual appeal and activity.

Traditional Commercial Core

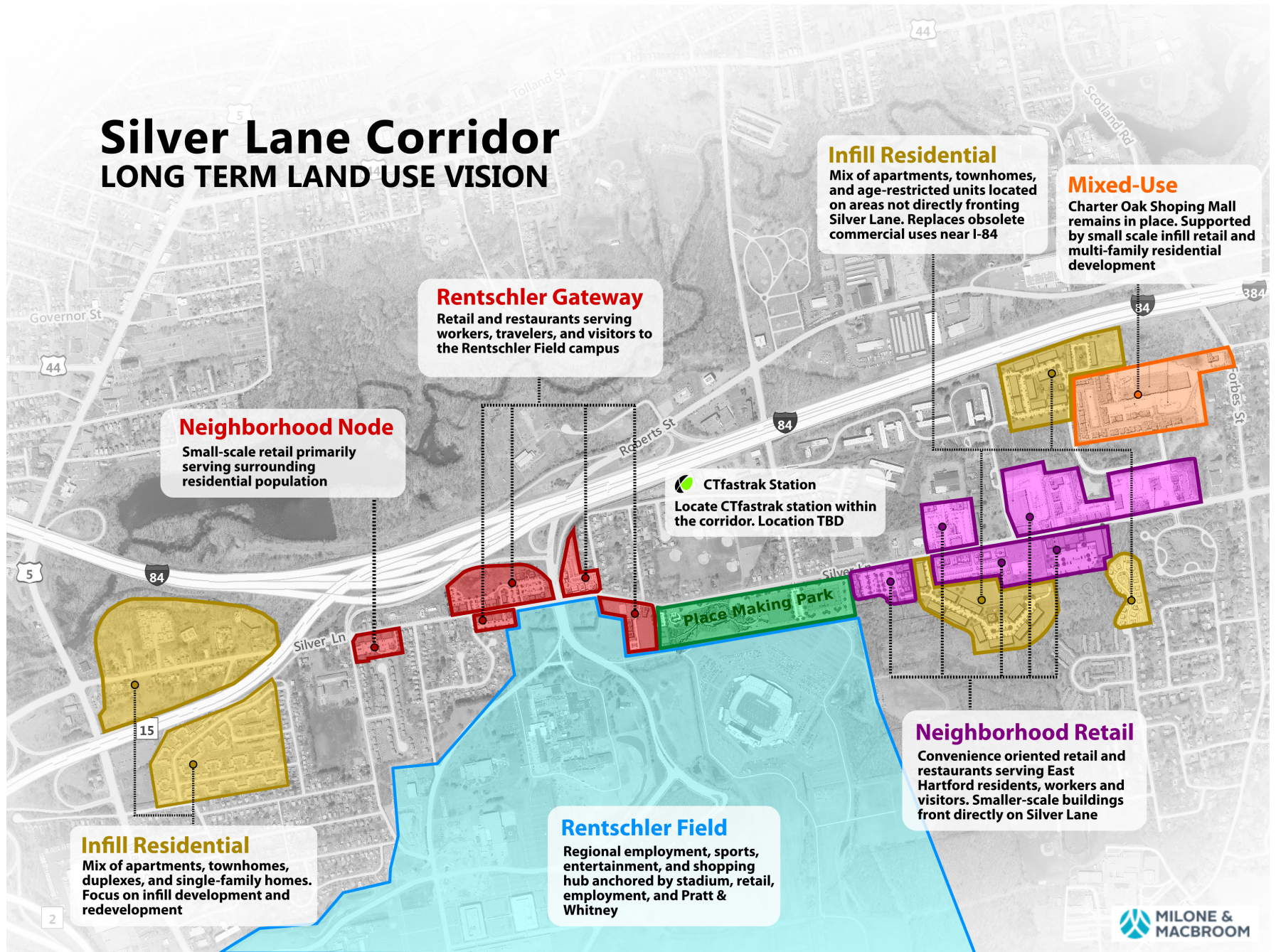
Finally, the concept plan for the traditional commercial core area shows a mixture of uses. Properties fronting Silver Lane focus on neighborhood-oriented retail, while the rear lots are revamped with a greater mix of uses, including significant residential development. The increased residential population provides opportunities for new commercial development. Scattered throughout the area are open spaces. Anticipated connections to the East Coast Greenway, as well as improved CTfastrak service provide amenities that support future



A placemaking park on the south side of Silver Lane would improve aesthetics and better integrate Silver Lane's distinct development areas

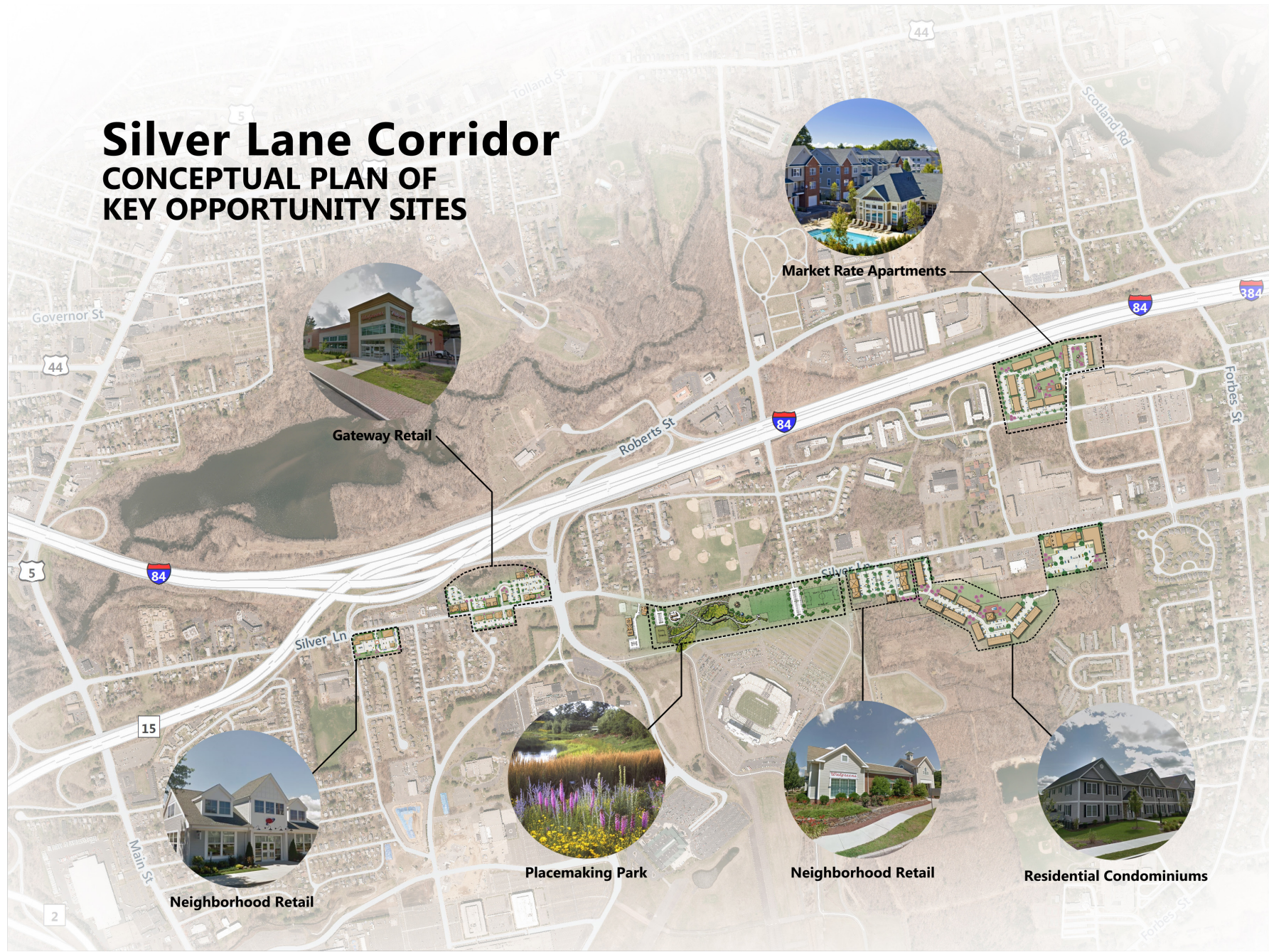
Silver Lane Corridor

LONG TERM LAND USE VISION



Silver Lane Corridor

CONCEPTUAL PLAN OF KEY OPPORTUNITY SITES



Conceptual Plan of opportunity sites

8



"Biking in a safe lane to good restaurants with outdoor seating."

Silver Lane Vision 2040

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations aim to realize the goals set forth by the community to achieve its vision for the Silver Lane Corridor. Some recommendations are relatively easy to implement, while others will take an ongoing, concerted effort, and/or the appropriate opportunity to arise. Enhancements to the transportation system will be a crucial component to the revitalization of the Silver Lane Corridor. Transportation recommendations will be included in the forthcoming CRCOG Transportation Study, and thus were omitted from this Plan. The two studies are being conducted in a coordinated and cohesive manner, and thus the forthcoming transportation recommendations will complement and support the Master Plan.

Recommendations fall into one of four categories:

- 1) Rezone the Corridor**
- 2) Invest in the Corridor**
- 3) Strengthen and Support Existing Residents and Businesses**
- 4) Strengthen Partnerships with Existing Employers and Institutions**

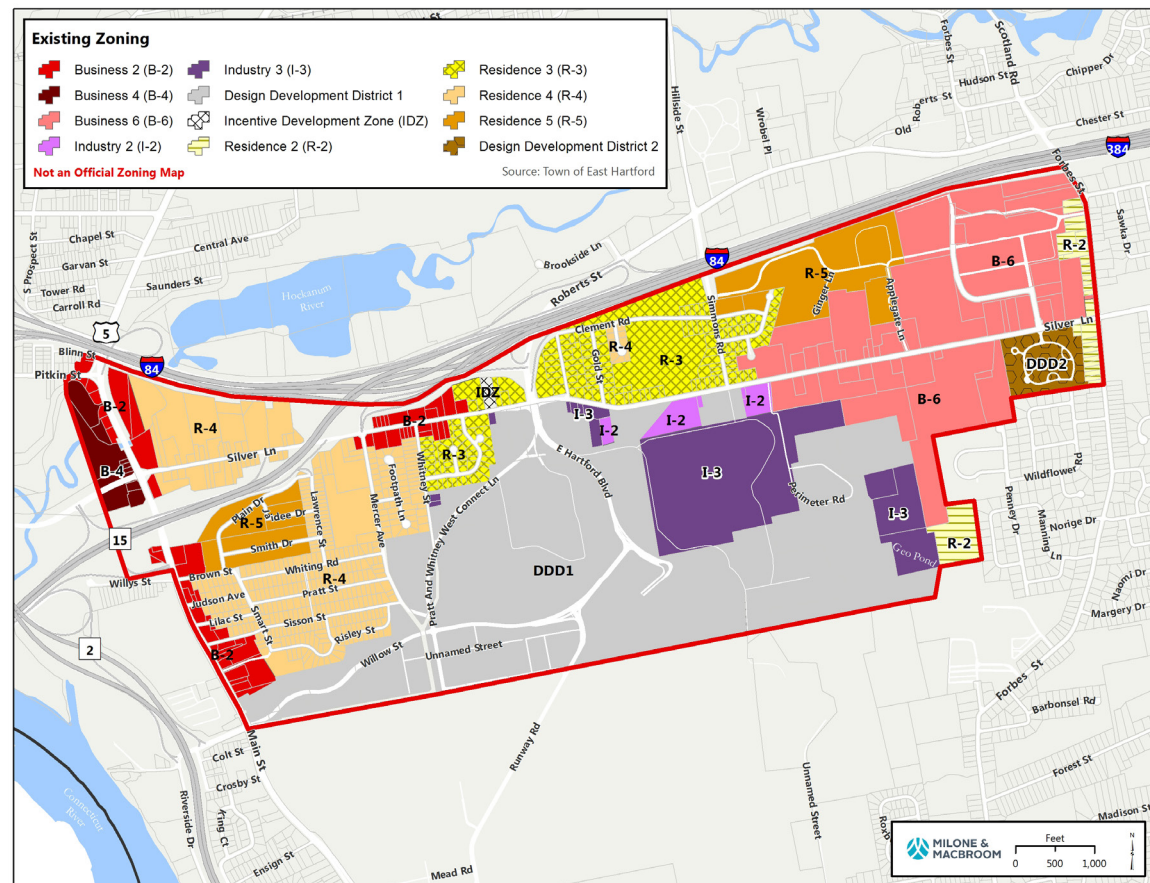
Rezone the Corridor

As highlighted in the 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development, current zoning in the corridor does not reflect desired future uses or market realities in many areas. Furthermore, given the Town's goals to enhance visual appeal and create a more livable neighborhood, existing zoning regulations do not adequately address urban design in the corridor. Changes in the zoning regulations are intended to align land uses to the locations where they are most likely to be successful.

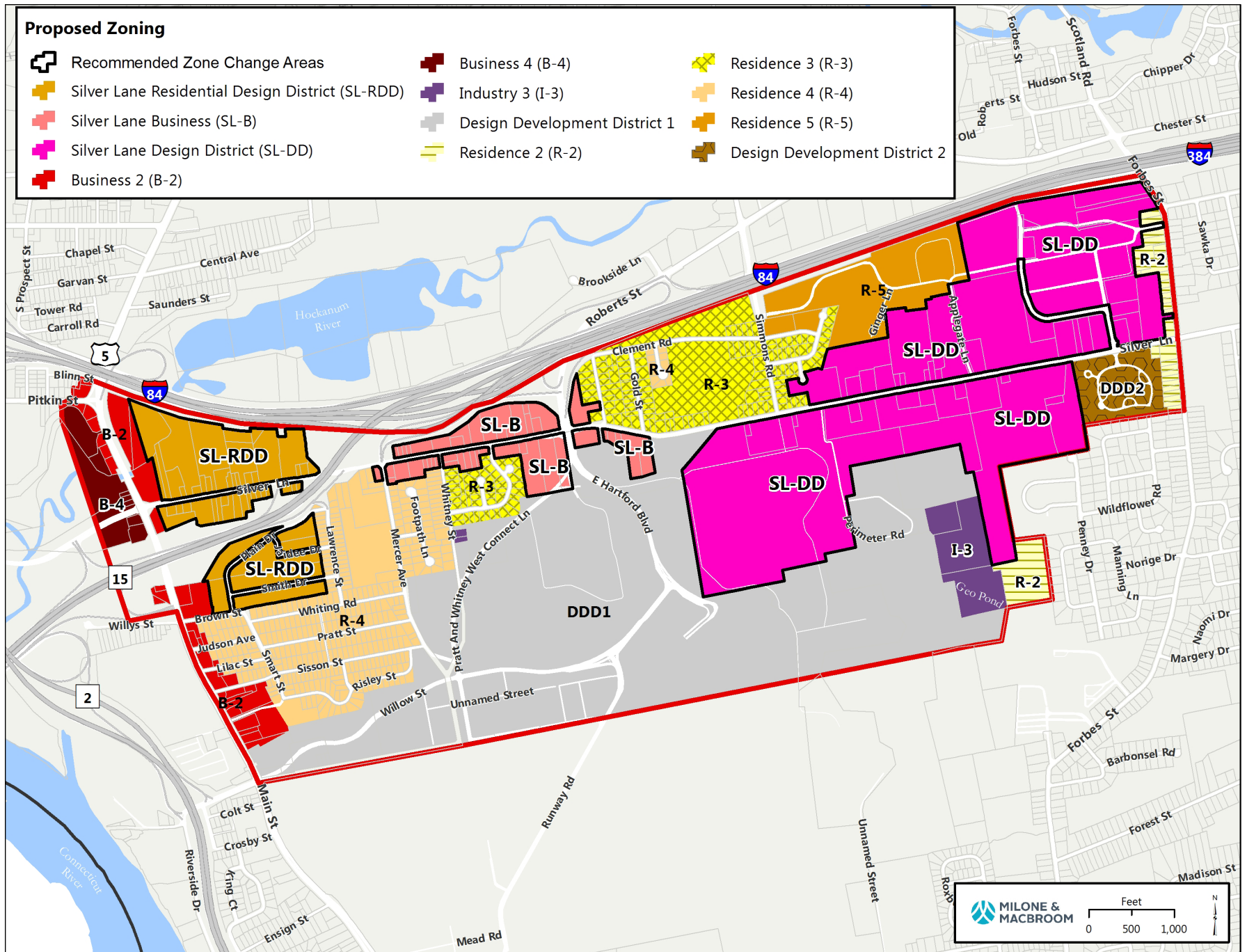
A large area of the traditional commercial core on the eastern end of the corridor is zoned B-6, the standards for which encourage automobile-centered design through large front and rear yard setbacks and generally inflexible standards with minimal site design parameters. Remnants of Industrial zoning (I-2 and I-3) remain around Rentschler Field, though current uses are of a more commercial nature. And, the R-4 zoning that covers much of the western end of the corridor does not adequately reflect the diversity of housing types already present in the corridor, nor does it provide design standards and guidance.

The recommended changes to zoning are broken down by the three main segments of the corridor:

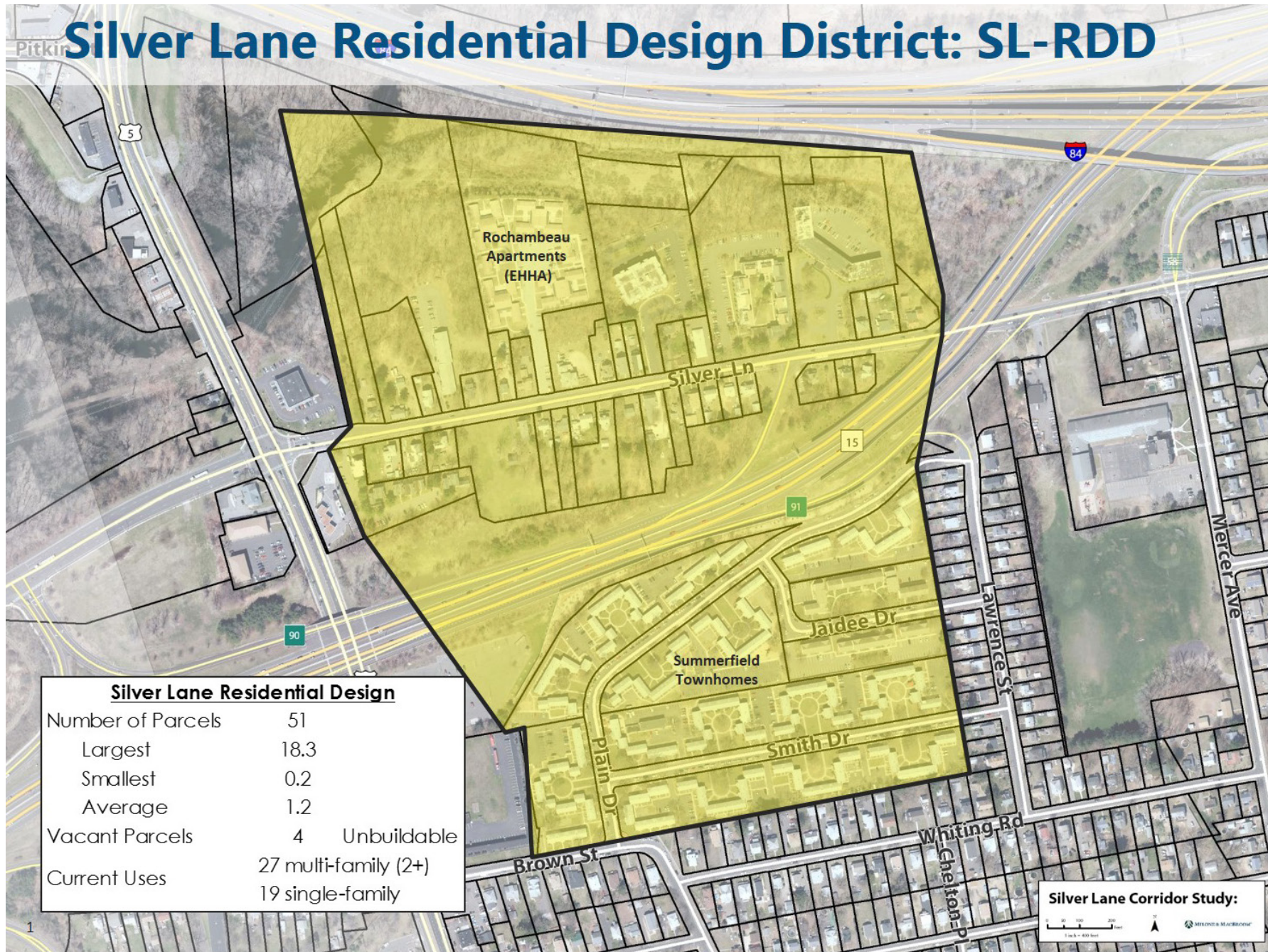
- 1) A Residential Design District is recommended for the western portion of the corridor, roughly between Main Street and the Rt. 15 overpass.
- 2) A Business District unique to Silver Lane is recommended for the Rentschler Gateway area.
- 3) A Mixed-Use Design District is recommended for the eastern portion of the corridor, roughly from the Stadium to Forbes.



Study Area Current Zoning



Overview of Zoning Recommendations



Recommended Residential Design District

Residential Design District

The intent of new zoning in this area is to best prepare the Town to achieve high quality design of any infill development of, and/or redevelopment of properties in the area. A similar mixture of residential uses is envisioned to remain; however, the quality of design and the public realm infrastructure in this segment will improve.

Specific Recommendations for Residential Design Zoning

Permit by right mix of housing types

- Single-family, 2-3 family, multi-family

Increase permitted density

- Max density for multi-family units 17 units/ acre (currently allowed in R-5) on minimum of 1 acre or more to encourage property assembly for such developments
- Maintain similar density and bulk lot requirements as in current R4 for single-, two- and three- family units

Establish basic design standards

- Front yard setbacks of no greater than 10 feet
- Prohibit parking areas from front yards
- On lots greater than 2 acres with less than 75 feet of street frontage on Silver Lane, require a landscaping buffer along the driveway

- For multi-family developments, require a certain amount of private open space per unit – consider exempting East Hartford Housing Authority from this provision
- Encourage quality architecture – new residential structures or additions should strive to be well crafted in their own style and detail. A consistent architectural design should be considered in choosing materials, finishes, decorative details, color and accent features.

Increase pedestrian friendly/ transit oriented design

- Consider offering parking reductions for car and/or bike share spaces on site
- Consider offering impervious coverage bonuses for the provision of streetscape amenities such as benches, bus shelters, etc. at the discretion of the commission



Existing 10 ft Front Yard Setback

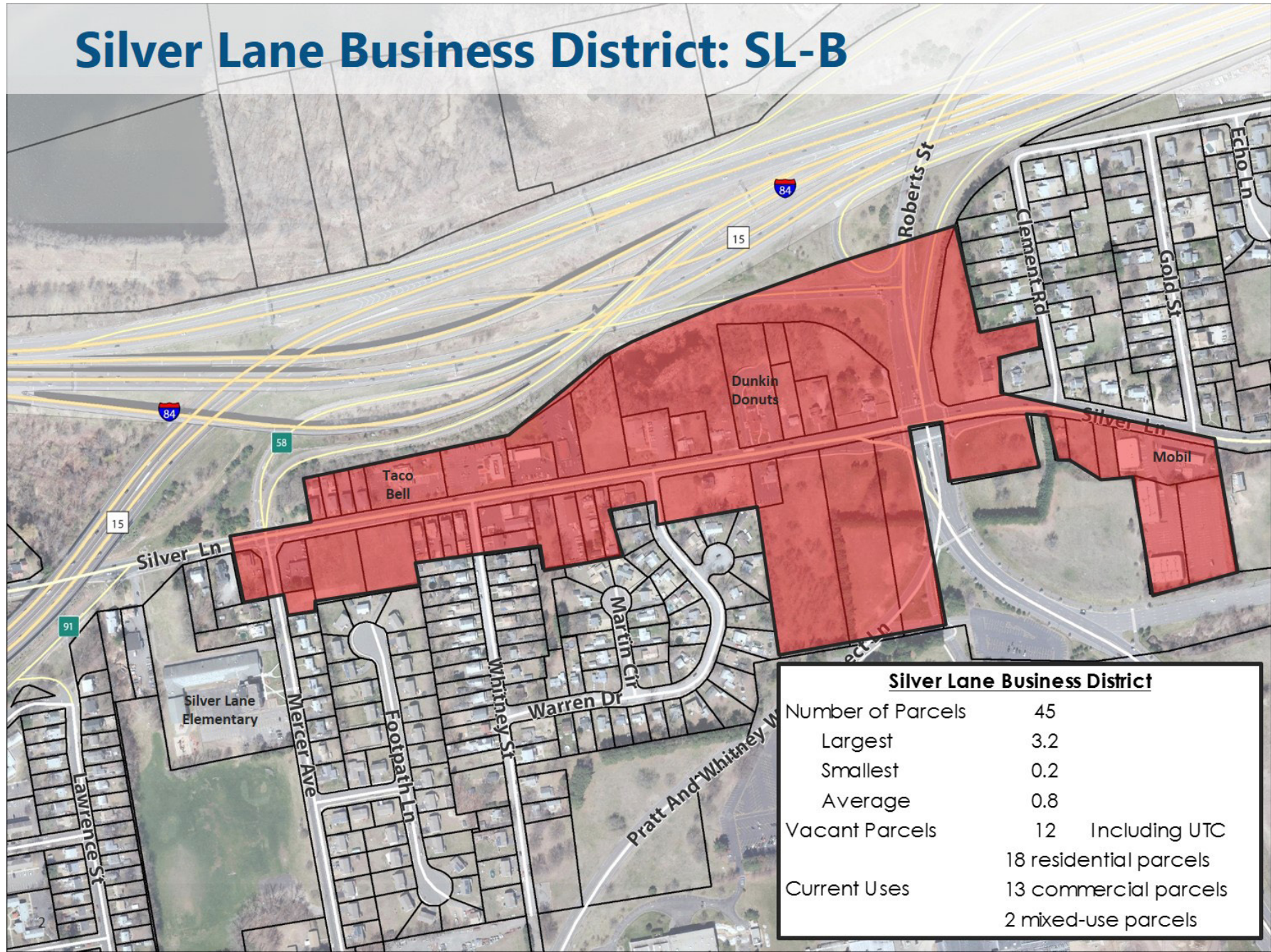


Require landscaping along long access driveways



Continue to maintain existing mix of housing types while discouraging parking in the front yard

Silver Lane Business District: SL-B



Recommended Silver Lane Business District

Silver Lane Business District

The intent of new zoning in this area is to promote and expand commercial development, while creating a walkable, livable environment. The scale of commercial development is anticipated to be in keeping with the scale of what is currently located in this area. The keys to success for this district revolve around improving urban design and access management.

Specific Recommendations for Silver Lane Business Zoning

No longer permit residential uses

- Existing residential parcels become nonconforming

Incorporate access management

- Require connections and easements across properties
- Require adjacent parking lots to share street access to reduce curb cuts
- Where easements cannot be obtained, require financial contribution to curb cut consolidation fund

Encourage integrated site development of contiguous properties through incentives

- Consider offering bonus building or impervious coverage for consolidated site plans that incorporate multiple parcels that may not be under common ownership
- Permit a reduction in parking requirements for integrated site plans

Enable parking reductions

- Establish zoning incentives such as parking reductions, for car- and bike-share spaces

Establish pedestrian friendly design standards

- Establish standards on building orientation, massing and height that encourage good design - reduce current B-2 height, require buildings to be oriented and fronting on street/sidewalk; signage orienting towards sidewalks, etc.
- Require street trees and/or landscaping in front yards and parking lots
- Incorporate low impact development requirements
- Consider parking maximums
- Require pedestrian connections from buildings to sidewalk network
- Provide incentives for sidewalk amenities such as benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, bus shelters – parking reductions may be an appropriate reduction
- Establish basic architectural guidelines to require pedestrian friendly scale and design that includes ground floor windows for transparency, façade modulation, low-reflecting and subtle building colors, etc.
- Consider establishing incentives for attractive and durable building design, which would need to be clearly defined with a list of preferred materials, desired roof styles and offsets, etc. Appropriate incentives may include bonus coverage



Street trees and high quality landscaping in a front yard



Pedestrian connection between the sidewalk and front entrance of a commercial building



Consider zoning incentives for developers who utilize attractive and durable building design

**Case Study A:
Consolidated Site Planning
South Windsor Zoning
Regulations
Buckland Road Gateway
Development Zone**

4.2.7 Consolidated Parcels

A. Purpose

In the interest of promoting development continuity, the consolidation of contiguous parcels is encouraged. 'Consolidation' is defined here as the integration of 2 or more individually owned parcels into a single Consolidated Parcel for the purposes of creating a shared-use arrangement of selected site components, e.g. common points of access/egress, drive passage, parking, loading/unloading, building coverage and yards.

B. Procedure

- 1. A consolidated parcel shall be developed with an integrated plan of buildings, parking, loading and unloading, and open space.*
- 2. The owner of each lot shall give to the owner of each lot in the consolidated parcel by deed, easement, or agreement filed in the Office of the Town Clerk, the right of entrance, exit, passage, parking, and loading.*

C. Access

The Commission may require or limit the number of access/egress drives and/or direct the placement of same within a Consolidated Parcel such that only 1 or more of several individually or commonly owned "sub-parcels" within the Consolidated Parcel would have a point of access/egress. Such restriction would be in accordance with current access management policies and plans.

D. Yards

Side or rear yards may be ignored along common boundaries of consolidated lots.

E. Impervious Coverage Bonus

A 5% impervious coverage bonus may be granted for the consolidation of 2 or more lots that are nonconforming to the minimum lot size requirement into 1 larger lot. When a non-conforming lot is combined with a conforming lot, an additional 5% of the area of the non-conforming lot can be added to the total impervious surface allowed.



South Windsor's Buckland Road Gateway zoning regulations have successfully promoted parcel and driveway consolidation, and connectivity between adjacent developments

Case Study B: Access Management; Consolidated Site Planning from Southington's West Street Business Zone (WSB) Regulations (4.05)

The purpose of the West Street Business Zone is to foster high-quality development of businesses and sites, with careful attention to appearance of buildings and their surroundings. Within the zone, it is important to promote and sustain the economic viability of the area by introducing a multi-family residential component. The establishment of a mixed-use land use pattern will accomplish the cohesive goals of the zone. Access Management will be an integral part of site planning, with access drives and limited curb cuts to facilitate traffic flow and safety.

4-05.1 General Concepts

A. Careful site planning is an essential element of the West Street Business Zone. It is the express intent of these regulations to garner projects that do not result in a commercial strip mall center. All developments should take into consideration the functionality and importance of pedestrian friendly amenities while concentrating on incorporating a New England Village aesthetic into a responsible, sustainable development.

B. Within this zone, smaller sites are encouraged to combine with conforming sites in order to provide larger cohesive

developments. As an incentive to promote the combining of properties, a 10% impervious coverage bonus shall be granted for nonconforming lot consolidation.

C. Access Management will be required on all sites to reduce the number of driveway cuts onto West Street, thereby limiting traffic congestion that typically follows increases in commercial activity. Access management techniques will include shared driveways, interior service drives, and cross easements for adjacent parcels.

D. Historical and/or natural features exist in this zone. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall have at their discretion the right to require an applicant to protect and promote such features during the Site Plan review process.

4-05.2 Pre-Application Discussion

Applicants are encouraged to participate in a pre-application meeting with town staff to discuss the conceptual design and attributes of a proposed development. West Street is a State Highway. Applicants are also encouraged to engage the State Department of Transportation and/or the Office of the State Transportation Administration in the early stages of the development process.

4-05.4 Consolidated Parcels

A. Purpose

In the interest of promoting continuity, the consolidation or assemblage of contiguous parcels is encouraged.

"Consolidation" is defined here as the integration of 2 or more individually owned parcels into a single Consolidated Parcel for the purpose of creating a shared-use arrangement of selected site components, e.g., common points of access/egress, drive passage, parking, loading/unloading, building coverage and yards.

B. Procedure

1. A consolidated parcel shall be developed with an integrated plan of buildings, parking, loading/unloading, and open space.

2. The owner of each lot shall give to the owner of each lot in the consolidated parcel by deed, easement, or agreement filed in the Office of the Town Clerk, the right of entrance, exit, passage, parking, and loading/unloading.

C. Access

The Commission may require or limit the number of access/egress drives and/or direct the placement of same within a Consolidated Parcel such that only 1 or more of several individually or commonly owned "sub-parcels" within the Consolidated Parcel would have a point of access/egress. Such restriction would be in accordance with Access Management requirements in Section 4-05.8A. Once a primary use is established under

Case Study B: Continued

these new regulations, each additional parcel that is developed within 400 ft. shall utilize the prior approved parcel's access and close their curb cut at their expense if the site plan illustrates that an interconnection can be made between each new use. If no feasible access is available, the Commission shall determine the location of the curb-cut on West Street.

On the West side of West Street, internal access roads must split the business uses from the mixed business/residential uses. Such internal access roads shall parallel to West Street unless specifically approved by the Commission.

On the East side of West Street, lots fronting on West Street shall provide a 50' wide roadway easement 350' from West Street, the full width of the lot parallel to West Street. The easement shall provide interconnectivity between adjacent parcels. The purpose of this requirement is to provide for a planned access road with connectivity to West Queen Street or other planned access roads that are perpendicular to West Street.

D. Impervious Coverage Bonus

A 10% lot coverage bonus may be granted for the consolidation of 2 or more lots that are non-conforming to the minimum lot size requirement into one conforming lot. When a non-conforming lot is combined with a conforming lot, the same 10% bonus shall apply.

...

4-05.8 Access and Parking

A. Access Management

The implementation of Access Management should focus on the following:

1. Limiting the number of driveways
2. Choosing driveway locations that reduce conflicts
3. Design driveways to reduce conflicts
4. Encourage shared access between lots
5. Consolidate access for contiguous lots
6. Frontage roads
7. Provision of parking structures that incorporate commercial and/or residential uses on visible faces of the structure

B. Parking Regulations/Requirements:

Parking within the WSB Zone shall adhere to Section 12 of the Zoning Regulations with the following exceptions:

1. Retail stores and service establishments shall provide 1 parking space per 250 square feet of net floor area. In no case shall more than 110% of the minimum allowable parking be constructed unless constructed as permeable paving and specifically approved by the Commission.
2. For residential uses parking shall be provided at a minimum rate of 1.75 spaces per multi-family residential unit and may be designated in open lot parking or garages. Unenclosed parking of recreational vehicles is prohibited.

3. Parking spaces may be provided in a lot or within shared, or private garages.

4. Residential parking spaces must be segregated from commercial parking spaces.

C. Location of Parking Fields

No more than one-quarter (25%) of the parking should be located between new buildings and West Street. No required front yard setbacks shall be used for parking or circulation (except for entrance drives to the site). The view of parking areas from West Street shall be minimized through the use of perimeter landscaping and berms in addition to any other requirements for parking in this regulation. Paver cells with vegetated cores are encouraged within the front parking areas to soften the landscape; if at least 25% of the required parking on site is paver cell, a 15% reduction of the total parking may be granted.

D. Landscape Requirements in Parking Areas

Parking lots located between a building and West Street shall provide at least 15% landscaped area. The landscaping should include islands between parking bays, planted peninsulas at the ends of bays, and planted areas along the perimeter of parking areas (at least 8' in width). In addition, all front parking areas shall be landscaped around the perimeter a minimum of 25' in depth and shall utilize low berms along front yards to minimize the view of parked cars. Other landscaping elements such as decorative

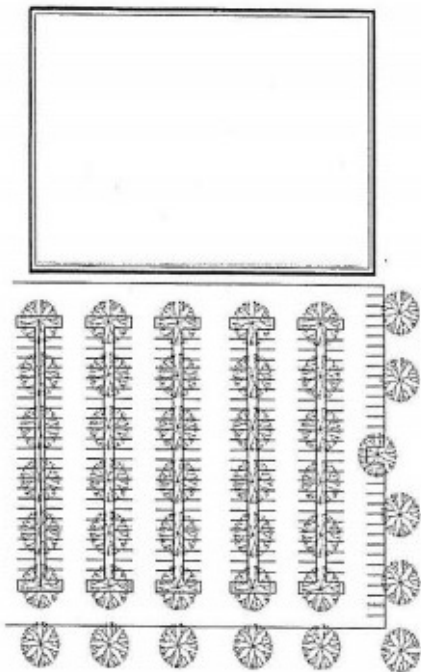
Case Study B: Continued

fencing, stone walls, attractive walkways and pedestrian spaces are highly encouraged. To the extent feasible, landscape features within parking areas shall be incorporated into a low impact development stormwater management plan. A Landscape Plan reflecting the above practices shall be submitted as part of the Site Plan.

E. Parking Layout

Parking areas may be divided into individual bays (a bay being an aisle with a row of parking spaces on each side of the aisle). Each bay must be separated from other bays by a landscaped island at least 8' in width the entire length of the bay.

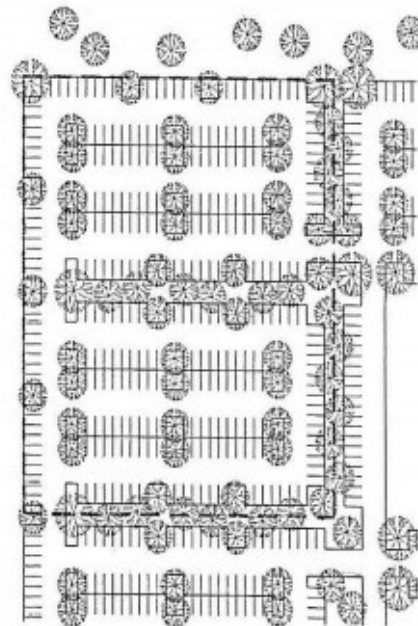
Parking Area Sample Layout- Diagram 1



Terminal islands shall separate the bays from any driveways or access ways. See Diagram 1. Parking areas may also be divided into individual areas connecting across bays. Such areas are to be divided by landscaped islands at least 16' wide at every row of parking spaces. Such landscaped islands should occur every 10 parking spaces. See Diagram 2.

All parking lots should strive to incorporate LID components such as bio-swaes and rain gardens to infiltrate surface water. The applicant is encouraged to provide interconnection between such features to maximize efficiency. (see Section 4-05.12).

Parking Area Sample Layout- Diagram 2



4-05.9 Pedestrian Circulation

Sidewalks are required along West Street frontage. All sidewalks shall be constructed to Town of Southington standards. Sidewalks shall connect from West Street to the parking fields, preferably parallel to the access drive. Safe and Convenient pedestrian access shall be provided throughout the site, incorporating paths and painted crossings to maximize pedestrian safety within parking and pedestrian areas.

Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations are required to interconnect to existing or future walkways on abutting properties or development areas and to link to the street/drives walks with existing or future multi-modal trail system.

4-05.12 Utilities

A. All utilities shall be underground.

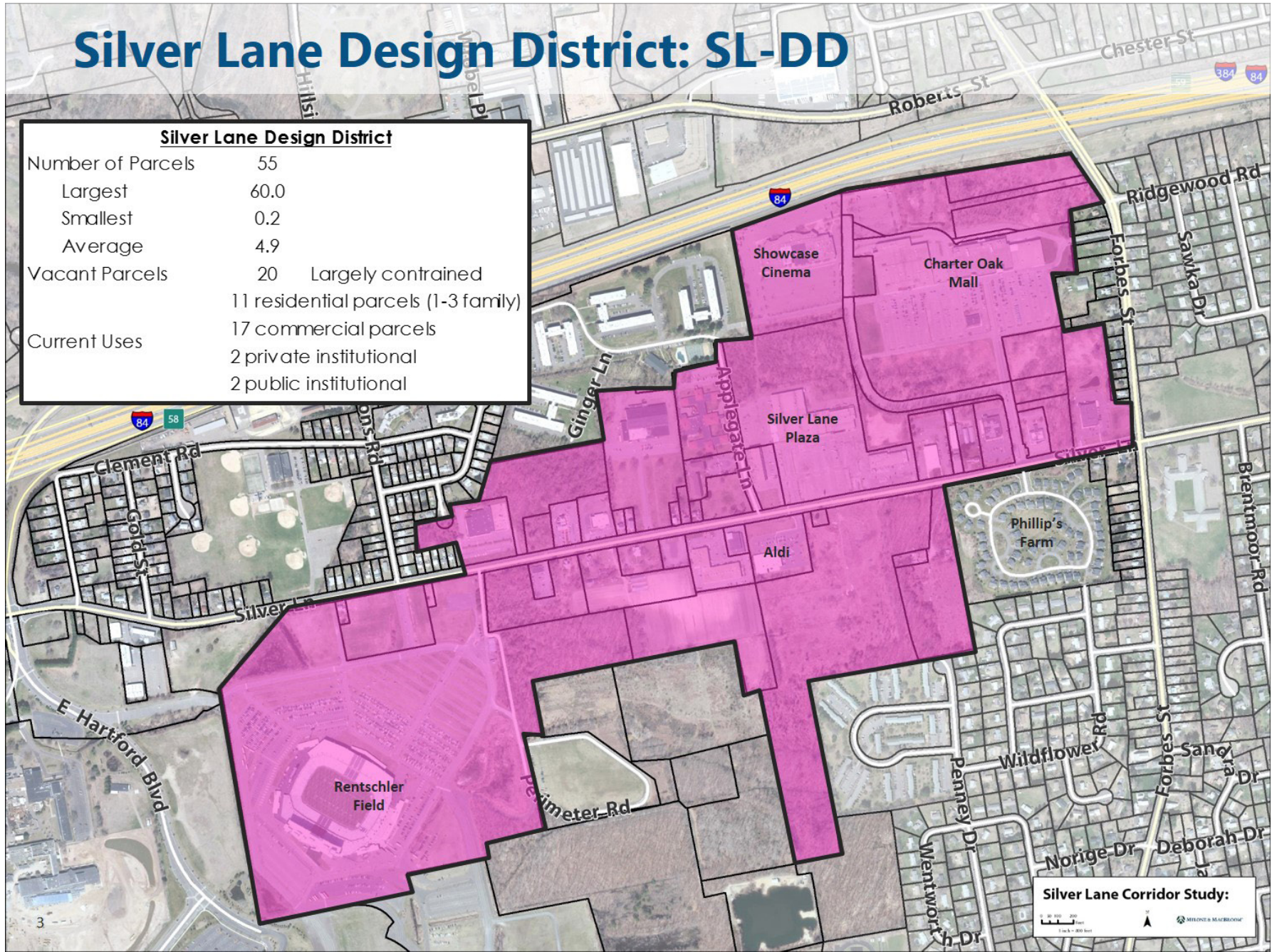
B. Sidewalks shall be required to appropriately interconnect the proposed development with other uses on the site or adjacent sites and also deemed necessary by the Commission within the limits of the development.

C. Unless specifically noted by the applicant at the time of Site Plan application and specifically approved by the Commission, all roads and utilities within the development area shall be owned and maintained by the owner(s) of the development, an association or other entity formed to carry out maintenance, but not the Town of Southington.

Silver Lane Design District: SL-DD

Silver Lane Design District

Number of Parcels	55
Largest	60.0
Smallest	0.2
Average	4.9
Vacant Parcels	20
Current Uses	Largely contained 11 residential parcels (1-3 family) 17 commercial parcels 2 private institutional 2 public institutional



Recommended Silver Lane Design District

Silver Lane Design District

The intent of this district is to enable mixed-use, pedestrian-centered development and design that creates a node of activity in the eastern end of the corridor. As this area has the largest parcels and multiple sites that are ripe for redevelopment in the near future, it offers the greatest opportunity for projects of some scale. Given challenges in the market, flexibility in uses is critical - from residential to retail and from commercial office to light manufacturing or research. Similar to the Business District, basic design standards should be incorporated with incentives to exceed basic standards to encourage quality design.

Specific Recommendations for Silver Lane Design District Zoning

Enable wide variety of uses

- Multi-family residential, age-restricted, light manufacturing, commercial, retail, mixed-use buildings or sites, public parks
- Streamlined approval process that requires pre-application meeting, uses third-party review as necessary and relies on site plan approval without public hearing to the greatest extent

Consider flexibility in density

- Provide impervious, height, yard standards and require demonstration of sufficient parking



Connections to the Charter Oak Greenway should be encouraged for adjacent properties



High quality landscaping and design standards should be established to ensure cohesive and attractive development



Enable a range of uses, including multi-family residential

- Limit density to reasonable capacity of the site and existing infrastructure, as well as compliance with coverage, lot and height requirements

Enable shared parking

- For mixed-use sites, and for adjacent sites or sites within a reasonable distance
- Enable parking reductions for car- and bike-share spaces

Establish pedestrian friendly design standards

- Establish standards on building orientation, massing and height that encourage good design - buildings oriented and fronting on street/sidewalk; signage orienting towards sidewalks, etc.
- Permit greater building height on rear lots, especially along the interstate
- Require street trees and/or landscaping in front yards, parking lots and driveways of certain length
- Incorporate low impact development requirements
- Consider parking maximums
- Require pedestrian connections from buildings to public sidewalk network
- Require pedestrian connection to the Charter Oak Greenway when site is within a certain distance of the trail
- Provide incentives for sidewalk amenities such as benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, bus shelters – parking reductions may be an appropriate reduction

- Consider requiring site design standards to be met, as feasible, with any substantial addition to existing buildings/ sites
- Establish basic architectural guidelines to require pedestrian friendly scale and design that includes ground floor windows for transparency, façade modulation, low-reflecting and subtle building colors, etc.
- Consider establishing incentives for attractive and durable building design, which would need to be clearly defined with a list of preferred materials, desired roof styles and offsets, etc. Appropriate incentives may include bonus coverage

Encourage integrated site development of contiguous properties through incentives

- Consider offering bonus building or impervious coverage for consolidated site plans that incorporate multiple parcels that may not be under common ownership
- Permit a reduction in parking requirements for integrated site plans

Invest in the Corridor

In order to prompt revitalization, the Town must commit to investing not only in a catalytic redevelopment project, but also in existing residents, businesses and infrastructure. The following recommendations require direct investment of dollars, or deferment of revenues, and therefore, may be more challenging to implement.

Town assistance in catalytic redevelopment site

- Conduct due diligence on potential Showcase Cinemas acquisition
- Acquire property using Urban Act Grant funding or town bond funds
- Conduct hazardous materials abatement and site remediation as necessary using environmental remediation grants to the extent feasible
- Demolish existing building and perform pre-development site work to achieve redevelopment-ready site
- Determine financing gaps for desired residential or mixed-use project type in order to better negotiate public-private partnership
- Solicit a private development partner
 - Develop a brochure and other marketing materials to distribute to prospective developers
 - Conduct tours
 - Developer solicitation – consider a two-step process as Meriden did with its TOD developments
 - Negotiate tax abatements to ensure viable project

Assist in redevelopment/rehabilitation of existing housing

- Target housing rehabilitation funds to the corridor, as applicable – the Town uses CDBG funding to assist in housing rehabilitation projects. Through annual action plans and the Consolidated Planning process, consider targeting the corridor for use of some of these funds.

- Blight enforcement
- Consider tax abatements for redevelopment of existing multi-family properties
- Seek to form a public-private partnership to renovate Housing Authority property

Assist in access management, streetscape and visual appeal improvements

- Consider establishing revolving loan fund to issue low-interest loans to existing and/or new businesses to facilitate property assembly, building, facade and/or site improvements, especially to implement curb cut consolidations in the recommended Silver Lane Business District
- Invest in gateway improvements such as signage, banners, plantings, and lighting, particularly in gateway areas near the highway interchanges

Make investments in infrastructure

- Make structural repairs to the Hockanum Diversion Structure
- Work with the state to ensure ongoing maintenance of stormwater infrastructure on Silver Lane, including catch basin cleaning, and jetting and vacuuming of stormwater lines.
- Work with utility providers to extend gigabit-speed internet throughout the corridor
- Implement the recommendations from the CRCOG Transportation Study

Case Study C: Developer's RFP Process, City of Meriden

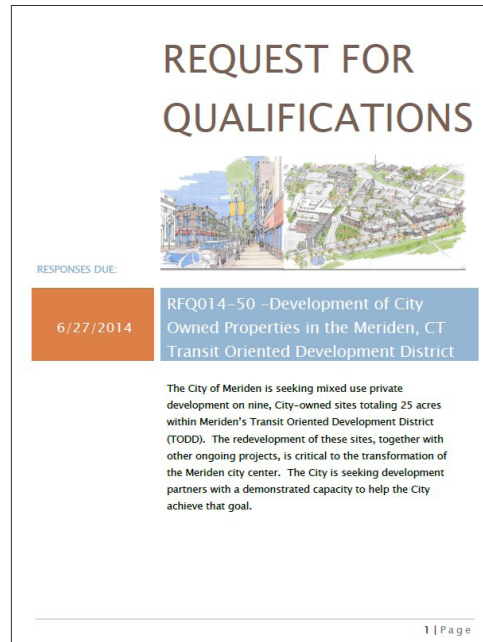
The City of Meriden conducted a two-step, RFQ then RFP process to forge partnerships with multiple developers for the redevelopment of multiple parcels in the City's TOD area. The process garnered significant developer interest, and yielded multiple projects that are currently under construction.

The City had 36 acres on several parcels to put out to developers, and had conducted a detailed market analysis to determine the most appropriate type of development on the properties that aligned with the City's objectives.

Consultants, the State and other contacts helped to develop a list of about 50 developers to directly send the initial RFQ. The City held a workshop and tour of the sites for interested organizations and marketed the opportunities. The RFQ submissions provided enough information for the City to determine the financial capacity of the developers and their experience in similar locations/ markets.

A limited number of qualified developers were then invited to submit concepts for individual sites through an RFP process. Not all preferred developers submitted on all available sites. The two-step process enabled the developers to avoid making significant investments in their proposals until having passed the initial vetting round.

The City then designated a preferred developer for each site, generally granting 180 days to negotiate terms on agreements. Some of the preferred developer designations were extended; however, they have moved forward.



Meriden Commons 1 – One of the multiple projects achieved through the City's two-step developer's RFP process in its Downtown

Strengthen and Support Existing Residents and Businesses

Implement Working Cities Challenge Grant

- Continue to work in collaboration with East Hartford Public Schools, and a variety of other public and private partners to build human capital and improve educational and employment outcomes for families in the Silver Lane neighborhood

Strengthen relationships with and among existing businesses in the Corridor

- Establish a regular visitation program by Town Staff to collaborate on potential expansion and/or upgrades, latest developments in implementation of this Plan and other concerns
- Facilitate a semi-annual networking event for Silver Lane businesses
- Work with CCAT to continually evaluate businesses graduating from incubator space in need of facilities and their potential fit in Silver Lane

Collaborate with State partners for physical improvements

- Advocate for a CTfastrak station in the corridor not only to serve existing residents, but also to serve an expanding workforce on the UTC campus and potential future residents
- Collaborate with the State and CRDA to implement Placemaking Park concept on State-owned Rentschler Field parking property. Not only would the park activate a highly visible under-utilized property in the corridor, but such an amenity would provide health and social benefits for existing and future residents of all ages. Incorporate opportunities for local artists and/or an art installation from Silver Lane Elementary School to strengthen neighborhood stewardship.
- Plan for and establish pedestrian connections from existing neighborhoods to East Coast Greenway

Strengthen Partnerships with Existing Employers and Institutions

- Explore employer-assisted housing program for new residential development
- Coordinate planning for future development of UTC's campus, as well as Goodwin College's expansion efforts to ensure appropriate linkages with the Silver Lane Study Area and to realize synergies in land uses and urban design.

Case Study D: Employee Housing

Cleveland, OH University Circle Housing Incentive

The Cleveland Foundation, with financial support from several philanthropic organizations and institutional partners, initiated the Greater Circle Living program in 2008 to increase socio-economic diversity in the residential neighborhoods immediately surrounding the cluster of institutional uses collectively known as University Circle.

These neighborhoods had suffered from years of disinvestment and were generally not perceived by employees of institutions in the neighborhood as desirable places to live. The program aims to attract employees to live in the area, thereby increasing income diversity, improve existing and future housing stock offerings, and offer a single program to serve all institutional anchors in the neighborhood. As of 2013, the Foundation had raised \$1.5 million from philanthropic partners and \$2.5 million from institutional partners to fund the initiative.

Close to 70 local arts, education, medical, religious and other institutions participate, offering some form of housing incentives to employees. Incentives offered range from a forgivable loan of up to \$20,000 for employees of certain institutions; a

supplemental working family loan for income-qualified family households; up to \$8,000 in matching funds for exterior renovations to ownership units; and one month's rent (up to \$1400) for employees signing a one-year lease.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE
Program usage as of 11/5/13

160 **300**
TRANSACTIONS PEOPLE HELPED

HOME PURCHASE

48
EMPLOYEES



RENTER ASSISTANCE

87
EMPLOYEES



EXTERIOR REPAIR

25
EMPLOYEES



From Cleveland's Greater University Circle Initiative: Building a 21st Century City through the Power of Anchor Institution Collaboration, Cleveland Foundation, 2013.

Further Information:

<http://www.universitycircle.org/live/incentives-for-home-buyers>

<http://community-wealth.org/sites/clone.community-wealth.org/files/downloads/Cleveland's%20Greater%20University%20Circle%20Anchor%20Initiative.%20Case%20Study.pdf>

http://fairfaxrenaissance.org/gcl/gclOptions/gcl_option3.html