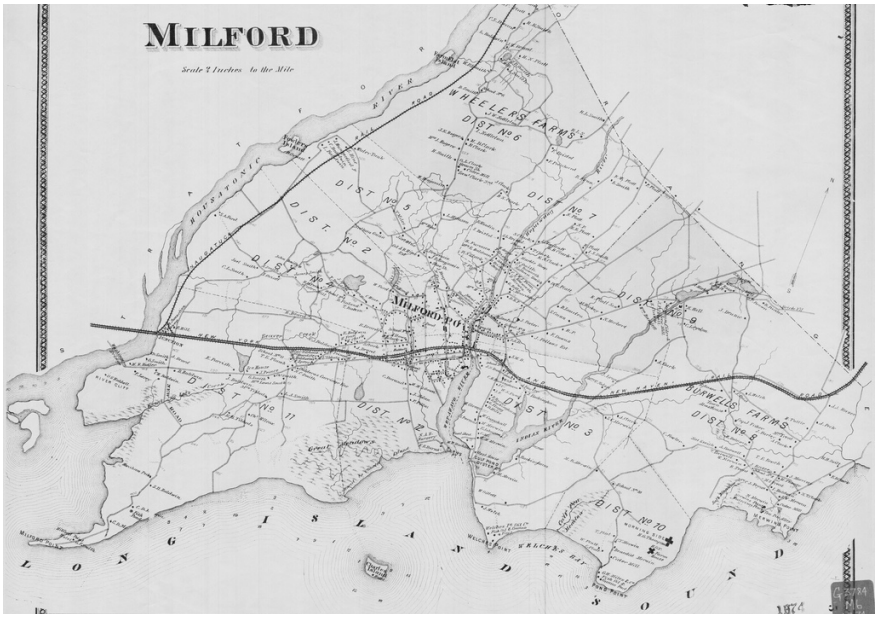
Milford Downtown Plan

Milford, Connecticut

December 3, 2012

Yale Urban Design Workshop
Center for Urban Design Research



The Yale Urban Design Workshop is a community design center based at the Yale School of Architecture, providing urban design assistance to communities in the region.

Yale Urban Design Workshop
Yale University School of Architecture
Box 208242, 180 York Street
New Haven, CT 06511

www.architecture.yale.edu/udw

Alan J. Plattus, Director
Andrei Harwell, AIA, Project Manager

CONTENTS

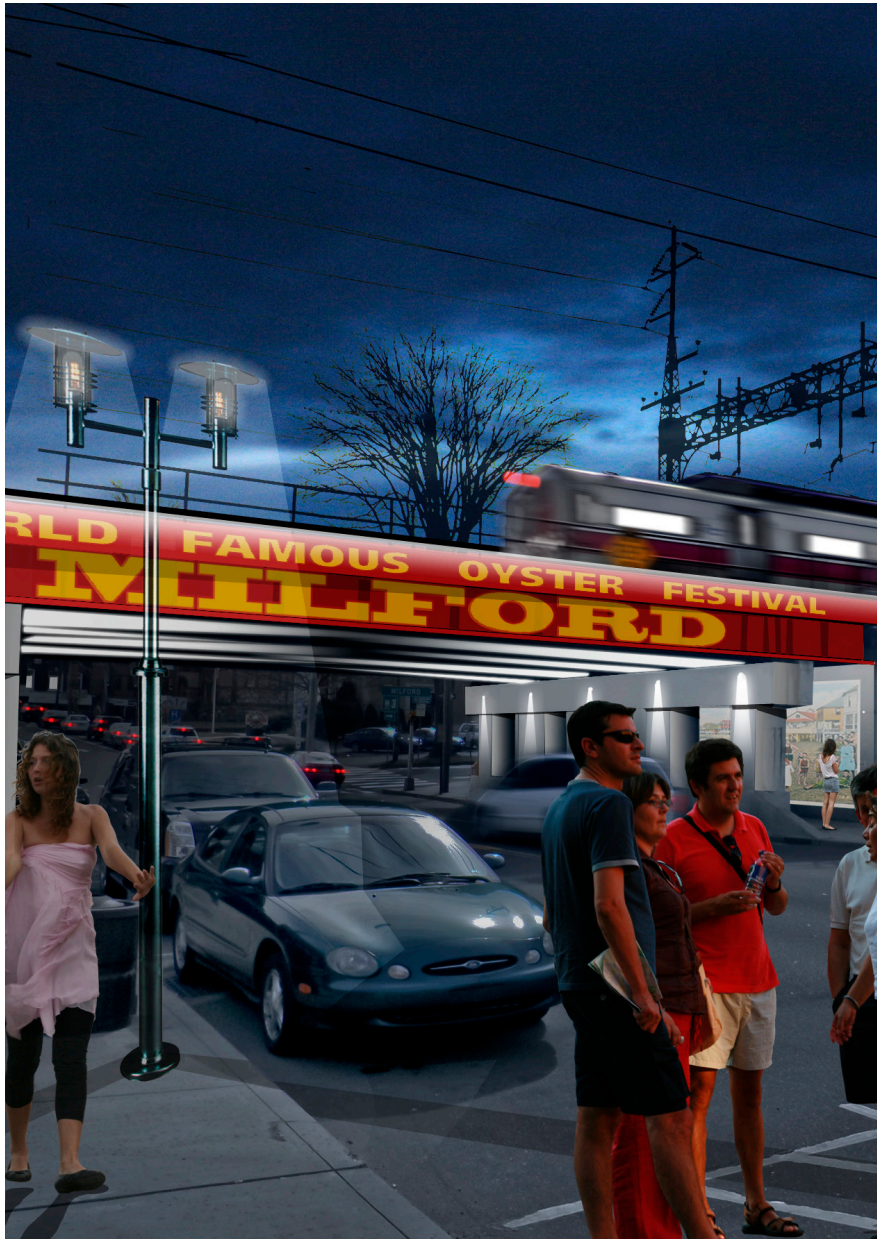

feet
100 m
© 2012 Microsoft Corporation
Pictometry Bird's Eye © 2012 Pictometry

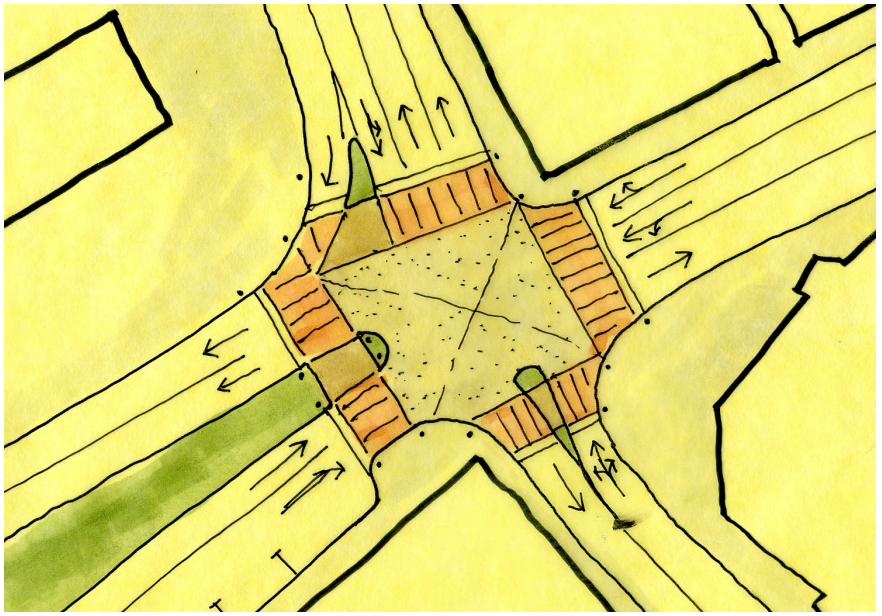
INTRODUCTION

Overview and Executive Summary

Since 2011, the Yale Urban Design Workshop (YUDW) has worked with Milford Progress, Inc. to revise and update the Downtown Plan for Milford, Connecticut. During the development of this Plan, the YUDW attended regular meetings of Milford Progress, Inc., met with City officials, business and property owners, local stakeholders, and the public to gather information and input on a range of issues related to downtown, including traffic, parking, streetscape, and economic development. This report represents a broad summary of this work and discussion, emphasizing recommendations for both short-term improvements and long-range planning intended to reinforce and promote downtown as a lively, mixed-use, pedestrian friendly and attractive commercial and residential center serving Milford and the region.

Since the last Downtown Plan, prepared by the Yale Urban Design Workshop (YUDW) for Milford Progress in 2003, downtown has developed impressively, seeing marked success as a thriving residential district and small business and restaurant destination, despite challenging economic conditions. Downtown Milford owes much of this success to qualities discussed in detail in the 2003 Plan: its compact, comfortable, walkable form and connections to rail transportation; its attractive, eclectic architecture; its accessible amenities, including the Green, the river, the Civic Center, the harbor, and Fowler Field; its distinctive local identity with small, locally owned retail and restaurants, as a contrast


FAMOUS OYSTER FESTIVAL
MILFORD




Darina Place
River Street
RR Avenue N
RR Avenue S
Daniel Street

and complement to the generic, strip-style commercial development of the Post Road; and to a committed and engaged community of stakeholders. Unfortunately, many of the challenges identified in the 2003 plan also remain. For Milford's downtown to sustain its success and increase its vitality, it must continue to evolve and make improvements.

The most significant challenges facing downtown include traffic and parking, especially the lack of a coordinated parking management strategy that includes appropriately sited structured parking, the lack of developable parcels of significant size within convenient walking distance of the train station, the rather weaker development and appearance of gateway areas leading into the downtown area, and some persistent disagreements about the appropriate direction for future development of the downtown district.

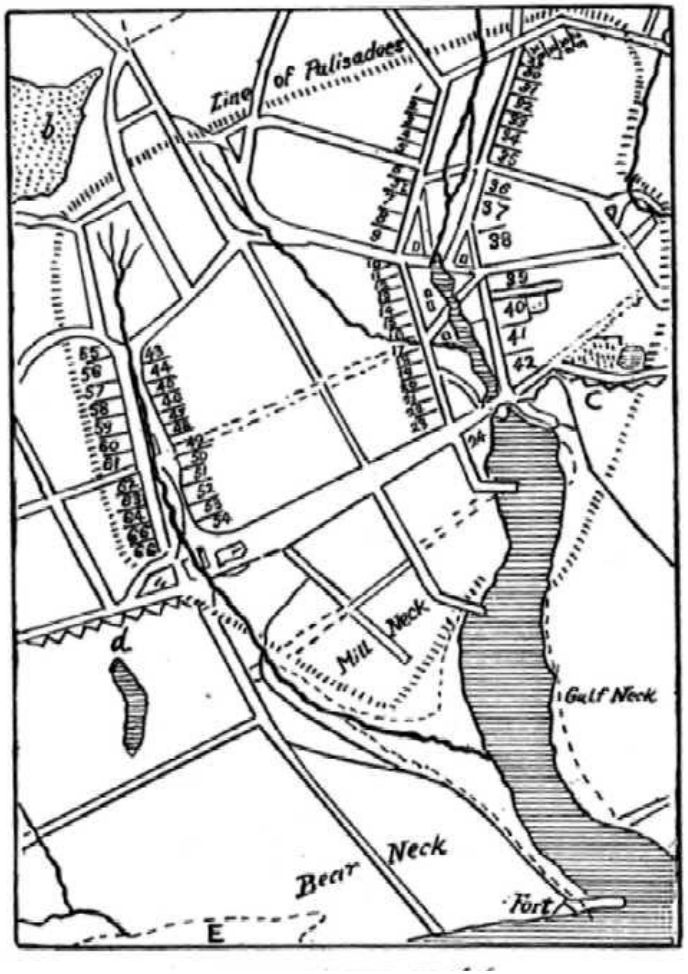
Principal Recommendations

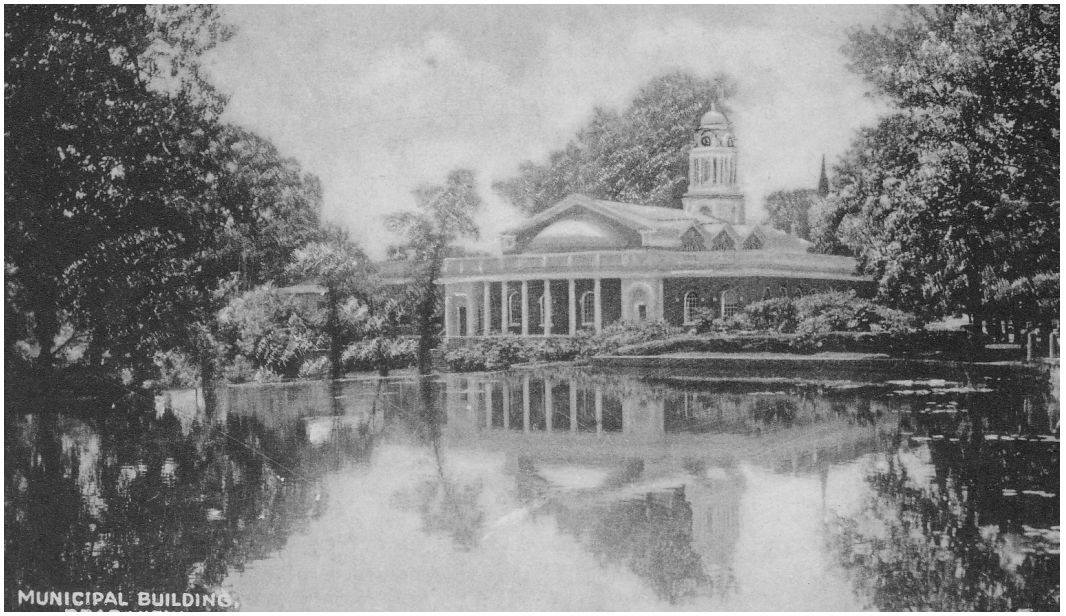
The principal recommendations of this study, illustrated in greater detail in following chapters of this report, are more broadly described below. Top priorities include: traffic, crosswalks, and related streetscape improvements, especially connecting to parking reservoirs; better parking management, signage, and a new parking garage; and, targeting opportunity sites for new development. For phasing, reference "Next Steps" on page 50-51.

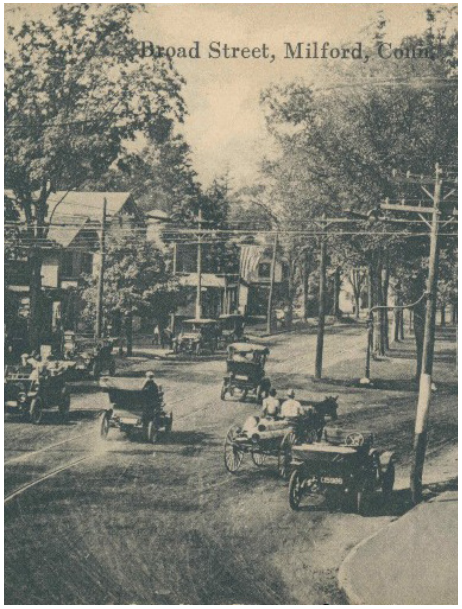
- Improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation, safety and legibility at the intersection of River Street, Broad Street, New Haven Avenue, and Factory Lane, as well as Daniel Street. Commission a detailed study from a qualified traffic engineer to investigate elimination of the awkward one way loop traffic pattern along Daniel Street. In conjunction, commission detailed design of streetscape improvements to the intersection that will improve pedestrian safety and will make the intersection an attractive landmark, including curb extensions, bollards, a traffic table, and textured crosswalks.
- Improve the pedestrian connection between Broad Street and the Harbor / Fowler Field along Factory Lane, including reducing curb cuts and constructing continuous sidewalks on both sides of the street, making sure sidewalks connect without obstructions, and installing full cutoff street lighting.
- Improve pedestrian safety and comfort along North and South Broad Street by improving crosswalks with curb extensions for shorter crossing distances, textured crossings, and "yield to pedestrian" signage. Improve sidewalk continuity on the green so visitors can park their car on the street and feel comfortable walking along or crossing the Green.
- Encourage visitors to park once and walk. Provide clear signage for designated public parking areas and street parking rules. Consolidate individual parking lots behind stores and develop a shared parking management strategy throughout the downtown area. Consider the establishment of a parking authority with the power to enforce parking rules.


Hanson's

- Consider development of new shared parking lots behind 67-75 High Street, connected to Broad Street parking lots.
- Provide well-located bicycle parking areas in the downtown area for cyclists.
- In conjunction with the City and State, construct a multi-story parking garage between Darina Place, West River Street, and Town Hall Plaza to serve the courts, commuters, and downtown merchants.
- Strengthen and anchor the underlying urban design structure of Downtown Milford with significant new development along the historic east-west and north-south axes of the town center.
- Strengthen the identity of the River Street entry into downtown, north of the railroad trestle, as both a gateway to and integral part of downtown. Improve the vehicular gateway by transforming the railroad trestle into a landmark using architectural features, screening, signage, landscape and lighting to create an attractive gateway. Improve pedestrian comfort and safety and strengthen connections between businesses on both sides of the tracks by transforming the sidewalks underneath the bridge with lighting and public art.
- Redevelop 36-38 South Broad Street (former Harrison's Hardware), in conjunction with the empty lot next door, into a two to three story, mixed use building including residential over commercial.
- Support redevelopment of 44-64 River Street as a 3 to 4 story, mixed-use, street-oriented building with parking behind to create additional downtown commercial space and residential units and reinforce the connection between downtown and the civic center, complementing improvements to the railroad trestle.
- Encourage redevelopment of 18 New Haven Avenue (auto use at corner of Daniel Street) to a street-facing commercial or mixed use building in keeping with the downtown pedestrian commercial environment.
- Strengthen the west end of the green, including redeveloping 247 Greens End Place as a mixed-use building to anchor the Green, possibly to include a civic function such as a community facility with meeting, exhibition, and other programmatic uses. Consider closure of Greens End Place and extending the Green, and the construction of permanent support infrastructure for public events such as a bandstand.
- Re-organize Fowler Field to transform it into a more vital public space for the Milford Community, enhancing waterfront access and use as well as minimizing impervious asphalt surfaces. Improve pedestrian access to Fowler Field from Broad Street, especially along the abandoned right of way of Shipyard Lane.
- Develop and construct a river walk along the Wepawaug River, linking the civic center and Duck Pond with Fowler Field and the harbor.







Historic Milford. Map of Milford in 1646 (above). Duck pond and City Hall (above, right). Memorial Bridge (far right, center). Broad Street, 1921 (near right). Taylor Library, 1911 (far right, bottom). (Postcard images from the Walsh Collection, Milford Public Library).

MILFORD: CONTEXT

*History and Development of Milford**

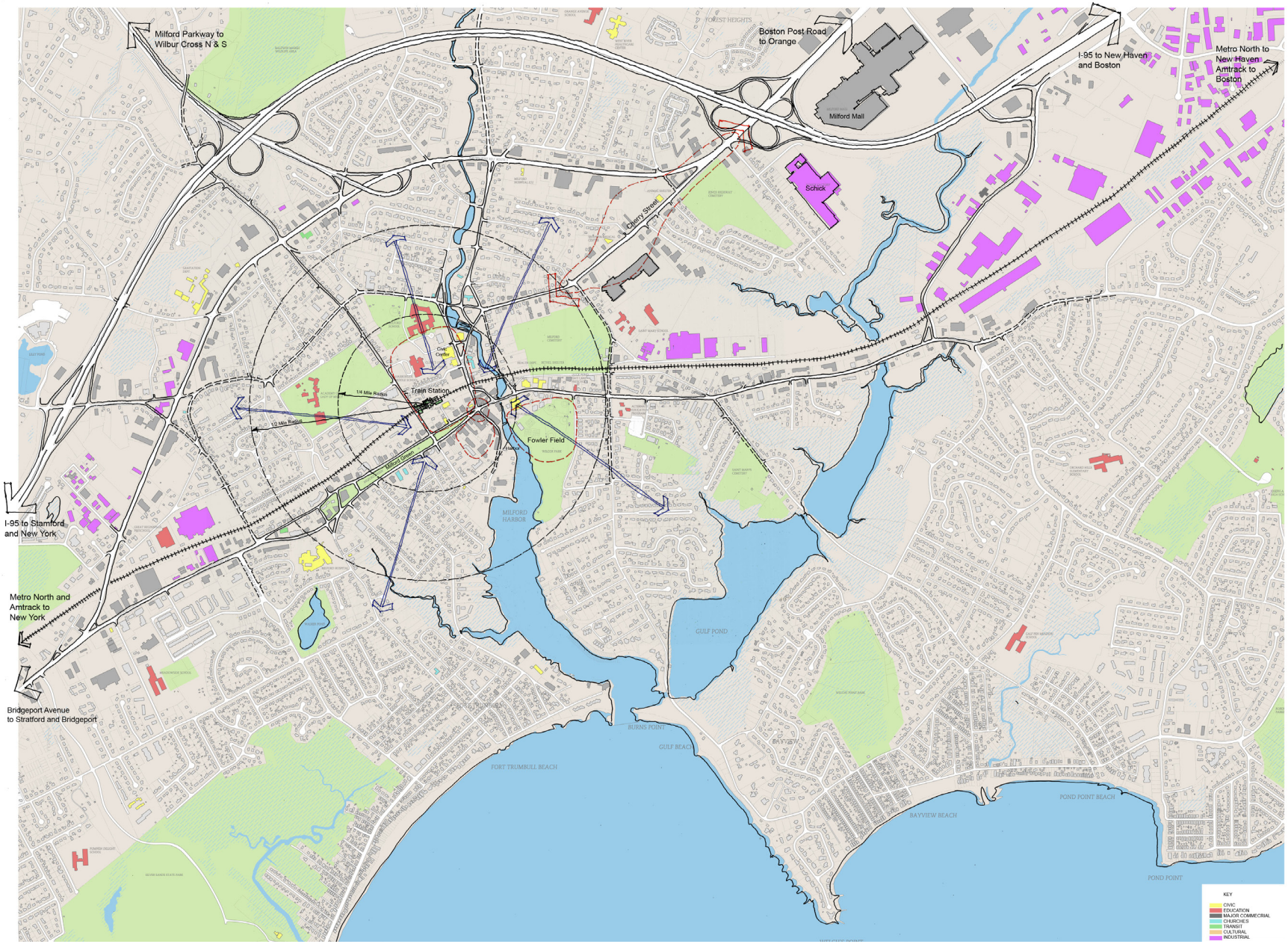
The site of the future City of Milford, originally known as Wepawaug, was purchased from Ansantawae, the sachem of the Paugusset tribe, on February 1, 1639. By the summer of that year, over two hundred settlers had moved west from the New Haven to settle in the new town. The plan of 1646 shows the original subdivision of land and layout of roads along lines that follow very closely the plan of what is today downtown Milford. Furthermore, the line of palisades indicated on the 1646 map, built under early threat of Indian attack, follows quite closely the area assumed for the purposes of this report to constitute downtown Milford.

Like many New England towns, Milford grew at a relatively slow pace during its first century and a half, but expanded significantly with the growth of industry and commerce throughout the nineteenth century and the arrival of the railroad line connecting New Haven and New York City in the middle of that century. Many of the gracious homes and handsome commercial and institutional buildings that surround the Green today date from that era of prosperity and expansion. Inventor Simon Lake, whose experimental submarine is now displayed at the head of the harbor, developed his invention in workshops just off the north side of the Green in this era. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, two of the structures that still adorn and anchor the town center were constructed: the Memorial Bridge, dedicated in 1889 to mark the 250th anniversary of the founding of Milford, and the Taylor Library (now the Chamber of Commerce) in 1895.

The Civic Center area, with its beautiful landscape and public architecture, is, for the most part, a product of the early twentieth century Colonial Revival, itself based on buildings like the First United Church of Christ Congregational - which was in fact built in 1823-24, around the same time as the three churches on the New Haven Green, replacing an earlier genuinely colonial building, which itself stood on the site of the original Meeting House of 1641. Through most of the nineteenth century, the banks of Wepawaug River in the center of Milford were lined with manufacturing and commercial buildings, but a continuous process of 'greening," which continues today, has produced the park-like setting and distinctive Duck Pond around the Town Hall of 1916.

Milford has, of course, grown considerably since those early days, with post-World War II suburban development filling in a significant amount of the open land within the city limits, including explosive commercial growth along the Route 1 (Boston Post Road) corridor, fueled by the opening of the Connecticut Turnpike (Interstate 95) in the 1960's. Notably, the Connecticut Post Mall was one of the first shopping malls in the region, opening in 1960 as an open-air center and as an enclosed mall in 1981, and it has continued to renovate and expand ever since, reaching 1.3 million square feet with the latest expansion, making it the largest mall in the state. In spite, but also as complement to, this peripheral growth, the original center of Milford remains both the symbolic and functional heart of the city, as well as the part of Milford where one can discover and appreciate over three and a half centuries of continuous civic activity and building.

* Adapted from the 2003 Milford Downtown Plan


Milford Parkway to
Wilbur Cross N & S
Boston Post Road
to Orange
I-95 to New Haven
and Boston
Metro North to
New Haven
Amtrack to
Boston
Milford Mall
Schick
Cherry Street
Civic
Center
Train Station
1/4 Mile Radius
1/2 Mile Radius
Fowler Field
Mill River
I-95 to Stamford
and New York
Metro North and
Amtrack to
New York
Bridgeport Avenue
to Stratford and Bridgeport
MILFORD
HARBOR
GULF POND
BURNS POINT
GULF BEACH
BAYVIEW
FORT TRUMBULL BEACH
BAYVIEW BEACH
POND POINT BEACH
POND POINT
KEY
CIVIC
EDUCATION
MAJOR COMMERCIAL
CHURCHES
TRANSIT
CULTURAL
INDUSTRIAL

DOWNTOWN'S STRUCTURE: ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

From its historical origins as a New England village at the head of the harbor, where the current downtown is located, Milford has developed in a more or less linear fashion, running east-west along the shore of Long Island Sound (and also along the major east-west transportation corridors). Indeed, Milford has more miles of shoreline (over 14 miles) than any other Connecticut town, a fact more recognized and appreciated by residents than by most visitors, for whom the dominant image of Milford is neither its historic center nor its waterfront.

Topography, tradition and circumstance have created distinctive areas within this larger pattern of development, such as Woodmont, Silver Beach, Devon and Walnut Beach, as well as Downtown Milford. Although the downtown remains the hub and source of civic identity within this constellation of sub-centers and neighborhoods, it is by no means the exclusive center any longer from a business and retail perspective, and it is, increasingly, a special kind of residential neighborhood in its own right. This new status has important implications for the future planning of Downtown Milford, including issues of traffic, parking and walkability, as well as both the complementarity and potential conflicts of residential and business uses, and these will be discussed further. For now it should be noted that the physical structure of Milford confirms both the persistent importance of the downtown as a center, as well as the inevitability of its role as one of several centers.

In large part this polycentric and corridor-based structure is a function of the fact that the two major modern automobile corridors through Milford actually bypass the downtown area. While the historic east-west corridor of the old Boston Post Road is traced by the line of Bridgeport and New Haven Avenues and passes straight through Downtown Milford as Broad Street along the north and south sides of the Green, the modern route of the Post Road (U.S. Route 1) deviates from Bridgeport Avenue east of the center of Devon, as does the later Connecticut Turnpike (Interstate 95), which follows an almost precisely parallel trajectory to the north of the center of Milford. The implications of this deviation for Milford are enormous and make Milford fundamentally different from a structural and planning point of view than other Connecticut Shoreline cities, where the Post Road and/or I-95 pass directly through or immediately adjacent to the downtown area (e.g. Stamford, New Haven, Branford, Madison, etc.), or, for that matter, the many places where those corridors produce a major north-south division between a historic center and the waterfront, or between the center and waterfront south of the highway and a formerly rural, but increasingly suburban, area to the north.

In Milford, much of the town and its population – and certainly population density – lie south of both the Post Road and I-95 and therefore have a more natural focus in the downtown, with its train station and concentration of government buildings , and along the shoreline. At the same time, the fact that the Post Road and I-95 bypass the center of Milford has served to both isolate and protect the downtown area from more recent automobile-oriented development and much of the attendant traffic. The Post Road and adjacent areas have clearly borne the brunt and reaped the considerable harvest of this sort of development, creating an important


BOOKS
Collected Stories
BOOKSTORE
Franklin's BARBER SHOP
SWEET ANNIE & CO.
GOING OUT OF BUSINESS

engine of economic growth well beyond the capacity of the smaller-scale, finer grained downtown, and diverting a great deal of the strip-style development that has invaded and eroded so many historic downtown areas in New England and across the country.

In spite of the fact that most of Milford continues to cluster around south of the major through corridors, it is nevertheless the case that the north-south connections within the town, as well as the gateway corridors into the downtown area, are much more weakly developed and articulated then the east-west infrastructure. Here again an apparent deficit may turn out to be an advantage, since the lack of regional-scale north-south corridors has encouraged a micro-fabric of pedestrian-scale (and potentially bicycle friendly) neighborhood streets, an preserved a still relatively underdeveloped network of open spaces along the mainly north-south geography of Milford Harbor and the Wepawaug River, which really forms the backbone of the downtown area, just as the Green forms its heart, and together they map the cross-axes which provide the underlying structure of Milford's center.

Indeed, the structure of Downtown Milford is, in many ways, a microcosm of the overall structure of the entire town, with the exceptionally long and narrow Green – almost a half-mile from east to west – providing the dominant image and reflecting this structure, as well as its origins as the widened and landscaped center of the old market street (Broad Street). Forming a north-south counterpoint to the Green and Broad Street are the somewhat less clearly connected components of Milford Harbor, River Street and Civic Center, which taken together constitute a cross axis that is also about a half-mile in length. Thus the entire downtown area falls roughly within a (theoretically) comfortably walkable radius (allowing for somewhat shifting centers, including the intersection of Broad and River Streets, the train station, or alternately the intersection of High Street and Broad Street, closer to the center of the Green), but suffers from the same relative weakness of north-south links - in spite of the narrowness of the Green which, along with North and South Broad Streets, is not easy to cross north to south - and congestion of the east-west corridors, as the rest of Milford. Obviously the challenge is to build on, and strengthen the overall structure of the downtown area by strengthening and better connecting each of the components, so that each can realize its distinctive potential as part a coherent comprehensive plan for a downtown that is attractive, vibrant and economically productive.

From the point of view of urban design and development, a particular challenge for Milford is to strengthen and activate the downtown area along each of the four very different cross-axes that structure downtown Milford. Since the 2003 Downtown Plan, significant progress has been made with respect to the two shorter arms of those axes: south along Factory Lane to the Harbor with the Schooner Wharf Development, and now with the redevelopment of 1 New Haven Avenue, and east long New Haven Avenue with new

Positive redevelopment on the east and south axes of Milford. Upper left: recent development of Schooner Wharf along Factory Lane to the south. Lower left: retail along Daniel Street to the east. Upper right: Stonebridge Restaurant and the pond. Lower right: One New Haven Avenue.


12-3
Milford Center for the Arts NEXT RIGHT


LIQUOR


CORNER CONVENIENCE

commercial development in the Daniel Street area – although further progress could be made in this zone, with redevelopment of the 18 New Haven Avenue site and improved pedestrian circulation across River Street to Daniel Street and the Library Fowler Field area. The next challenge – and opportunity – for downtown development is now to encourage similar activity along the other two arms of the cross-axes: north along River Street to the Train Station area and under the tracks to the Civic Center area, and west along the full length of the Green to the still weakly characterized and developed west end of the Green, and ultimately beyond to the Hospital. Fortunately there are opportunities for in both directions for significant mixed-use redevelopment of under-utilized sites that could functions as anchors for those axes in the way that Schooner Wharf has been for the axis south to the Harbor. These include the 44-64 River Street site, and a new parking structure in the courthouse area to the north, and the former Harrison's site and especially the underdeveloped properties around the west end of the Green to the west. The City should explore with the owners of these properties ways in which public-private partnerships might unlock the full development potential of those sites.

Opportunities for redevelopment. Areas north of downtown along River Street including the trestle (upper, right) and 44-64 River Street, and underdeveloped properties at the west end of the green (left).

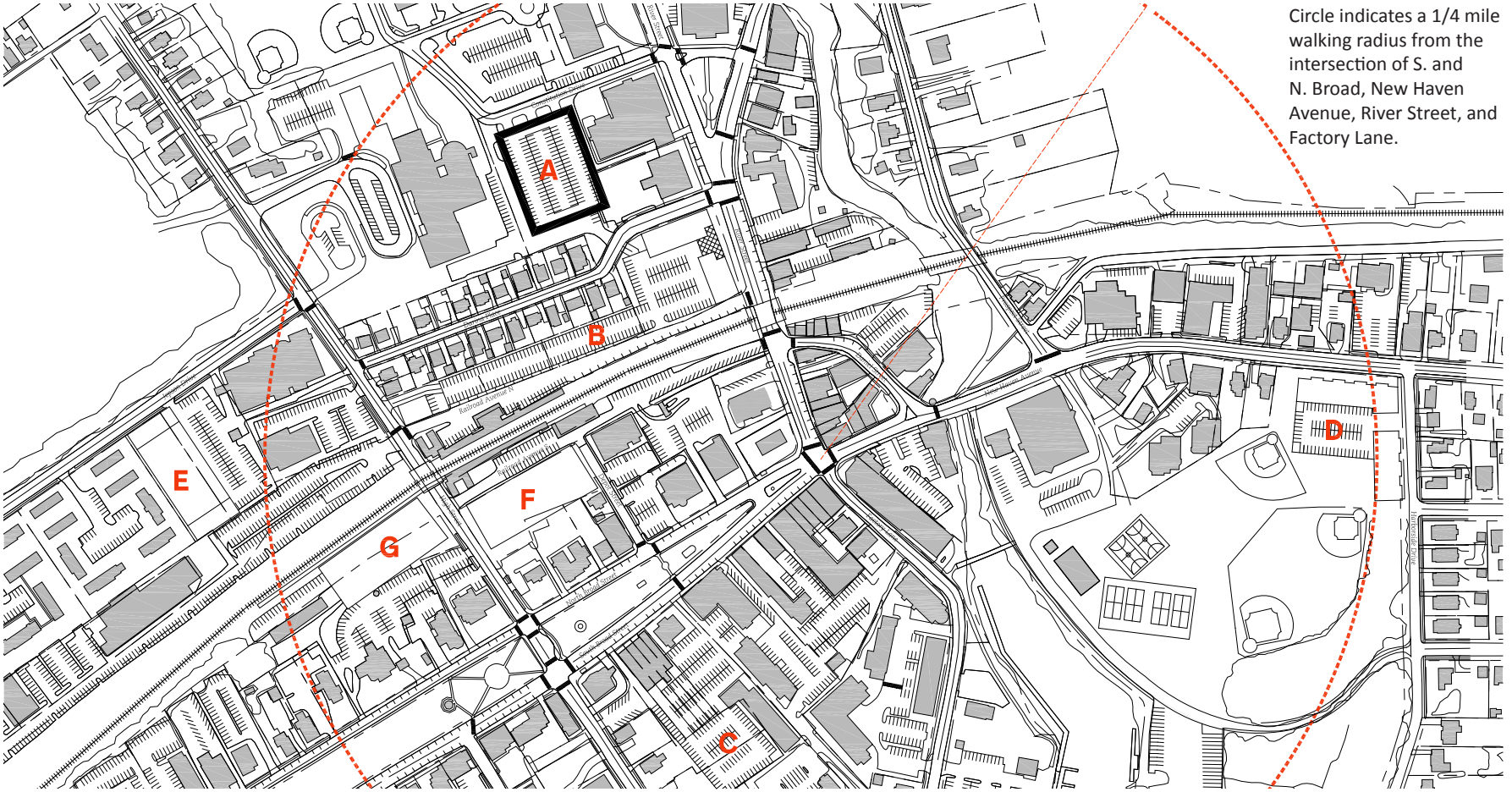
Fortunately for Milford, these sites, and others as yet unexplored, may provide one of the missing ingredients for the future development of Downtown Milford, namely sites that could accommodate retail footprints of a size not typically found in the historic commercial fabric of the downtown area. This does not mean the big-box footprints that have become characteristic of the Post Road corridor and mainly belong there, if anywhere. Rather Downtown Milford could benefit from the opportunity to develop one or more spaces in the 10 – 20,000 square foot range which would be, if not exactly anchor stores in the classical sense, at least potentially destination retail of the sort that the downtown has only in the form of small specialty stores, such as Milford Photo.

In the end, Downtown Milford is its own anchor, attracting people because of the special kind of place it provides, distinct from the anonymity of strip-style development, and boasting a mix not only of business uses, but also institutional, civic, food and entertainment uses not usually found elsewhere, along with the truly unique open space resources described above, along with walkability and access to public transportation. Indeed, if the downtown is anchored both structurally and in terms of its character by the Green, the Civic Center and its landscape, the Harbor and Fowler Field, then the role of retail in the downtown is to fill in continuously between and around those anchors, making the sidewalks and views that connect them as attractive and lively as possible. This means, wherever possible, a preference for ground floor retail, restaurants and other street-oriented uses, along with limited curb cuts, which have always been a problem in Milford, parking and auto-oriented uses located in the rear of buildings, and signage and streetscape treatment that reflects the small-town character of Milford's center.


VILLA GOURMET

What has most strengthened Downtown Milford over the past ten years is the continued expansion and health of the rental housing market and the restaurant sector, along with the general accessibility of the town center to adjacent residential neighborhoods, to the railroad station and to the harbor. All of this should be encouraged, with the appropriate attention to traffic and parking impacts as discussed below, and by encouraging mixed-use multi-story development (i.e. residential over retail) through zoning and other incentives. With the ongoing development of downtown housing, it is also time to seriously address the issue of vacant and under-utilized upper floors, which should probably be aggregated wherever possible, to make improvements to access and egress efficient and economically feasible.

As for positive role models, it is first of all safe to say that Milford has itself become, or should be, just such a role model for medium density, mixed-use, transit-oriented development, of the sort that local, State and regional plans now routinely recommend. It is also a role model with respect to a generally pleasant diversity of architectural styles that complement, rather than copy, each other. Other places to look for comparable patterns, and perhaps a somewhat more robust mix of businesses, different scales, parking management, and thoughtful use of streetscape and both new and old buildings, might include the likes of West Hartford, Madison, Old Saybrook, Northampton, MA, or South Norwalk. Of course none of these is a precise parallel to Milford, which claims, as has been outlined, its own unique structure and place-making assets, but each does have examples of the next level of ambition in scale and character of development project that might help Milford set its own goals and standards.



Circle indicates a 1/4 mile walking radius from the intersection of S. and N. Broad, New Haven Avenue, River Street, and Factory Lane.

Potential New or Expanded Parking Locations

The following sites were studied as potential new or expanded parking locations in the downtown area as part of this plan:

A. The preferred location for a new downtown parking garage serving commuters, the court, and downtown merchants. 657 parking spaces on 5 levels.

B. Potential location for a new, two level parking facility along Railroad Avenue that could provide additional commuter/downtown parking. Existing lots contain 155 spots; an expanded two level structure could have 372 spots.

C. Potential site for consolidated and expanded shared surface lot at South Broad and High Street - see page 22 for details.

D. Potential site for structured parking lot at NE corner of Fowler Field. Existing Fowler Field surface lots contain 260 spots; structured garage could have 150-200 per level

Additional potential structured parking garage locations studied in this plan:

E. 100 spaces per floor

F. 90 spaces per floor

G. 101 spaces per floor

PARKING: UNLOCKING DOWNTOWN POTENTIALS

Among downtown merchants, visitors and residents, parking has been and continues to be understood as a critical issue to be addressed if downtown is to continue developing into a pedestrian friendly, transit oriented, mixed-use district. The perception of downtown as a place which lacks parking is a challenge faced not just by Milford, but is widespread among Connecticut's towns and cities. Most often, and certainly in Milford, this sense is the result of psychological and physical factors which don't necessarily reflect an actual lack of quantity - instead, it reflects things like the expectation of parking steps away from a destination, the frustration of navigating fragmented, small parking lots attached to individual buildings, complicated parking search patterns caused by the lack of coherent signage directing motorists to appropriate parking lots, and unfortunately, experiences in other places which get projected on any and all historic downtown areas.

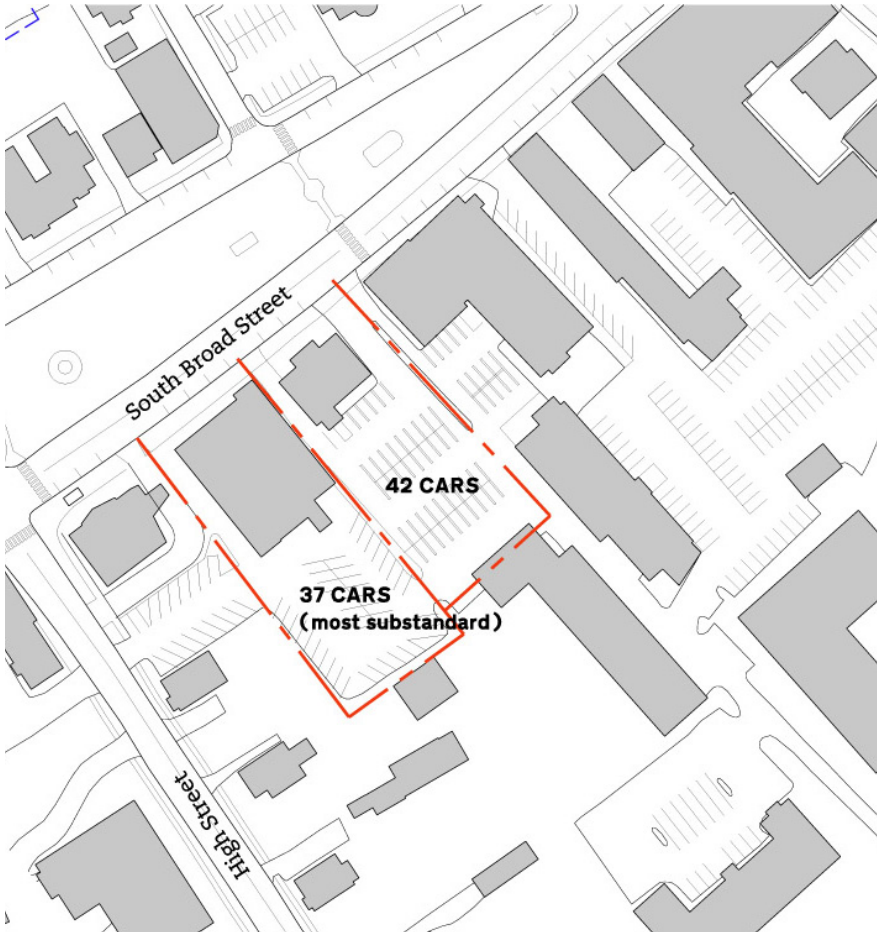
As Milford has a compact, walkable downtown, the 2003 Downtown Plan recommended encouraging visitors to "park once" and get out of their cars as soon as possible, navigating downtown on foot as one would a single destination such as a shopping mall. This strategy is now a recognized and accepted standard for downtown areas, improving the vehicular navigability of downtowns, reducing traffic and congestion, increasing pedestrian safety, and encouraging multiple stops in each trip.

Supporting the "park once" approach requires a coordinated strategy that addresses initial and ongoing issues. Larger, shared parking areas must be located conveniently throughout downtown, clearly identified through cohesive, legible directional signage, and managed on a collective basis. Street parking should be provided on a short term basis only, and parking rules enforced. People working and living in downtown should use rear lot spaces to leave the streets spots open for short term business.

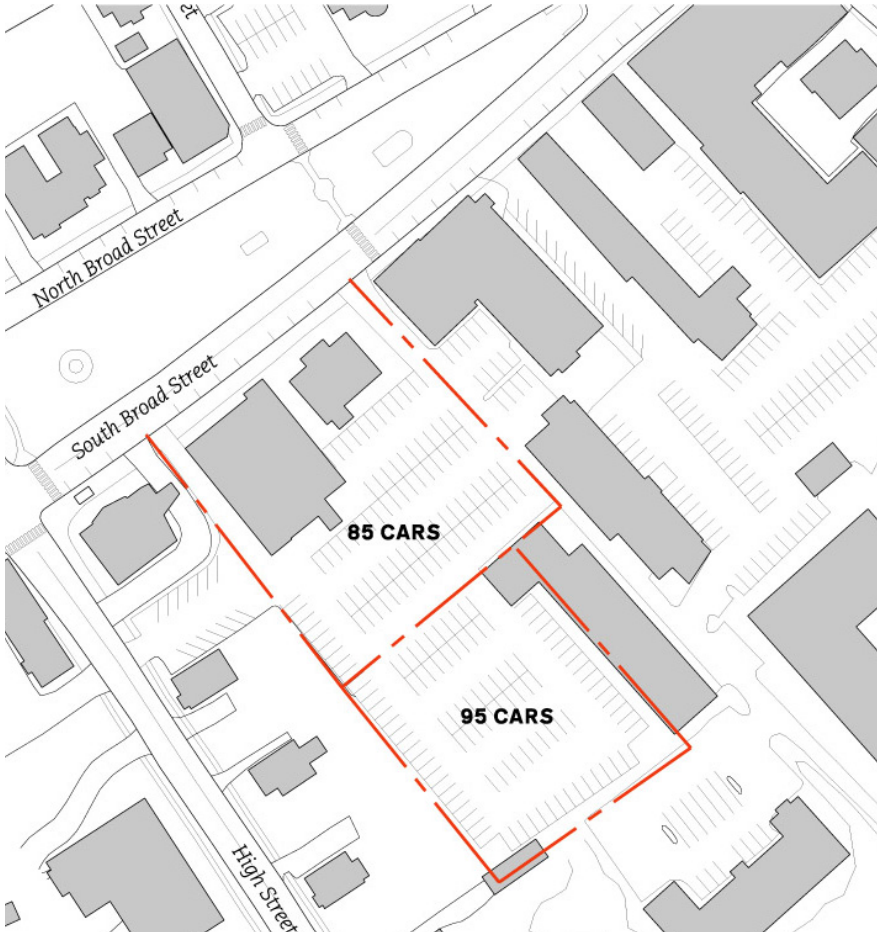
There is currently no particular agency or organization tasked with looking after these various issues in Milford. A downtown parking authority or special services district might be best equipped to coordinate and manage these issues on an ongoing basis in the interest of the downtown community.

Some progress has been made on parking since 2003. The South Broad Street parking areas have been collectively merged, providing an effective, large reservoir of parking serving the South Broad/Schooner Wharf area. This is a good start, but more opportunities need to be explored to serve the River Street area to the north, the area along New Haven Avenue to the east, and the area at the West End of the Green.

An additional challenge for downtown is the competing, and ever increasing, demand for commuter parking close the train station. Existing commuter parking located in Fowler Field is inefficient, poorly located and is not the best use of this important piece of waterfront open space, and should be relocated. Other train station parking adjacent to the station itself is convenient but limited. Expanded, centralized commuter parking must be developed in downtown to support access to the train station (one of Milford's greatest assets), but any new transit parking constructed downtown should also be leveraged to provide parking for other uses like downtown



Existing mid-block parking at South Broad and High Street. Individual lots are disjointed and inefficient, and in some cases many parking spots are substandard in size and access routes.



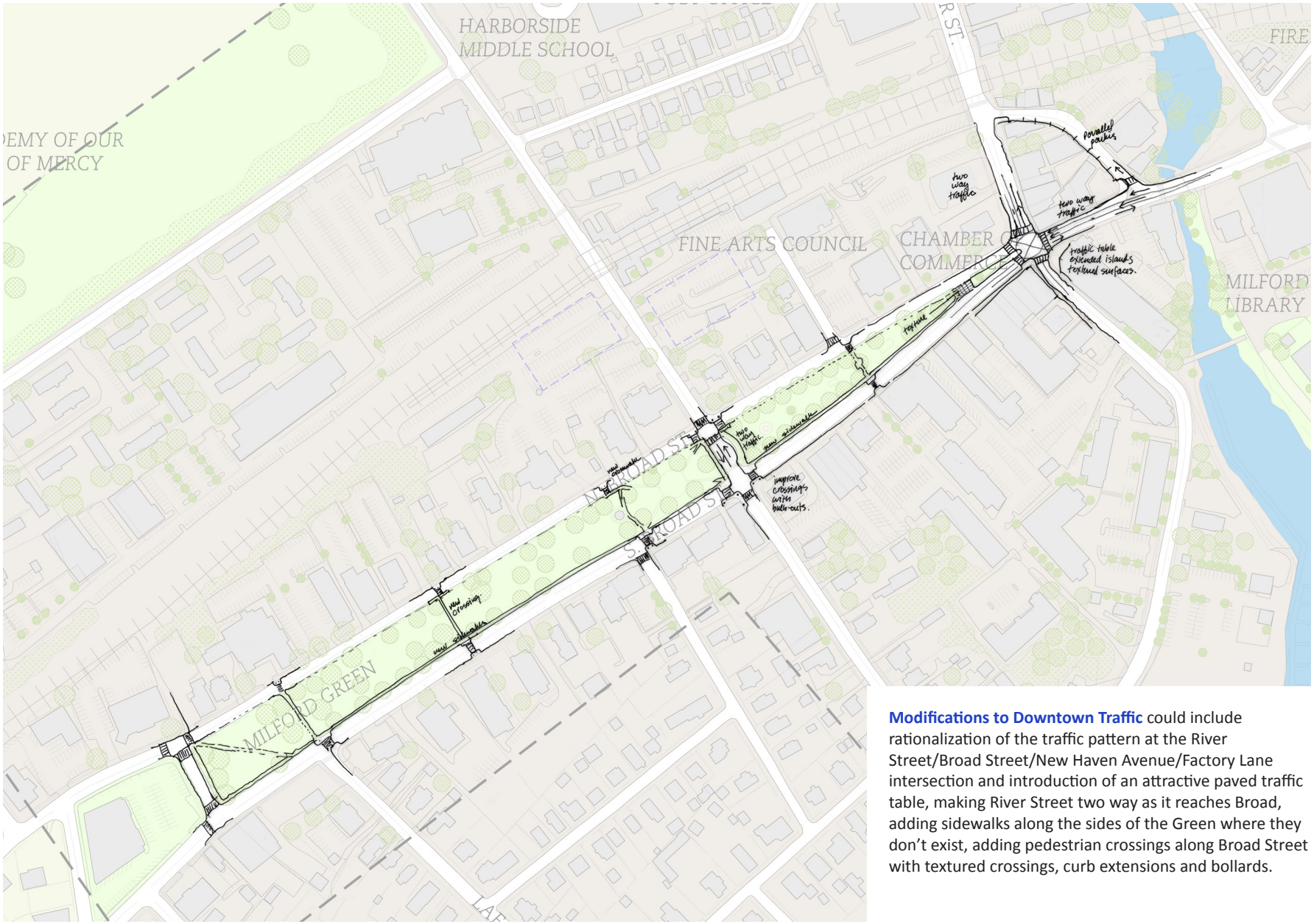
Proposed shared mid-block parking at South Broad and High Street. If the back half of the two deep lots currently facing High Street were consolidated into the parking, and the parking reorganized to create a shared lot, not only would there be a much larger reservoir of parking for this part of downtown, but it would be safer and much easier to navigate.

merchants, residents, and other users like the courthouse.

As part of this planning effort, the YUDW reviewed a planning study prepared by Desman Associates for the Milford Transit District, dated July 1, 2006. The report outlines 6 possible structured parking locations within 1/4 mile of the train station, including their potential maximum build out, access issues, benefits and drawbacks. Each option was reviewed, and two additional sites were studied. Based on our review, the preferred site from 2006, the so-called "D2" site in the study, located south of Constitution Drive behind the courthouse, appears to provide the most benefit to the downtown in terms of additional parking capacity, access, and traffic, with negligible negative impacts.

Specific parking recommendations of this plan include:

- Establish a downtown parking authority or a special services district to develop, manage and maintain shared parking resources throughout the district, including parallel street parking, municipal lots and garages, and shared surface lots.
- Establish additional shared or municipal parking reservoirs north of the railroad trestle to serve the River Street area, at the west end of the green, and east along New Haven Avenue.
- In partnership with the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation, the Courts, and downtown merchants and property owners, design and construct a new structured parking facility south of Constitution Drive, behind the existing court house. Upgrade pedestrian infrastructure between the new garage, the train station, and under the trestle to downtown along River Street
- As part of a comprehensive signage and wayfinding system, develop and install clear signage directing motorists to parking throughout the downtown.
- Install bicycle racks throughout the downtown to support visitors coming to downtown on bicycle.
- Install additional sidewalks and crosswalks around the Green to encourage visitors to cross the Green on foot instead of moving their car.



Modifications to Downtown Traffic could include rationalization of the traffic pattern at the River Street/Broad Street/New Haven Avenue/Factory Lane intersection and introduction of an attractive paved traffic table, making River Street two way as it reaches Broad, adding sidewalks along the sides of the Green where they don't exist, adding pedestrian crossings along Broad Street with textured crossings, curb extensions and bollards.

STREETS AND SIDEWALKS: TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY

Enhancing Safety, Comfort and Connectivity for Motorists and Pedestrians

Like parking, traffic continues to be an critical issue to members of the downtown community. In Milford, the dual role of Broad Street as the principal "main street" of the commercial core, and an important east-west through route produces conflicts between different user types, creating frustration and potential safety issues for motorists and pedestrians alike. In planning for downtown traffic, it is important to find a way to balance the needs of these groups whose desires are different: through-motorists who want to get across downtown as quickly as possible, motorists arriving downtown as a destination, who want to parallel park, enter a parking lot or search for their destination, and pedestrians crossing Broad Street and the Green between different uses and buildings.

Because of Milford's topography and physical structure, there are limited east-west through connections. While the Route 1 bypass caries much of the east-west traffic, the New Haven Avenue-Broad Street-Bridgeport Avenue (partly State Route 162) corridor will continue to be an important east-west linkage. But through modest transformations, its character in the downtown should reflect its role as a pedestrian-friendly main street while continuing to fulfill its function as a linkage. In this, maximum vehicular throughput at maximum speed cannot be the ultimate goal - instead a context-sensitive approach is appropriate, with a balance of circulation functions managed at slower speeds (but maintaining throughput), better wayfinding and enhanced pedestrian safety and comfort.

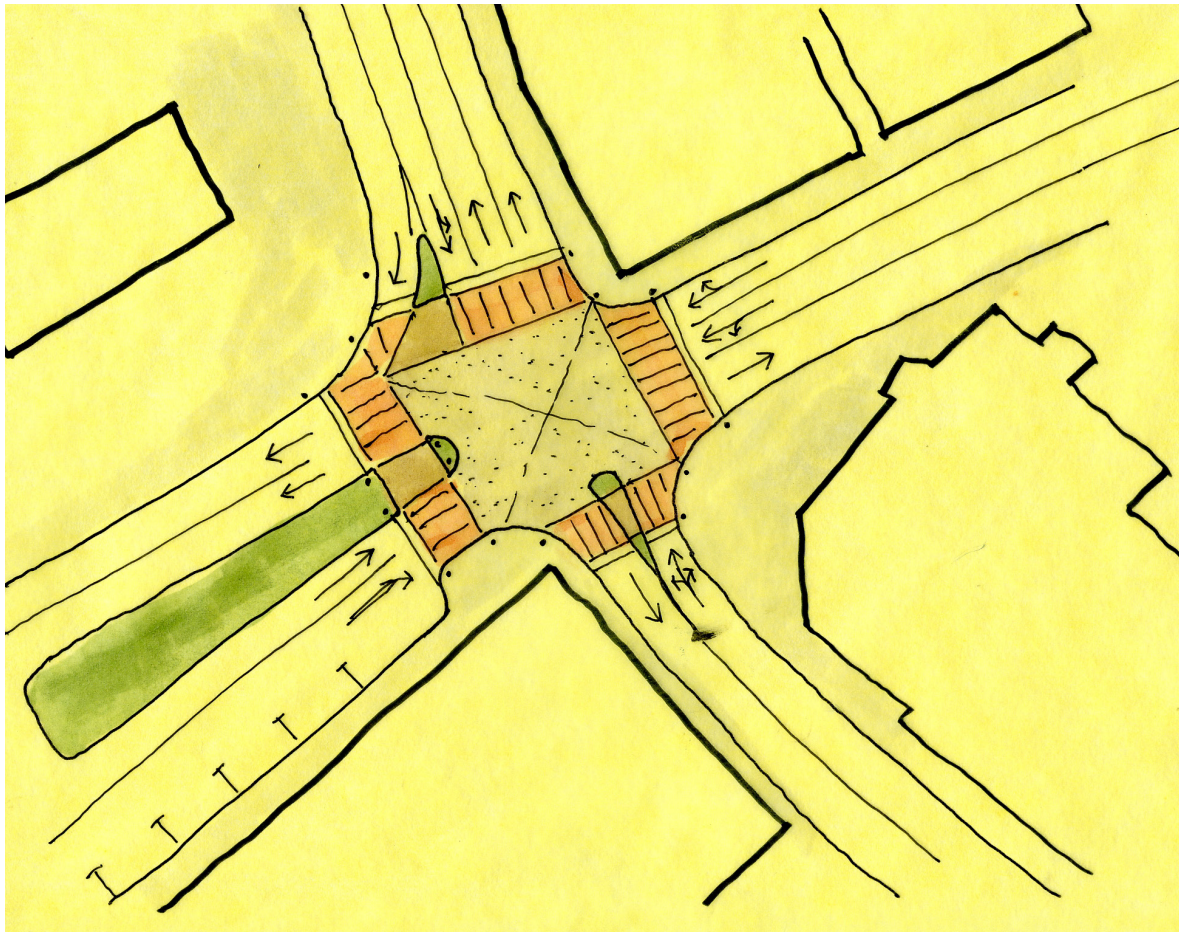
Currently, pedestrian safety is a major concern along N and S Broad Street, within the Broad Street/River Street/New Haven Avenue/Factory Lane intersection and at the Daniel Street/New Haven Avenue intersection.

On Broad, cars accelerate unchecked down long, uninterrupted stretches only to stop in long cues at the stoplight. This pattern of traffic -- with sudden stops and rapid acceleration to get through the next light--is especially dangerous for pedestrians trying to cross to and from the Green as well as for motorists maneuvering into and out of parallel parking spots.

A more appropriate traffic pattern for this

Existing Traffic on Broad Street (top)

Existing Daniel Street/New Haven Avenue Intersections (above) with confusing and dangerous pedestrian crossing.



Proposed River Street/Broad Street/New Haven Avenue/ Factory Lane Intersection. Rationalization of the traffic pattern, allowing traffic to proceed in all directions could be coupled with a raised, textured traffic table, curb extensions, pedestrian waiting areas, and bollards to create a more attractive, more efficient, and safer overall intersection.

Examples of Pedestrian Crossing Improvements. Top: Traffic table with bollards and textured crosswalks. Center: pedestrian waiting area in the median strip and highly visible, textured crosswalk. Bottom: 3 way traffic table with bollards and textured cross walks.

corridor would have cars moving slowly but continuously, and could be achieved through generally accepted traffic calming methods, which not only slow traffic but indicate to drivers that they have entered a different kind of urban zone which they share with pedestrians. Traffic calming measures to be deployed downtown should include the introduction of more frequent stop signs along Broad to create better paced traffic movement. Pedestrian crossings along Broad and the Green should occur more often, improving pedestrian's ability to cross the street and the Green (and thereby improving commercial performance), and should be made more visible through the use of textured surfaces, signage, and curb extensions. Enforcement of laws requiring motorists to yield to pedestrians at crossings would help to change the culture of aggressive driving along Broad. Some of these elements, such as textured crosswalks, create opportunity for attractive design which has the added benefit of improving the aesthetic quality of the downtown area.

Broad and River Intersection

The intersection of Broad Street, New Haven Avenue, River Street, and Factory Lane presents a unique challenge for traffic and safety in the downtown area. As the "number 1" corner in downtown, this intersection plays an important role in the structure of downtown as an arrival and distribution node for cars, but also for pedestrians as the center of the most dense commercial activity in the downtown. Here the conflict between pedestrians and traffic movement is the greatest, and because of complex traffic patterns generated by the one way loop on Daniel Street and River Street, the possibility for motorist confusion is also significant. The design team observed, on several occasions, cars trying to turn the wrong way down River Street trying to go north, or awkwardly merging right on New Haven Avenue to avoid turning left into Daniel Street. These movements, when combined with long pedestrian crossing distances, produce confusion and danger for pedestrians.

According to "Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach," published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers in 2010, main street traffic

Broad/River Intersection (top) Many Milford residents are used to the strange traffic pattern in the intersection, but to a first time visitor it can be very confusing.

Pedestrian Crossings (above) are long, and conflicts with the River Street right turn lane are common.

Areas of Discontinuous Pedestrian Realm. Top: bushes block the sidewalk along Factory Lane. Left: Continuous asphalt curb cut on Factory Lane. Above: Discontinuous sidewalks on River Street at Railroad Avenue.

intersections should "emphasize slow speeds and the management of conflicts" and "pedestrian convenience, as these types of streets encourage frequent crossing.[1]" Above all motorists should be able to see and understand the rules of the intersection easily, see pedestrians and their movements clearly, and know what to do next without hesitation. Rationalization of the traffic pattern and reconstruction of the intersection could provide the opportunity to create a more attractive, signature space for downtown, more like a piazza shared between cars and pedestrians, than the current conditions where pedestrians are made to feel like they are crossing a highway. A redesign of this intersection should consider inclusion of curb extensions, median refuge islands, textured, high visibility crosswalks or a textured traffic table, bollards to define pedestrian waiting areas, elimination of channelized right turn lanes, pedestrian countdown timers, and short stop light cycles to encourage crossing.

The pedestrian crossing at Daniel Street and New Haven Avenue is another area of concern. While this crossing would surely be addressed within a study of the River Street/Broad Street intersection, measures should be put in place now to address its shortcomings. The current condition includes cars coming both ways down New Haven Avenue, and turning into Daniel Street without any traffic controls. There are no crosswalks and weak, confusing signage. A raised crosswalk at this location, and a flashing pedestrian crossing sign could help motorists better see and understand this as a crossing area. Ultimately, in a reconfigured traffic pattern, this crossing would also be rationalized.

For pedestrians, sidewalk connectivity continues to be a concern within the downtown area. Particularly along Factory Lane, but also along River Street leading north from downtown, the pedestrian realm sometimes fades into long asphalt curb cuts, or is even blocked by infrastructure or objects. In addition, some areas of the sidewalk are in disrepair. A comprehensive sidewalk study would identify areas to be renovated and reconnected.

Supporting Bicycles

Travel by bicycle has become a popular way of accessing stores, restaurants, and other neighborhood amenities, and is likely to continue gaining in popularity as energy costs rise and the next generations of residents move into Milford. To the greatest extent possible, downtown Milford should be made accessible for cyclists. Like motorists, cyclists should be encouraged to "park once" in downtown and leave their bicycle behind as they circulate around.

Parking racks should be provided throughout the downtown to service cyclists coming from different directions. Racks may take the form of large groupings at strategic locations, or be more distributed along a sidewalk or on the Green. Custom designed racks could become a signature element in the streetscape of downtown, and can be combined with other kinds of uses, like benches or information

1 Institute of Transportation Engineers. Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach. ITE: 2010. Available online at www.ite.org/css

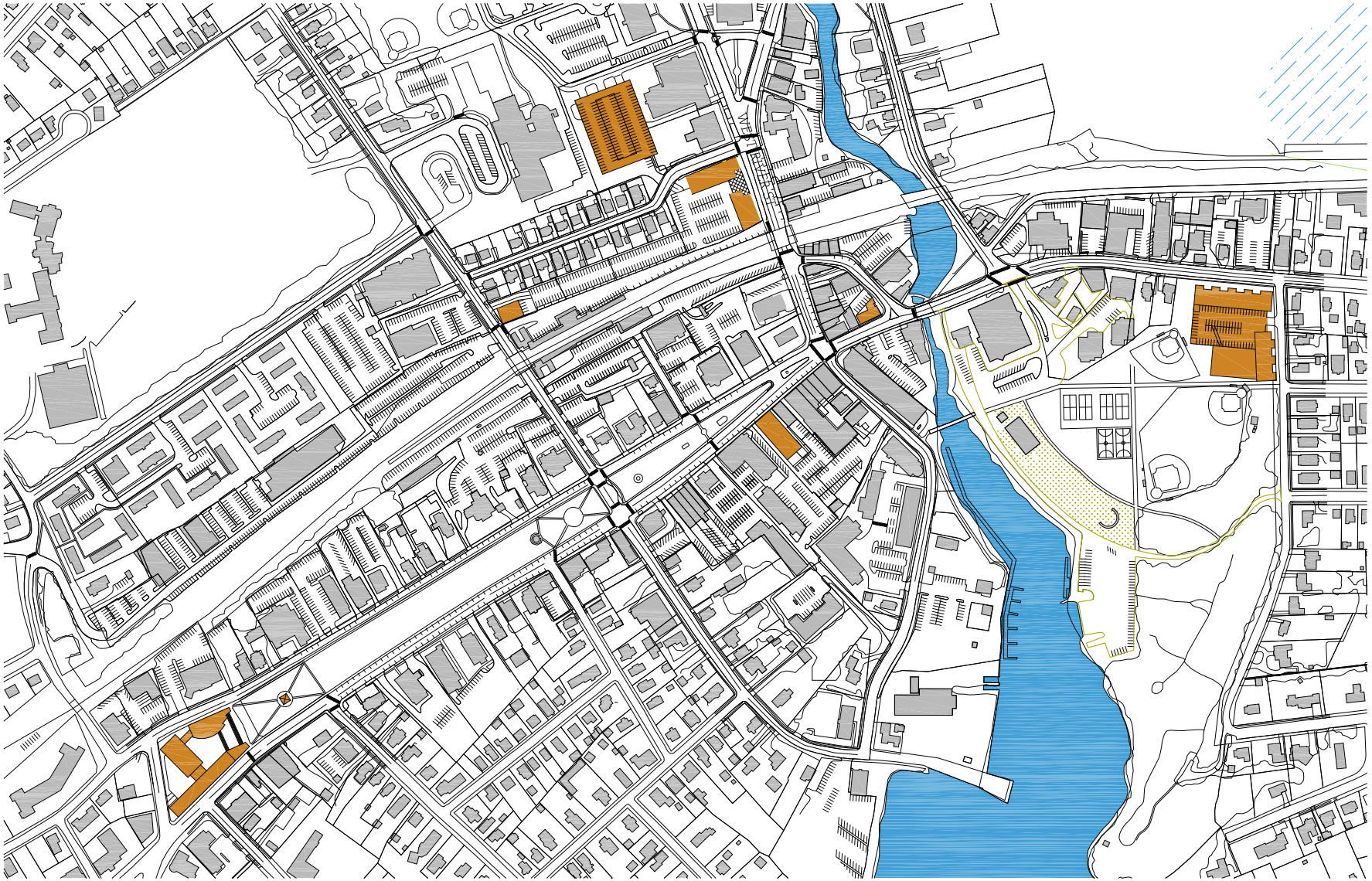
Urban Bicycle Racks. Strategies for bicycle parking can include simple posts or more decorative branded racks for individual bicycles (left), larger groupings of racks at higher traffic nodes (above) and even displacement of one or more parallel parking spots in strategic locations, as demand dictates (upper left).

kiosks.

Supporting cyclists also includes the continued development of bicycle lanes and routes leading into and out of downtown, especially through adjacent residential neighborhoods. Wherever possible, separate bicycle lanes should be created, and connected not just to downtown but to multimodal trails (such as the River Walk) as they develop.

Key Recommendations:

- Commission a traffic study to reexamine the River Street - Broad Street - Daniel Street - New Haven Avenue traffic pattern, and look for improvements to pedestrian safety and vehicular wayfinding. Consider "normalizing" the intersection and eliminating the confusing one way loop along Daniel Street. Redesign the intersection with a traffic table, sidewalk extensions, and bollards to slow traffic, reduce pedestrian crossing distances and improve safety, and make the intersection an attractive gateway for downtown.
- Implement one or more new pedestrian crosswalks to and across the Green at strategic locations. Utilize sidewalk extensions to reduce pedestrian crossing distances and improve pedestrian visibility. Add appropriate "stop for pedestrians in crosswalk" signage and enforce rules.
- Consider slowing traffic and reducing queuing at stop lights along north and south Broad Street by introducing regular stop signs at all intersections.
- Construct additional sidewalks along the edge of the green to connect parallel parking to crosswalks.
- Conduct a sidewalk survey and repair discontinuous sidewalks and reduce unwieldy, long continuous curb cuts. Eliminate barriers along sidewalk routes, especially on Factory Lane. Make sure crossings have curb ramps and comply with Pubic Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG).
- Install bicycle racks at strategic locations throughout downtown
- Where practicable, introduce bicycle routes and lanes on roads leasing into downtown.



DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY SITES

In the process of developing this plan for Downtown Milford, a number of specific opportunity sites presented themselves as a result of stakeholder and community input. All the sites presented in this section of the report are sites of importance and within the physical structure of the downtown area, and which are not living up to their full potential, and have the possibility, if redeveloped, to make significant contributions to the character and functioning of downtown as a mixed-use commercial and residential district.

The specific redevelopment mechanism for each of these sites may be different. Some of these opportunity sites are on public land, like Fowler Field, the railroad trestle and location for a structured parking garage behind the Courts, and redevelopment would be predicated on a public process to bring them to fruition. Others, like the Greens End Place site and 44-64 River Streets are privately held, but their owners have expressed willingness to think about possibilities for redevelopment, and the City should encourage the sensitive redevelopment of these sites in line with the recommendations of this plan and explore public-private partnerships to unlock the potential of these sites.

Each site in this section is accompanied by studies for potential projects prepared by the YUDW, and photographs from other places, illustrating characteristic best practices on each site. While actual redevelopment of each site will likely look different, these renderings and images provide an illustration of what thing might look like if change were to occur.


WORLD FAMOUS OYSTER FESTIVAL
MILFORD

River Street Gateway

One of the most important gateways into downtown Milford is the route from the north along River Street from its intersection with Cherry Street. As the home of Milford's attractive and historic civic center, including the city hall and duck pond, churches, and the courts, this area serves as the "front door" to downtown for many. A stretch of thriving storefront businesses north of Railroad Avenue reinforce this area's identity as a natural extension of the downtown pedestrian commercial environment.

Much of this zone, by virtue of it's high quality architecture and scenic pond and park is attractive to motorists and pedestrians, but in the area directly abutting downtown, where the railroad overpass separates Broad Street, Daniel Street and New Haven Avenue from River Street, there are a number of important opportunities to improve the pedestrian and motorist environment in terms of function, safety and quality. In addition, redevelopment of 44-64 River Street presents a major economic development opportunity in the downtown area.

The railroad trestle crossing River Street presents a significant challenge to the image of downtown and it's connection to the civic center. A low, mean, unattractive structure, adorned with suburban-style billboards (inappropriate in a historic downtown) and cluttered with uncoordinated and confusing signage, the bridge functions as mental break, separating River Street and downtown. For motorists, the trestle is an inauspicious gateway into downtown, while for pedestrians, the trestle is an unpleasant passage, especially at night, dark and forboding.

But given some minor investment in beautification and lighting, the trestle could become a signature element for Milford, which, after all, benefits greatly from excellent access to rail service which utilizes the bridge. Bridges have historically been celebrated pieces of infrastructure, especially where they came into contact with urban areas, creating memorable experiences for visitors and residents alike. Indeed one of the most memorable aspects of driving the Merritt Parkway is it's diversity of bridges, all of which have the same "bones" but have been dressed in different skins. Passing under a well-designed and lighted bridge can be more akin to passing through the threshold of a house than scurrying under the railroad tracks.

The existing trestle is a cor-ten steel viaduct sitting on concrete piers which separate the traffic lanes below from the pedestrian sidewalks. Opportunities for adapting the existing structure to create a more inviting gateway into downtown might include a variety of treatments. For instance:

River Street Gateway Area

Key existing landmarks:

A. Milford City Hall

B. Courthouse

C. Post Office

D. Wepawaug River

E. Retail storefronts

F. St. Peters Church

Proposed modifications:

1. New four to six story parking garage for commuters, the courts, and downtown patrons.

2. New four to six story mixed use building with ground floor commercial and upper floor residential.

3. New one level parking deck, serving residents, downtown, and commuters.

4. Improvements to railroad trestle to make it a signature gateway element.

5. Streetscape improvements along River Street, including textured crosswalks, bump outs, new lighting, street trees, coordinated directional signage, and buried electrical wires (typical along River Street).

Railroad Trestle. Artists rendition of what a redesigned railroad trestle could look like with decorative paint, lighting, and murals (previous page).

- Painting of the steel viaduct and stenciling of lettering ("Welcome to Milford") or other decorative painted improvements, when combined with night time lighting, could provide the least expensive improvements to the appearance of the trestle. Railroad trestles were historically painted with signage throughout the country.

- A more aggressive possibility for improving the appearance of the bridge would include the application of decorative, pattered screens to the exterior of both the trestle and the concrete abutments. This type of treatment was used on a number of bridges on the Merritt Parkway, and current CNC technology could allow complex patterns to be cut from sheet metal inexpensively. This new "wrapping" could be augmented by lighting.

- Pedestrian comfort and safety could be improved with the introduction of a dramatic lighting installation underneath the trestle. This lighting could be multi- colored, or could even be animated over time, creating a memorable gateway experience for pedestrians. This type of improvement has been successfully deployed in many U.S. urban areas to great effect.

    - Under-trestle lighting could be coupled with either permanent or temporary art pieces, including murals and sculptures, installed along the interior walls of the underpass, or in vitrines within the concrete piers.

- Additional architectural treatment of the abutments could include the introduction of integral seating and landscape areas, lighting, signage, and other streetscape elements.

The redevelopment of 44-64 River Street as a four to six story, mixed use (commercial and residential) property with structured parking behind could be a significant element in the improvement of this area. A future mid density building with a front facade at the sidewalk edge could improve the sense of the street as a place, while ground floor retail or professional offices would enliven the street, and upper story residential units would add to the 24 hour downtown population. Structured parking behind could serve rail commuters, downtown patrons, as well as residents and commuters.

The potential future construction of a major structured public parking facility behind the courthouse, which would serve the courts, but also commuters and visitors to downtown, will make this area all the more important as the primary gateway for people whose destination is downtown, especially for pedestrians who will walk from the garage south to the train station or to the Green.

Image: MTA

Image: Library of Congress, Historic American Building Survey

Image: George Rex, flickr.com

Applied ornament on standard bridges can transform them from utilitarian structures to signature gateway elements. Above, left: Artist Terry Adkins' "Harlem Encore" on Metro North viaduct, 125th St. New York City. Above, center: detail of Yerxa Road underpass applied metal ornament in Cambridge, MA. Above, right: Route 110 overpass in Stratford, CT on the Merritt Parkway with applied ornament and a decorative railing. Left: Camden Lock rail viaduct with decorative hand painted sign in London, England.

Underpass improvements. could include decorative, animated lighting, mural installations, and architectural features like seating, landscape, and lighting elements. Above, left: “Light Channels” installation in San Antonio, TX. Above, top: renovated Tickle Cock underpass by architect DSDHA in Castleford, England, including pedestrian seating and public art. Above: detail of “Loosing My Marbles” mosaic by artist Lisa Dinhofer, New York City 42nd St subway station. Right: “Obey Revolutions” mural by Shepard Fairey, Navy Pier, Chicago.

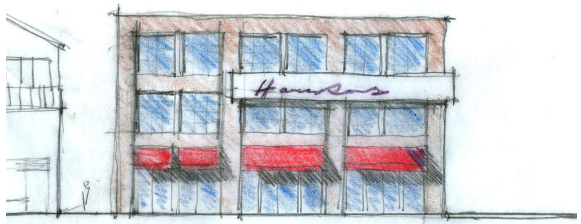
36-38 South Broad Street

Since 2007, when the venerable Milford institution Harrison's Hardware closed its doors, 36-38 South Broad has stood vacant. This site is close to the intersection of South Broad with River Street and stands in an important location within a continuous row of storefronts, but directly adjacent to an empty lot, site of a building that had burned down.

As part of the plan, the UDW was asked by Milford Progress to look at the possibility of redeveloping the site as a mixed use project. Currently, 36-38 has a century old, architecturally undistinguished building on a narrow and awkwardly shaped lot. Much of the back portion of the lot is given over to shared parking. Combined with a soft commercial market, the awkward building produced little in the way of commercial interest for sale or lease.

The design developed by the YUDW proposed that the site should really be made into a mixed use, residential over commercial building to provide economic diversity to the building and to add additional downtown residential units in a very high demand market. The challenge in planning this kind of a building was the constraint of the narrow site. But when coupled with the vacant site next door, a more substantial building with the potential for 10 residential apartments per floor on the second or second and third floor could be possible. The sketches on this page and the facing page illustrate some possibilities for what a building like that might look like. The iconic "Harrison's" sign is retained in the drawings in homage to the former use.

During the process of planning, the existing building was finally leased to Colony Grill, a Stamford based restaurant chain, which will open a restaurant there sometime in 2012. This is a positive development and will add to the sense of downtown Milford as a regional restaurant destination.



Greens End Place

The west end of the green is weakly characterized and lacks the continuous commercial density of the east end. Redevelopment in this section of downtown should focus on reinforcing the commercial street frontage along North and South Broad Street, while continuing to expand quantity of downtown residential units through development of mixed use buildings (residential over commercial). Given the scale of open space in this area, 3-4 story buildings could easily be absorbed, with parking in shared lots in the mid-block or in structured parking.

The west end of the green beyond Greens End Place is an ideal site for a major mixed use project that could produce a critical mass in the redevelopment of this area of downtown. A project on this site might contain retail and residential, and the direct connection to the Green itself makes it a great candidate for a civic use such as a community facility with meeting, exhibition and other programmatic uses. More intensive redevelopment of the former CVS site as a mixed use project should also be considered.

18 New Haven Avenue

18 New Haven Avenue is an important site for downtown. New Haven Avenue is the primary gateway route into downtown from the east, and after crossing the Wepawaug River and the Memorial bridge, 18 New Haven is the first property seen upon entering this district proper. This zone of downtown, with Daniel Street and River Street, has become the restaurant destination for Milford and has seen significant success in the last decade. As a marginal auto-oriented use, 18 New Haven is a key under-utilized assett for this burgeoning part of downtown, and could contribute to the success of downtown with redevelopment as a mixed use, two-to-three story building, with ground floor commercial (with a preference for retail or eating establishements) and upper story residential. As part of the downtown commercial district, parking relief should be provided to the right kind of redevelopment project.

The corner of Daniel Street and New Haven Avenue is important landmark as motorists enter Milford Downtown, and any new building should emphasize the corner and the street-wall on both streets, and reinforce Daniel Street as a pedestrian shopping and eating street.

In addition, consideration should be given to reconstruction of the Daniel Street entrance off New Haven Avenue to better accommodate pedestrians. In its current configuration, this intersection is used at high speed by motorists trying to get out of town. Normalizing this intersection by teeing up Daniel Street, reducing crossing distances, and installing attractive textured crosswalks would improve not only this areas safety, but its aesthetic quality. This kind of change should be coordinated with an overhaul of traffic patterns in downtown, as discussed elsewhere within this report.

18 New Haven Avenue. Artist's view of a new mixed use building at 18 New Haven Avenue (opposite). Redevelopment of 18 New Haven Avenue could reinforce the Daniel Street/River Street/New Haven Avenue restaurant sub-district. The Daniel Street intersection should be redesigned to better accommodate pedestrians safely and comfortably.

Existing Conditions. Dangerous Daniel Street intersection (right, near) and existing auto garage building (right, far).

Commuter Parking is a dominant use at Fowler, occupying almost 30% of the area of the Field, but serving neither recreational users or the downtown.

Fowler Field. Relocation of the existing commuter parking lots in Fowler Field could present an opportunity to replan the relationship of various parts of the field, with an emphasis on creating waterfront passive recreational space. In this sketch, the waterfront is left open with a boardwalk at the water's edge up to New Haven Avenue (1) and reinforced turf behind (2) that could be used for large gatherings or for parking cars during games, if required. The open space is anchored by a band shell (3). Basketball and tennis courts are consolidated to the center of the field (4), along with playground (5) and seating areas for use during games (6). Pedestrian paths provide access to the fields, and a new stair is proposed leading up to Harborside Drive and George Street (7).

Fowler Field

Fowler Field is a much-loved, City-owned multi-purpose recreational asset in downtown Milford. In public meetings, residents of Milford spoke passionately about the need to keep and improve the space as a recreational resource serving the whole City population in the heart of downtown.

Fowler Field currently contains a plethora of unrelated uses, including free Milford-resident parking used mainly by rail commuters, baseball fields used exclusively by Little League, basketball courts and tennis courts, an events pavilion, the public library, VFW post, and access to the boat launch. The area is well used, but use is limited to very specific groups (primarily Little League and commuters) and options for passive recreation and access to the harbor are minimal. The physical relationship between current uses is haphazard, disjointed and inefficient, with a considerable amount of impervious asphalt surface, chain link fences dividing areas of use, and relatively limited landscaped public space along the waterfront itself.

The 2000 Downtown Plan recommended rethinking the disposition and relationship of the uses within Fowler Field and improving the connections between downtown and the Field, and this recommendation still stands. While the pedestrian bridge constructed across the Wepawaug is an improvement since 2000, connections to downtown along New Haven Avenue remain weak, with inconsistent sidewalks and difficult pedestrian crossings, especially at Daniel Street. A more direct pedestrian connection to the Field along the waterfront right of way of the disused road west of the VFW should be considered.

The current disposition of uses, especially automotive uses, continues to impede the Field's ability to take full advantage of its waterfront location. The possibility of a new downtown structured parking facility to serve rail commuters could present significant opportunities to rethink the functioning of Fowler Field through the elimination of the existing surface parking lots which account for nearly 30% of the Field's area. These lots are not only inefficient and a poor use of this prime waterfront property, they represent an significant piece of waterfront impervious surface which is likely having a deleterious effects on the water quality of the harbor.

Replanning the filed should include an increase to the amount of waterfront open space, including direct access to the water, which could be used for large events during the year. Consideration should be given to reducing the number of baseball fields in order to provide more passive open space, and the ball fields to remain should be available to a greater number of residents. Public rest room facilities on the field should be included.

While there is currently considerable affection for and a protective attitude toward the current uses of Fowler Field, there is also strong sentiment and a good argument that this is not the highest and best use of the Field in the long run. Accordingly, this study also considered options that combined modest mixed-use development along with improved waterfront public open space. These options should be revisited in the future, as should the long term reallocation of the library, which currently occupies a key redevelopment site.

Wepawaug River Trail. A trail along the Wepawaug could start at the boat launch in Wilcox Park (1), connect to dowtown across the pedestrain bridge (2) to Fowler Field (3) and the library (4), continue dramatically under memorial bridge past the waterfall (5, image, above), under the railroad bridge (6) and skirting the river behind River Street businesses (7, image, opposite page) that could have outdoor seating along the trail. Continuing north the trail would pass City Hall (8) and the duck pond (9, image, top) and continue north to connect with the future Merritt Parkway Trail.

River Walk

Multimodal trails, such as the Naugatuck Valley Greenway, beginning in downtown Derby and skirting the Naugatuck River as it passes through the heart of the Valley Towns on its way north, and the Farmington Canal Trail, beginning in downtown New Haven and continuing north to Northampton, MA, have proliferated throughout the country in the last 20 years. These kinds of trails have created a new kind of highly desirable recreational and transportation space that links core urban areas with scenic resources through rural countryside, along former rail lines, through park reserves, or along watersheds, and have found incredible use among residents along their routes and visitors from afar. In New Haven, commuters ride bicycles to work along the Farmington Canal trail from suburban Hamden next door, while cyclists, rollerbladers, and families walk along the route further to the north for a Sunday afternoon recreational activity or fitness workout. Demand for this kind of resource will only continue to rise as people seek alternate ways of getting around their cities and regions as energy prices continue to soar as they have in the decade.

A River Walk along the Wepawag River, beginning at the Harbor and Fower Field could provide Milford with this kind of a resource for a small capital investment. By making the Wepawaug accessible, a trail could connect city neighborhoods with downtown, Fower Field and the harbor, as well as connecting the City to the larger East Coast Greenway System, which will eventually run from Florida to Maine, via the Merritt Parkway Trail which is currently under development. After the recommendations of the 2000 Milford Downtown Plan, in 2003, Milford nominated the Wepawaug River watershed to the State's offical greenway list.

NEXT STEPS

Short-term (1-2 years):

- With the City, explore establishing a parking authority or other entity that can plan for parking needs, manage parking resources and enforce parking rules.
- Design and install an attractive, comprehensive wayfinding signage package that includes clear signage for designated public parking areas and street parking rules.
- With the City, establish bicycle routes (and bicycle lanes where practicable) into downtown, and install attractive, well-located bicycle parking areas throughout the downtown.
- Explore the development of a new/expanded shared parking lot behind 67-75 High Street, connected to South Broad Street parking lots.
- Support redevelopment of 36-38 South Broad Street (former Harrison's Hardware) as a mixed use building with ground floor commercial.
- Explore and encourage redevelopment of 18 New Haven Avenue as a street-facing commercial or mixed use building in keeping with the downtown pedestrian commercial environment.
- Commission a comprehensive sidewalk survey within the downtown to examine existing conditions as well as propose locations where new sidewalks should be established, like along the edge of the green.
- Commission a study and design, and construct additional crosswalks along Broad Street.

Mid-term (2-4 years):

- In conjunction with the City and State, design and construct a multi-story parking garage between Darina Place, West River Street, and Town Hall Plaza to serve the courts, commuters, and downtown merchants.
- With ConnDOT, redesign and renovate the railroad trestle into a landmark using architectural features, screening, signage, landscape and lighting to create an attractive gateway. Improve pedestrian comfort and safety and strengthen connections between businesses on both sides of the tracks by transforming the sidewalks underneath the bridge with lighting and public art.
- Encourage redevelopment of 44-64 River Street as a 3 to 4 story, mixed-use, street-oriented building with parking behind.
- Develop and construct a river walk along the Wepawaug River, linking the Civic Center and Duck Pond with Fowler Field and the Harbor.
- Re-organize Fowler Field to transform it into a more vital public space for the Milford Community, enhancing waterfront access and use as well as minimizing impervious asphalt surfaces. Improve pedestrian access to Fowler Field from Broad Street, especially along the abandoned right of way of Shipyard Lane.
- Commission a traffic study and design study of the intersection of River Street, Broad Street, New Haven Avenue, and Factory Lane, as well as Daniel Street.
- Begin a program of annual sidewalk reconstruction and expansion.

Long-term (4-10 years):

- Reconstruct the River Street, Broad Street, New Haven Avenue, Factory Lane intersection with a rationalized traffic pattern and attractive raised traffic table.
- Encourage the redevelopment of 247 Greens End Place as a mixed-use building to anchor the west end of the Green, possibly to include a civic function such as a Milford Museum. Consider closure of Greens End Place and extending the Green, and the construction of permanent support infrastructure for public events such as a bandstand.

NEXT STEPS

This Plan is intended to be used as a framework and guide for ongoing planning, improvement and development of downtown Milford. In the section that follows, projects discussed in the body of the report are organized according to priority and phasing. While most of the recommendations of the report have long-term implications in terms of funding, maintenance and management, some projects, due to their scale, complexity and expense may take years to develop. In the meantime, it is extremely important to identify short-term projects that can translate the energy and concerns of the planning process into immediate and visible action. While these short-term project are intended to address, if not resolve, real issues, they have over-riding importance as momentum builders and as a demonstration of the commitment of Milford Progress and the City of Milford and residents to working towards their goals.

For the purposes of this plan, the terminology used in the matrix and elsewhere will refer to “immediate” action items as having a 6-12 month time frame, “short-term” is roughly 1-3 years, “mid-term” 3-5 years, and “long-term” is 5-10 years.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

City of Milford

Benjamin G. Blake, Mayor

David Sulkis, City Planner

Emmeline Harragan, Assistant City Planner

Milford Progress, Inc.

David A. Slossberg, Esq. Hurwitz, Sagarin, Slossberg & Knuff, LLC, President 2012

John Bergin Pearce, George J. Smith Realtors, Vice President

Tina DeNapoles, Tranquility Mind & Body Wellness Spa, Secretary

Buddy Prete, Ultimate Interiors, Inc., Treasurer

Robert Kapusta, Esq., Kapusta, Otzel & Averaimo, Attorney's at Law, Corporate Counsel

Glenn D. Beck, CPA, Discenza, Beck & Company, CPAs, Corporate Accountant

Vincent J. Averaimo, Esq., Kapusta, Otzel & Averaimo, Attorneys at Law, President Elect

Kathleen Alagno, Milford Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

James R. Beard, Beard Sand & Gravel Company, Inc.

Samuel Bergami, Jr., Alinabal, Inc.

John DePalma

Rev. Kenneth Fellenbaum

Robert Gregory, City of Milford Economic & Community Development

Harriet Haggerty, Shamrock Financial Services

Joseph Hebert, Hebert & Associates

Ginny Kozlowski, REX Development/Visit New Haven

Brian Lema, Esq., Berchem, Moses & Devlin, P.C.

Cyrus Settineri, The Yankee Professional Building

Lynda Smith-Tellier, West Shore Realty Inc.

Stephen W. Studer, Esq., Berchem, Moses & Devlin, P.C.

James Wilson, Milford Photo, Inc.

Yale Urban Design Workshop

Alan Plattus, Director

Andrei Harwell, AIA, Project Manager

Cotton Estes, Student Fellow

Mollie Ponto, Student Fellow