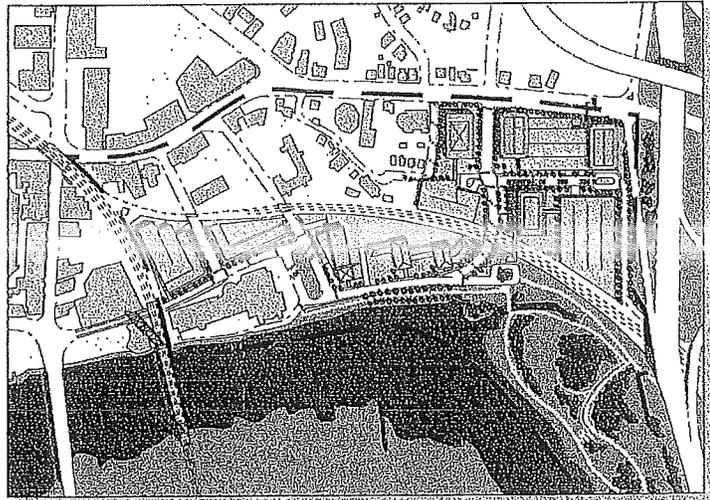


**Urban Renewal Plan for the Reed Putnam Area**  
**Norwalk, Connecticut**

**(As Amended and Restated)**

**Approved by the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency**  
**(December 17, 1997)**

**Approved by the Norwalk Common Council**  
**(February 10, 1998)**



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# Urban Renewal Plan for the Reed Putnam Project Area

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# **Urban Renewal Plan for the Reed Putnam Project Area**

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## 1. Introduction

The *Urban Renewal Plan for the Reed Putnam Project Area* was initially approved in 1983. Since that time there have been significant changes in the regulations pertaining to environmental controls on development, as well as in the regional economy affecting the area real estate markets. The original Plan has been revised and restated herein to provide a better fit between the goals of the community and the development opportunities available. This includes not only matching development parcels with prospective users, but also a better articulation of objectives relating to urban design and landscape requirements, in order to ensure development of a high quality environment consistent with the long term planning goals of the City of Norwalk.

### 1.1. Scope of Revisions

In general, the overall approach and structure of the original Plan as established by State statute have been maintained. However, changes have been introduced to the parcelization patterns, land use plan, urban design guidelines, and regulations on development. These revisions are intended to capitalize on the current development potential of the area without losing sight of the general objectives originally identified by the Plan, and the best interests of the City.

### 1.2. Goals and Objectives

The general objectives identified by the original Plan remain valid as today's goals. They are:

- Create development opportunities for an appropriate mix of uses, including office, retail, residential, hotel and non-profit institutions.
- Increase the tax base of Norwalk.
- Enhance public access to and enjoyment of the Norwalk waterfront.
- Increase housing opportunities for the residents of Norwalk.
- Increase employment opportunities for the residents of Norwalk.

Additional planning and design objectives to be accomplished through the Plan include the following:

- Identify solutions to the traffic and parking issues generated by new development.

Parking becomes a significant determinant of the amount of development and the quality and value of the overall district. The revised plan establishes

realistic parking volumes that will be required for the various use types, examines how the cost of accommodating this parking will result in design strategies by prospective developers, and defines measures to mitigate the resulting traffic impact on the area.

- Consider visibility and views from the different development parcels, as well as views of the project area both from I-95 and the local streets.

Highway identity is an important consideration for many developers and users. The views from the development parcels are also important. Upper level views towards Long Island Sound, the SoNo historic commercial district, and the hillsides that frame Norwalk will be important attributes of each site. The Plan will serve to maintain and enhance important public view corridors to the River, the new Heritage Park, and other amenities.

- Promote a high-quality urban environment.

The Reed Putnam area constitutes a unique opportunity for the City of Norwalk to extend along the waterfront the particular downtown character and livability that already make it special. The revised Plan provides a framework to ensure that new development fits appropriately into the area, positively contributing to its overall urban qualities.

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## 2. Plan Summary

### 2.1. Existing Conditions

The Reed Putnam Project Area consists of approximately 70 acres strategically located in the immediate vicinity of South Norwalk, the attractive SoNo historic commercial district, and the Norwalk River (See *Figure 1, Existing Conditions and Development Context*, and *Appendix A, Project Area Boundaries*.) In addition, its convenient location adjacent to the intersection and access ramps of major vehicular transportation routes, such as I-95 and US Route 7, makes it a natural site for the future development of higher density uses typical to downtown areas.

The Project Area is divided in two sections by the Danbury Branch Railroad, which runs north-south parallel to the river. The area located to the east of the rail line, originally a waterfront industrial district and landfill, has been progressively redeveloped for institutional and public recreational uses. The Maritime Aquarium which attracts approximately 500,000 visitors annually from throughout the region, and the Heritage Park, now under construction, are the most significant. In addition to these important amenities, other existing uses in this area include public parking serving the Maritime Aquarium, commercial trucking, and manufacturing.

To the west of the rail line, a change of use and character is evident along North Main Street and West Avenue. Close to Washington Street, uses are predominantly commercial and retail, with several institutions located along West Avenue. In the Pine Street neighborhood, old industrial buildings have been successfully renovated and converted into market rate apartments. Approaching the I-95 and Route 7 interchange, commercial uses are predominantly automotive oriented, interspersed with some residential and vacant buildings.

In the immediate vicinity of the Project Area, several important projects are proposed or underway: public space improvements at SoNo Wharf, landscaping and upgrading of Mathews Park, and the development of a Children's Museum within Mathews Park.

### 2.2. Preservation and Redevelopment

Given the existing conditions and development context of the Reed Putnam area, two distinct strategies have been identified for urban renewal: preservation/rehabilitation and redevelopment.

The area located between the Danbury Branch Railroad and West Avenue, from Washington Street to Pine Street is designated as most appropriate for preservation/rehabilitation (See *Figure 2, Preservation Area and Redevelopment Parcels*.) Uses here are fairly consolidated, and renovation initiatives have been

consistently taking place at a small scale. New development in this zone will likely occur on an infill basis, building by building.

The area immediately adjacent to Reed Street and Putnam Avenue and the sites located between the Danbury Branch Railroad and the Norwalk River offer excellent opportunities for redevelopment. Most properties in this area are vacant or underutilized relative to their location adjacent to I-95 and the Norwalk River. We have identified six potential redevelopment parcels, shown on Figure 2.

### 2.3. Illustrative Site Plan

An analysis of the existing conditions indicates that the parcels close to the intersection of I-95 and Route 7 are appropriate sites for office use, given their location and accessibility. The parcels located east of the Danbury Branch Railroad line are more appropriate for uses complementary to the recreational and institutional character of the waterfront, such as hotel and residential.

*Figure 3, Illustrative Site Plan*, represents the preferred development plan in terms of massing and location of buildings. It shows office development on the northern parcels of the Reed Putnam area, to the west of the railroad line. Building heights step back away from the existing neighborhood, towards the river. On the waterfront, an approximately 200-250 room hotel and residential uses would be located in the vicinity of the Maritime Aquarium and Heritage Park. The sites across North Water Street from the Maritime Aquarium would be redeveloped for mixed use (office, residential, retail, and parking for Maritime Aquarium users.) Uses for each of the redevelopment parcels identified in the previous section are the following:

<u>Use</u>	<u>Parcel(s)</u>
Office	1, 2, 4
Hotel, residential	3
Mixed Use	5, 6

A detailed description of the program of uses assumed as a basis for this Site Plan is included in *Appendix B, Preferred Development Program*.

### 2.4. Vehicular Circulation

Certain infrastructure improvements will be essential to accommodate the proposed development within the Plan. In particular, improved vehicular and pedestrian circulation throughout the Project Area will be necessary. Some improvements may be required prior to construction on key development parcels, while others may be constructed as part of each parcel's development program.

The construction of a new Riverside Drive and Esplanade walkway along the waterfront are critical elements to the circulation plan. Additionally, a new Reed Street extension and railroad underpass connecting Putnam Avenue to Riverside Drive provide improved access to Parcels 3, 5, 6, and the Maritime Aquarium.

The realignment of Putnam Avenue is proposed to maximize the development possibilities of the adjacent parcels. On the south side of Reed Street, a segment of Putnam Avenue and the adjacent parcels are combined into a single development site (Parcel 4,) since each of the separate lots by itself would be too small to allow for substantial development volumes and the necessary ancillary parking. An extension from Pine Street to West Avenue is proposed, in order to preserve traffic and fire access to the neighborhood.

The Plan also calls for a realignment of North Water Street within the boundaries of the Project Area, to increase the amount of open space available and facilitate pedestrian circulation in front of the Maritime Aquarium. The preservation of Marshall Street as an important vehicular and pedestrian access to the waterfront, open to traffic, is recommended.

## **2.5. Traffic Mitigation and Control**

It is clear that new development in the Reed Putnam area and the necessary parking volumes that it would generate will affect traffic patterns and flow through the area significantly. This issue has been documented by previous traffic and environmental studies, including the *Traffic Study for the Riverside Drive Project* prepared by Urbitran Associates, Inc. in 1991, and the *South Norwalk Traffic and Parking Study* prepared by Greiner Engineers in 1986.

The increase in traffic volume at certain intersections due to new development may be considerable during peak hours, in particular at the intersection of West Avenue, Crescent Street, and the I-95 Northbound On-Ramp; and the intersection of West Avenue and Reed Street.

In order to mitigate anticipated problems at these intersections, and allow for an efficient control of traffic flows in and out of the Project Area during peak hours, the following actions are proposed:

- The northbound access ramp to I-95 should maintain its current location and origination point, allowing for control of exiting traffic from the Reed Putnam area through signalization and queuing along West Avenue. The ramp will be widened to accommodate two lanes of traffic entering onto the ramp. The construction of an additional northbound lane on West Avenue from Reed Street to the I-95 Northbound On-Ramp, with an additional dedicated right hand turn onto the ramp, would expedite the exiting traffic volumes generated during peak hours.
- The I-95 Exit 15 (southbound) ramp should be improved to accommodate two lanes of traffic exiting onto West Avenue (southbound) in addition to the

existing northbound lane, together with necessary signalization adjustments to reflect increased volumes associated with new development.

- Crescent Street should be closed to general traffic at Science Road, maintaining its right-of-way east of Putnam Avenue for fire and emergency access only. This would direct all traffic exiting the new developments to use Reed Street and West Avenue in order to reach the I-95 intersection, increasing the queuing capacity for northbound traffic and allowing multiple opportunities to provide traffic control points. It is also envisioned that, by maintaining the current location of the I-95 Northbound On-Ramp, the vacated Crescent Street right-of-way between West Avenue and Putnam Avenue will be utilized to enable greater traffic volumes to enter onto the ramp.
- The closure of Crescent Street will require improvements at the intersections of Butler/Crescent and Butler/West in addition to improved access to I-95 southbound from West Avenue.
- Reed Street should be widened to four lanes between Putnam Avenue and West Avenue, in order to accommodate exiting traffic from the redevelopment parcels.
- In addition to the construction of the proposed Pine Street extension, the existing Pine Street right-of-way should be upgraded to at least a minimum width of 30 feet, and provided with sidewalks .
- Overflow parking for the Maritime Aquarium and Heritage Park on weekends should be redirected towards the new parking garages within the Reed Putnam area. In order to maximize parking opportunities throughout the Reed Putnam district, it will be important to provide for shared parking in new and existing facilities among complementary uses, wherever possible.
- Restricting access to through vehicular traffic along North Water Street to emphasize pedestrian access between the SoNo district and the Maritime Aquarium would greatly contribute to the character and livability of the area. The planned expansion of the Maritime Aquarium will require greater capacity for pedestrian circulation and queuing at the main entrance to the facility. Pedestrian circulation would be improved not only by means of design, but by the allocation of the right mix of uses (retail, residential, office, etc ) along the street.

## **2.6. Phasing Considerations**

Redevelopment of the Reed Putnam area will occur in response to market conditions and the interests of particular sectors at a specific time. However, a few general assumptions can be made about phasing:

### **2.6.1. Infrastructure Improvements**

Some of the proposed infrastructure improvements will be necessary before redevelopment can take place, or at least should be under construction concurrently

with the development of the adjacent parcels. Such is the case for Riverside Drive and the waterfront Esplanade, the proposed Reed Street extension and viaduct, and the proposed realignment of Putnam Avenue and closing of Crescent Street. Additional off-site improvements will be required along West Avenue in the form of a dedicated right turn lane, and improved on-ramp highway access for both north and south bound I-95 traffic.

#### 2.6.2. Office Developments

Development of Parcels 1 and 2 could happen in any sequence, at the same time, or combined in one project. The reconstruction of Putnam Avenue and widening of Reed Street and West Avenue needs be scheduled in accordance with the development on these parcels.

Development of Parcel 4 could take place independently of Parcels 1 and 2, but construction of the proposed Pine Street extension should occur simultaneously with development on Parcel 4 in order to ensure that access to the surrounding neighborhood remains continuously available.

#### 2.6.3. Maritime Aquarium Area.

The construction of a parking facility for visitors to the Maritime Aquarium must be completed before adjacent parcels, currently used for public parking, become available for redevelopment. The proposed realignment and reconstruction of North Water Street should be scheduled concurrently with development of Parcels 5 and 6.

The proposed hotel on Parcel 3 cannot be built until alternative parking for the Maritime Aquarium is available.

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## 3. Land Use and Controls

### 3.1. Land Use Plan

*Figure 4, Land Use Plan*, shows land use for the Reed Putnam area. In the area designated for "Preservation" existing uses may continue during current ownership but would be subject to review and approval by the City authorities if alteration, enlargement or replacement are proposed. In general, uses allowed in this area would be residential, retail, office, and institutional as permitted by the Norwalk Zoning Code.

The following land use categories are proposed for new development:

#### 3.1.1. Commercial (Parcels 1, 2 and 4)

The principal commercial use is for business, professional, or government offices. Accessory retail, not to exceed 5 percent of the office development allowed on a parcel, may include personal service stores (such as barbershops, beauty salons, and shoe repair shops), banks, travel agencies, restaurants and coffee shops, stationery stores, bookstores, tobacco stores, and newsstands. Transportation terminals designed as an integral part of a structure containing one or more other permitted uses may be allowed as an accessory use, subject to approval by the Redevelopment Agency. Accessory parking is to be provided in structures conforming to the controls and guidelines described in *Section 3.5, Land Use Controls* and *Chapter 4, Urban Design Guidelines* of this document.

#### 3.1.2. Combined Hotel and Residential Uses (Parcel 3)

Hotel use shall be for a first-class full service hotel with accessory parking and support facilities. Such uses are proposed to be combined with residential use as part of the same development, but not necessarily sharing the same structure, building, or location within the site. The purpose of combining hotel and residential uses is to achieve a higher utilization of the only site with premium access and views of the waterfront for visitors and Norwalk residents, as well as to create economies of scale that may result from the combination of two compatible uses.

#### 3.1.3. Mixed Use (Parcels 5 and 6)

Mixed use is intended to foster a diversity of compatible land uses within a single development parcel or structure. The result of a mixed use project shall be to more effectively utilize a parcel or structure to achieve the stated goals of the urban renewal plan. Permitted uses may include retail, restaurant, residential, office, institutional and parking. Such uses may be organized in combination with one or more of the permitted uses and accessory parking as required by the Norwalk Zoning Code. In all mixed use projects a minimum of 30 percent of the ground

floor area shall be devoted to retail or institutional use, while residential uses shall be limited to the floors above the first floor.

### **3.2. Development Parcels**

Six major development parcels, ranging in size from approximately 1.3 to 4.4 acres, are identified within the area proposed for "Redevelopment." The large size of these parcels is expected to allow for development volumes within a range consistent with current market demands for office, hotel and residential development.

The recommended development volumes for these parcels are generally consistent with the levels allowed under current zoning regulations. They are as indicated in *Figure 5, Major Development Parcels*, and *Appendix C, Preferred Development Volumes*.

Whenever appropriate for reasons of market and land use efficiencies, certain of the proposed parcels may be combined to form an even larger site. In particular, Parcels 1 and 2 could be developed together as a large office "campus" site; Parcels 5 and 6 could be developed at the same time or as complementary phases of the same project, although public access and use of Marshall Street should always be maintained.

### **3.3. Streets and Parks**

*Figure 6, Streets and Parks*, illustrates the proposed roadway alignments and parks for the Reed Putnam Project Area. Major public recreational areas and open space are concentrated along the waterfront, as a result of the construction of the Heritage Park and Esplanade, and the expansion of the Maritime Aquarium.

### **3.4. Landscaping Plan**

A sequence of wide sidewalks and landscaped sitting areas is proposed to connect West Avenue to the Maritime Aquarium along Reed Street and Riverside Drive (See *Figure 7, Open Space Concept*.) The pedestrian connection between the Maritime Aquarium and SoNo should be emphasized by incorporating wide sidewalks and measures to slow traffic speeds on North Water Street. A pedestrian bridge over the Danbury Branch Railroad would link the proposed sitting areas on the northern parcels of the Reed Putnam area to Heritage Park and the waterfront.

*Figure 8, Landscaping Plan*, shows the proposed landscape treatment for the overall Project Area. Tree lined sidewalks, 8 to 12 feet wide along West Avenue, Reed Street, Riverside Drive, and North Water Street, are an important feature of the plan. Along Putnam Avenue and the new Pine Street extension, 6 feet wide sidewalks and a landscaped setback area lined with trees are proposed in front of buildings and parking garages. The following schedule summarizes the required minimum sidewalk width on each street:

<u>Street</u>	<u>Minimum Sidewalk Width</u>
West Avenue	12 feet
North Water Street (Parcels 5 and 6)	12 feet
Ann Street (in front of hotel building)	12 feet
Ann Street	6 feet
Reed Street	8 feet
Riverside Drive	8 feet
Putnam Avenue	6 feet
Pine Street (extension)	6 feet
Marshall Street	6 feet

Landscaped open spaces, privately owned and maintained but accessible to the public, are proposed at specific locations along West Avenue and Reed Street, indicated in Figure 8. In particular, pedestrian sitting areas partially shaded by trees are planned at the intersection of Reed Street and Putnam Avenue. On these areas and along sidewalks, trees should be selected from the following species:

#### Evergreens

Austrian pine	<i>Pinus nigra</i>
Red pine	<i>Pinus resinosa</i>

#### Deciduous Trees

Little-leaf linden	<i>Tilia cordata</i>
Japanese zelkova	<i>Zelkova serrata</i>
Red oak	<i>Quercus rubra</i>
London planetree	<i>Platanus x acerifolia</i>
Honey locust	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>

#### Flowering Trees

Flowering crabapple	<i>Malus</i> (various)
Callery pear	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i> (‘Aristocrat’ or ‘Chanticleer’)
Kousa dogwood	<i>Cornus kousa</i>

### 3.5. Land Use Controls

In addition to the previous sections, land use and development in the Reed Putnam area shall conform to the dimensional requirements indicated in the following diagrams:

*Figure 9. Maximum Building Heights*

*Figure 10. Setbacks and Build-to Lines*

*Figure 11. Curb Cut Zones*

*Figure 12. Easements and Public Rights-of-Way*

An existing utilities easement running across Parcel 2 could be negotiated subject to approval by the City, if the existing utilities are rerouted around the parcel, making use of the abandoned Crescent Street right-of-way.

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## 4. Urban Design Guidelines

The following urban design guidelines are intended as criteria to guide and orient the development on each parcel during the project design and design review process, in order to ensure that the desired image and high quality of environment are achieved throughout the Project Area.

These guidelines are organized in four sections: buildings (meaning structures dedicated to the primary use of the site,) parking (meaning parking areas or structures devoted to parking,) landscaping, and signage.

### 4.1. Buildings

#### 4.1.1. Orientation

New buildings should be oriented with their wider elevation preferably facing South, in order to take advantage of sun exposure and the excellent views of Norwalk Harbor and Long Island Sound that would be available from the upper floors.

#### 4.1.2. Location within the Site

Buildings should be located close to the street and public pedestrian areas. The primary facades, including the main entrance to the building, should relate to the public pedestrian areas or the street. Buildings should not be located to the rear of the parcel or next to railroad tracks.

#### 4.1.3. Relationship to Parking

Buildings should be set back from parking structures, or partly located on top of parking garages. In this case, the building structure should be associated with the parking structure in such a way that only a portion of the building floor plate is used for parking on the lower floors. A minimum of half the floor plate (50 percent) of the lower floors of the building should be dedicated to a permitted use other than parking. Buildings located on top of parking garages, in which the lower floors are exclusively used for parking, shall not be allowed.

#### 4.1.4. Access

Primary access to buildings should be from the street or landscaped areas accessible to the public. Secondary access should be provided from parking garages.

#### 4.1.5. Setbacks

The minimum setback from the street, to be measured from the curb, should be as indicated in *Figure 10, Setbacks and Build-to Lines*, for each parcel. A minimum setback of 30 feet from parking garages or other buildings should be maintained,

except when the building and parking structures are combined as described in *Guideline 4.1.3, Relationship to Parking*.

#### 4.1.6. Materials and Colors

Building materials should include brick, stone or masonry cladding on their exteriors, particularly in the vicinity of the Maritime Aquarium. The lower floors of the building should be finished with a masonry base at least 3 stories high from the ground level, modulated with openings and design details that relate to the structural organization of the building. A more individual expression through the use of setbacks, recesses, balconies, rooftops, and different materials is encouraged for the upper floors. Warm colors and earth tones are recommended. Bright color accents may be allowed subject to review by the City authorities. Bronze mirror curtain wall or the extensive use of glass curtain wall at every floor of the building are not allowed.

#### 4.1.7. Architectural Character

Building design should be responsive to the context, specifically, the particular geographical and landscaping features of the surrounding area, the main views towards and from the building itself, and the adjacent landmark buildings. It should not mimic, but be in consonance with the character of the existing downtown and SoNo district.

#### 4.1.8. Electrical and Mechanical Equipment

All electrical and mechanical equipment, except electrical transformers, should be located inside the buildings. HVAC systems should be centralized in all new buildings. Rooftops should be architecturally treated in such way that their shape, size and scale would allow for the location of any large mechanical equipment that needs to be on top of the building. No penthouses, rooftop mechanical units visible from the exterior, or window air conditioning units are allowed.

### **4.2. Parking**

#### 4.2.1. Location within the Site

Parking structures should be located towards the rear of the parcel or in the vicinity of the railroad tracks. Prime locations within each parcel should be reserved for primary buildings.

#### 4.2.2. Street Frontage

The total length of parking garage elevations facing a street should not exceed a specified percentage of the street frontage for each parcel, according to the following schedule:

Putnam Avenue:	60 percent maximum
Reed Street:	40 percent maximum
Ann Street:	30 percent maximum
West Avenue:	20 percent maximum
Riverside Drive:	20 percent maximum
Marshall Street:	20 percent maximum
North Water Street:	0 percent
North Main Street:	0 percent

The remainder of the street frontage should be occupied by one or more other permitted uses (commercial, hotel, residential, retail, etc.) or by landscaped open space as indicated in *Figure 8, Landscaping Plan*.

#### 4.2.3. Access

Parking access and curb cuts are allowed from secondary roads only, as shown on *Figure 11, Curb Cut Zones*. Direct access from West Avenue will not be allowed, except in the case of an office “campus” development on Parcels 1 and 2 combined. In this case, access must be provided by a dedicated driveway and controlled by a traffic light properly located between the intersections of Reed Street and the I-95 Northbound access ramp.

#### 4.2.4. Setbacks

The minimum setback from the street for parking structures including underground levels, to be measured from the curb, should be as shown on *Figure 10, Setbacks and Build-to Lines*, for each parcel. A minimum setback of 30 feet from buildings or other parking garages should always be maintained.

#### 4.2.5. Materials and Colors

Garage exteriors should include brick, stone or masonry details in their design. On elevations facing the street, a masonry cladding consistent in height and design with the masonry base of the primary buildings in the project is recommended. The use of warm and earth color tones is encouraged. Bright color accents may be allowed subject to review by the City authorities.

#### 4.2.6. Architectural Character

The design of garage elevations that would mitigate the impact of large prefabricated elements by means of details or the use of materials (brick, stone or masonry cladding) is highly recommended. The design of the upper level of every parking structure must incorporate landscaping and paving patterns to add visual interest when viewed from adjacent buildings and I-95.

#### 4.2.7. Loading Areas and Dumpsters

Loading and dumpster areas are to be located within the building or parking garage footprint, and towards the rear of the parcel. Adequate space and clearance should be provided for maneuvering of single bodied trucks and WB-50 tractor trailers, as required by the development program. Access and curb cuts are allowed from secondary roads only, as shown on *Figure 11, Curb Cut Zones*. No access from West Avenue will be allowed.

### 4.3. Landscaping

#### 4.3.1. Open Space

Open space on each parcel should be visible from the street, except by private residential courtyards or outdoor storage areas if necessary. The use of fences, walls, or continuous hedge plantings on the front property line will not be allowed, except when screening of outdoor uses or site equipment is required. In such a case, every fence or wall facing the street should be setback at least 5 feet from the property line, and the front of the fence or wall should be landscaped with low plantings (See *Guideline 4.3.7, Buffering and Screening*.)

#### 4.3.2. Planting

A line of trees planted every 40 feet is required along all sidewalks 8 to 12 feet wide, as shown on *Figure 8, Landscaping Plan*. On 12 feet wide sidewalks, trees should be set back 3 feet from the curb. On 8 feet wide sidewalks, trees should be set back a minimum of 2 feet from the curb. Large, deciduous trees, should be selected from the list of tree species included in *Section 3.5, Landscaping Plan* of this document. Evergreen trees are recommended for buffering and screening. Flowering trees should be used as design accents, especially in pedestrian sitting areas and landscaped open space accessible to the public. Low plant materials such as shrubs and small trees, preferably of flowering varieties, may be included as desired in the landscaping of each parcel.

#### 4.3.3. Pedestrian Sitting Areas

Landscaped sitting areas for public use should be provided and well maintained at locations indicated in *Figure 7, Open Space Concept*. These areas should be visible and easily accessible to pedestrians on the street. A "bosk" or canopy of trees providing shade to at least half of the sitting area is recommended.

#### 4.3.4. Materials and Colors

Hard-surface, durable materials and natural colors are recommended as paving materials for sidewalks, walkways and sitting areas. Materials should include brick, granite, cobblestones, concrete pavers, or concrete with significant details and accents in other materials. The use of bituminous pavement for pedestrian areas is not allowed.

#### 4.3.5. Site Furniture

All pedestrian and sitting areas should be adequately equipped with good quality and durable lighting, benches, and trash receptacles, made consistent with approved city standards.. The use of decorative elements such as planters, fountains, pergolas, or trellises is encouraged.

#### 4.3.6. Lighting

Site lighting should be provided by pole-mounted fixtures, with the bottom of fixture no higher than 17 feet above finish grade. No primary lighting of site areas, including driveways, should be from the building exterior parapets or roofs. All exterior lighting should be height cut-off fixtures in the white light spectrum (metal halide.)

#### 4.3.7. Buffering and Screening

Planting of different sizes and qualities should be provided along parking garage elevations facing the street or another building. Planting should include a line of large evergreen or deciduous trees planted every 40 feet and set back at least 8 feet from the garage exterior wall. Trees should be selected from the species listed in *Section 3.5, Landscaping Plan*, and interspersed with lower plantings. Electrical transformers, underground utility feeds, site mechanical equipment (if necessary,) outdoor storage areas, and private residential courtyards should be screened if visible from the street. Screening should consist of any solid fence or wall built of natural materials compatible with the materials of the adjacent buildings. These would include brick and other fired-clay masonry units, natural stone, and painted or stained wood. Every fence or wall facing the street should be setback at least 5 feet from the property line, and the front of the fence or wall should be landscaped with low plantings.

#### 4.3.8. Site Utilities

With the exception of electrical transformers, all site utilities shall be located underground.

### 4.4. Signage

#### 4.4.1. Purpose

Signage should advertise the name and the type of business or organization at its location. It should not advertise brand names, unless that brand name is inherent in the name of the business.

#### 4.4.2. Types of Signs Allowed

Flat wall signs are allowed for commercial, hotel and retail uses. Projecting signs, meaning signs mounted on the building perpendicular to the street, may be allowed only for retail uses. Projecting signs should convey information in a unique way, utilizing images that visually represent the goods or services provided at the premises. In a multiple storefront building, signage should be of a consistent

location, size and material, and of harmonious color. Free-standing ground signs are recommended for office, hotel and residential uses. Only one free-standing ground sign shall be allowed per building. Off premises signs shall not be allowed.

#### 4.4.3. Location and Size

In new commercial and mixed use buildings, a strong signage band should be designed just above the level of the storefront, if flat wall signs are to be employed. Signs should be sized to extend across the entire sign band yet within the vertical building elements that define individual storefront bays. Signage above the sills of the second story windows will not be allowed, except by flat wall signs identifying a hotel or the principal user of a commercial building. In this case, the location and size of the sign should be integrated with the architectural design of the building, subject to approval by the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency and appropriate City authorities. Projecting signs should be centered on a vertical pier, column or pilaster, rather than centered on a wall opening such as a door, window or storefront. A minimum clearance of 9 feet under the projecting sign should be maintained. Ground signs should be fully located within the parcel boundaries, and should not be greater than 50 square feet or more than 6 feet above grade.

#### 4.4.4. Materials and Colors

Signs should be made of durable materials compatible with those of the building served. These would include wood, metal, and stone piers for ground signs. Plastic in general is not recommended, except if used in combination with other materials or as part of individual internally lit letters or symbols. Signs utilizing light-colored letters against a dark background and signs on canopy fabrics advertising the name of the business or organization are encouraged. Neon signs advertising only a business name, illuminating at a steady, even light level, are appropriate if located inside the facade glass.

#### 4.4.5. Lighting

Signs should be lit by the building's exterior lighting fixtures or by individual backlit letters against a dark background. Directly illuminated signage should be from a series of gooseneck or similar extended arm fixtures which direct light to the facade and are compatible with the design of the building. Internally lit signs should not be used, except by individual letters or symbols on a dark background. Such signs must be flat wall signs that conform to all other design guidelines. On all free-standing signs, exterior lighting of the sign with ground or sign-mounted fixtures is encouraged.

#### 4.4.6. Design Review

Every sign intended to be visible from public areas will be subject to design review and approval by the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency and appropriate City authorities. The purpose of the review is to ensure that the proposed design, materials and location conform to these guidelines as well as to any other applicable regulations.

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## 5. Regulations on Development

### 5.1. Parcel Regulations

Development on the several parcels shall be subject to all the controls set forth by *Chapter 3, Land Use and Controls* and the guidelines in *Chapter 4, Urban Design Guidelines* of this document, as indicated in Figures 4 through 12. In addition, the following regulations will apply:

- 5.1.1. There shall be no restriction of occupancy or use of any part of the project area on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, or national origin. All leases and sales agreements to the land and to the improvements on the land shall include this requirement and that of conformance with all such applicable law.
- 5.1.2. If a Request for Proposals is issued for a parcel, development of that parcel shall be governed by the terms of the RFP. Notwithstanding, the site plan, landscaping plan, and the exterior design of all buildings shall be subject to the review and approval of the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency, on the basis of the controls and guidelines set forth by this plan on *Chapter 3, Land Use and Controls* and *Chapter 4, Urban Design Guidelines*.
- 5.1.3. Vehicular traffic improvements and new utilities are indicated in *Figure 13, Traffic Circulation and Improvements*, and *Figure 14, Existing and Proposed Utilities*. These improvements will be made by the developers of adjacent parcels, subject to negotiation with the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency and appropriate City authorities.
- 5.1.4. In addition to any other provisions of this plan, certain public improvements must be constructed as a precondition to development of redevelopment parcels. Developers shall work cooperatively with the City to ensure that such improvements are constructed in a timely manner. These improvements must be built according to city standards and standards listed elsewhere in this Plan, and they must be accepted by the City as complete and standard prior to issuance of a temporary or final Certificate of Occupancy for the private development. These improvements are outlined in the following schedule:

#### Parcel 1 and /or Parcel 2

- Construction of realigned Putnam Avenue between Reed and Crescent Streets, and the vehicular turn-around area at the connection of Putnam Avenue and Crescent Street.
- Widening of Reed Street between Putnam Avenue and West Avenue, and widening of West Avenue between Reed Street and the I-95 Northbound Ramp intersection.

#### Parcel 2

- Construction of a pedestrian bridge over the Danbury Branch Railroad, providing a pedestrian connection from public accessible open space on the site to Heritage Park.

#### Parcel 3

- Construction of the proposed Riverside Drive/Reed Street extension and railroad underpass.

#### Parcel 5 and/or Parcel 6

- Construction of realigned North Water Street between the railroad and Ann Street.
- Construction of a parking garage with 500 parking spaces for users of the Maritime Aquarium, in addition to the number of parking spaces required by any other use proposed for the parcel.

#### Parcel 4

- Construction of the required improvements and proposed roadway extension to Pine Street.
- Provision of a traffic light at the intersection of Putnam Avenue and Reed Street.

### **5.2. Applicability and Duration**

These regulations apply to development proposals for any of the redevelopment parcels shown on *Figure 2, Preservation Area and Redevelopment Parcels*. For those properties located within the area assigned to "Preservation," existing uses may continue during current ownership, but no alteration, enlargement or replacement may be made except in conformance with all pertinent regulations.

Except as specifically amended by the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency, all requirements and controls in this plan shall be binding and in force for 15 years after February 10, 1998.

### **5.3. Property Acquisition Plan**

*Figure 15, Property Acquisition Plan*, shows properties that may need to be acquired in order to assemble the proposed redevelopment parcels.

Properties acquired by the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency may be disposed of by lease or sale at the option of the Agency. Such disposition will specify the required schedule for commencement and completion of construction on a parcel. No designated developer may sell its interest in a parcel prior to completion of development without the written permission of the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency.

#### **5.4. Plan Approval and Amendments**

##### **5.4.1. Procedure for Approval**

Pursuant to state legislation, appropriate reviews, findings and approvals will be obtained from the Planning and Zoning Commissions before approval of this plan by the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency and the Common Council of the City of Norwalk.

*Appendix D, Proposed Zoning Changes*, indicates proposed revisions to the current zoning regulations that reflect the controls and regulations set forth by this document.

##### **5.4.2. Plan Amendments**

The Norwalk Redevelopment Agency may make minor modifications to this plan at any time. Any substantial modifications shall follow the approval process described in 5.4.1. above.

Approval for minor or major modifications shall be obtained from any affected developers who have purchased or leased property under the terms of this plan before such modifications are effective.

Once approved, this plan and its subsequent amendments supersede the original *Urban Renewal Plan for the Reed Putnam Area* and its previous Amendments.

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## Appendix A

### Project Area Boundaries

The limits of the Reed Putnam Project Area are defined by the following description:

- Beginning at the intersection of the center line extended of Crescent Street and the center line of West Avenue;
- Thence southerly on West Avenue to an intersection of the center line of West Avenue with the center line of North Main Street;
- Thence southerly along that center line to its intersection with the northern boundary of the railroad right of way;
- Thence easterly along that boundary to the intersection with the Norwalk River;
- Thence northerly along the navigation line to the intersection of this line with the highway right of way;
- Thence generally westerly along the right of way to the intersection of the right of way with the center line of Crescent Street;
- Thence generally westerly along the center line of Crescent Street to the point of beginning.

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## Appendix B

### Preferred Development Program

The following program of uses are the basis of the urban design alternatives and, by extension, the basis of the preferred development plan identified as a result:

#### 1. Office Use

Office use may consist of single user space, back office space, or multiple-use office space. Typical floor plates will range from 25,000 square feet to 35,000 square feet (gross area). Additional requirements are likely to include the following:

- Primary entrance oriented to street with nearby pick-up and drop off areas
- Secondary entrance oriented to parking.
- Loading and service area with adequate maneuvering area for at least 2 WB-50 tractor trailers
- Maximization of visibility and views to the harbor

#### 2. Hotel Uses

Hotel uses are expected to range in size from a minimum of approximately 200 rooms to a maximum of approximately 300 rooms, with a gross area of approximately 700 square feet per room including all circulation and ancillary space. Floor plates may range from a low of approximately 10 rooms per floor to a maximum of approximate 24 rooms per floor. Large hotels may be assumed to include some additional meeting or event space of up to 20,000 square feet, but special conference or meeting facilities in excess of this amount will not be assumed. Additional requirements are likely to include the following:

- Primary entrance with nearby pick-up and drop off areas
- Secondary entrance oriented to parking
- Loading and service area with adequate maneuvering area for at least 3 single bodied trucks and one WB-50 tractor trailer
- Site design to relate to Maritime Aquarium and waterfront

#### 3. Retail Use

On major redevelopment parcels, retail uses are assumed to be combined with other uses, either as accessory uses or as part of a mixed use development. Such uses are generally intended to animate ground floor street frontage or take advantage of special site circumstances.

#### 4. Residential Use

Housing may range from market rate rental to condominium housing. Preference is likely to occur for market rate development. The site characteristics of the Reed Putnam area, its location within the Norwalk urban area, and land values make the site more suitable for the development of multiple-unit housing. Units would be assumed to average two-bedrooms with an approximate net area per unit of approximate 1,000 to 1,100 square feet, and internal circulation areas appropriate to the building type.

#### 5. Parking Use

Parking uses are assumed to be as follows:

- Accessory parking for office: minimum 3.5 spaces per 1,000 gross square feet of building area
- Parking for hotel: 1.25 spaces per unit with an additional 4 spaces per 1,000 gross square feet of special meeting space
- Parking for housing: minimum 1.5 spaces per unit
- Parking for the Maritime Aquarium: 50 spaces for staff, 450 spaces for visitors (500 spaces total); peak loads would require 50 spaces for staff, 1,000 spaces for visitors
- Shared parking among compatible users as a goal to be encouraged.

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## Appendix C

### Preferred Development Volumes

The tables on the next two pages show Preferred Development Volumes for the proposed redevelopment parcels. They are not intended as a rule assigning specific development volumes to each parcel, but rather as a sample indicating the maximum development potential of each parcel within the goals and limits set forth by the Plan.

The indicated parcel areas have been estimated from layouts based on existing City maps. They should be regarded as approximations rather than exact amounts. Accurate parcel areas need to be obtained from site-specific surveys and engineer layouts.

Urban Renewal Plan for the  
Reed Putnam Project Area  
Norwalk, Connecticut

Preferred Development Volumes

Parcel or Right-of-Way Area	Parcel or Right-of-Way Area (GSF)	Maximum Buildable Area at F.A.R. of 2.0 (GSF)	Use Summary						Parking		Subtotal Building Footprint Area (GSF)	Subtotal Parking Footprint Area (GSF)	Site Area for Landscaping / Internal Circulation, etc. (GSF)	Effective Lot Coverage %
			Office Area (GSF)	Hotel Area (GSF)	Residential Area (GSF)	Retail Area (GSF)	Parking for Aquarum Uses	Maritime Parking	No. Spaces	No. Spaces				
Parcel 1 and Crescent Street Right-of-Way (West)	167,000	334,000	324,000	0	0	0	10,000	1,167	0	50,000	65,000	42,000	69%	
Parcel 2	193,000	386,000	386,000	0	0	0	0	1,351	0	25,000	82,000	86,000	55%	
Parcel 3	180,000	360,000	172,500	172,500	250	143,000	143	634	0	56,000	72,000	52,000	71%	
Parcel 4 and Putnam Street Right-of-Way (South)	114,000	228,000	178,000	0	0	0	0	623	0	25,000	29,000	60,000	47%	
Putnam Street Right-of-Way (North)	22,000	44,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22,000	0%	
Crescent Street Right-of-Way (East)	20,000	40,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20,000	0%	
Parcel 5 (Maritime Parking Lot)	56,000	116,000	0	0	0	77,000	77	190	5,000	16,000	22,000	20,000	66%	
Parcel 6 (Maritime Lock Building)	87,000	174,000	15,000	0	0	55,000	55	140	5,000	15,000	31,000	41,000	53%	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>841,000</b>	<b>1,682,000</b>	<b>903,000</b>	<b>172,500</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>275,000</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>4,104</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>187,000</b>	<b>301,000</b>	<b>353,000</b>	<b>58%</b>	

Total Development 1,370,500

Total F.A.R. 1.72

**Urban Renewal Plan for the  
Reed Putnam Project Area  
Norwalk, Connecticut**

**Preferred Development Volumes**

Assumptions	
Maximum Buildable F.A.R.	2.00
Parking for Office per 1000 GSF	3.5
Parking for Hotel per room	1.25
Parking for Residential per Unit	2.25
Parking for Retail per 1000 GSF	3.25
Hotel GSF per Unit	690
Housing GSF per Unit	1,000
GSF/Average Structured Parking Space	325
Typical Office Footprint (GSF)	25,000

Building Heights	Building No.	Office @ 25,000 GSF/Flr		Office @ 35,000 GSF/Flr		Hotel No. Flrs	Residential No. Flrs	Retail No. Flrs	Parking Levels	Parking Height (flrs)
		No. Flrs	No. Flrs	No. Flrs	No. Flrs					
Parcel 1	1	1	9	9						4.8
	2	2	8							5.8
Parcel 2			15	11						5.4
Parcel 3					12			6		2.9
Parcel 4			7	5						7.0
Parcel 5 (Maritime Parking Lot)								5	1	2.8
Parcel 6 (Maritime Lock Building)			1					4	1	6.7

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## Appendix D

### Proposed Zoning Changes

Pursuant to approval of this Plan, current zoning regulations will need to be revised in order to reflect the controls and regulations set forth by this document. The Norwalk Zoning Commission will be asked to modify the City's zoning map as indicated in *Figure 16, Proposed Zoning Subareas*, to change the zoning regulations in RPDD Subarea E-1 to eliminate hotel use, and to amend the zoning requirements to read as follows:

REED-PUTNAM DESIGN DISTRICT  
SCHEDULE LIMITING HEIGHT AND BULK OF BUILDINGS  
City of Norwalk

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Subarea A	
Minimum Office Building Size:	174,000 sq. ft. floor area
Maximum Office Building Height:	15 stories and 200 ft.
Maximum Parking Garage Height:	6 stories and 54 ft.
Minimum Size of Plot:	4 acres
Minimum Yards:	None
Maximum Lot Coverage:	75%
Maximum Floor Area Ratio:	2.0

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Subarea B	
Minimum Office Building Size:	130,000 sq. ft. floor area
Maximum Office Building Height:	9 stories and 120 ft.
Maximum Parking Garage Height:	6 stories and 54 ft.
Minimum Size of Plot:	1.5 acres
Minimum Yards:	None
Maximum Lot Coverage:	75%
Maximum Floor Area Ratio:	2.0

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Subarea C

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Minimum Residential Density:	1,500 sq. ft. of lot area per dwelling unit
Maximum Residential Density:	750 sq. ft. of lot area per dwelling unit .
Maximum Residential Building Height:	6 stories and 72 ft.
Minimum Hotel Size:	200 guest rooms
Maximum Hotel Building Height:	12 stories and 150 ft.
Maximum Parking Garage Height:	4 stories and 36 ft.
Minimum Size of Plot:	2 acres
Minimum Yards:	None
Maximum Lot Coverage:	75%
Maximum Floor Area Ratio:	2.0 - Residential 5.0 - Hotel

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Subarea D

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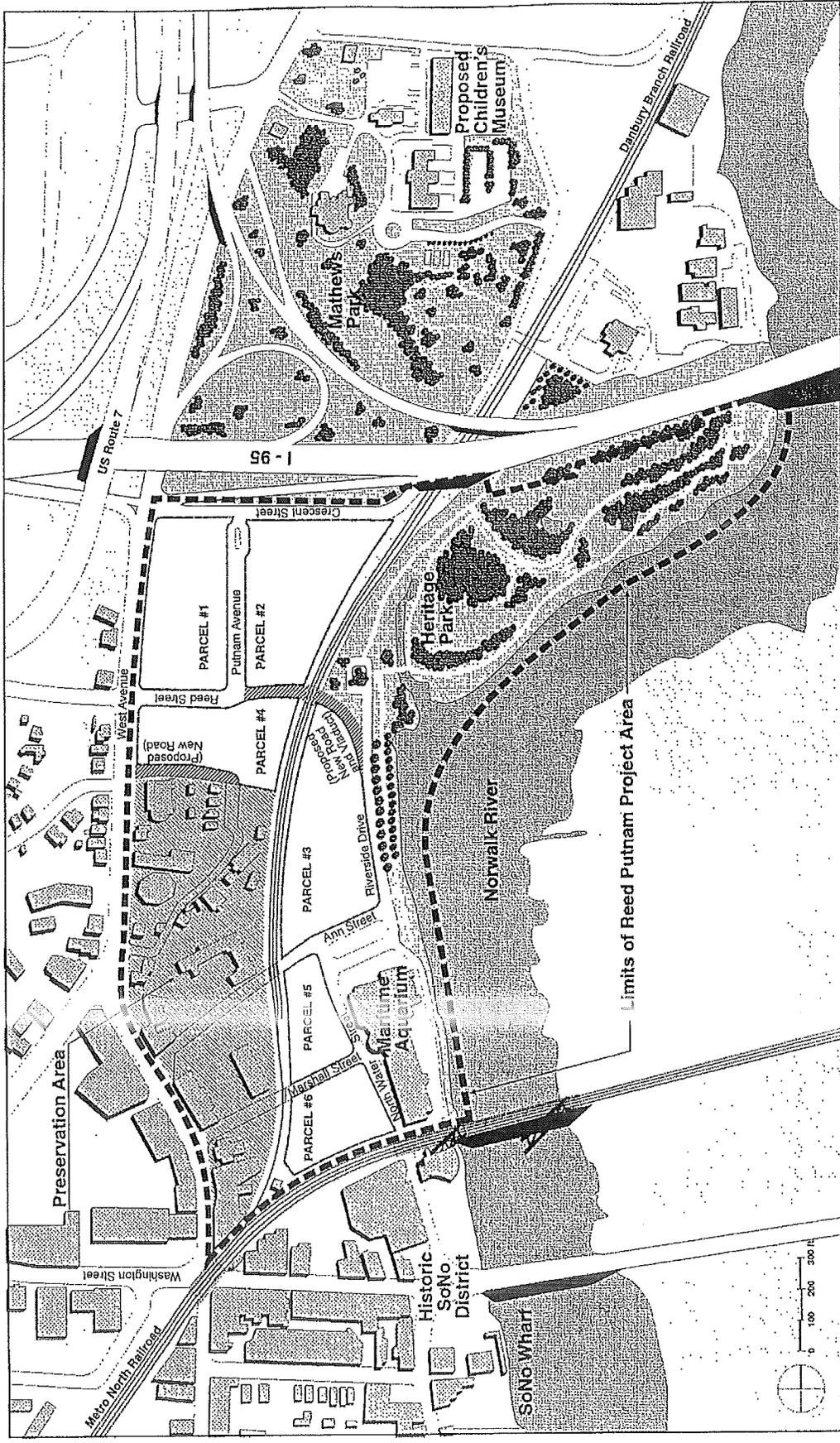
Minimum Residential Density:	2,000 sq. ft. of lot area per dwelling unit
Maximum Residential Density:	700 sq. ft. of lot area per dwelling unit
Maximum Building Height:	6 stories and 72 ft.
Minimum Size of Plot:	1 acre
Minimum Yards:	None
Maximum Lot Coverage:	80%
Maximum Floor Area Ratio:	2.0

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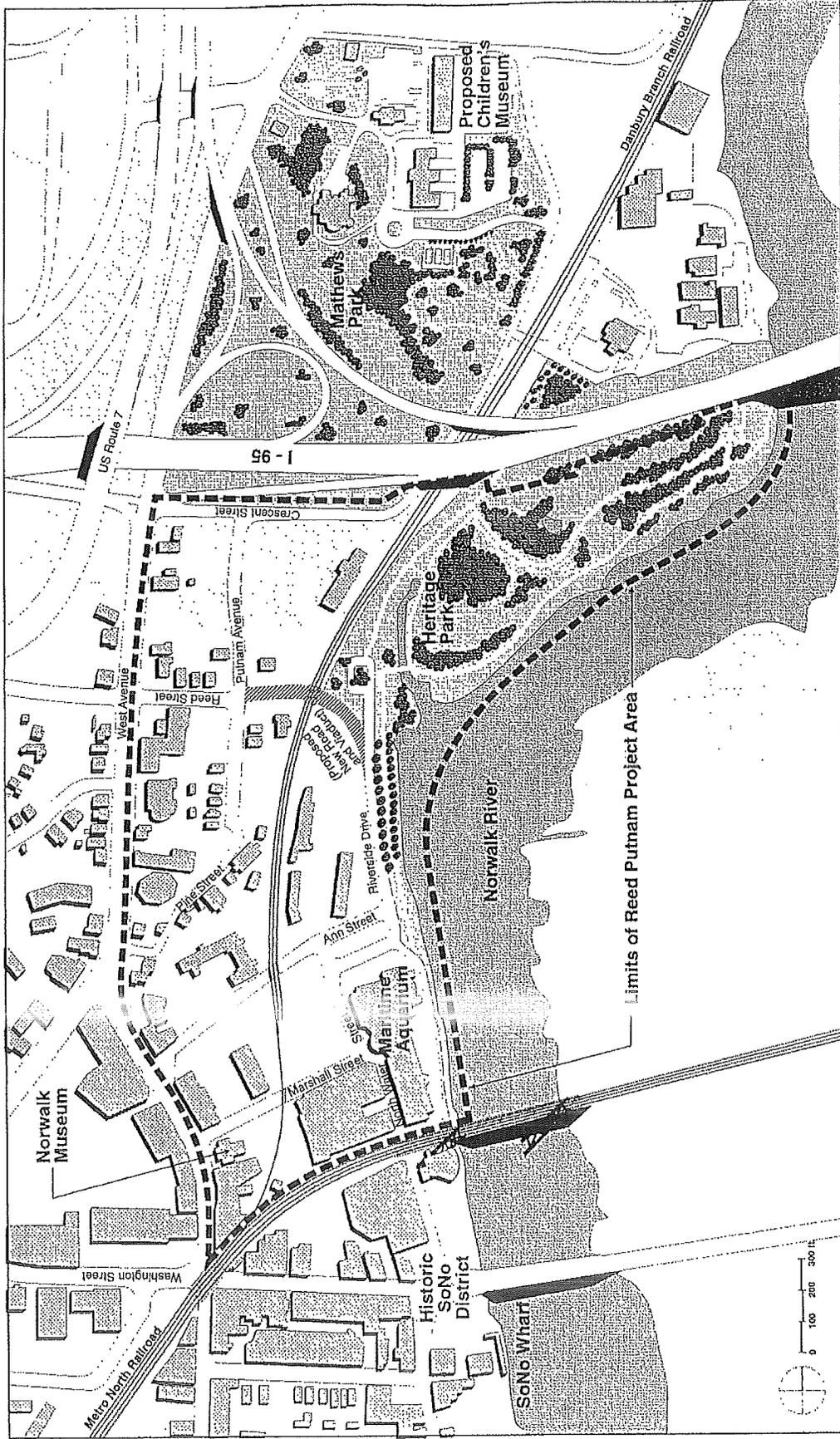
Subareas E and E-1

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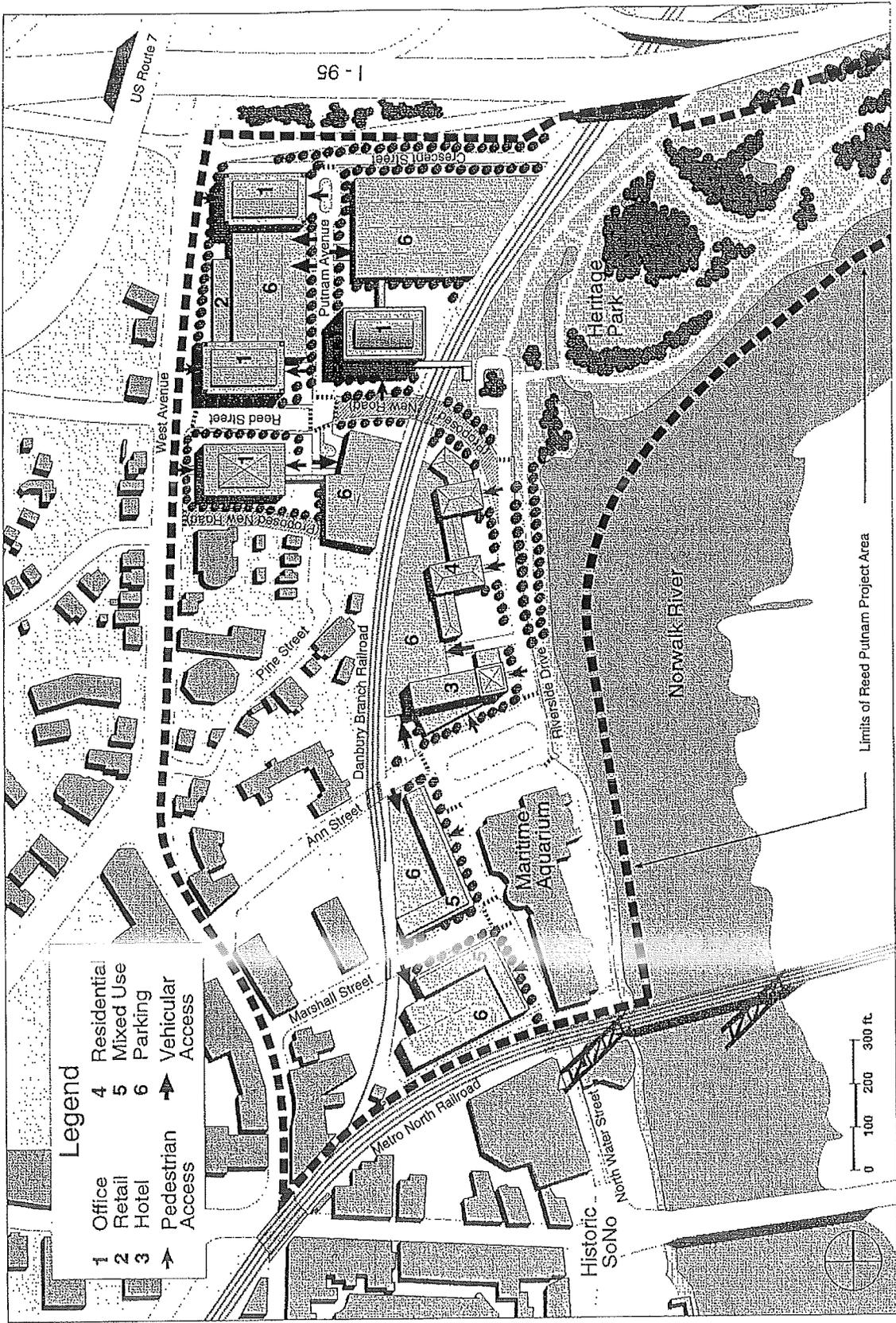
Minimum Residential Density:	None
Maximum Residential Density:	1,500 sq. ft. of lot area per dwelling unit
Maximum Building Height:	4 stories and 50 ft.
Minimum Building Height:	2 stories and 25 ft.
Minimum Size of Plot:	Multifamily dwellings and elderly housing: 7,500 sq. ft.; mixed use, commercial and industrial uses: none
Minimum Yards:	Multifamily dwellings and elderly housing: front, 30 ft.; side, 20%, need not exceed 30 ft.; aggregate side, 40%, need not exceed 60 ft.; rear, 30 ft. Mixed use, commercial and industrial uses: none
Maximum Building Area:	50% for building; 80% for parking garage
Maximum Floor Area Ratio:	1.0



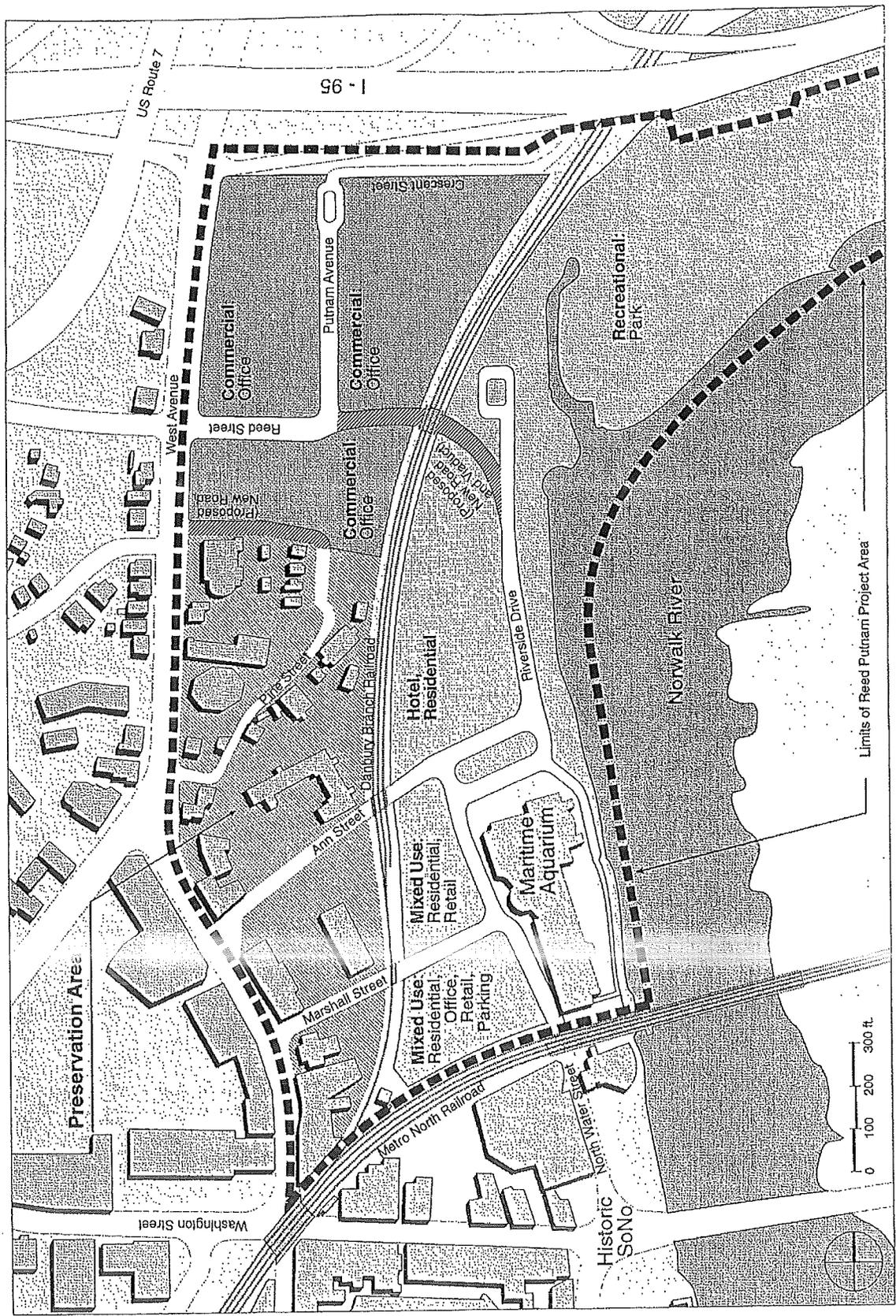
**Figure 2 - Preservation Area and Redevelopment Parcels**  
 Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut



**Figure 1 - Existing Conditions and Development Context**  
 Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut

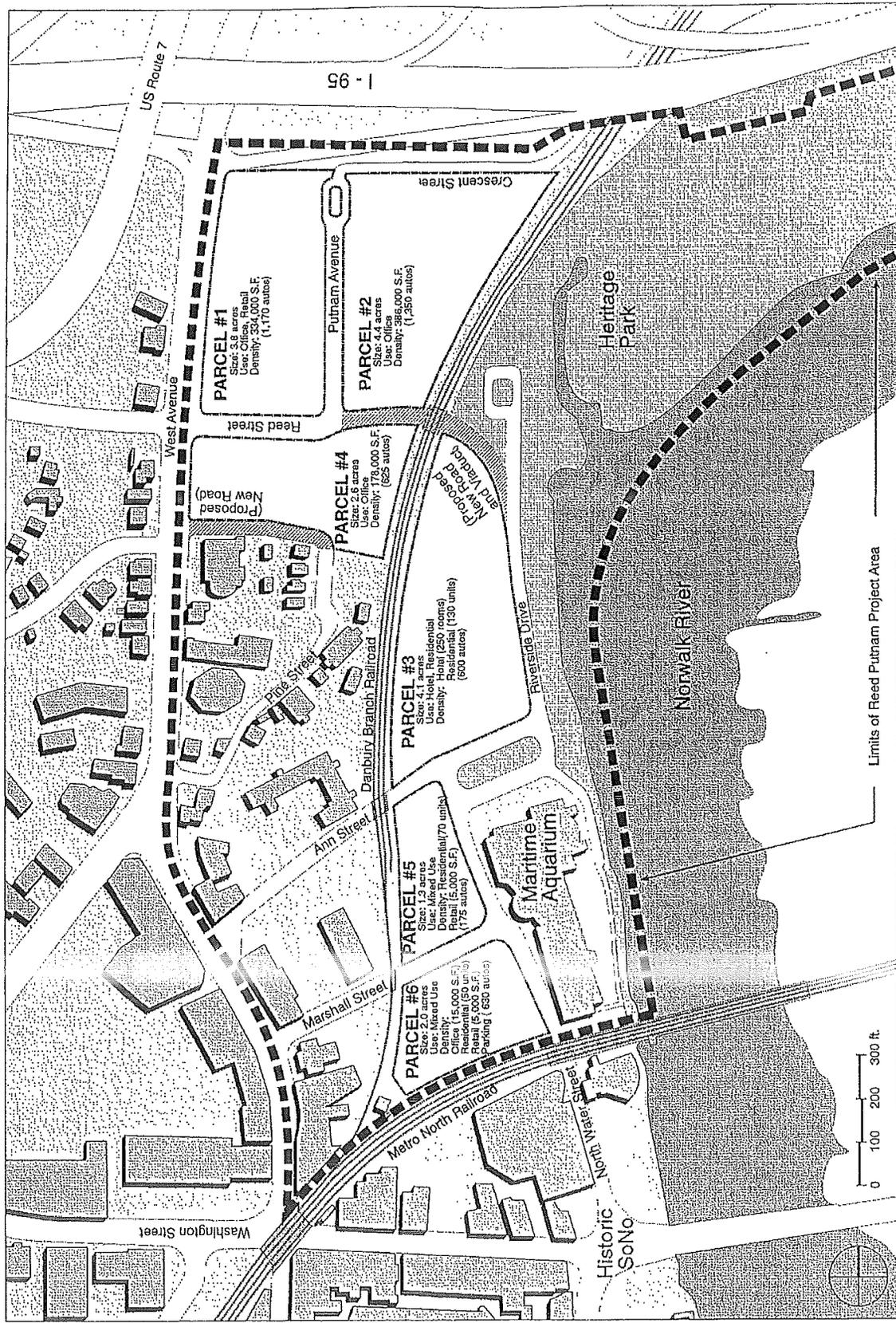


**Figure 3 - Illustrative Site Plan**  
 Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut

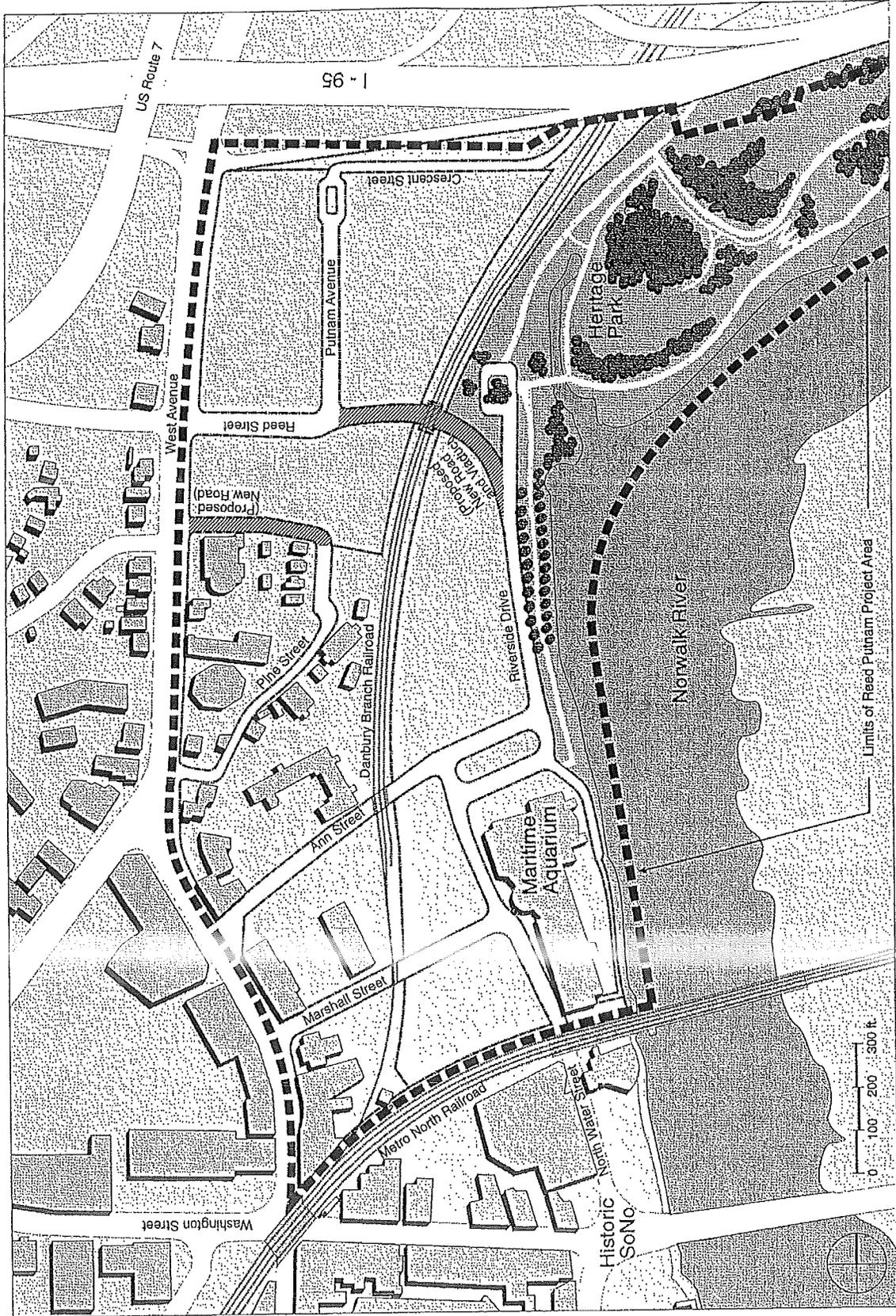


**Figure 4 - Land Use Plan**

Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut

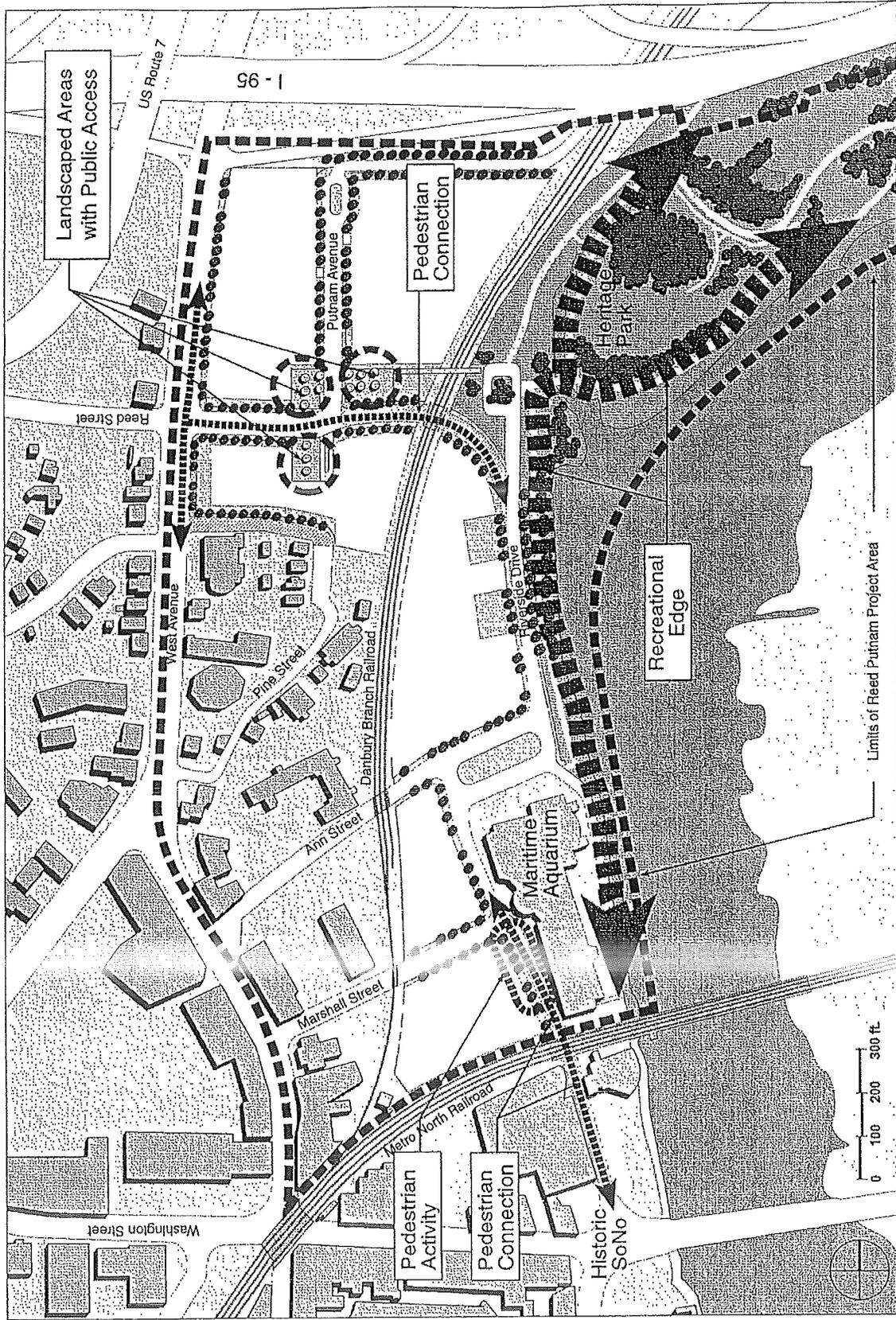


**Figure 5 - Major Development Parcels**  
 Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut

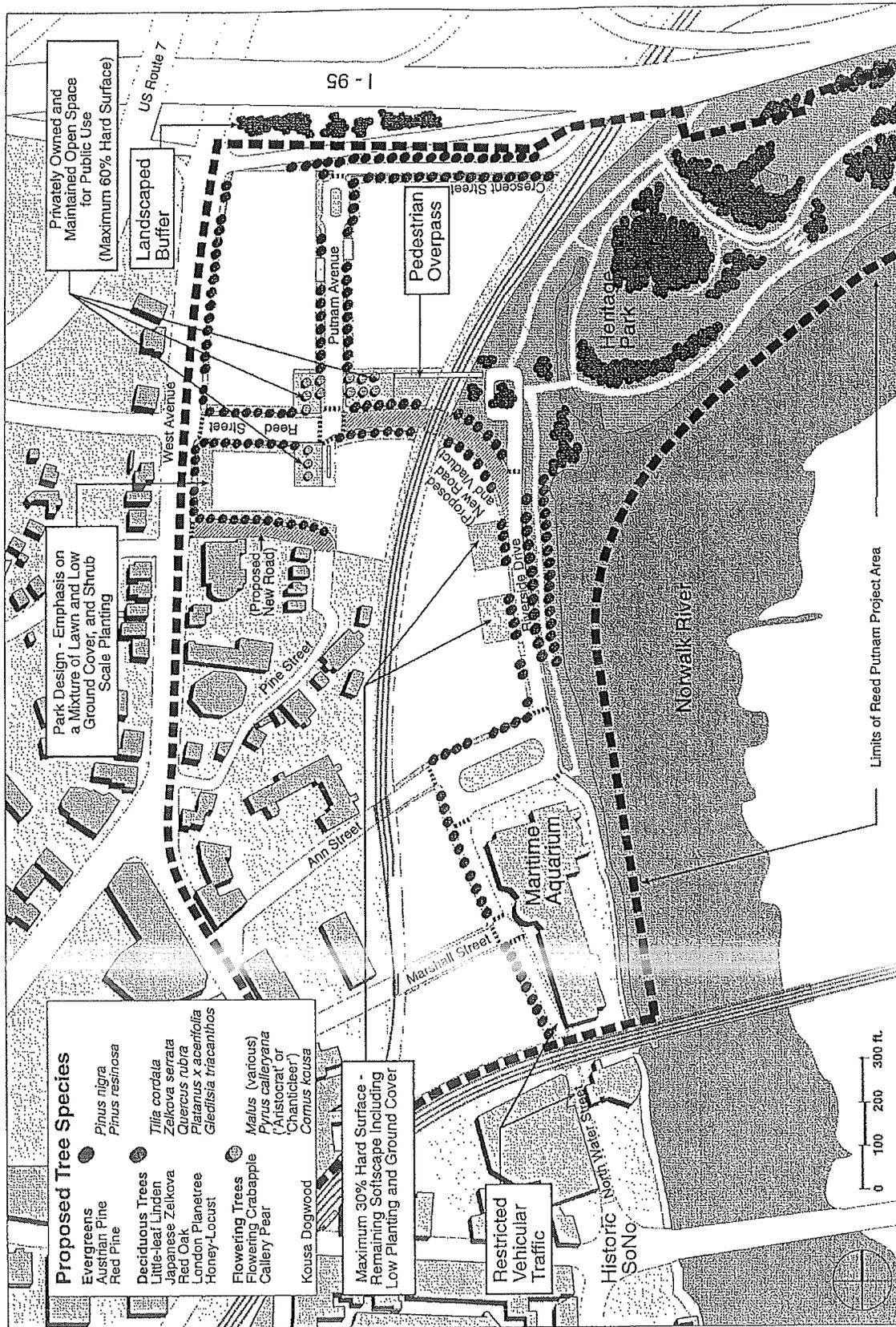


**Figure 6 - Streets and Parks**

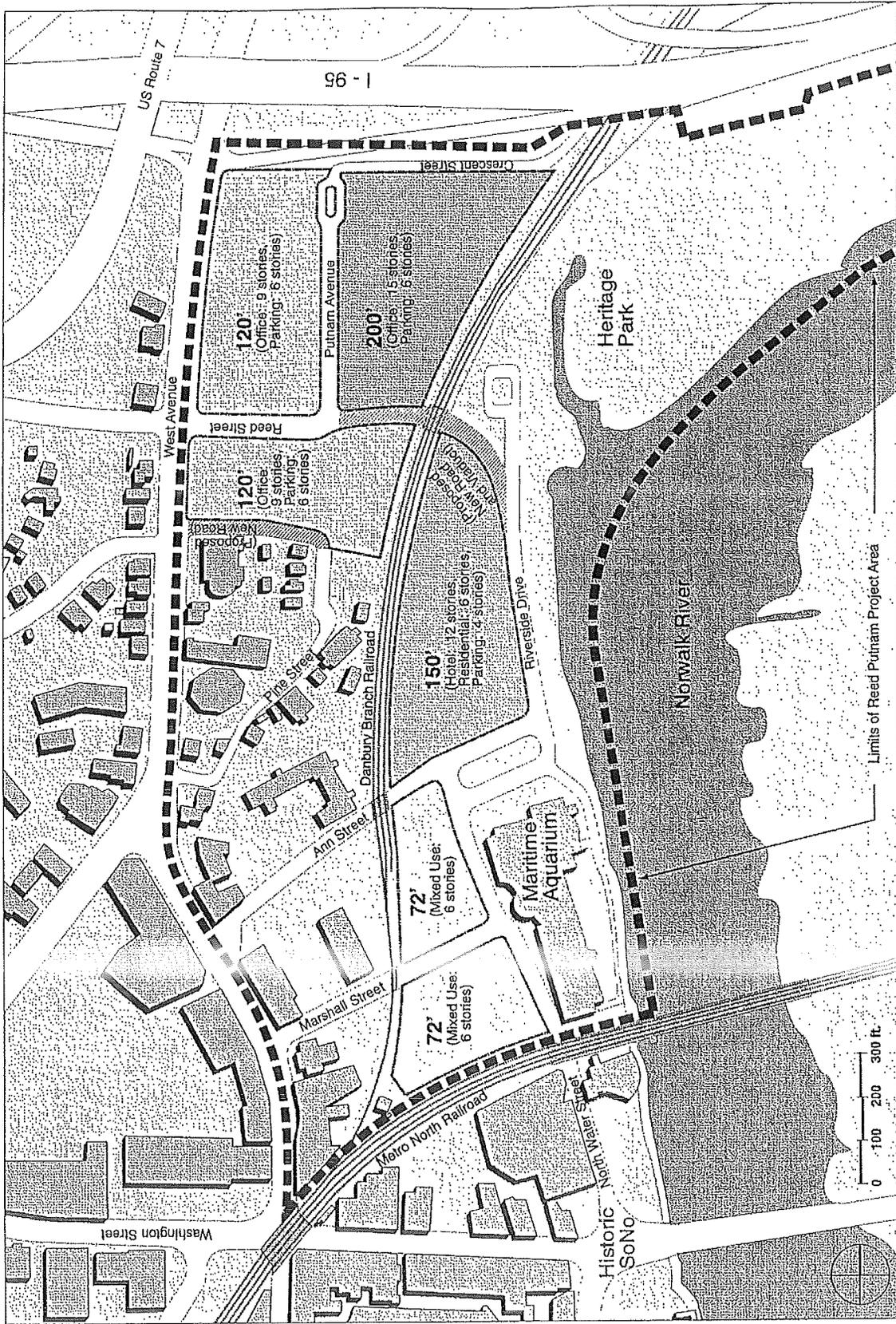
Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut



**Figure 7 - Open Space Concept**  
 Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut

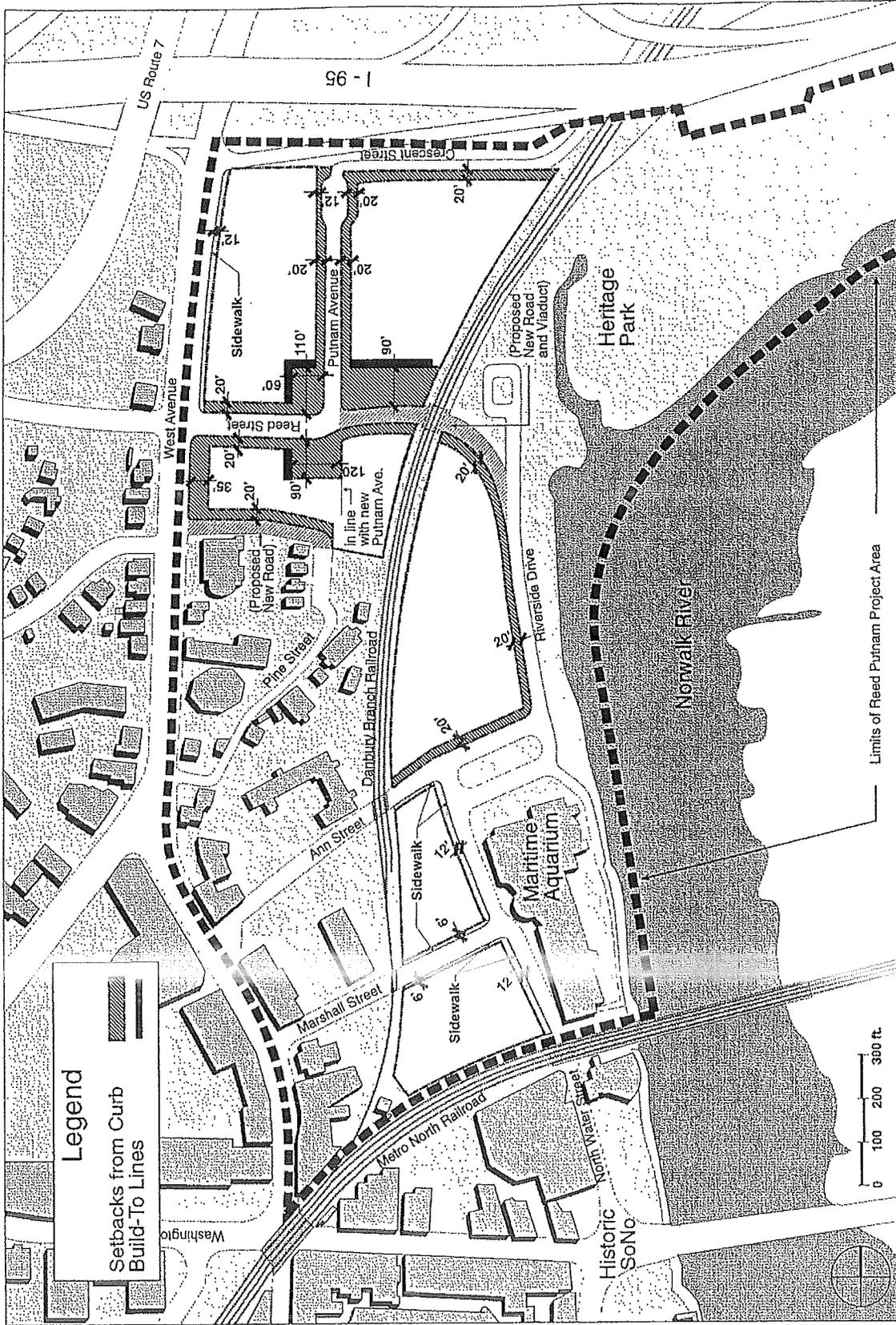


**Figure 8 - Landscaping Plan**  
 Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut

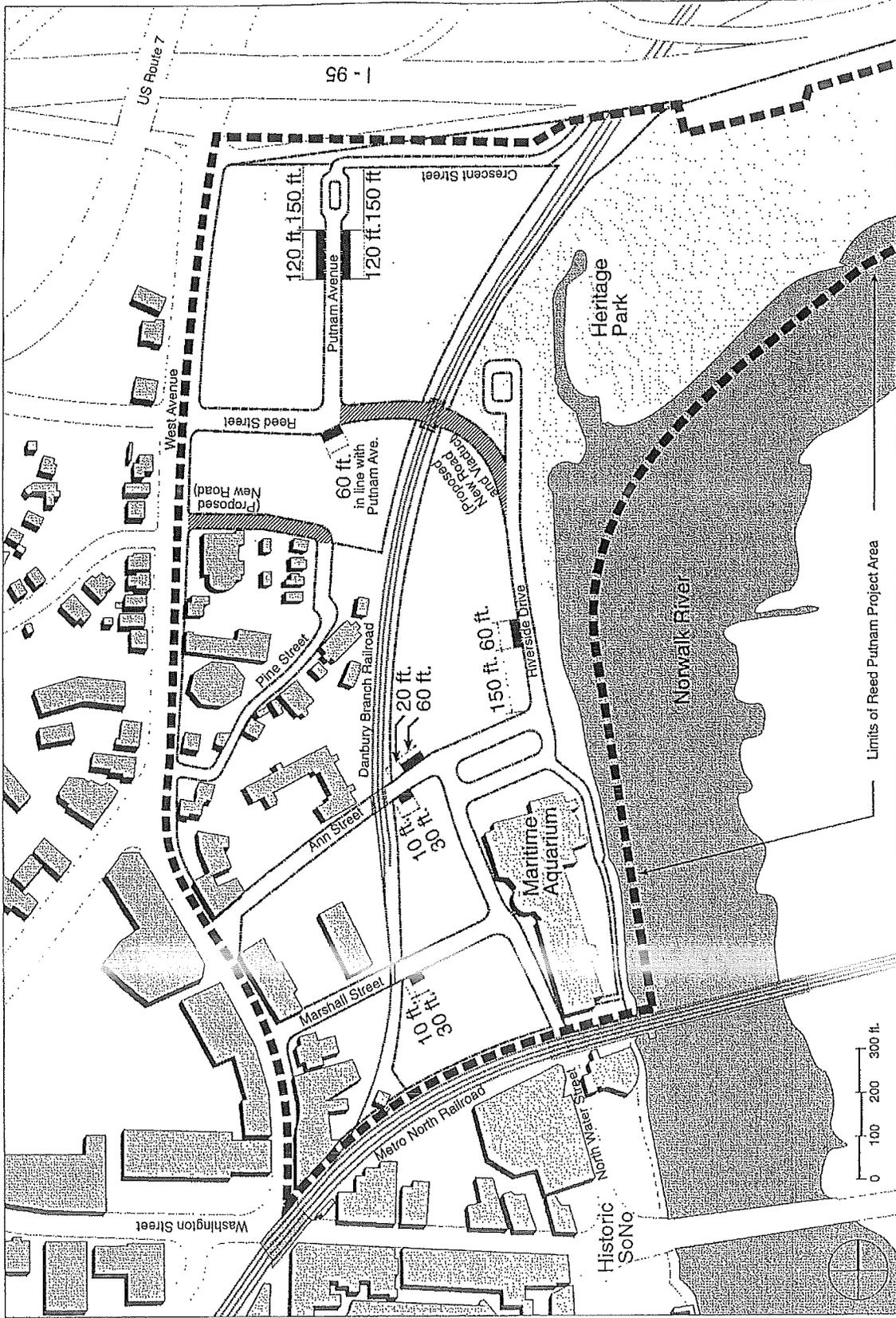


**Figure 9 - Maximum Building Heights**

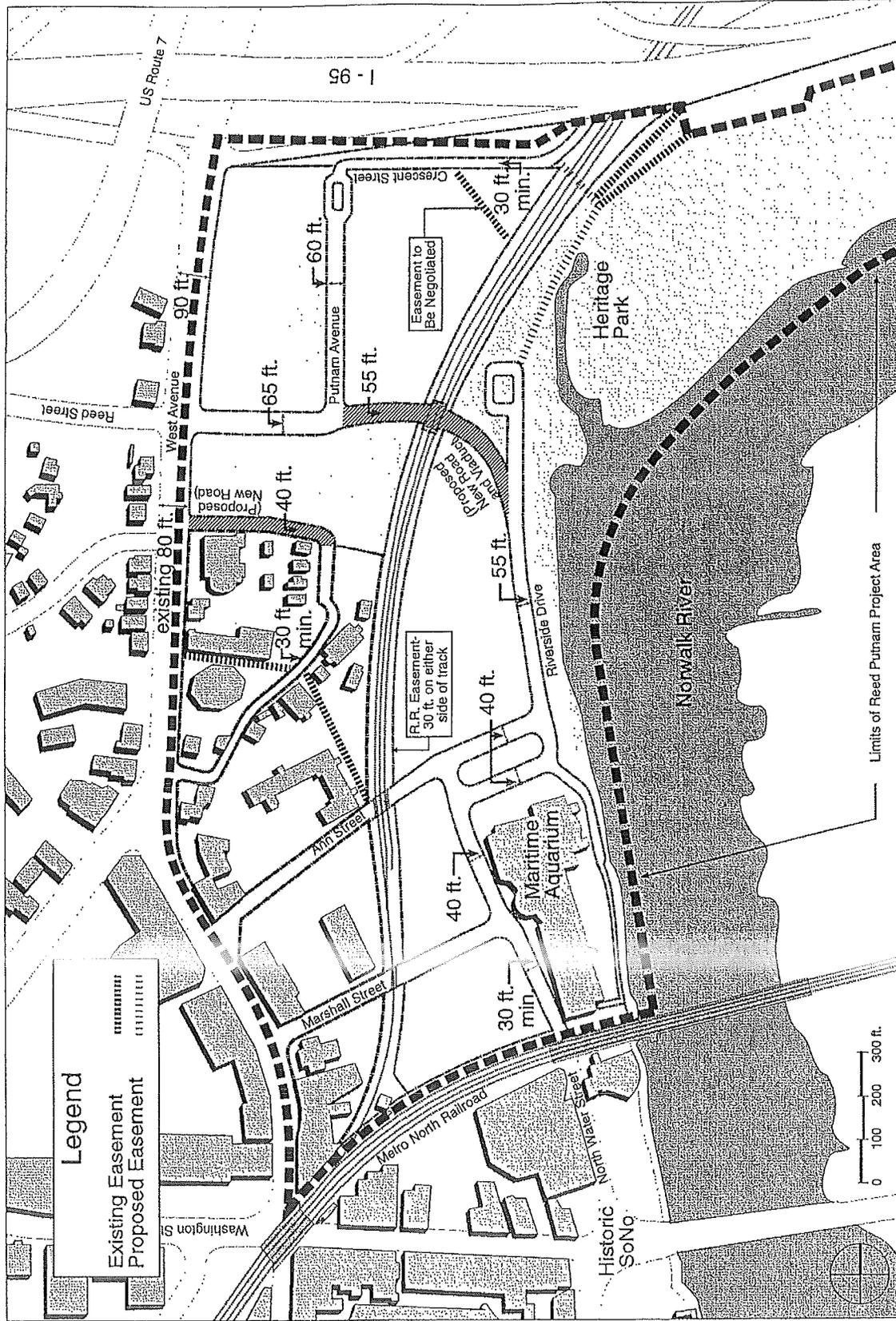
Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut



**Figure 10 - Setbacks and Build-To-Lines**  
 Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut

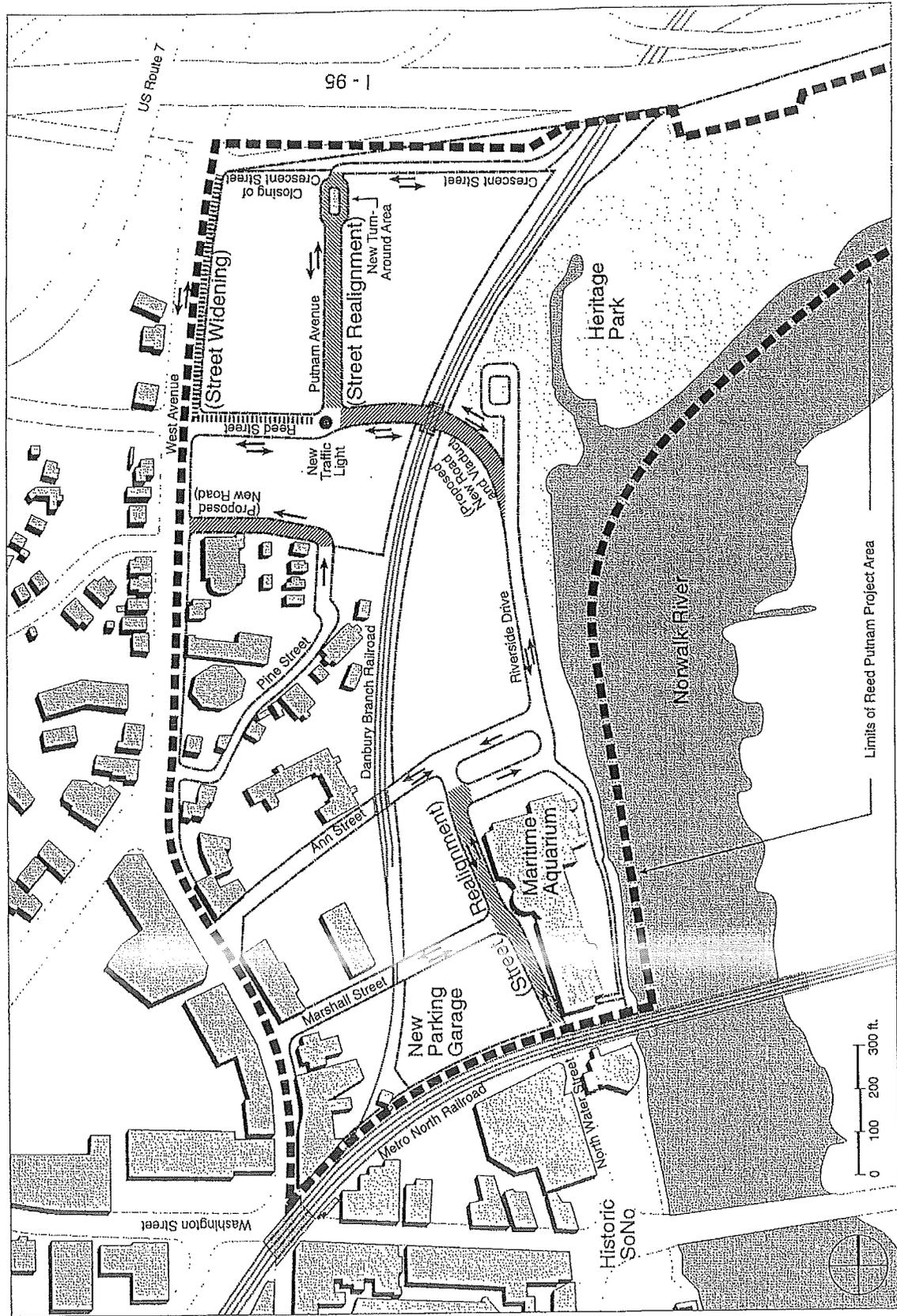


**Figure 11 - Curb Cut Zones**  
 Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut



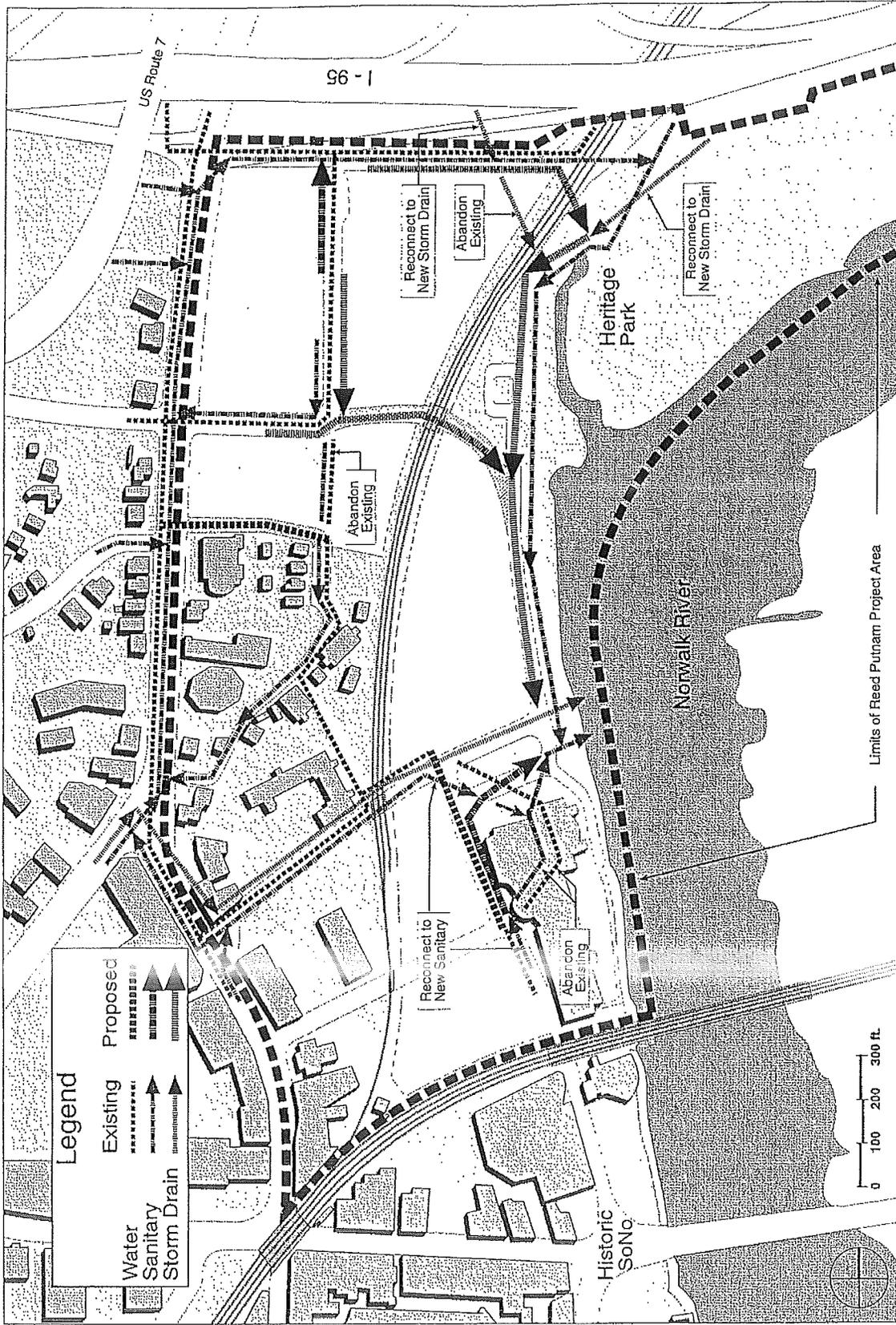
**Figure 12 - Easements and Rights-of-Way**

Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut



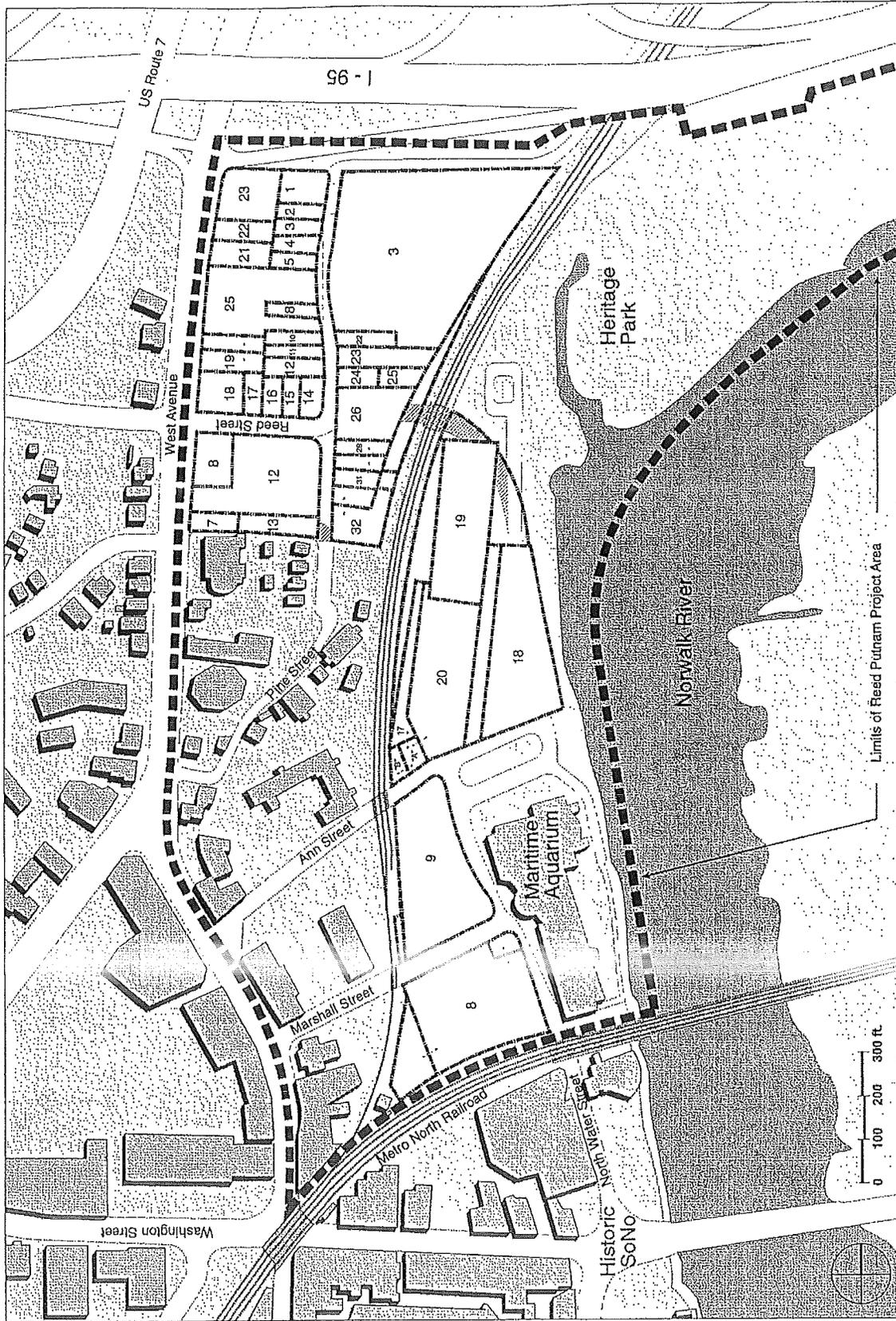
**Figure 13 - Traffic Circulation and Improvements**

Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut



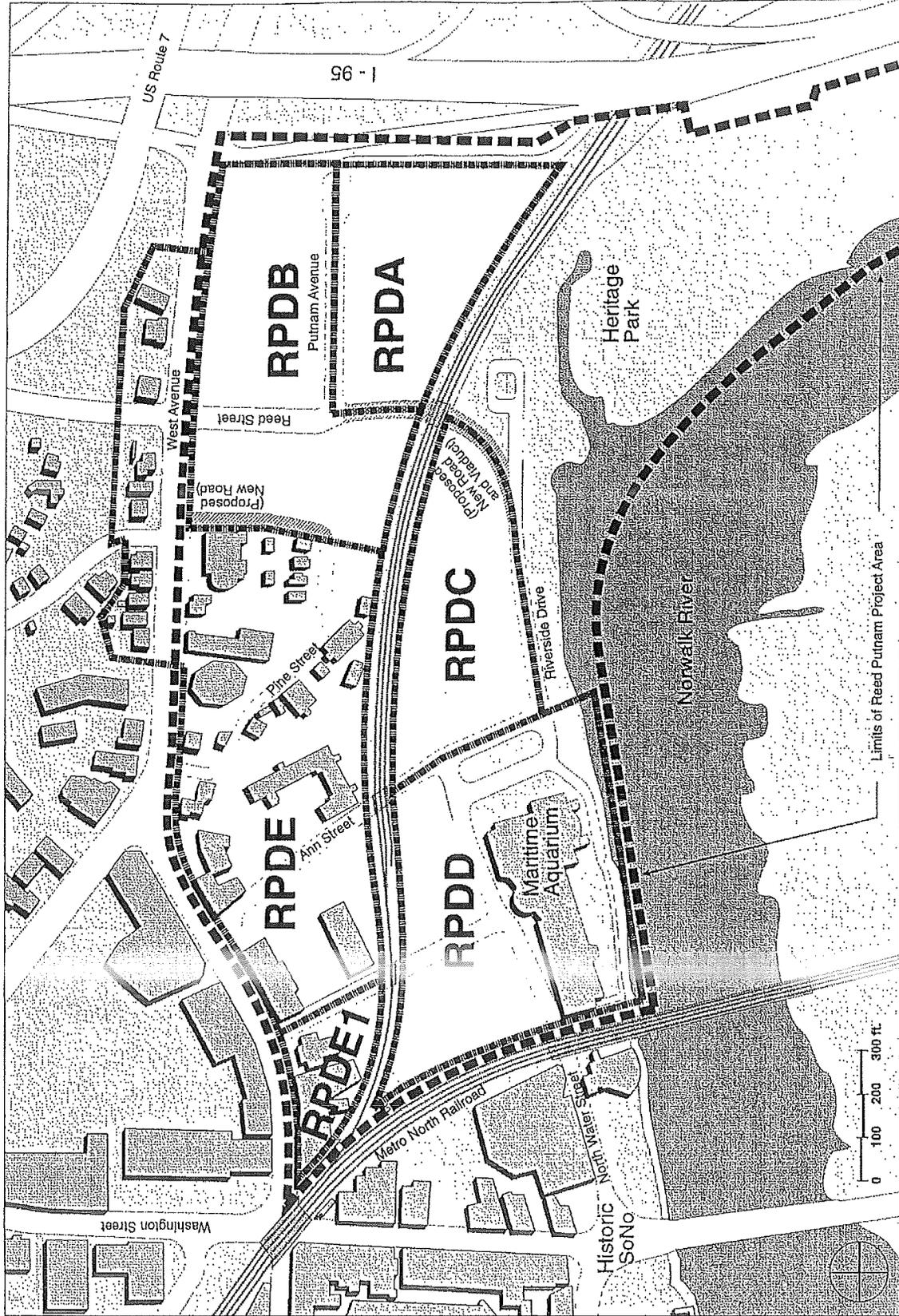
**Figure 14 - Existing and Proposed Utilities**

Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut



**Figure 15 - Property Acquisition Plan**

Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut



**Figure 16 - Proposed Zoning Subareas**

Reed Putnam Project Area - Norwalk, Connecticut