

Existing Traffic Conditions

Access to and egress from the Wall Street area is well served by the distribution of key intersections and outlets primarily along West Avenue, Belden Avenue, East Avenue and the Route 1 corridor. The primary arterials, particularly Route 1 and West Avenue, contain numerous turns and intersections that experience marginal peak hour delays. Though no one intersection is the direct cause, the number of intersections with marginal and poor peak hour levels of service (levels D, E and F) along the periphery do result in some short-term vehicular delays and driver inconvenience. The State of Connecticut Department of Transportation initiated a traffic study in 1998 for the Route 1 corridor from Belden Avenue and Cross Street to Route 53 recognizing that lane additions are necessary in the area. No design work or additional studies have been completed and these improvements are not scheduled to take place any time in the near future.

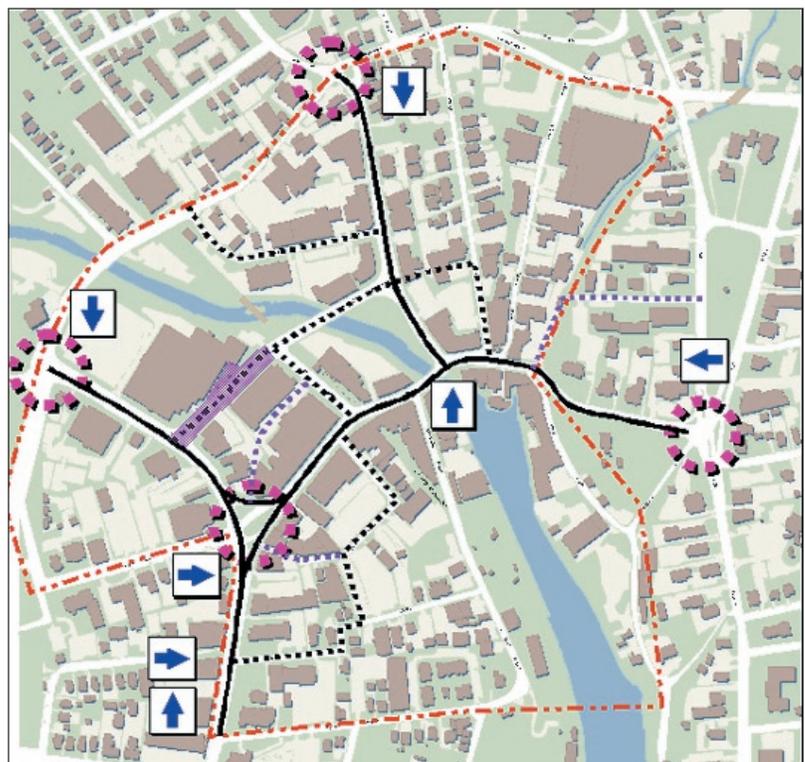
Traffic and Circulation Strategy

Traffic improvements should be implemented with proposed streetscape and downtown gateway enhancements. In addition to geometric and signal improvements at targeted intersections, other improvements may be proposed to encourage a greater distribution of traffic to and from new residential development. For example, a significant portion of traffic generated on the Isaac Street block may be encouraged to use Leonard Street for access to Wall Street and East Main and to West Avenue to avoid additional peak hour congestion at other intersections. Incorporating a mixed use including some retail space would benefit

Connections

Legend

-  Gateway
-  Primary Route
-  Secondary Route
-  Pedestrian Route
-  Bus transfer Pulse Point
-  Wayfinding System



the redevelopment strategy from a traffic standpoint allowing for greater distribution of traffic throughout the day.

Considerations for downtown traffic modifications may include the following:

- Complete two-way traffic on Burnell Boulevard proposed by Avalon
- Reconfiguration of the West Avenue and Wall Street intersection
- Improvements to Belden Avenue and Cross Street intersection
- Reconfiguration of the Main Street and Route 1 intersection
- Conversion of the south end of High Street as a pedestrian corridor
- Internal access improvements within the Leonard and Isaac Street block.

There has been considerable debate over the years about the potential benefits of turning Wall Street into a one-way running from west to east, which has been reinitiated as a result of the discussions held during this planning process. Taking into consideration the existing land use and circulation patterns in the Wall Street area, the advantages of maintaining Wall Street as a two-way street are significant and include the following:

- Two-way street provides options and flexibility to employees, residents, visitors and vendors who conduct business in the project area
- Two-way traffic increases exposure and visibility of businesses along the road
- On-street parking increases that may be generated in a one-way circulation pattern will be minimal
- Truck traffic to existing businesses including Devine Bros. would be affected and would increase traffic on less suitable roadways
- One way traffic would direct a significant amount of downtown generated traffic (existing and in the future) toward fewer intersections whereas a distinct advantage that the Wall Street area has today is the potential for distribution of generated traffic to multiple intersections on the perimeter arterials

Traffic Calming Measures

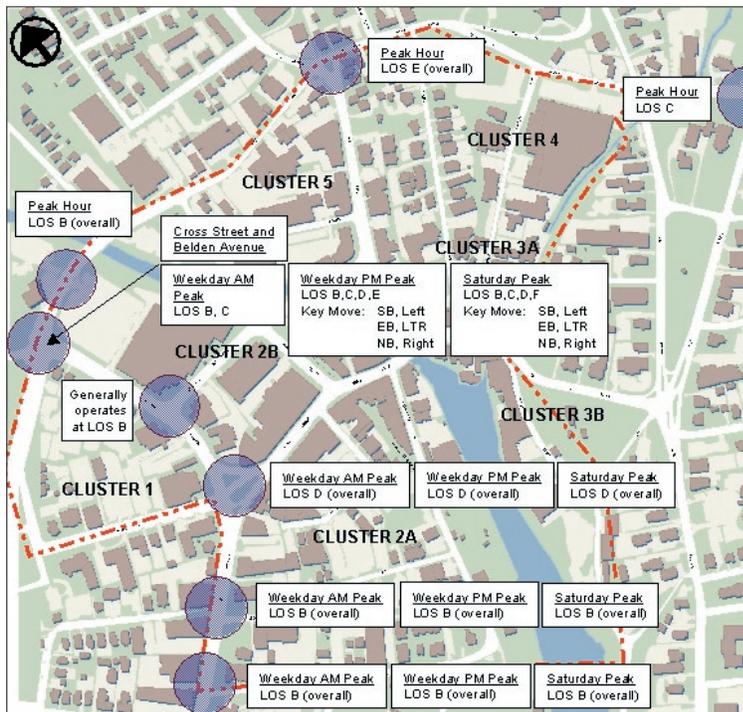
No district-wide traffic calming measures are proposed but specific modifications are recommended that will have a traffic calming effect. The objective is to implement subtle district wide streetscape and intersection improvements that will have an overall calming effect on traffic. Based on the volume of Wall Street traffic, the expected increase in local

traffic as redevelopment occurs, and the relatively short distance between intersections, cross streets and driveways along the main arterials there are built in traffic calming mechanisms. Geometric improvements are recommended at Burnell Boulevard and Main Street, where corner radii may be tightened to decrease the potential for excessive speeds for turning vehicles. These measures would need to consider turning radii for bus/pulse point traffic. Extending the park landscape out to the roadway will have the same traffic calming effect as planting trees and placing site amenities along the roadway.

Impacts on Traffic and Circulation

Existing traffic conditions at signalized intersections on the perimeter of the downtown district are indicated on an enclosed graphic. Existing peak hour levels of service based local on studies complete in 1998 and 2002 range from LOS A to LOS F where LOS A indicates no delay and LOS F indicate excessive delays. LOS C and LOS D are typical in downtown areas and reflect common and acceptable delays at signalized intersections. Residential development could compound peak hour traffic delays in the future since it is likely that residents would be joining the commuter traffic that is the essential cause of weekday peak hour delays. Residential development would likely impact weekend traffic (midday peak hour) and future studies should consider the impact of the proposed redevelopment on pass-thru traffic and traffic destined for the project area. The redevelopment of the downtown district and within the development clusters will require further study of the local intersections to identify potential traffic impacts and recommend improvement measures. Any improvements initiated by the State along the Route 1 corridor should be considered

Existing Traffic Conditions



as opportunities to enhance the perimeter intersections of the downtown district. These improvements should include traffic (geometric and signal) modifications including traffic generated by the redevelopment plan and other pedestrian, cyclists, gateway and aesthetic enhancements.

Parking Strategy

Traffic circulation must allow visitors, residents and employees to find convenient parking. As a basic strategy, parking should be consolidated, visible from primary roadways, and strategically located to serve the main development blocks. Signage consistent with the streetscape character and district image must also be incorporated. As the redevelopment strategies are advanced, parking needs must be evaluated to determine the actual space requirements.

On-street parking will continue to be available. Time restrictions (i.e., meters) may be a consideration along West Avenue and Main and Wall Streets to encourage the use of parking structures and reserve curbside parking for short-term parking and pick-up and deliveries. For residential development, adequate parking must be available to attract buyers and tenants. The availability and proximity of parking for other uses is essential to support business. Customers will tolerate parking inconveniences to reach unique and highly desirable destinations; however, current uses rely on conveniently located parking facilities.



For the redevelopment, parking must be available for the incremental and slow migration of infill residential, retail and office development. Any new multi-unit residential development, which may very well be the future anchors in the redevelopment of the downtown, must contain sufficient and dedicated parking. Recommended structured parking locations are placed to support individual block development within the core of the downtown district. Design of new structural or large scale parking facilities must also include pedestrian connections to adjacent blocks. Parking is consumptive in terms of land and funding, and efforts should be made to maximize shared parking capacity and to use existing at-grade parking areas, regardless of ownership, more efficiently.

A cursory review of a recent parking survey completed by the Department of Public Works for the Yankee Doodle Garage indicates that there is a relative shortage of available short-term parking spaces in the garage at certain times. The shortages, based on the availability



Parking

Legend

-  Existing parking totals
-  Proposed structured/on-site parking
-  Existing structured parking

of fewer than 20 short-term spaces, occur generally from 6:00 to 8:00pm from Wednesday to Friday, 9:00-10:00pm on Wednesday and from 12:00 noon to 8:00pm on Saturday. Sunday shortages (lower level only) occur during the afternoon. These shortages suggest that there is an increase in demand for parking spaces during the hours that are typically popular for entertainment, dining out and family activities.

Relative shortages occur in long-term parking on Wednesdays from 11:00am to 1:00pm based on the survey data available. The cause is unknown but we suspect it may be associated with business lunch-hour activity or local church activities.

Implications for Infrastructure

Based on conversations and feedback from municipal representatives, existing utility and sewer capacity in the Downtown area is sufficient to support new development, particularly clusters 2A, 3A and 3B, outlined in this plan. In conjunction with each phase of redevelopment, utility capacity must be evaluated, expected loads calculated and new services sized accordingly. Utility improvements must also be coordinated with the respective utility agency. Cost, funding sources and a determination as to who will design and perform the actual work must be coordinated with City officials and the respective utility agencies. The following table provides general information regarding utility availability in the Downtown.

| | Agency | Capacity Status | Major Service Points | Remarks |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|---|
| Water | Ist Water District, Norwalk | Adequate; local spurs and upgrades may be required of lengths generally under 2 blocks in length | 20", 12" and 8" services available on Route 1, West Avenue and Leonard Street, respectively. | Verify service; site specific plans will be required to determine extent of work |
| Electric | Connecticut Light & Power | Adequate | Multiple; verify and confirm work that may be provided by utility and cost allocated to redevelopment | All existing services must be verified; regional upgrades are expected by 2005/2006 |
| Gas | Yankee Gas | Adequate | West Avenue and Wall Street as well as throughout the Business District | |
| Stormwater Facilities | City of Norwalk | Subject to municipal review | Subject to municipal review | See text below, "Stormwater Facilities" |
| Sanitary Facilities | City of Norwalk | Subject to municipal review | | |

Stormwater Facilities

Soil erosion and sediment control plans for areas of disturbance greater than one-half acre in area must be provided per the City of Norwalk's Building Zone Regulations. Stormwater facilities must also be designed and maintained on-site for and following the construction phase to provide sediment and erosion control. Considering the size of the designated redevelopment clusters and the density of existing and proposed development providing effective measures may be challenging but certainly achievable. Proposed activity may initiate plan review by the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection depending on the size of the area of disturbance, relationship to tidal zones, potential impact to navigable waters and/or proximity to stream encroachment limits.

Roadway Improvements and Utilities

Infrastructure may be impacted by modifications to traffic intersections. In the case that roadway widths may be decreased and utilities remain in place there may be instances where these utilities are located beneath sidewalks and public spaces. Right-of-way, access to and future maintenance costs associated with these utilities must be considered.



SUMMARY OF KEY PLANNING ELEMENTS

As a result of the previous analyses and strategies, a series of planning elements have been identified that represent the building blocks of the proposed planning update:

1. Moderate density mixed-use redevelopment of the Isaac Street area
2. Reconfiguration of the Wall Street/Belden/West Avenue intersection to create a civic space and new connections
3. Expansion of the Norwalk Public Library and creation of new public parking
4. Restoration of the historic theater and support of the businesses along Wall Street
5. Enhancement of the operations and attractiveness of the Yankee Doodle Garage
6. Redevelopment of the High Street lot and its surroundings
7. Enhancement of the Wall/Main Street intersection to improve circulation and streetscape character
8. Expansion and enhancement of open space connections along the river, including Mill Hill
9. Creation of new pedestrian connections as part of redevelopment plans
10. Provision for coordinated development of the large remaining parcels
11. Improvement of access, circulation, and wayfinding systems
12. Promotion of the revitalization of the historic fabric



Specific Plan Elements

The following is a description of the key plan elements and planning recommendations associated with each one of them. Taken all together, these recommendations set the basis for the proposed plan strategies:

Plan Element: Moderate density mixed-use redevelopment of the Isaac Street area

Recommendations:

- Seek and promote the development of mixed-use buildings, 3 to 5 stories high, that combine residential uses, retail and parking, as described in the alternative development scenarios.
- Use public land ownership to unlock appropriate development and replace the existing public parking through development agreements.
- Use that parking supply to support the redevelopment of nearby areas.
- Implement zoning and design guidelines that support the proposed cluster development concepts, and the creation of through-block pedestrian connections.

Plan Element: Reconfiguration of the Wall Street/Belden/West Avenue intersection to create a civic space and new connections

Recommendations:

- Rationalize the intersection of Belden Avenue and Wall Street to facilitate pedestrian crossings and improve vehicular turns.
- Consider a “T”-shaped intersection plan in terms of physical configuration improvements.



- Maximize pedestrian areas along the sidewalks and minimize roadway pavement area.
- Implement streetscape improvements complementary to the proposed new park next to the Post Office.

Plan Element: Expansion of the Norwalk Public Library and creation of new public parking

Recommendations:

- Enhance and expand the Public Library to become the center for cultural and civic life in Norwalk.
- Create a signature image along Belden Avenue by means of high-quality architectural and streetscape design.
- Reorganize and expand the existing supply of public parking on the block.
- Create an initial shared-parking agreement and improvements

Plan Element: Restoration of the historic theater and support of the businesses along Wall Street

Recommendations:

- Recognize and strengthen Wall Street's historic significance as the original spine of the district.
- Enhance and complement its distinctive streetscape character.
- Implement traffic calming measures to foster and enhance pedestrian qualities.
- Support initiatives that protect historic resources and renovation efforts.
- Create a stewardship entity.
- Create a financing strategy that combines subsidies and links to other programs and projects.



Plan Element: Enhancement of the operations and attractiveness of the Yankee Doodle Garage

Recommendations:

- Support streetscape improvements and the expansion of the existing commercial uses on the middle of the block.
- Improve vehicular and pedestrian access to support a new pedestrian walkway and landscaping along the current service alley.

- Consider architectural improvements to the external appearance of the garage that would enhance its image and perception as a landmark.
- Establish an improved operating plan through the Norwalk Parking Authority.
- Create a capital improvement plan, funded through operational changes and other sources.

Plan Element: Redevelopment of the High Street parking lot and its surroundings

Recommendations:

- Seek and promote the development of a parking deck coated with residential uses and retail, and covered with a landscaped rooftop garden.
- Use public land ownership to unlock appropriate development and replace the existing public parking through development agreements.
- Use the public parking supply to support the redevelopment of nearby areas.

Plan Element: Enhancement of the Wall/Main Street intersection to improve circulation and streetscape character

Recommendations:

- Recapture the essence of the historic St. John Place as a public urban space.
- Reorganize vehicular patterns to clarify turn lanes, minimize roadway paved area and maximize sidewalk area.
- Close High Street to vehicular traffic along the side of the Trolley Barn building, and landscape as a pedestrian area.
- Build a roadway connector from High Street to Knight Street to allow vehicular turns (retain one-way pair circulation)



- Implement storefront and façade renovation programs.
- Promote the renovation of the hall at the former Lockwood building as a public auditorium.

Plan Element: Expansion and enhancement of open space connections along the river, including Mill Hill

Recommendations:

- Remove some of the vacant and dilapidated buildings along Smith Street to open views and access to the river.
- Build a new park on the site of the removed buildings where people can walk directly to the waterfront.
- Build pathways and sitting areas connecting the waterfront to the historic structures on Mill Hill.
- Renovate and enhance Freese Park, and the riverwalk along the opposite edge of the river
- Clean, prune and enhance the river edges

Plan Element: Creation of new pedestrian connections as part of redevelopment plans

Recommendations:

- Transform the service alley between the Yankee Doodle garage and the adjacent buildings into a landscaped through-block pedestrian connection.
- Extend the riverfront walkway proposed by Avalon along the river's edge of the River Street public parking lot.
- Extend pedestrian access along the edge of the river as far as possible until reaching the boundaries of the existing industrial properties.
- Include design guidelines as part of cluster redevelopment packages that will establish the location and character of through-block pedestrian connections.
- Set guidelines for new development in the Isaac Street area to provide a pedestrian connection between Wall Street, Commerce Street, and the waterfront.



Plan Element: Provision for coordinated development of the large remaining parcels

Recommendations:

- Use zoning, guidelines, and other incentives to encourage mixed-use redevelopment.
- Seek and promote emphasis on residential uses.

Plan Element: Improvement of circulation, access and wayfinding systems

Recommendations:

- Use the Cross Street/Route 1 improvement project as an opportunity to create better public space, places and circulation along the corridor.
- Design special gateway elements to mark the key intersections providing access to Wall Street.
- Create a special signage and wayfinding system.
- Implement mitigation measures to any potential traffic impact due to new development.

Plan Element: Promotion of the revitalization of the historic fabric

Recommendations:

- Use zoning, historic district protections, and guidelines to preserve special buildings.
- Identify and protect buildings that are not historic, but contribute to the overall traditional character of the fabric.



- Promote and encourage the adaptive reuse of traditional buildings.
- Offer technical assistance programs for the renovation of storefronts and facades; combine technical and financial assistance whenever possible.

The Norwalk Wall Street Area Planning Update has been created to unlock coordinated public and private actions that will achieve the vision and goals contained in this report. This chapter discusses the actions, programs and initiatives that will be required over the next ten years. These consist, in part, of the overall implementation strategy comprised of regulatory, management and public investment activities that address the overall planning area. In part, the Plan's implementation will be accomplished through project-oriented actions focused on the key elements identified in this document; these are listed separately in the discussion below.

The evolution of the Wall Street area will occur over a period of time. This section addresses initial concepts for the phasing of public initiatives and their relationship to subsequent private sector reinvestment.

Overall Implementation Strategy

Urban Renewal Plan

Norwalk has an approved Urban Renewal Plan for the Wall-Main project area that was established in 1959. This plan needs to be updated and extended into the future, so that the City can bring the benefits of urban renewal tools to the revitalization process. These include a wide range of potential advantages for financing, grants, parcel assembly, special design review and other mechanisms. Another advantage of the expansion of the urban renewal district will be the formalization of the design review role of the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency in project approvals. The amended urban renewal plan should specify those projects that would qualify for reviews, establish any special procedures appropriate to the Wall Street area, and include design standards and guidelines that will advance the public planning and revitalization goals.

In order to accomplish this, an Urban Renewal Plan Amendment should be prepared through the direction of the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency. The existing urban renewal district is limited to an irregularly shaped area generally bounded by Belden Avenue, Cross Street, Hoyt Street Main Street, Wall Street, and Burnell Boulevard. The limits of the area should be extended to include:

- Those portions of the block bounded by Byington Place, Mott Avenue and Belden Place, including parcels that are likely to participate in the parking strategy envisioned in this Plan.
- The entire block bounded by Belden Avenue, Wall Street, River Street and Burnell Boulevard.
- The entire area bounded by West Avenue, Leonard Street, Commerce Street and Wall Street, as well as the nearby non-industrial land parcels between Commerce Street and the Norwalk River.

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- The land and parcels near surrounding the High Street parking lot near the intersection of Main Street and Wall Street that would benefit from inclusion in an urban renewal district, including parcels adjacent to the Norwalk River up to, but not including, the asphalt production/industrial use site along Smith Street.

The expanded urban renewal district could also include additional areas, either through the initial amendment or through a subsequent amendment, if it proves useful to unlock additional development that fulfills the purposes of this Master Plan Update. The additional areas would include:

- The land bounded by Cross Street, Main Street, Burnell Boulevard and the Norwalk River.
- Land parcels bordering Knight Street between East Wall Street and North Avenue (U.S. Highway 1).

The urban renewal plan should be updated to reflect current public goals and interests and provide the documentation required to conform to all applicable Connecticut standards. It should be adopted by both the Norwalk Redevelopment and the Common Council of the City, and put into effect. The preparation of the amended plan and its approval process should provide for public participation and input as required for such an important step.

Zoning

The planning update for the Wall Street area is consistent with the existing City of Norwalk zoning ordinances in many respects and can largely be accomplished within the framework of regulations that have already been established. Many of the key portions of the planning area are subject to zoning standards that encourage the type of mixed-use development envisioned as the core character for its future.

The current zoning provides for a Central Business District zoning category for much of the planning area that promotes mixed use, provides for shared parking. It directs the City to allow public/private agreements to meet parking needs. It has tailored regulations that encourage appropriate redevelopment along the riverfront and promotes public access. The CBD zoning regulations provide for relatively limited building heights (up to six stories and allows additional heights only if bonus provisions are met through special public amenities provided by a developer.

However, a number of refinements should be considered to the zoning ordinance in order to ensure a close match between the City's plan for the area and the development that will occur. Among the regulatory changes that might be considered are the following:

Changes in Extent of CBD Zoning

There are several blocks of Industrial –1 zoned land in the northern portions of the planning area that might benefit from a change to CBD-A zoning. These areas generally consist of the parcels along Cross Street and north of the Norwalk River and parcels flanking Knight Street and High Street. A change to CBD zoning would permit continuation of existing uses, but would reduce the potential for non-compatible manufacturing, warehousing, storage facilities and the like. Such a change should take into account the desirability of retaining key historic structures and appropriate scales of development along the street edges of the district, and may be combined with concepts for historic preservation consideration, as well.

Changes in the Height and Bonus Provisions

The City should consider several changes in the height and bonus provisions. First, the maximum “as-of-right” height might be lowered somewhat from 6 to 4 floors, since the maximum height has not been utilized and a somewhat lower scale district is more in scale with the historic fabric of the planning area. The bonus provision is a helpful concept, but might be revised to provide benefits more in keeping with contemporary needs. Perhaps the bonus provision for two additional floors up to a total maximum of six floors could be applied to a mixed-income project if it provides a certain minimum percentage of affordable housing units, or perhaps to an affordable housing development. The bonus provision could also be tied to projects that retain or rehabilitate valued historic structures as part of a project commitment. Another useful means to encourage mixed-use development would be to provide a one-floor bonus for those portions of a project that have active retail, restaurant, or other destination uses on the ground level. However, the sum of all bonus provisions should still be limited to a maximum of two additional floors.

Changes in Housing Density Provisions

The housing density provisions in the existing CBD zoning appear to be somewhat less than the densities that will be appropriate for the area and necessary in order to create the complex parking solutions that will be beneficial to the character and functioning of the area. These should be reviewed and revised in order to achieve approximate unit/acre maximums of about 60 units/acre in CBD sub-areas A and B.

Refinements in the Parking Provisions

The existing parking provisions appear to provide a wide range of practical alternatives to meeting parking needs. Several refinements should be considered, including reviewing the rates for fees-in-lieu of parking so that they conform to current market values, public goals and the financial management associated with the new Parking Authority. The percentage of privately-allocated parking spaces should also be reviewed in the context of the Parking Authority’s overall strategy and the needs of the area, to make sure that the correct balance is struck between open parking needed to support retail, business and civic destinations and the allocation that is needed to promote beneficial development.

Affordable Housing Provisions

Future zoning should include any affordable housing provisions that the City might promote that are appropriate to this district as a diverse urban neighborhood and downtown district.

Historic Preservation and Zoning

Future zoning changes should consider additional means to promote historic preservation and restoration. Among the mechanisms that might be considered would be a demolition delay ordinance, bonus provisions as discussed above, or the institution of an historic district overlay that would reinforce historic preservation goals through site plan reviews or special incentives.

Private/Public Redevelopment Initiatives

A core aspect of this Planning Update is the use of public land assets to unlock beneficial public and private redevelopment in key locations. The City (along with the Norwalk Redevelopment Authority and the Norwalk Parking Authority) should undertake the following actions in order to proceed with these initiatives:

Developer Requests for Proposals

The City should prepare Development Requests for Proposals (RFP's) for both the Isaac Street area and the High Street/Head of the Harbor area, offering the sale or long-term lease of the public land in exchange for replacement or expansion of public parking in the same locations. The RFP's should include detailed design standards, use guidelines, density limits, historic preservation goals and other requirements to ensure that the public interests are fully met through the redevelopment process. Development teams that assemble and include adjacent or nearby parcels to achieve the highest degree of desirable revitalization should be preferred relative to less comprehensive or less integrated approaches.



Development Agreements

Based on the review of the Development Proposals, preferred development agreements should be created that guide the timing, compensation, and other project commitments so that the subsequent land dispositions, approvals and construction occurs in a predictable and orderly fashion.

Public Financing, Grants or Other Participation

The City and its agencies and authorities should pursue grants, financing assistance or other tools that will enhance the public's return on its reinvestment in these sites.

Parking Facilities and the Norwalk Parking Authority

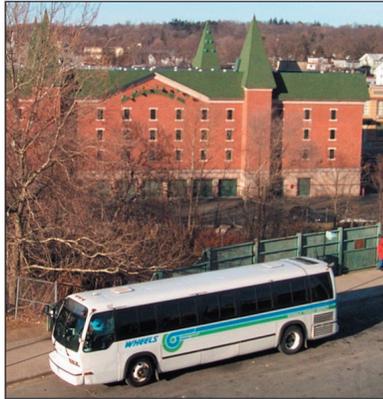
This Master Plan should be used as a guide in the formation of operations and capital investment plans by the Norwalk Parking Authority. Specifically, the Parking Authority should accomplish the following:

- Establish a capital investment program for improvements to the appearance, security and functioning of the Yankee Doodle Garage to enhance its perceived convenience and marketability.
- Create and maintain a public information and signage program for Wall Street area public parking needs to be established as part of the operational strategy of the Norwalk Parking Authority.
- The Norwalk Parking Authority should operate the new public parking facilities that are within the Isaac Street redevelopment.
- To provide a low-cost method of expanding parking, the City should sponsor a short-term study and lead a joint program to create low-cost capital improvements and shared parking agreements among property owners within the block bounded by Mott Avenue, Belden Avenue and Byington Place. The Norwalk Parking Authority, the Norwalk Redevelopment Authority and the City might jointly undertake this effort.
- The appropriate City agencies and authorities should prepare plans and initiate the development of a parking deck on this same block in conjunction with growing demand for parking and the need for additional library-related parking.
- Annual parking capacity and use pattern reports should be prepared by the Parking Authority to establish the effectiveness of parking management and the adequacy of existing supplies.

Transportation and Infrastructure

The Wall Street Area Planning Update advocates numerous improvements in the transportation and circulation network for the area. These need to be accomplished in step with revitalization efforts so that it continues to be a highly accessible, safe and convenient district. Most of the infrastructure improvements must be accomplished through public sector investments. However, some of this network will be created as part of the public/private redevelopment activities through the extension of streets, improvement of sidewalks, creation of pedestrian links, and restructuring of intersections. Key aspects of the transportation and circulation reinvestment include the following:

- The City's capital and transportation improvement programs should be reviewed and updated, if necessary, to match the recommendations of this Planning Update.
- The City should fund and construct the relatively small scale intersection, crosswalk sidewalk and open space improvements on an incremental basis as part of its annual capital improvement program, and continue to pursue State and Federal funding sources to contribute to these goals.
- In conjunction with the Norwalk Parking Authority, a study for a "wayfinding" signage system for the Wall Street should be initiated by the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency. This should include identification signs for the Wall Street district, directional signs to parking resources, and directional signs for key uses or attractions. The signage program should be designed through a consulting contract, and may be implemented through a variety of funding sources, including Parking Authority expenditures, City funding, coordinated expenditures by businesses and institutions, or other sources.
- The funding goals for the Cross Street/Route 1 Project should be expanded, if required, to include appropriate land use and pedestrian enhancements that will adequately mitigate the project and provide for the important economic enhancements along this corridor.
- The City should aggressively pursue special grants or direct appropriations at both the State and Federal level for the transportation and related public investments along the Cross Street/Route 1 Corridor in view of its critical importance to the long-term economic health and safety of the community.
- Development impacts should be mitigated through infrastructure improve-



ments through developer-borne payments or construction costs for public sidewalk, passageways, intersection and other improvements on a case-by-case basis.

Transit

Transit access to and from the Wall Street area will be increasingly important as revitalization proceeds. In order to support this access, the following should be accomplished:

- Additional State and Federal funding to provide design and operational improvements at the Pulse Point should be sought if required to supplement existing improvement strategies.
- In the long term, if a preferred alternative location and adequate funding becomes available for the Pulse Point, then this transit hub should be relocated from Burnell Boulevard. However, the bus scheduling should ensure excellent access to and from the Wall Street area.
- The Norwalk Transit Authority should study the feasibility of creating shuttle bus-type service between the Wall Street area, the South Norwalk Rail Station and SoNo as residential and mixed-use development creates additional needs for transit.
- The City should maintain its advocacy for restoration of a rail station in the Wall Street area as a long-term goal.

Other Infrastructure Improvements

The redevelopment of the area will require updating and relocating utilities consistent with the location and amount of redevelopment that occurs, which will typically be planned and coordinated as part of project review and approval processes already in place.

This planning update also underlines the critical need to provide dredging to support the water-dependent uses along the Norwalk River. Dredging is needed to ensure that there is adequate depth to meet the regionally important needs served by the businesses along this stretch of the river. Public advocacy by the City and private advocacy by the business community for Federal funds and approvals continue to be required

Parks, Open Space and Pedestrian Ways

The Wall Street Area Planning update emphasizes the value of parks, open spaces and pedestrian connections that will connect the area. There are a series of actions that will be required to implement these recommendations:

- The City should continue to work with the Post Office and other abutters to

the Yankee Doodle Garage to create a common pedestrian connection and open space connecting the intersection of West Avenue, Belden and Wall Streets to the garage and to River Street.

- The City and the First Taxing District should create the jurisdictional agreements required to allow for reorganization of the intersection of West/Belden/Wall Street to create better traffic flows and superior civic open space.
- Streetscape, plaza and open space improvements should be integral to the intersection and circulation improvement design and funding throughout the Wall Street area.



- The City should explore acquisition of an easement and/or public open space along the Norwalk River edge in association with the private sector redevelopment of parcels that require public funding or subsidies.
 - The City, through the Norwalk Re-development Agency, should establish design standards for access walkways to and along the Norwalk River so that the improvements on private and public lands are coordinated and pleasant.
- The City should pursue State and Federal grant sources for water access to support pedestrian paths and connections along the Norwalk River, for streetscape improvements, and for the pedestrian ways that will distinguish the Wall Street area.

Historic Preservation and Historic Character

The City's Historical Commission should continue to have an active role in the identification of valuable historic resources and in the design review of new projects and renovations. If the concept of historic preservation bonuses is incorporated into the zoning code, then the Historical Commission should serve in a review role prior to granting of bonus provisions.

The City should also continue to work closely with the Norwalk Historical Society to support the preservation and interpretive feature of the Mill Hill Historic Park and Museum. This should include joint pursuit of grants or transportation enhancements to expand the pedestrian access to, from and along Mill Hill. Working together, the City and the Norwalk Historical Society should also develop a jointly-supported plan to support the combined rehabilitation and redevelopment of the riverfront parcels along Smith Street,

including the potential of restructuring the lower Mill Hill area to accommodate parking, provide pedestrian connections, and promote an open space connection to the waterfront.



The Wall Street Area Planning Update includes an emphasis on retaining the historic fabric of the Wall Street area and preserving appropriate buildings. To achieve

this, it may be both practical and necessary to physically relocate some buildings, either within the area or in nearby districts. The Norwalk Historical Commission should work with the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency and others to prepare concepts for “receiving zones” or “receiving sites” that can serve this purpose. This is the approach that has been taken to building reuse in Norwalk (for example, on Mill Hill) and other communities for centuries.

Theater Restoration and Reuse

The historic theater on Wall Street requires renovations as a structure and as a use. The theater space could be revived as a performance theater or as a small cinema. There are many applicable models for revivals of similar historic theaters, which could be used successfully. However, the following steps should be taken in the near term:

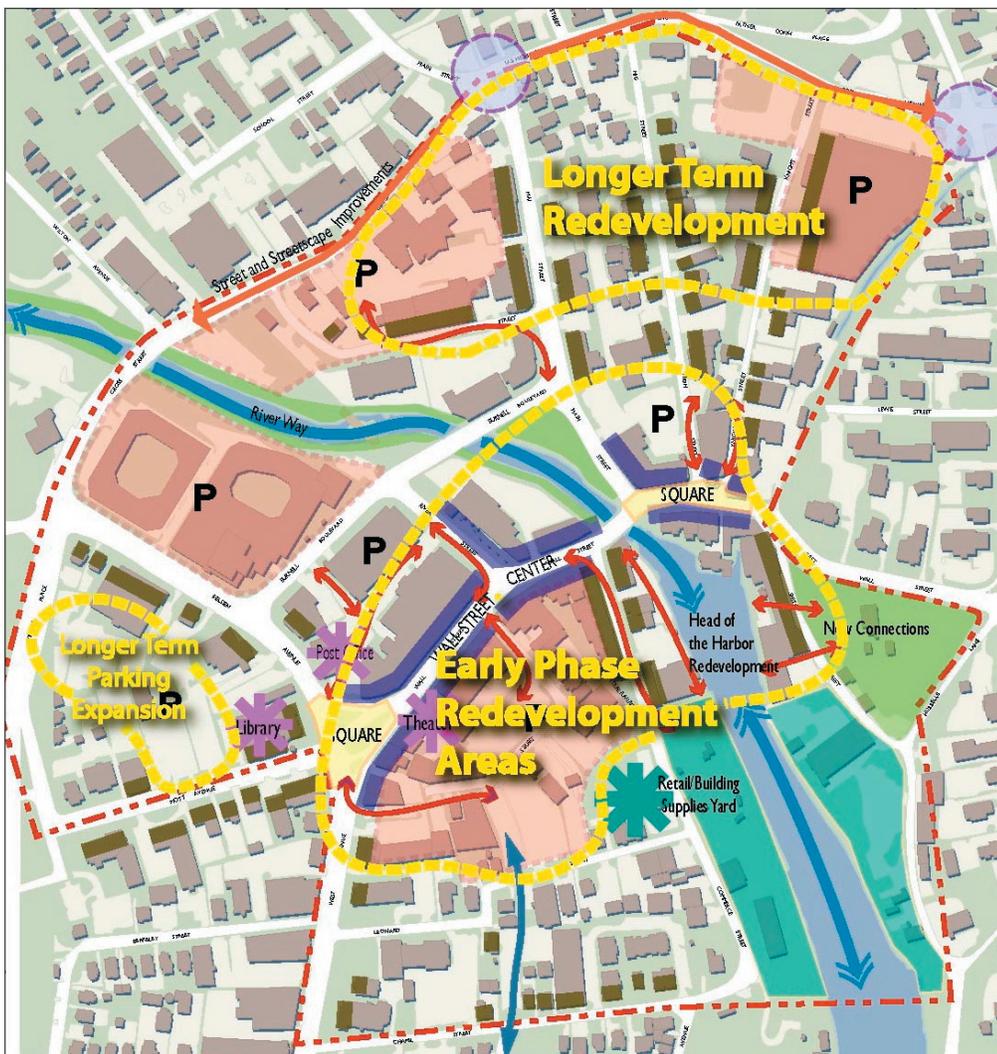
- A stewardship group needs to be assembled to lead the revival initiative over the several years that will be required to establish the reuse operation and assemble the financing for restoration. This group could take the form of a City-sponsored committee or a Section 501(c)3 non-profit corporation or other formally composed entity.
- This group should help assemble funds and direct technical reviews of the building structure, renovation costs, and a business plan for renovation of the building that will establish capital improvement needs and operational support requirements.
- The City should continue to pursue State funds and explore educational-related opportunities as a basis for revival.
- Proposals for reuse and renovation should be sought in conjunction with the Isaac Street redevelopment RFP, to explore whether there is a profitable way to incorporate the theater into the overall project scope.

Civic Uses: The Norwalk Public Library

The City should continue its stewardship of the Norwalk Public Library and initiate the planning process necessary to create the substantial expansion and reorganization of this key civic facility. This might be accomplished, in part, through a special joint committee among the relevant boards, commissions and agencies to guide this mid-term to long-term process. As part of this effort, the City and the First Taxing District should pursue agreements that would allow future expansion of the Library to the north.

Phasing

Many of the actions required to implement the planning recommendations contained in this document could occur at any time, depending upon the availability of funding and market conditions. However, many of the changes are best planned through a step-by-step process, as discussed below.



Early Action Elements

A number of the key recommendations listed in this Planning Update can be undertaken as early action elements. These can be initiated or, in some cases, completed over the next two years. Among the elements that should be a focus in the short term are the following:

- Urban Renewal Plan Amendment - Preparation and approval of the Urban Renewal Plan Amendment
- Zoning - Preparation and approval of appropriate refinements
- Public/Private Development Initiatives

Request for Proposals - Preparation, issuance, review and approval of Developer Requests for Proposals for the Isaac Street area and the High Street/Head of the Harbor area

Development Agreements – Establishment of Development Agreements

Additional Resources - Pursuit of public financing, grants or other participation

Design and Approvals – Finalization of designs and public approvals

- Yankee Doodle Garage – Initiation and completion of operational and service improvements and those physical enhancements that may be feasible in the short-term, while planning for larger scale improvements and rehabilitation
- Intersection and Open Space Improvements - Initiation and completion of smaller scale intersection, streetscape and open space improvements that may be reasonably accomplished with available resources
- Street and Infrastructure Improvement Programs – Refinement of previous City and State capital funding and improvement plans and advocacy for State and Federal funding
- Pulse Point - Improvements to the Pulse Point as previously planned, contingent upon State and Federal funding
- Theater Restoration and Reuse - Creation of a dedicated stewardship group, establishment of funding and operational model, and technical/design preparation for renovations
- Mill Hill Planning – Coordination for new connections and enhancements of the Mill Hill Historic Park in conjunction with redevelopment and public access improvements to the Head of the Harbor
- Library Expansion Planning - Initiation of the process leading to future library expansion and improvements.

Mid-Term Actions

Some of the planning elements are most likely to be initiated or, in some cases, completed in the next three to five years.

- Public/Private Development Initiatives - Completion of the major elements of the private/public redevelopment projects for the Isaac Street area and the High Street/Head of the Harbor area
- Yankee Doodle Garage – Funding, design and completion of additional operational and capital improvements to make the garage an effective asset for area businesses and destinations.
- Intersection and Open Space Improvements – Continuation of roadway, intersection, streetscape and open space improvements that may be reasonably accomplished with available resources
- Street and Infrastructure Improvement Programs – If possible, achievement of funding commitments for the reconstruction and improvements along the Route 1/Cross Street Corridor
- Theater Restoration and Reuse - Completion of the theater renovation and revival
- Library Expansion Funding - Completion of a funding plan for the library expansion and preparation of designs

Later Phase Actions

Some of the planning elements are linked to the accomplishment of earlier action items. The following list of actions is projected for a five to ten year time frame. Some of these actions are dependent on previous steps being accomplished. Others are linked to the availability of public funding that is unlikely to be achieved in the short to mid-term future because of the fiscal projections of City, State and Federal budgets. They may also be dependent on improving economic conditions within the surrounding district, the City and the region.

- Construction of the Route 1/ Cross Street Improvements – Accomplishment of the reconstruction of the Route 1/Cross Street Corridor and associated streetscape, open space, preservation and redevelopment initiatives
- Additional Development Clusters - Private sector redevelopment of the northern development clusters, depending on market conditions
- Parking Facility on the Library Block - Creation of a parking deck in the interior of the block behind the Norwalk Library
- Library Expansion – Completion of a library expansion and enhancement program

