

# VI

## Renderings & Massing Plans for Preferred Sites



SPORT

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### Site 2 (High Street)

The site bounded by High Street, Main Street, Trumbull Street and I-84 represents a new arena development scenario with two very different impacts on the city. First, an arena on this site would significantly expand the perceived geographic area of the downtown core. Second, an arena located north of I-84 would trigger an interest in considering potential new uses for the adjoining blocks.

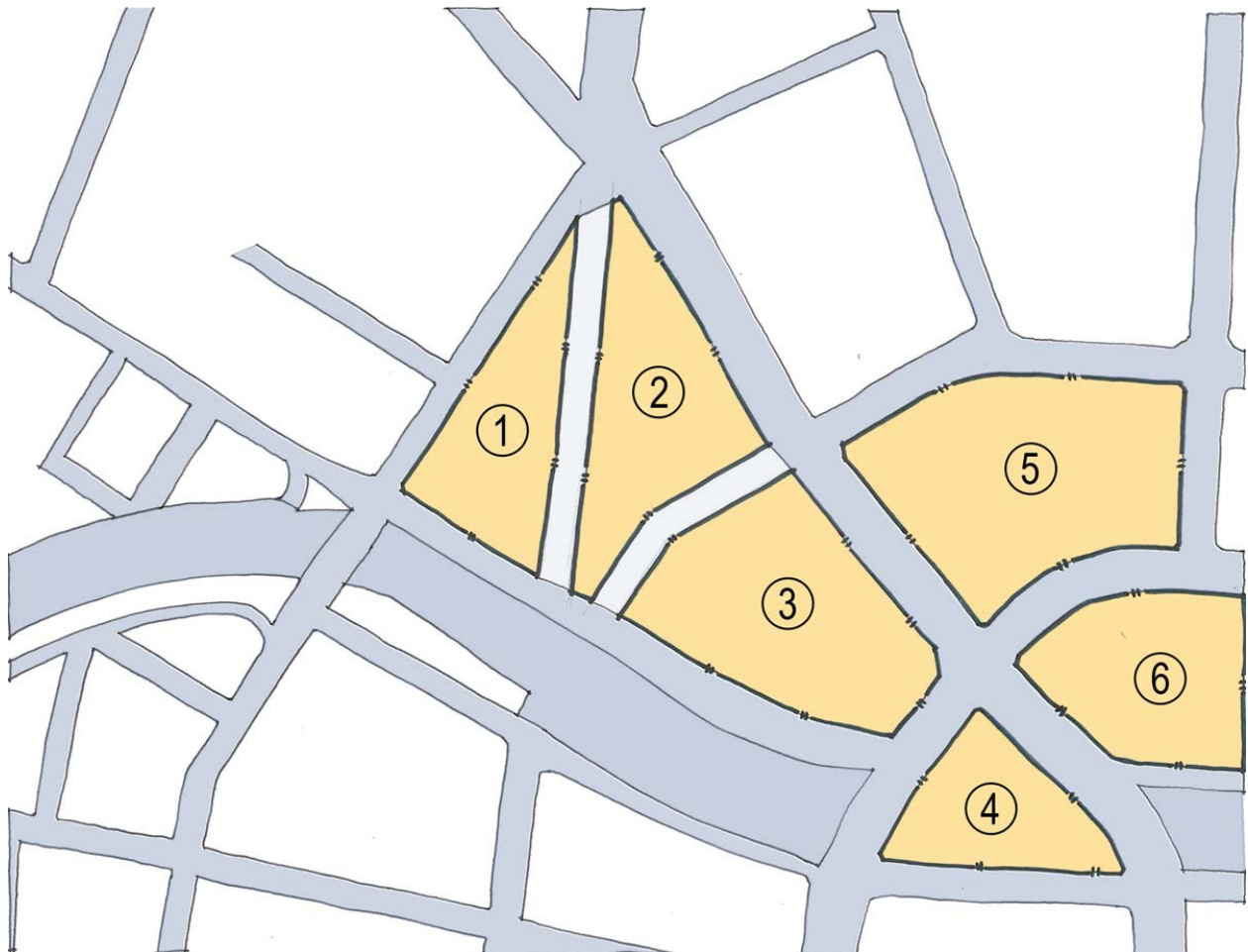


### Land Use:

The positioning of the arena on Site 2 will present the challenge of overcoming the perceived separation from downtown by the interstate, and historic under-investment in the North End neighborhood. A critical urban design feature that will make the arena feel “connected” to downtown would be the enhancement of the triangular parcel over I-84 into a “gateway” park or plaza. Developing this as an inviting public space would be a way of extending the growing vitality along downtown’s Trumbull and Main Street corridors, culminating at the front door of the arena. Safe, convenient and interesting streetscape corridors will encourage the vital pedestrian patterns between various parking destinations and the arena.

The city's new Public Safety Complex, located adjacent to this arena site, on High Street and Walnut Street, marks the first major new development north of I-84. Together with the arena, these two projects represent highly visible, significant reinvestments into the North End, opening up potential interest in other development opportunities. Compatible uses on adjacent blocks will further integrate the arena into both the downtown and the neighborhood; they will also strengthen a future I-84 park with active building edges.

Six blocks, then, are identified as desirable for a comprehensive arena development for Site 2. Blocks 1, 2 and 3 are required for the arena building itself, supporting fundamental program uses such as the seating bowl and concourse, service areas and a public lobby. Block 4 (the I-84 air rights parcel) supports a secondary – but still important – function for the arena: a public park and plaza. Because arena events attract thousands of visitors, the inclusion of a public space near the main entry serves as a crowd control device. From a thematic and cultural point of view, such a space provides an opportunity to make the arena project reflect Hartford's unique personality with public art, landscaping, lighting, etc. Blocks 5 and 6 also support a secondary function – that of an accompanying development opportunity, which could include a portion of the necessary arena parking. This block also presents important urban edges to consider: the Main Street façade facing the arena and park, and the I-84 façade facing downtown and passing highway traffic.



Development Strategy:

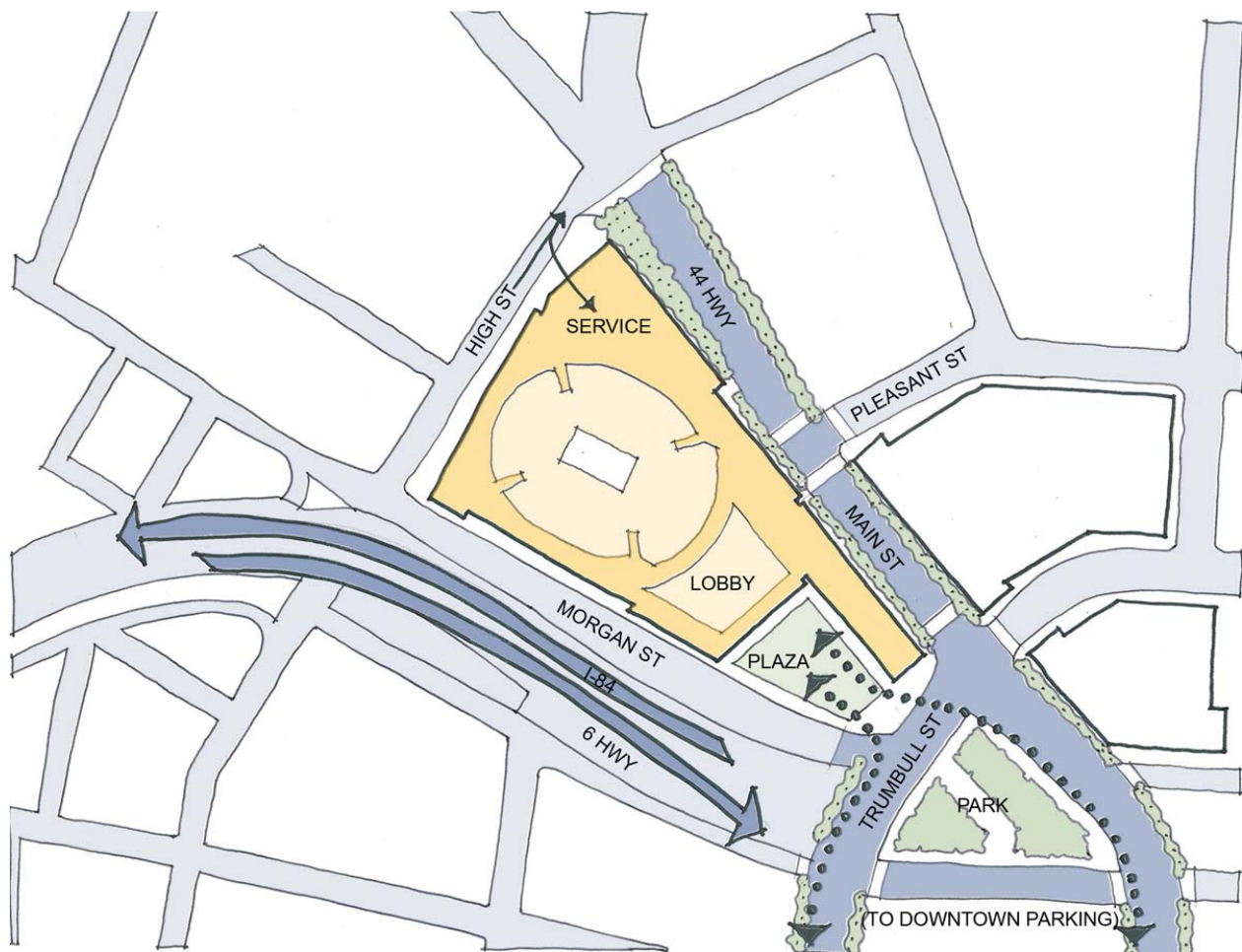
The architectural appearance of arenas have the ability to significantly enhance the image of a city, depending on how prominent its location, and how visible its building mass. Interstate visibility will be prominent on this site, with over 1,000 feet of frontage. While not in the immediate “core” of downtown, an arena location slightly separated from the tall buildings of the C.B.D. presents the ability to design public spaces – such as the plaza, lobby, and lounges – with striking views of the downtown skyline. Conversely, many downtown buildings will enjoy the new ability to look down on the new arena from the south and east. Ancillary development, together with the arena, could act as a new gateway at the juncture of Main Street and Trumbull Street, embracing the new I-85 park with connections from the North End to downtown.

Assuming that portions of the Ann Street and Pleasant Street rights-of-way are incorporated into the arena parcel, the size of the property would be sufficient to support such a building. The triangular configuration of the parcel, however, presents few options for locating the main arena footprint: the optimal site organization places the arena bowl towards the northwestern end, as illustrated below. The southeastern portion of the site, then, would be designed as the “front door”, with a public lobby opening onto an exterior plaza that connects to the I-84 elevated plaza on Block 4, and further to downtown. The “back door” with service access and functions, then, would be located either on High or Chapel Street (adjacent to the I-84 r.o.w.).



Circulation:

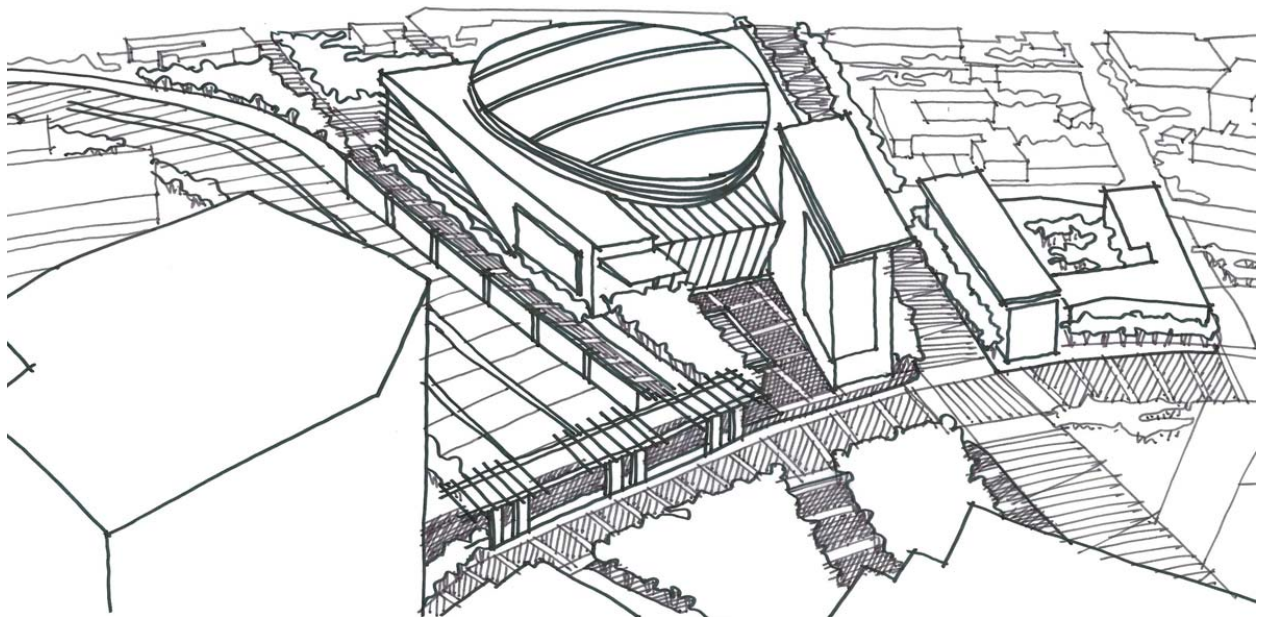
Located along I-84 with direct access to many arterial roadways, the regional access for this site is well-positioned. Since the site is only a block away from the northern edge of the downtown core, most of the event parking would utilize public and office parking lots and garages that are empty in the evenings. While not all of this parking can be counted on, the bulk of the downtown parking supply is located within a ½ -mile walk from the arena entry. A dedicated parking lot or garage adjacent to the arena will still be necessary, however, to meet competitive criteria geared for V.I.P. parking – one possible location being across Main Street on Block 5 or 6. Regional and local transit systems at Union Station represent another nearby transportation option, located approximately three blocks from the arena’s front door, or between a five- and ten-minute walk. A downtown trolley or other special-event transit/parking systems would also help to achieve a more balanced multi-modal mix, to reduce the impact on downtown roadways.



### Massing:

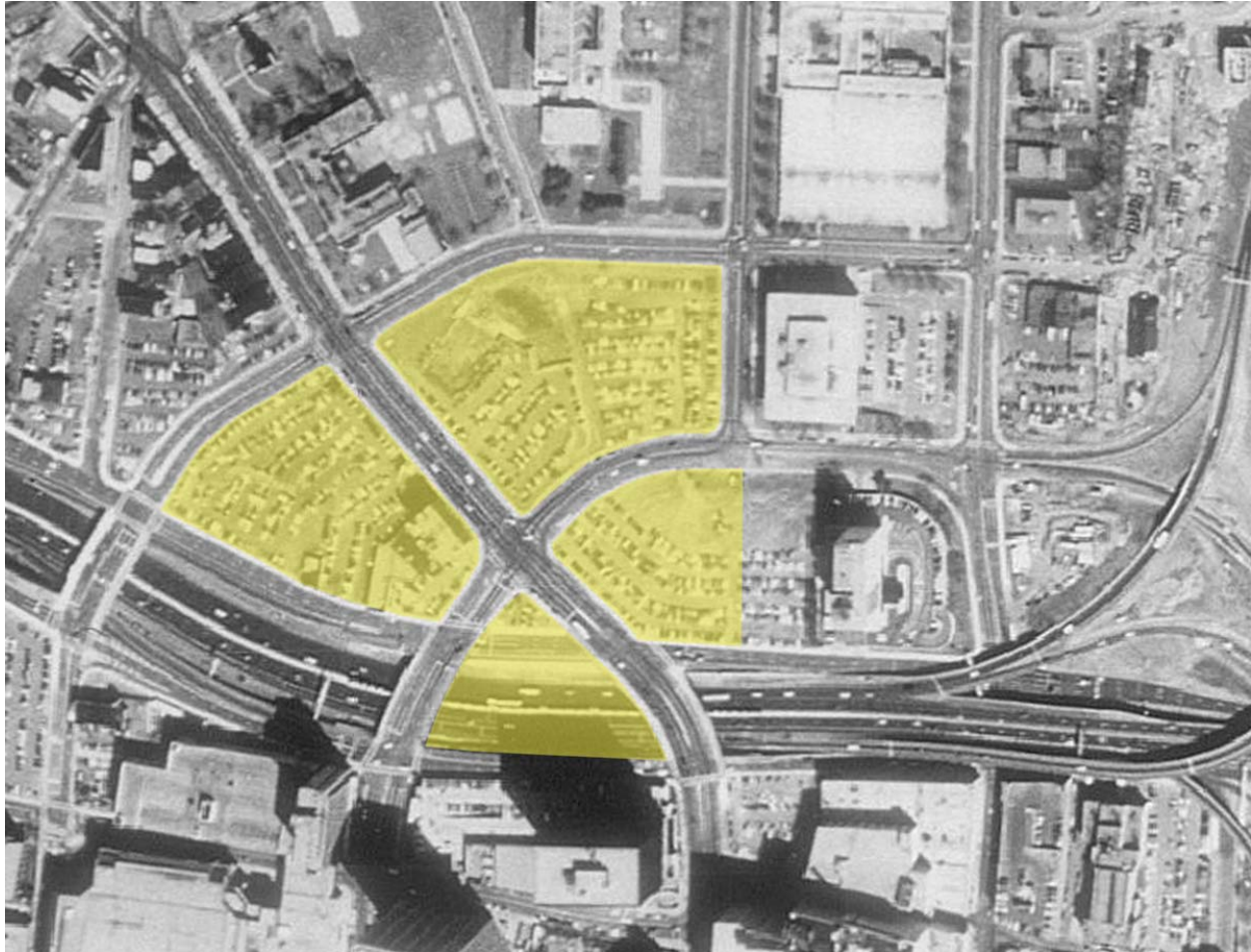
While arena buildings may be several hundred thousand square feet in total size, the various program elements and site features allow for a variety of architectural solutions within the overall composition. In the case of Site 2, an important urban design aspect is the sequence of spaces that lead visitors walking from downtown to the front door lobby. A taller building mass along Main Street would help to define the public plaza, and would also enhance the visibility of the arena complex within the downtown context and along the I-84 corridor.

Many different design concepts are possible for the edge of the building along the interstate, but an important consideration is to embrace the idea of the façade as perhaps the best opportunity for creating the building's primary "image." This could include an integrated solution of lighting and graphics, in addition to the architectural materials and massing. Ideally, this approach would extend to the vertical wall along the highway, "extending" the iconic appearance of the arena. Additionally, the streetscape improvement program along Trumbull Street could extend across the interstate, perhaps with a partially covered walkway to encourage pedestrian connections and further define the area as a northern gateway to the city.



### Site 3 (Main Street)

Like Site 2, the site bounded by Main Street, Pleasant Street, Windsor Street and I-84 represents a new arena development scenario with two very different impacts on the city. First, an arena on this site would significantly expand the perceived geographic area of the downtown core. Second, an arena located north of I-84 would trigger an interest in considering potential new uses for the adjoining blocks.



### Land Use:

The positioning of the arena on Site 3 will present the challenge of overcoming the perceived separation from downtown by the interstate, historic under-investment in the North End neighborhood. A critical urban design feature that will make the arena feel “connected” to downtown would be the enhancement of the triangular parcel over I-84 into a “gateway” park or plaza. Developing this as an inviting public space would be a way of extending the growing vitality along downtown’s Trumbull and Main Street corridors, culminating at the front door of the arena. Safe, convenient and interesting streetscape corridors will encourage the vital pedestrian patterns between various parking destinations and the arena.

The city’s new Public Safety Complex, located on High Street and Walnut Street, marks the first major new development north of I-84. The land between this building and Site 3 represents a second critical urban design challenge, offering the ability to further expand the arena