

Planning Themes



KEY TOPICS

- Promote livable and sustainable neighborhoods
- Protect the City's natural and built environment
- Enhance mobility through transit, pedestrian and bike systems city-wide
- Advance downtown's role as the region's center for commerce, culture and city living
- Promote and encourage the integration of sustainable practices



DRAFT 11/5/09

FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

SUBJECT TO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

Vision Statement

Hartford is home to over 124,000 residents, headquarters for many of the country’s largest insurance companies, and the State Capitol of Connecticut. Everyone who lives or works in Hartford wants it to thrive. To that end, we envision the Hartford of the future to be:

“A clean, safe, culturally diverse community where residents can get an excellent education and become a valuable part of the workforce. Families and individuals can find affordable, attractive housing, both Downtown and in vibrant neighborhoods, and have access to efficient transportation. Natural and historic resources are well-protected, and sustainability is at the forefront of all activities. Hartford’s government works with residents and the business community to leverage local investments and regional opportunities, and advance downtown’s role as the region’s center for commerce, culture and city living.”

Planning Themes for One City, One Plan

One City, One Plan is guided by five (5) broad planning themes. The themes provide the framework for the plan and are woven throughout the chapters of the POCD, tying together the numer-

ous strategies and goals described in the document. Following is a description of the theme, the goal related to the theme, and list of objectives designed to reach the goal.

Livable and Sustainable Neighborhoods

Hartford’s neighborhoods are vital to the success of the city. This is where the vast majority of residents live, go to school, shop, worship, recreate, and interact. It is important for these places to be livable, with good quality housing, abundant open space and recreational facilities, efficient community services, great school facilities, ample employment, and low levels of crime. They must also be sustainable physically, socially and economically. For instance, neighborhoods must be places where environmental impacts are minimized, resources are used efficiently, the carrying capacity of the infrastructure is not exceeded, diversity is treasured, citizens are engaged and involved, and the local economy is vibrant.

In order to achieve livable, sustainable neighborhoods, diverse sectors must work together. For example, the quality of schools is connected to the quality of housing, which is affected by the quality of transportation options, etc. Activities in these and other areas can have positive effects on the livability and sustainability of Hartford’s neighborhoods.



A house located on Allen Place



Frog Hollow Perfect 6’s

One City, One Plan– POCD 2020



Tree Planting



The Mark Twain House

Goal: Promote Livable and Sustainable Neighborhoods

- Aggressively combat crime in impacted neighborhoods.
- Prevent the spread of blighting influences by emphasizing code enforcement initiatives, thereby compelling property owners to clean up and improve their properties.
- Promote on-site ownership of residential structures to limit the potentially negative impacts of absentee property management.
- Enhance the cohesiveness and appearance of neighborhood centers by improving signage, landscaping, lighting and other urban design features.
- Ensure access to public space by visually connecting existing parks and open space to the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Provide for community service activities appropriate to each neighborhood.
- Enhance mobility by linking neighborhoods and employment areas via greenways, plazas, sidewalks and other pedestrian connections.
- Prioritize maintenance, repairing, and replacing of public infrastructure.
- Work towards “Housing for All” by ensuring a variety of housing types at multiple price points
- Work with the Board of Education to improve neighborhood schools.
- Develop job opportunities for neighborhood residents.

The Natural and Built Environment

Hartford’s visual character is defined by both its natural landscape and its built environment. The City’s most notable natural feature is the Connecticut River. There are also 2,000 acres of parkland, the Park River, and several wetland areas. Given Hartford’s almost completely developed nature, the visual character of the City is dominated by built form elements. These elements, such as homes, schools, hospitals, office buildings, roads and highways, are the building blocks of Hartford’s neighborhoods. As one of the oldest continuously settled communities in the United States and with almost four centuries of history, Hartford has a significant number of historic structures and neighborhoods. Protecting the City’s natural & built environment has a significant impact on the character of the City and the vitality of the neighborhoods.

Goal: Protect the City’s Natural and Built Environment

Parks, Open Space & the Natural Environment

- Emphasize the value of urban forestry and tree programs for improving the City’s appearance, improving energy efficiency and air quality, providing wildlife habitat and providing recreational opportunities.
- Market Hartford’s riverfront and open space system as major quality of life amenities to attract and retain commer-

cial and residential investment.

- Work with CRCOG to develop a long-term regional vision for growth management and open space preservation.
- Work with the MDC on the Clean Water Project to reduce sewage discharges into the Connecticut River and completely overhaul the region’s sewer system over the next decade.
- Enhance the environmental quality of the Connecticut River, provide greater public access to the riverfront and develop additional environmentally-sensitive recreation uses.
- Maximize the value and utility of the existing system of parks, recreational facilities and open space resources throughout Hartford and add to the open space system as resources and opportunities permit.
- Improve the quality of existing parks by making them inviting, well-maintained, safe and more accessible.
- Partner with the Park River Watershed Revitalization Initiative and the Farmington River Watershed Association to expand public awareness of the watershed boundaries and to improve water quality within them.
- Protect identified floodplains and riparian corridors by controlling development in these environmentally sensitive areas.

Built Environment

- Emphasis the rehabilitation of the City’s multifamily rental housing stock, while conducting selective demolition of residential structures which cannot be salvaged.
- Revise the City of Hartford’s zoning regulations to change the measurement of residential density from “persons per acre” and “families per acre” to “dwelling units per acre”.
- Review and make necessary revisions to existing housing policy documents so that they are adaptable to and reflective of current market conditions.
- Promote the rehabilitation and/or construction of new housing near significant public and private reinvestment projects.

Historic Preservation

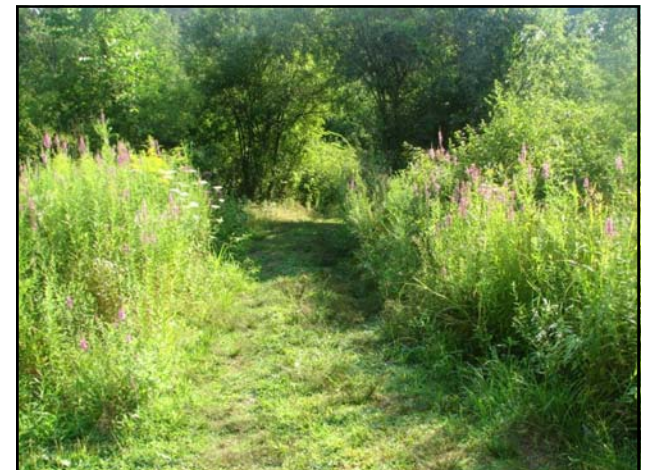
- Build upon the successes of Hartford’s Historic Preservation Ordinance by:
 - ◆ Educating property owners of the merits of historic preservation.
 - ◆ Working with builders and developers to incorporate historic preservation into renovations and new construction of buildings.
 - ◆ Aligning the city’s demolition ordinance with the historic ordinance.

Mobility: Transit, Pedestrian and Bike Systems

The City of Hartford is a major transportation hub due to its role as the State Capital and the region’s economic powerhouse as well as its

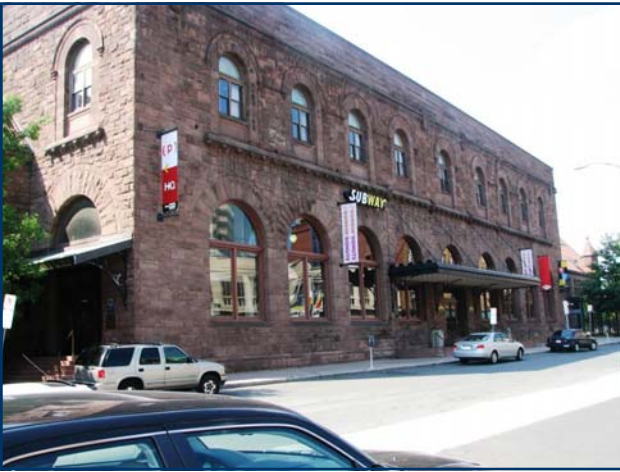


Riverfront Rangers



North Branch of the Park River Trail

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Union Station



Charter Oak Landing

proximity to Boston and New York and other New England locales. The presence of Interstates 91 and 84, Connecticut Routes 4, 5 and 44, train service at Union Station, the path of Connecticut River, a fully developed system of busses and a pedestrian-friendly street grid have all influenced the City of Hartford's transportation system in many ways.

The loose gridiron arrangement of the majority of Hartford's streets provides a strong web of connections that can be utilized by pedestrians, bicyclists, and buses as well as automobiles. These connections should be strengthened by improvements to the streetscapes, pathways and roadways, as well as better integration of transportation systems with land use. For example, the transit oriented development (TOD) planned for the Union Station area will be vital for the success of the planned New Britain Hartford Busway and the NHHS Commuter Rail. TOD around Union Station will help create a vibrant pedestrian friendly Downtown with easy access to mass transit options while enhancing mobility throughout Hartford.

Goal: Enhance Mobility Through Improvements to Transit, Pedestrian and Bike Systems City-Wide

Pedestrian & Bicycle Systems

- Provide a seamless pedestrian transportation system that enables bicycling and walking, connecting origins and destina-

tions, and effectively linking to the public transportation system within Hartford and the larger region.

- Pursue the development of various trails and greenways around the City, with an emphasis on creating linkages with regional and national trail systems, and with connecting Hartford neighborhoods and residents with employment centers, shopping center, and parks both in Hartford and in the surrounding communities.
- Leverage the East Coast Greenway (ECG) along the South and North Branches of the Park River and Hartford's Riverfront to connect key links in and around Hartford.
- Develop appropriate bicycle infrastructure (bike lanes, bike shoulders, wide curb lanes, or parallel multi-use paths) along major commuter routes, commercial and employment centers and transportation hubs.
- Improve pedestrian connections

Transit

- Promote mass transit and Union New Station as the HUB of the City's transit system.
- Develop urban commercial centers into transit activity. Transit stops should be intensive activity areas.
- Work collaboratively with neighboring cities and towns, the Capitol Region Council of Governments and the State of

Connecticut to evaluate and develop other regional mass transit systems.

Roadways

- Encourage carpooling among employees in the Downtown area by offering discounted parking rates for multiple occupant vehicles at Hartford Parking Authority facilities.
- Explore the creative use of car-sharing programs such as Zipcar.
- Evaluate the synchronization of traffic signals in the City. Make improvements where necessary to reduce the number of intersections where vehicles are forced to idle for extended periods of time.
- Employ access management tools to promote traffic safety and maintain the “carrying capacity” of Hartford’s arterial streets.
- Review one-way street patterns to improve connectivity.

Mixed Modes

- Encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation including mass transit, pedestrian and bicycle. Encourage car pooling and ridesharing programs during peak commuter times.
- Improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation around Union Station. Several of the major local roadways leading into the Union Station area have design, circulation and traffic congestion conditions that impede the development of Union Station as a

convenient multimodal transportation hub.

- Connect Hartford’s Downtown to activity centers, urban neighborhoods as well as surrounding communities.

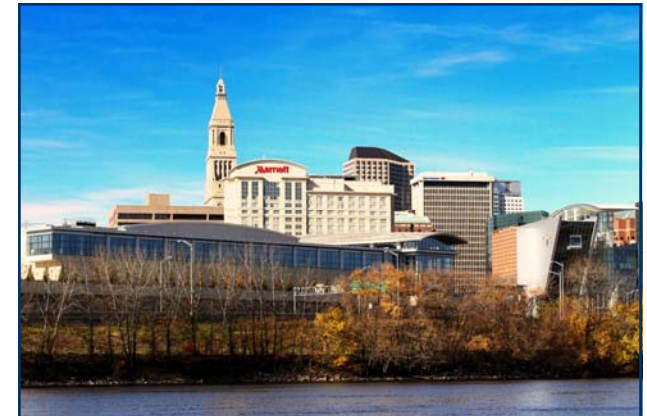
Downtown as the Region’s Center for Commerce, Culture and City Living

Although Hartford has a large workforce (80,000 jobs in Downtown) very few workers reside in Hartford. Downtown Hartford has a relatively small number of housing units when compared to downtowns of similar size. Despite recent additions of new housing units, including several high-end apartment complexes, there is still a gap between housing and the employment base. Closing this gap by creating downstairs shopping and entertainment with upstairs living and working creates a diverse, vibrant & attractive atmosphere for resident to work, live & play.

Goal: Advance Downtown’s Role as the Region’s Center for Commerce, Culture and City Living

Transportation

- Centralize the public transportation system around Union Station, creating a multi-modal transit center that includes supportive transit-oriented mixed use development.
- Improve circulation around Union Station. Several of the major local roadways leading into the Union Station area have design, circulation and traffic congestion conditions that impede the development



The Hartford Riverfront



The Old Statehouse

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Statehouse Square



242 Trumbull Street

of Union Station as a convenient multi-modal transportation hub .

- Continue to support and promote the development of the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield commuter rail service and the Hartford-New Britain Busway.

Housing

- Promote a balanced mix of residential development in Downtown Hartford, preferably as part of larger mixed use projects that will contribute to the City's tax base while also adding residents to support Downtown businesses.
- Integrate residential rehabilitation and new construction into the neighborhood revitalization plans and redevelopment plans for identified sections of Hartford.

Arts & Culture

- Promote and support existing major events Downtown.
- Seek additional attractions to Downtown, such as minor league baseball, entertainment complex, multiplex cinema, etc.
- Emphasize historic and cultural richness of Hartford utilizing the renovated, expanded Old State House and other historic sites for the development of a historic walking tour.
- Integrate I-Quilt ideas to build connectivity among arts and culture institutions.

Redevelopment

- Implement redevelopment initiatives in keeping with the three recently completed redevelopment plans for Downtown North, Downtown West II and Constitution Plaza East.
- Develop urban commercial centers into transit activity. Transit stops should be intensive activity areas.

Integrating Sustainable Practices

Sustainability can be defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." By its very nature, Hartford's urban fabric is much more sustainable than other forms of development. With its high-density development patterns and mixing of uses, the City makes much more efficient use of its land than traditional suburban development or "sprawl" development patterns.

The City of Hartford has been actively working to improve environmental quality and promote sustainable practices, and to identify future strategies for accelerating the "greening" of Hartford. Hartford has recently undertaken a number of renewable and "green" energy initiatives. Hartford's goal of becoming a greener city will benefit residents and businesses while attracting investors and visitors to the City.

"Sustainable" relates to more than just the

Environment and “green” buildings. Economic sustainability is the City’s ability to produce a workforce that can meet the employment needs of the current local and regional economy but also be flexible enough to adapt to troubling economic conditions. That is why sustainable education and economic development practices must also be adopted.

Goal: Promote and Encourage the Integration of Sustainable Practices

Energy

- Strive to increase annually the percentage of energy needs supplied by clean and renewable energy, with an ultimate target of achieving 100% attainment from clean energy sources by 2030.
- Retrofit municipal buildings with energy efficient equipment and features, where appropriate and feasible. Ensure that new equipment purchased meets appropriate energy efficiency standards.
- Complete energy audits of municipal facilities to determine where improvements can be made to increase energy efficiency. Development a City-wide energy management plan. Raise energy usage awareness among municipal employees and encourage appropriate energy conservation practices in municipal office and facilities.
- Replace incandescent traffic signal lights and street lights with energy saving LED

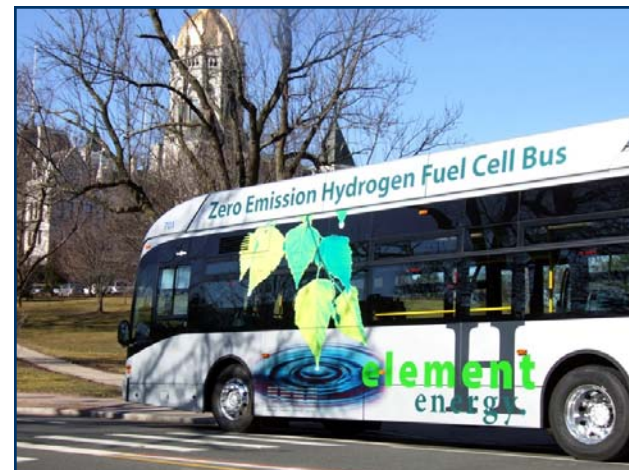
lights.

Transportation

- Transition the City’s fleet of vehicles from gasoline and diesel powered vehicles to ones that operate using alternative fuel sources such as natural gas, electric power or hydrogen fuel cells.
- Investigate the feasibility of replacing older City school buses with buses that use alternative fuel sources.
- Encourage the development of additional Zipcar locations around the City, particularly in the Downtown, at the hospitals and at the insurance company campuses.
- Encourage carpooling among employees in the Downtown area by offering discounted parking rates for multiple occupant vehicles at Hartford Parking Authority facilities.

Green Building

- Provide incentives to encourage the development of green buildings.
- Require that all new commercial construction 50,000 square feet or greater in size be LEED Certified.
- Require that all municipal buildings constructed 5,000 square feet or greater in size must be LEED Certified.
- Revise the City’s existing zoning and building regulations to encourage more green building systems and components, such as rain gardens, green roofs and permeable



This Zero Emission Hydrogen Fuel Cell Bus is part of the Star Shuttles fleet, and the first such bus in New England.



Installation of a Green Roof at the Betty Ruth and Milton B. Hollander Foundation Center

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Pervious ground covering at the Sports & Medical Sciences Magnet School



Single-stream recycling Downtown

paving materials to help reduce storm water runoff.

Waste

- In conjunction with the Connecticut Resource Recovery Authority (CRRA) and the Metropolitan District (MDC), work to develop a regional Waste Exchange Program.
- Extend the “Go Green Use Blue” single-stream recycling program citywide.
- Continue the Hartford “Gold Leaf” composting program.
- Require recycling in all City agencies and offices.
- Reduce littering and illegal dumping through aggressive enforcement and fines for violators.

Environmental Health

- Over the next decade, complete a City-wide tree canopy assessment and targeted tree planting program to improve air quality, lower air temperatures and enhance the aesthetics of Hartford’s street system.
- Improve air quality by reducing the number of vehicles traveling on Interstate 84 and Interstate 91 by focusing future investment on public transit
- Fund and support lead paint abatement and remediation programs.
- Work to provide lead-free “safe homes” for families impacted by lead poisoning during remediation work.

- Improve public awareness of asbestos and asbestos-related health and environmental issues.
- Fund data collection, public outreach, awareness and education programs regarding asthma.
- Work with the State of Connecticut and private developers to identify and remediate brownfields in the City to eliminate potential environmental and public health problems and to return such properties to active economic use.
- Ensure that the issue of environmental justice is a key consideration in future land use, development and policy decisions in the City of Hartford.
- Support State level legislation regulating the use of herbicide and pesticides in the maintenance of municipal grounds and facilities.

Economic Development

- Assist merchants to purchase and rehabilitate their buildings where they are presently located, thereby making it an owner-occupied business and stabilizing the area.
- Assist community development corporations to enter into employment-generating enterprises by providing technical assistance, financial support, and market research with the goal of making them self-sufficient.

- Work with regional bodies (CRCOG, Capitol Region Growth Council) to market the region, especially the City, as a location for both labor-intensive manufacturing and high growth, high tech industries.
- Provide technical assistance to encourage the expansion and retention of Hartford businesses through real estate referral, financial and incentive counseling, Business Plan development and resolution of operation problems.



Planting trees improves air quality