



# What is the future of I-84 in Hartford? Part II: A Citizen's Forum

Presented by  
Hub of Hartford Steering Committee  
June 12, 2008  
Hartford Public Library

# Hartford before highways



1920's



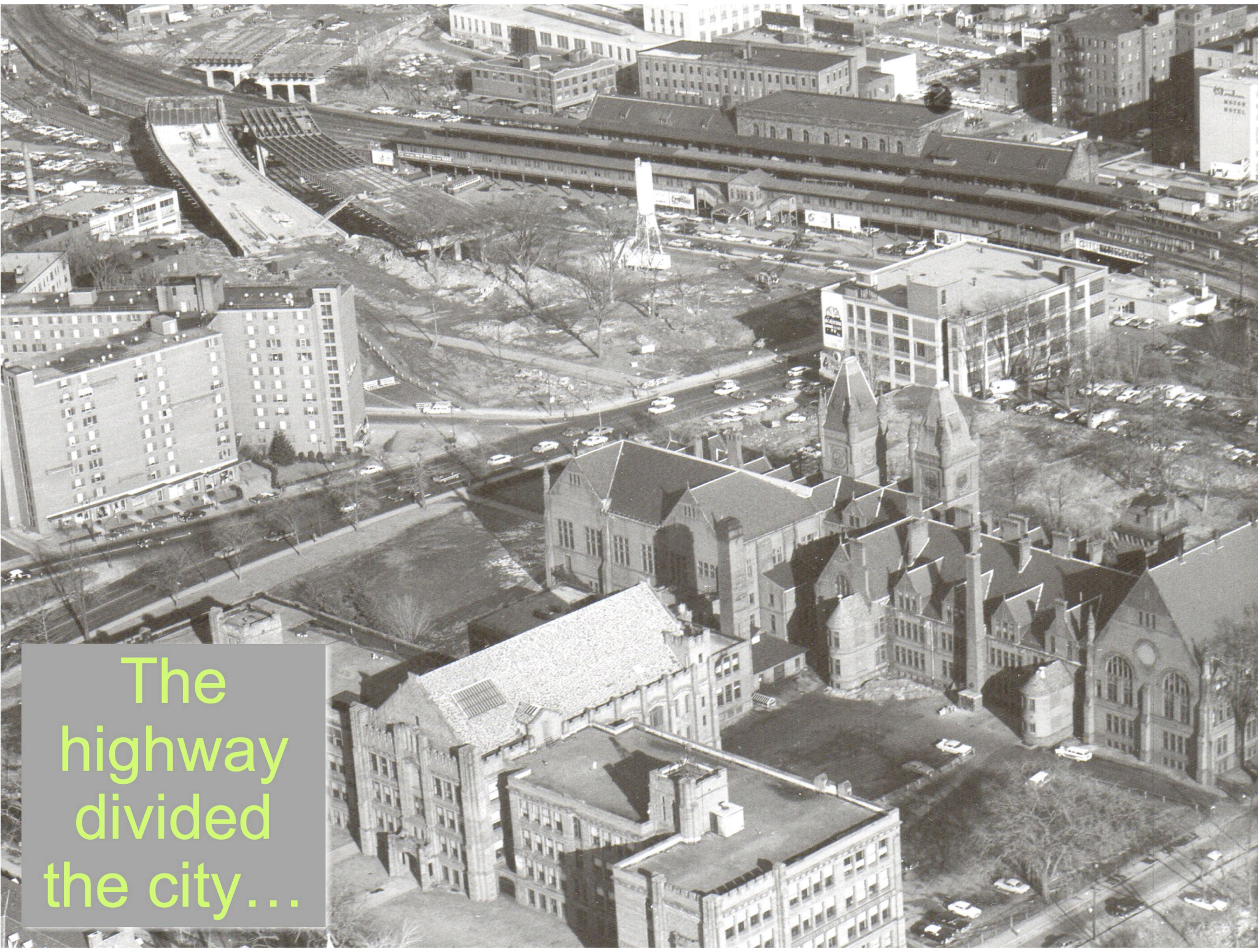
1940's

MAIN ST. HARTFORD, CONN.





The fabric of  
the city was  
intact



The highway divided the city...



Union Station

Asylum

Farmington

...separated Asylum Hill from Union Station & Downtown

An aerial photograph of Hartford, Connecticut, showing a complex highway interchange. The State Armory is a large, light-colored building with a gabled roof on the left. The Hartford Courant is a large, multi-story brick building in the center. Aetna is a modern, multi-story building on the right. Broad St and Flower St are major roads running through the interchange. The image shows a mix of urban infrastructure, including parking lots, roads, and buildings.

State Armory

Hartford  
Courant

Aetna

Broad St

Flower St

...separated Capitol area from Asylum Hill





**...split & isolated neighborhoods,  
& consumed large tracts of land.**

The viaduct -- the elevated section -- has created undesirable surface parking lots

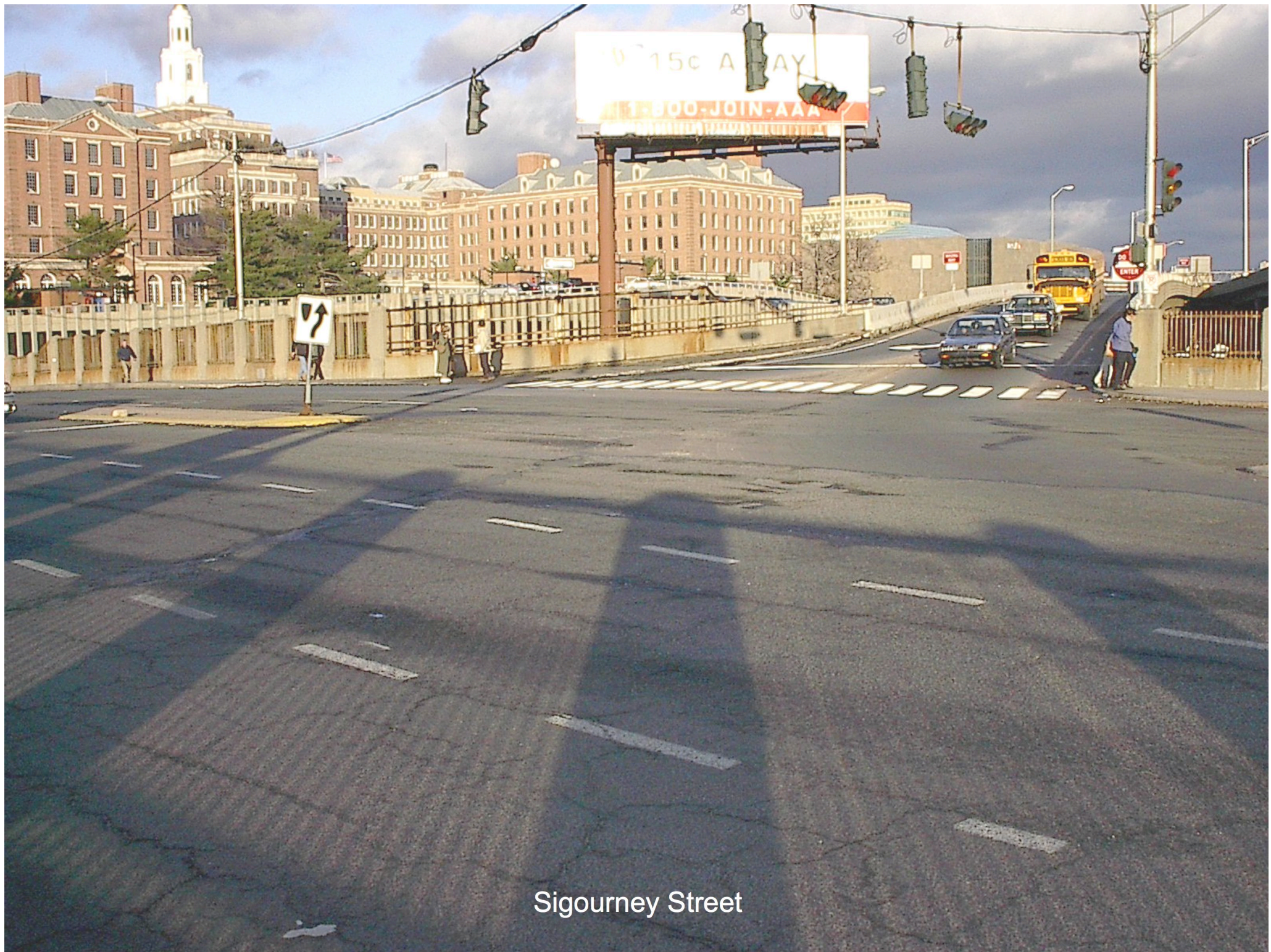
Sigourney St.





Broad Street

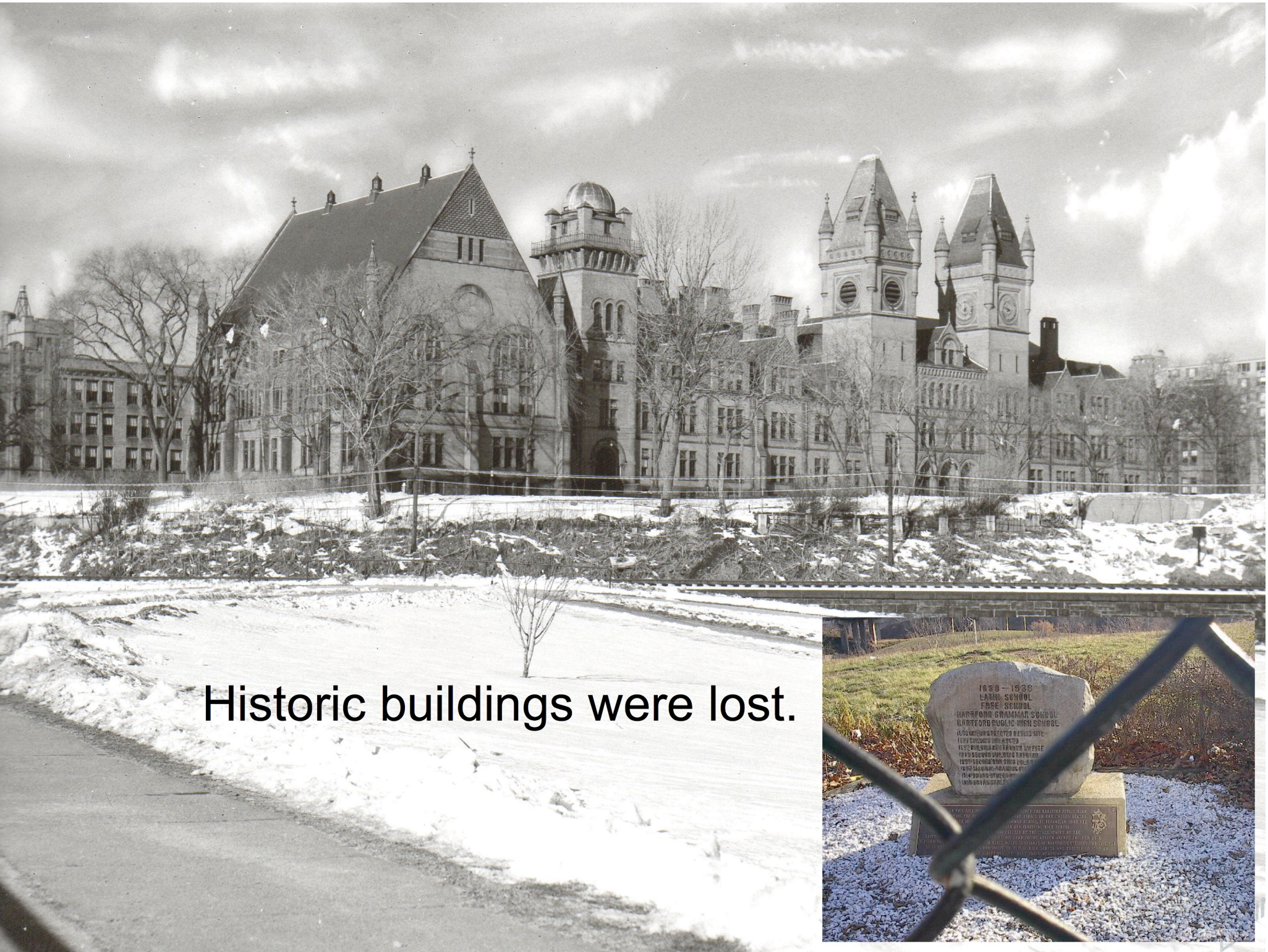
The Streets have become highway ramps.



Sigourney Street

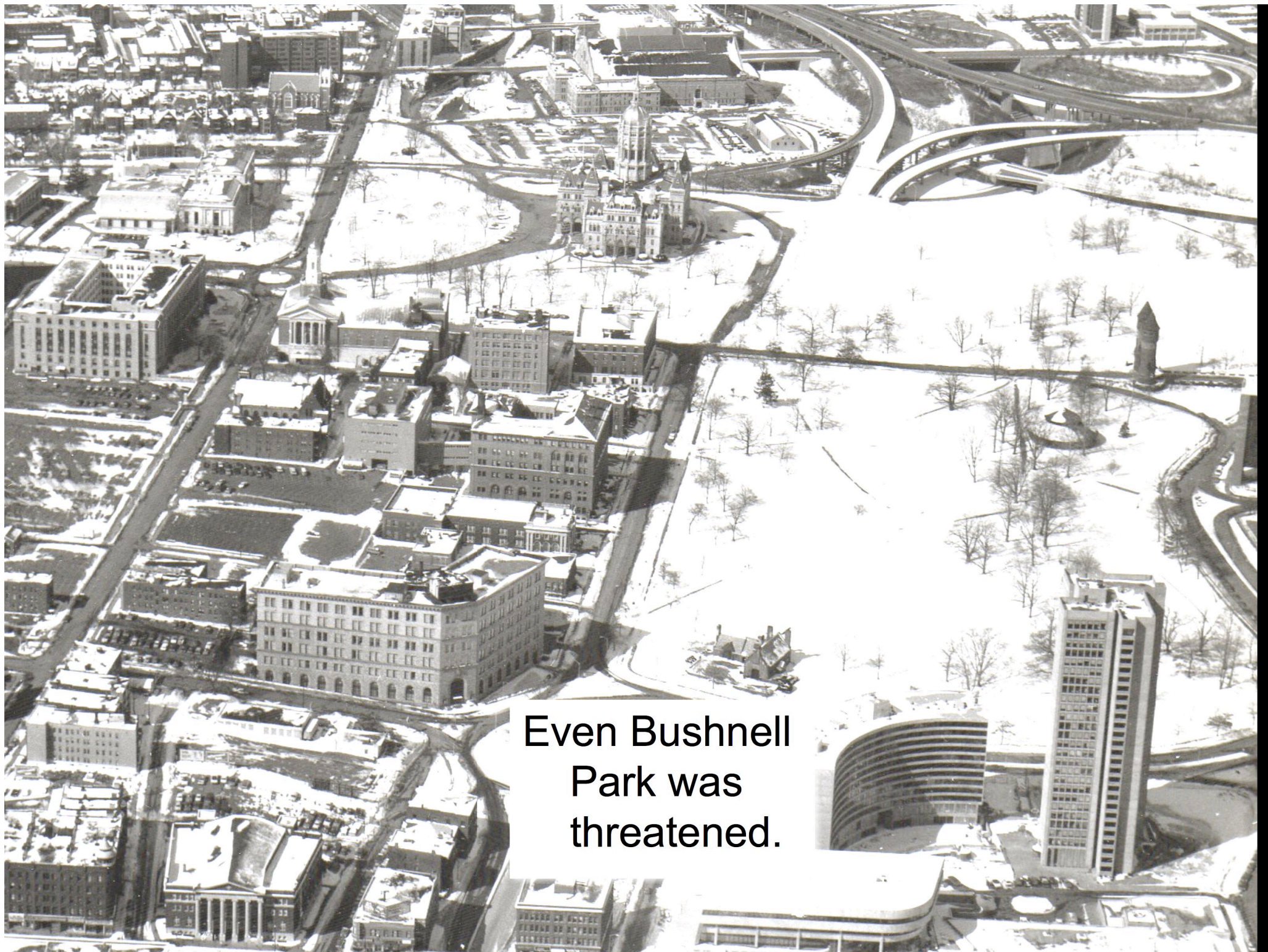


Asylum Street

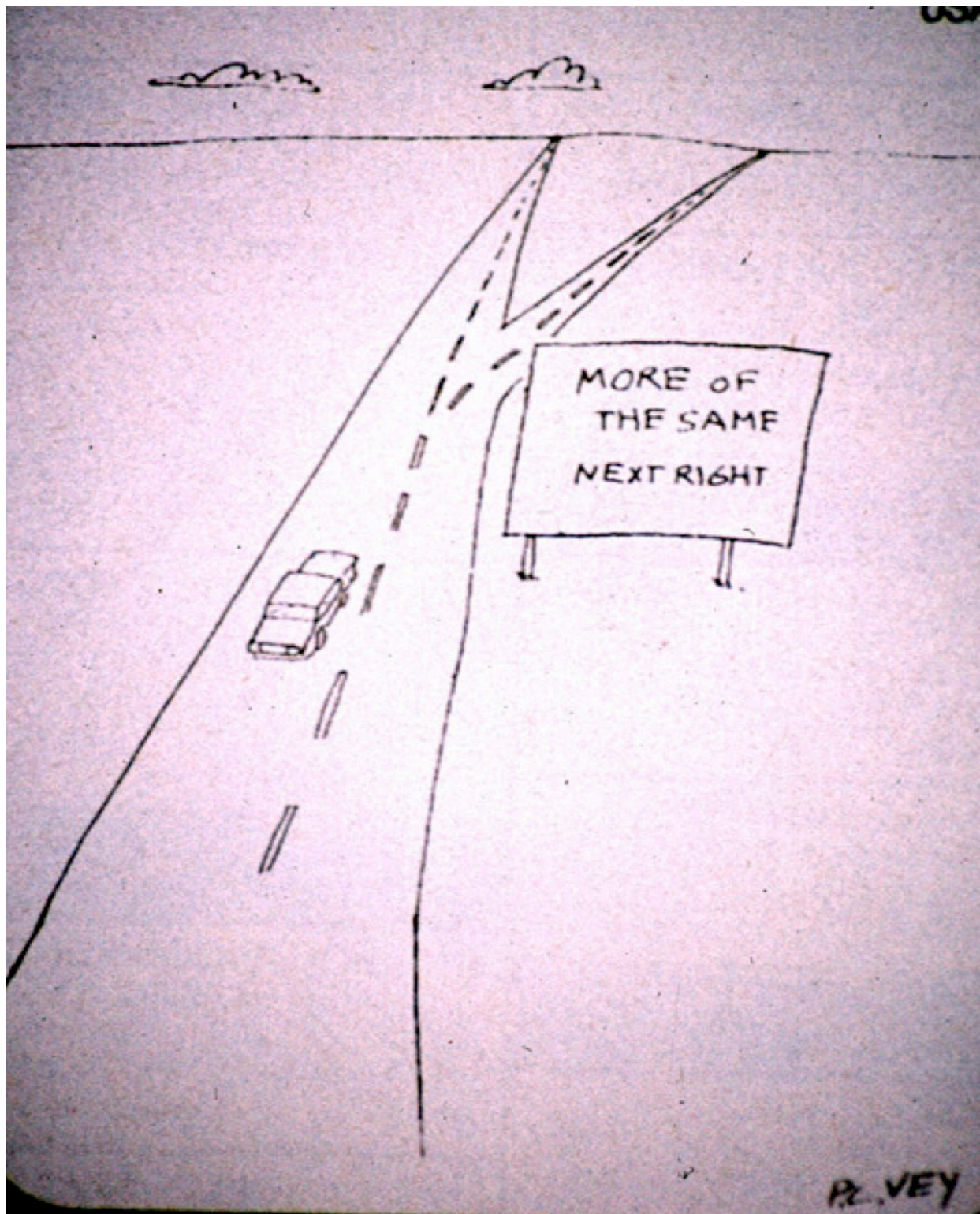


Historic buildings were lost.





Even Bushnell  
Park was  
threatened.



Now, the highway is almost 50 years old and deteriorating. What happens next?



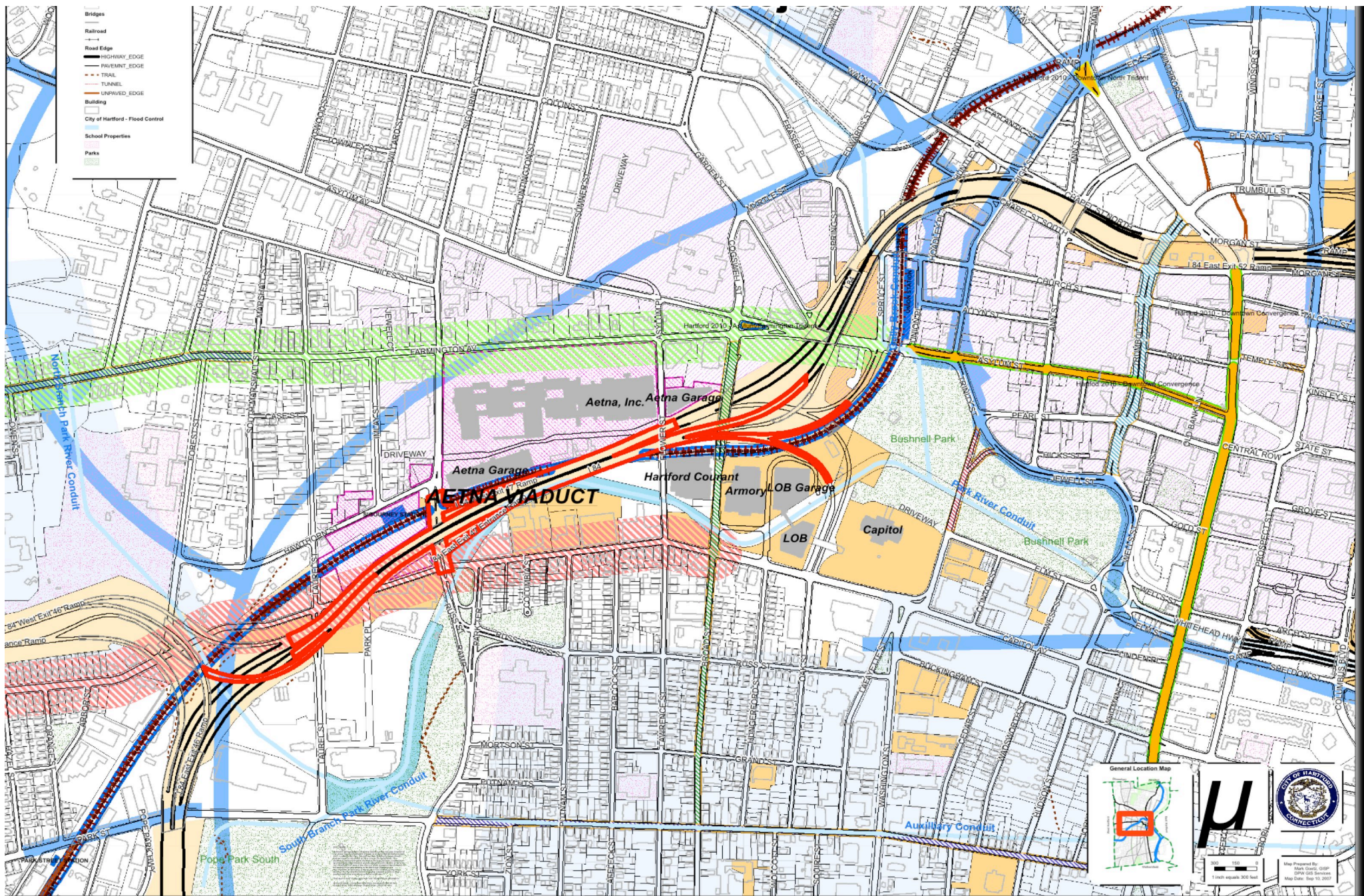


## THE OPPORTUNITY:

To re-imagine... “the entire central area of the city with a new vision worthy of its historic setting, while building a new economic engine based on the tenets of responsible growth, improved regional transportation, and inter-modalism”.

The Hub of Hartford Steering Committee





Fourteen separate community, economic development, transportation, business and environmental projects currently overlap the I-84 Viaduct

# The Vision:

- **“Using the redesign and de-emphasis of I-84 as the central theme for change, the Hub of Hartford can become a lively and walkable, mixed-use, mixed-income urban place, and a regional crossroads where business, government, community and recreational uses integrate seamlessly in a historic context supplemented by compatible new development”.**

**The Hub of Hartford Steering Committee**



**Some would say this is just a fantasy...but we've done it before:**



**Remember this?**

**The Old State House from the Riverfront, 1990**

During the reconstruction of I-91, a section the highway was lowered

- to gain access to the Connecticut River from downtown
- to allow creation of a new riverfront park & plaza



1994





Before



After





**So --**

**How do we achieve a similar transformation of the Hub of Hartford?**

# First step

- Try to understand what our options are.
- Comprehensive & thoughtful study process that engages the community & all the stakeholders.

# First step: **Hub of Hartford Study**

## “Integrated Transportation & Land Use Study”

### ■ Evaluate options for rebuilding or replacing the I-84 viaduct

- rebuild in place
- replace with boulevard
- depress the highway
- bury the highway
- divert or reroute some traffic
- others

*Do just pieces of these or possibly combine elements*

### ■ Identify opportunities for improving the community

- to remediate adverse community impacts from the existing viaduct
- to create more livable neighborhoods & a more livable city
- to foster business growth & economic development in the city

# Hub of Hartford Study

## First step in a two-step “planning” process

### Phase 1: preliminary assessment

- Viaduct replacement options
- Community impacts & opportunities
- Outcome: set of recommended options & evaluation criteria for phase 2

### Phase 2: more detailed engineering & cost assessment

- Conducted by DOT with guidance from phase 1

# Hub of Hartford Study

## Why now?

### Viaduct built in 1965

- Nearing end of useful life
- DOT anticipates replacement in next 10-15 years

### Replacement decision:

- Presents great opportunity
- Also requires long lead time
- Major projects often take 10-15 years to process:
  - planning – environmental assessment – design - construction

### Hub study: early start assures we fully explore opportunities

- requested by City & agreed to by DOT

# Basic Organization of Hub Study Process:

**Project funder:** City of Hartford

To be supplemented with some federal funds

**Partners:** City, neighborhoods, businesses, DOT, CRCOG

**Administrator:** CRCOG

Hire consultant, process invoices, manage technical work

**Project oversight:** Hub of Hartford Committee

**Steering** committee

# Hub Steering Committee

City of Hartford (*committee chair - Bob Painter*)

Hartford Business Community

Aetna

The Hartford

Hartford BID

Neighborhoods

Asylum Hill

Frog Hollow

West End

CT Department of Transportation

Capitol Region Council of Governments



## General Scope of Work for Study:

1. Research & collect data
2. Identify alternative concepts
3. Develop evaluation criteria
4. Refine & assess alternatives
5. **Build consensus** on alternatives to advance to phase 2

Multiple alternatives will be advanced

**Community involvement** - *key part of study*

Continue efforts like today's forum

Newsletters, charrettes, website, mailing list, ....

## What kinds of alternatives might be evaluated?

Wide range: rebuilding, depressing, removing highway

Examples: *what other cities have done*

# Pittsburgh's Tenth St Bypass: *Depressed freeway*



# Pittsburgh: Tenth St Bypass

surface  
street

walkway



depressed  
highway

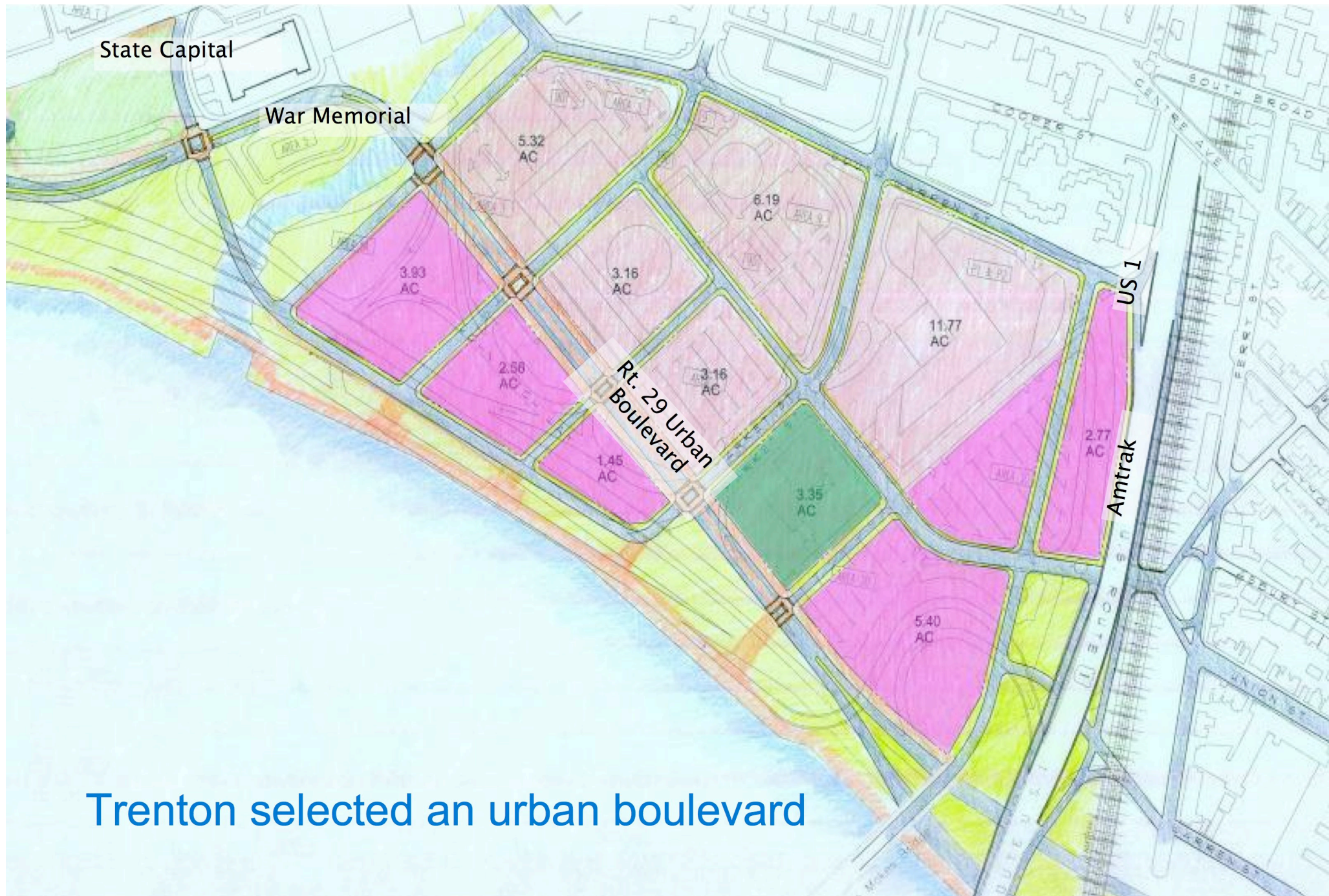


# Trenton's Route 29: *Replace with boulevard*

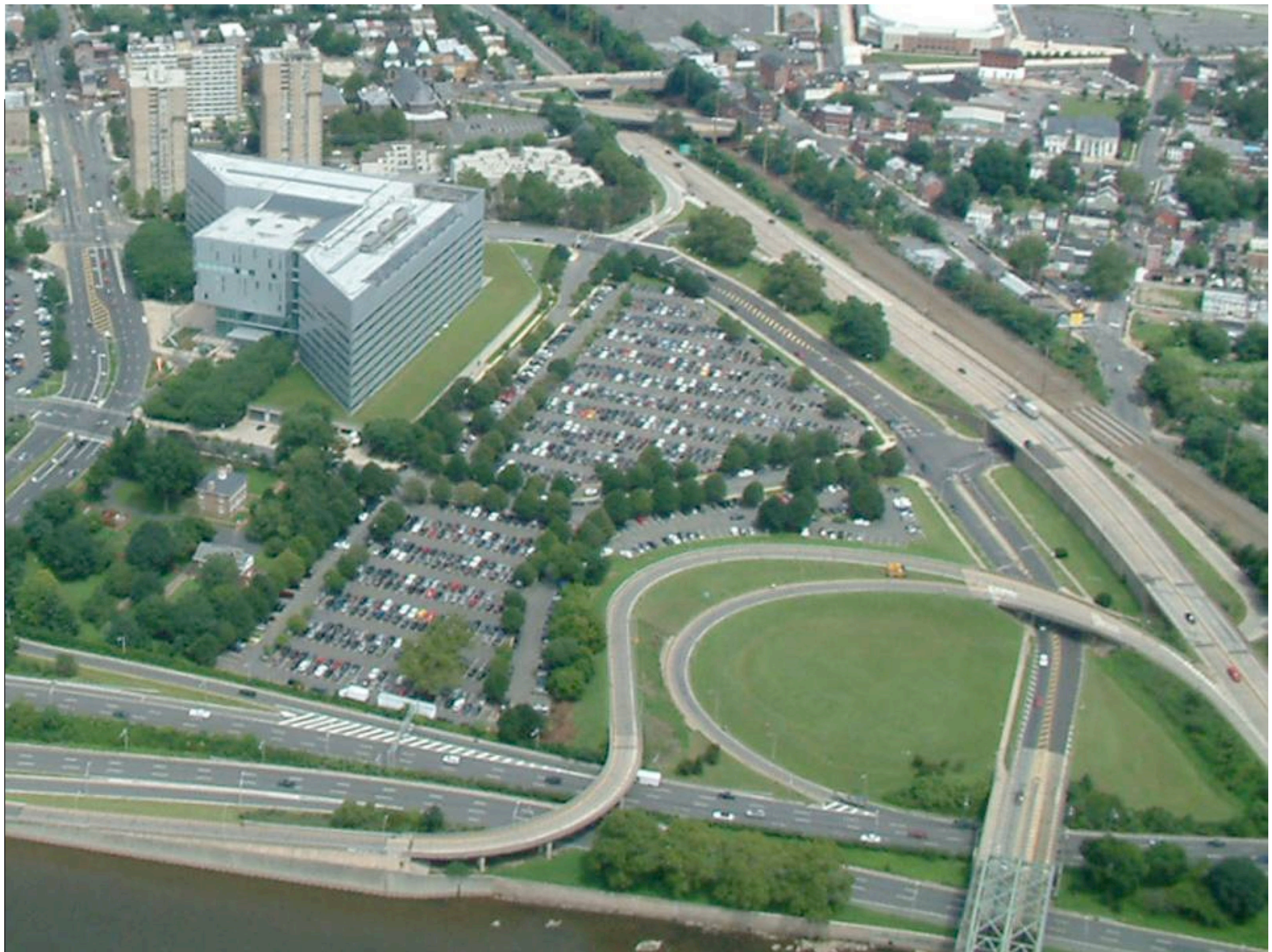


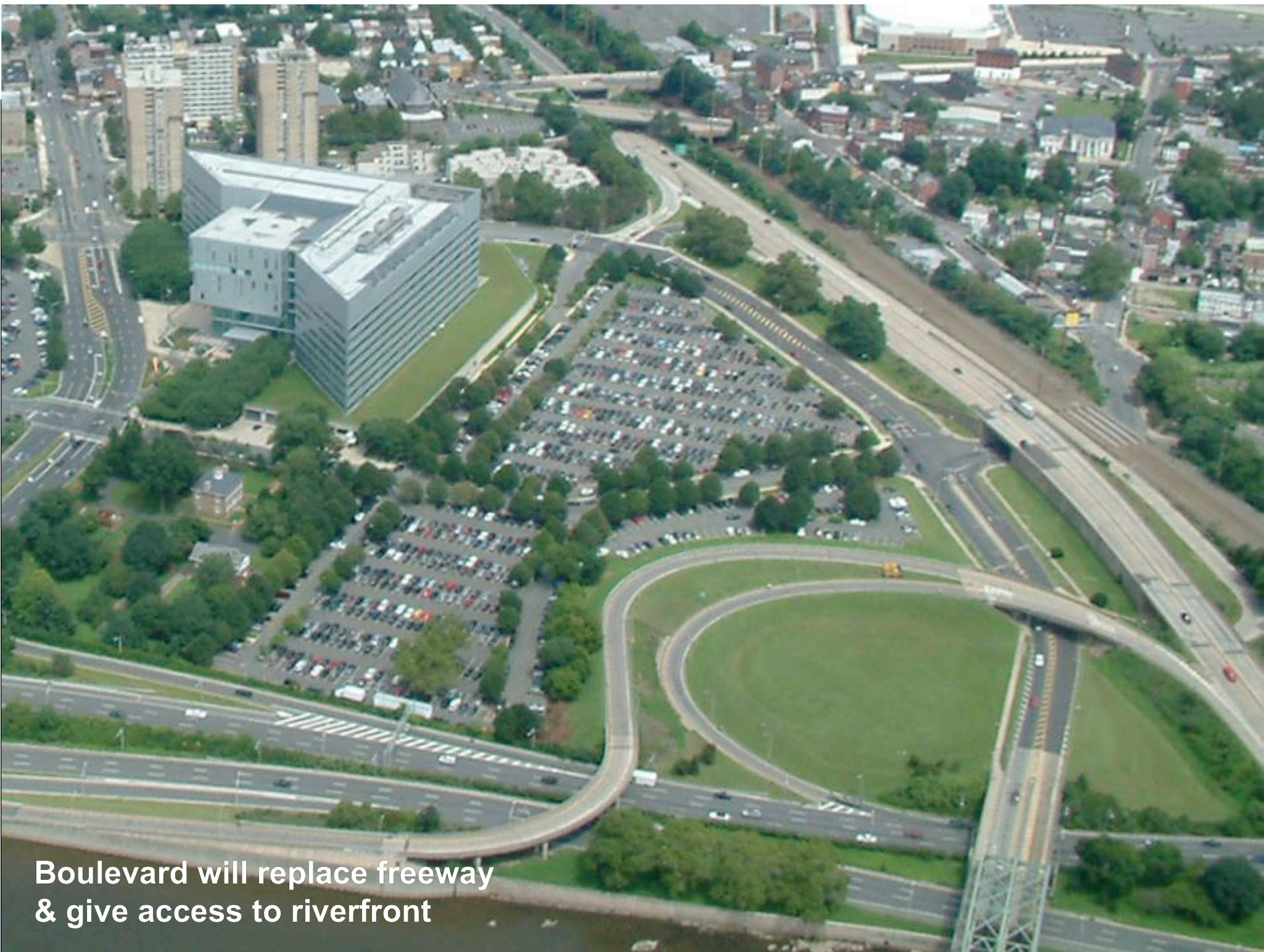
Route 29 Freeway

# Linking road planning with land use planning



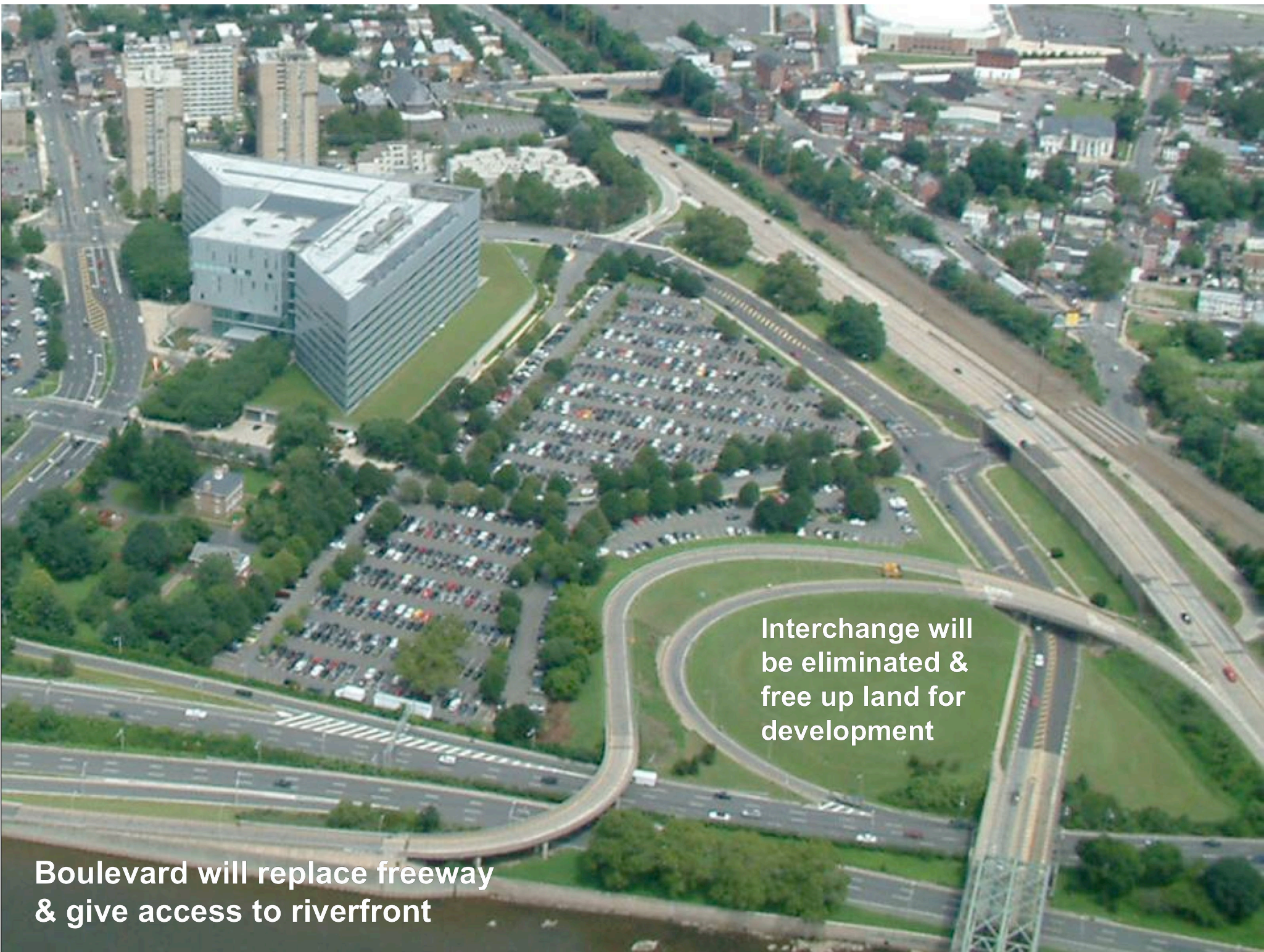
Trenton selected an urban boulevard





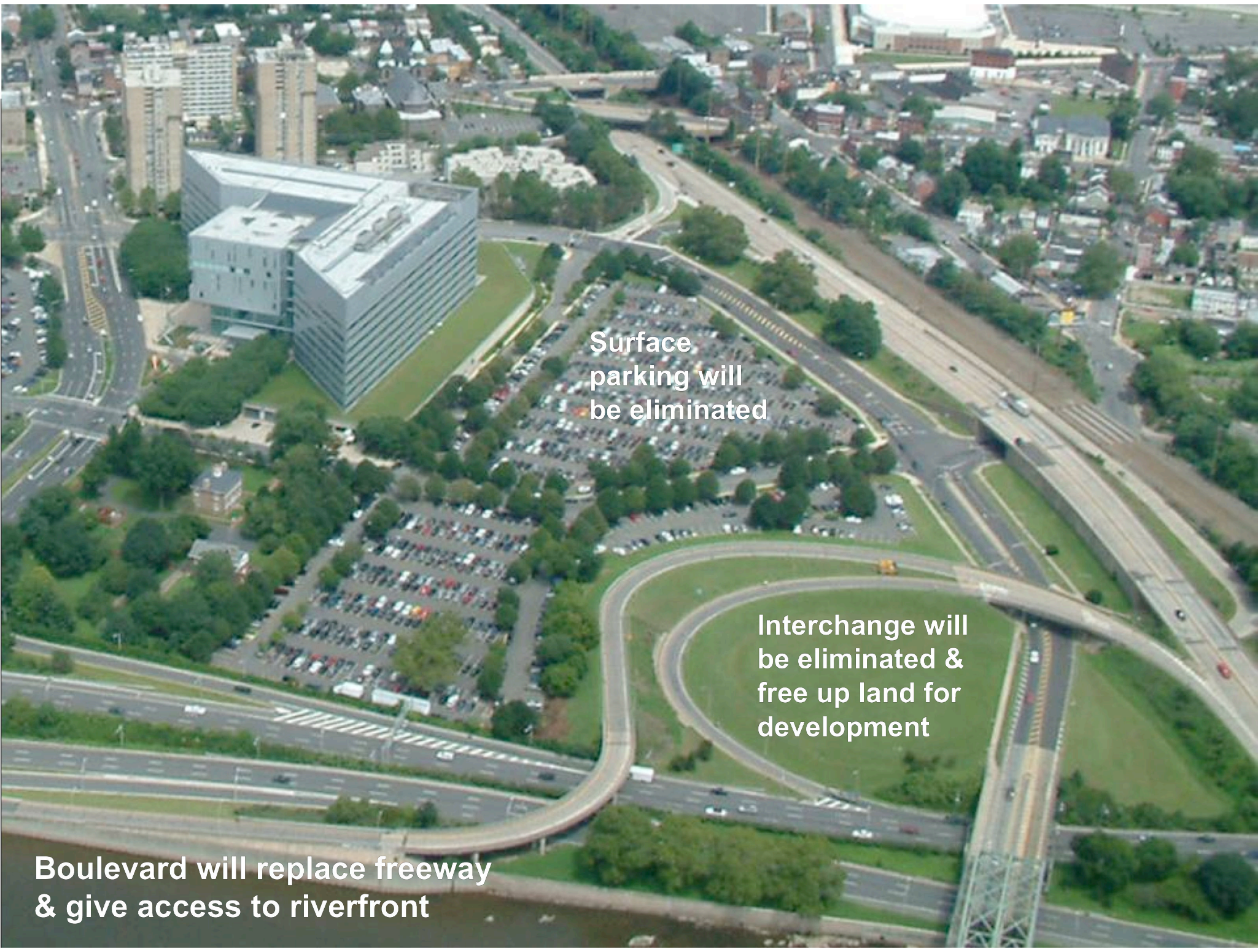
**Boulevard will replace freeway  
& give access to riverfront**





Interchange will be eliminated & free up land for development

Boulevard will replace freeway & give access to riverfront



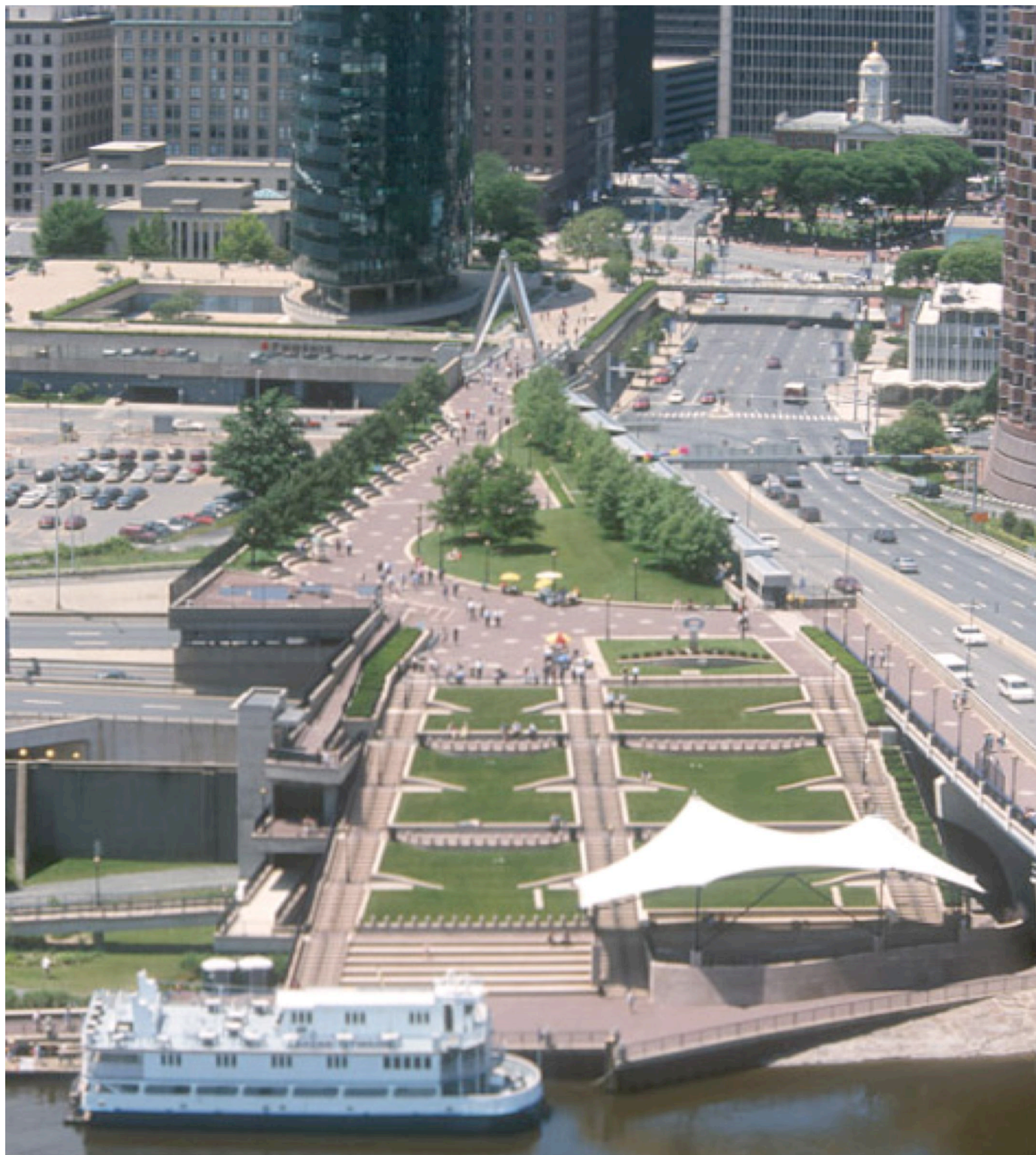
Surface parking will be eliminated

Interchange will be eliminated & free up land for development

Boulevard will replace freeway & give access to riverfront



**Sometimes  
a vision  
can  
become  
reality**



Sometimes  
a vision  
can  
become  
reality