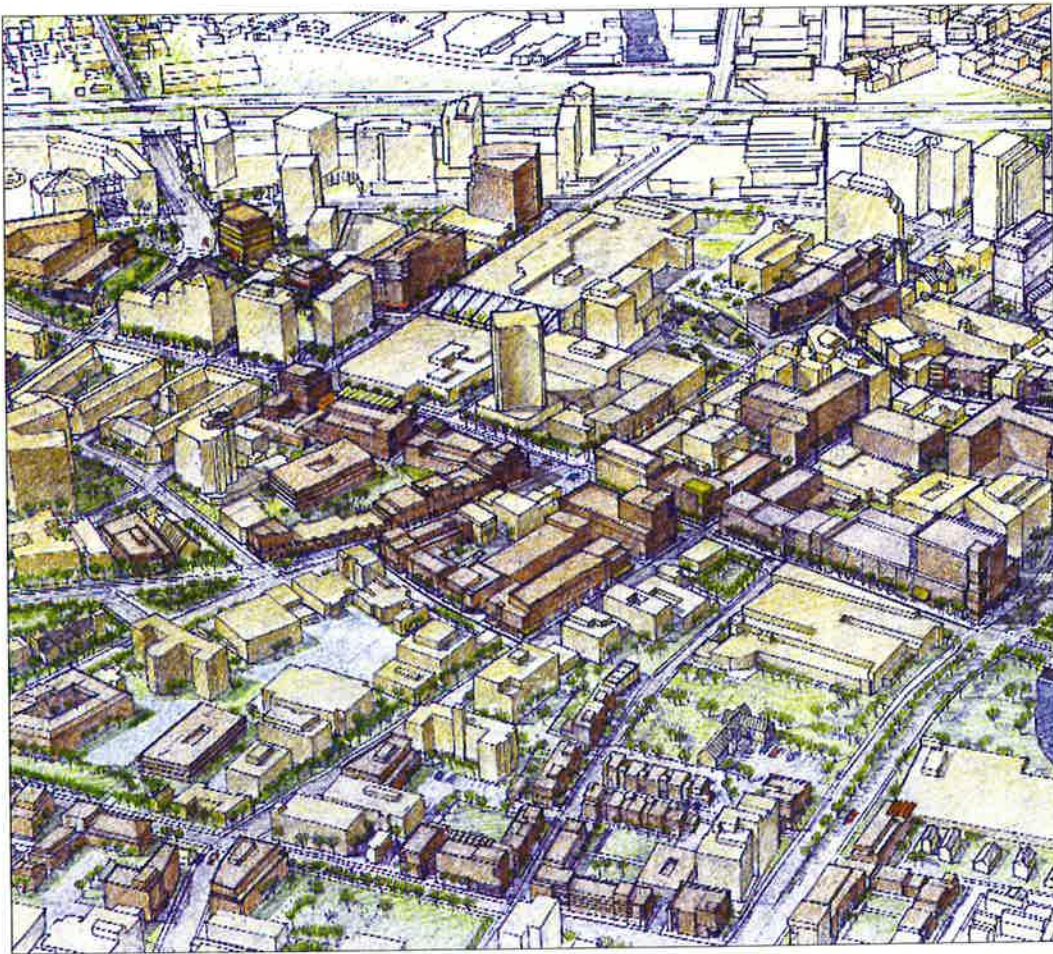


STAMFORD MASTER PLAN 2002  
GROWTH MANAGEMENT STUDY

**URBAN DESIGN REPORT**

SEPTEMBER 2003



Regional **Plan** Association  
CT  
NJ  
NY

Abeles Phillips Preiss & Shapiro, Inc.

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This report was initially issued and dated November 2002. This reissue corrects a variety of typographic errors and includes only the following substantive changes:

Additional cross-referencing of the design studies throughout the book were added to the map on page ii.

Throughout the book, the distinction has been made between the portion of East Main west of the railroad trestle (discussed in Chapter II as one of the "Radial Corridors") and the portion of East Main east of the trestle (discussed in Chapter II as one of the "Edge Corridors"). This is now called "US 1 (East Main)".

Similarly, throughout the book, the distinction has been made between the portion of West Main east of Jackie Robinson Park (discussed in Chapter II as one of the "Radial Corridors") and the portion of West Main west of Jackie Robinson Park (discussed in Chapter II as one of the "Edge Corridors"). This is now called "US 1 (West Main)".

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# INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## **URBAN DESIGN, GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND THE FOUR GOALS**

This urban design report is one of three foundations for the larger Growth Management Study which describes the interaction of three sets of issues:

- **Economic development** – how much new employment and population growth there may be over the next twenty years.
- **Traffic and transit** – how residents and workers will travel to and around Stamford.
- **Urban design** – where Stamford should grow and what should new development look like.

In order to understand the consequences of growth, the Growth Management Study modeled three futures – slow, trend and high growth - and for each of these possible futures, policy recommendations are made.

In the context of Growth Management, Urban Design is not so much an aesthetic exercise as a strategic land use policy intimately related to the Four Goals of the City-wide Policies Report. Stamford can only solve its traffic problems and protect Neighborhood Quality of Life by accommodating a diverse range of housing and commercial developments in configurations and locations that support transit. Thus, the urban design recommendations in this report, and as summarized in the City Beautiful and Downtown sections of the City-wide Policies Report, are important because they insure that these new developments will reinforce and improve the physical quality of the neighborhoods. The urban design recommendations are also important because they model future development in the Downtown which, by virtue of its ample capacity and accessibility to transit, is the centerpiece of any "smart growth" management plan. In order to support Stamford's goals for economic and social Diversity, the urban design study identifies and models a complete range of development sites, both in the downtown, and in the industrial districts. Finally, the Urban Design report includes recommendations for increased access to well-designed parks and open spaces.

It is important to note that design is itself a tool for controlling growth as two countervailing forces are at work: On the one hand, the Urban Design Study supports growth by illustrating the ways in which future growth can be accommodated in Stamford. On the other hand, the ambitious agenda described here for controlling growth in terms of location, configuration and appearance, all act to slow growth by increasing development costs.

i. Map of Stamford, Connecticut

**AREA-SPECIFIC DESIGN STUDIES  
IN THIS REPORT**

**DOWNTOWN**

- 1. Downtown - Chapter I

**ROADWAY CORRIDORS**

**Radial Corridors**

- 2. E. Main St. - pg. 49
- 3. Elm St. - pg. 53
- 4. Atlantic St. - pg. 57
- 5. W. Main St. - pg. 61
- 6. W. Broad St. - pg. 65

**Edge Corridors**

- 7. Washington Blvd. - pg. 70
- 8. US-1/E. Main St. - pg. 71
- 9. Tresser Blvd. - pg. 72
- 10. US-1/W. Main St. #1 - pg. 73
- 11. US-1/W. Main St. #2 - pg. 74

**High Ridge and Long Ridge Roads**

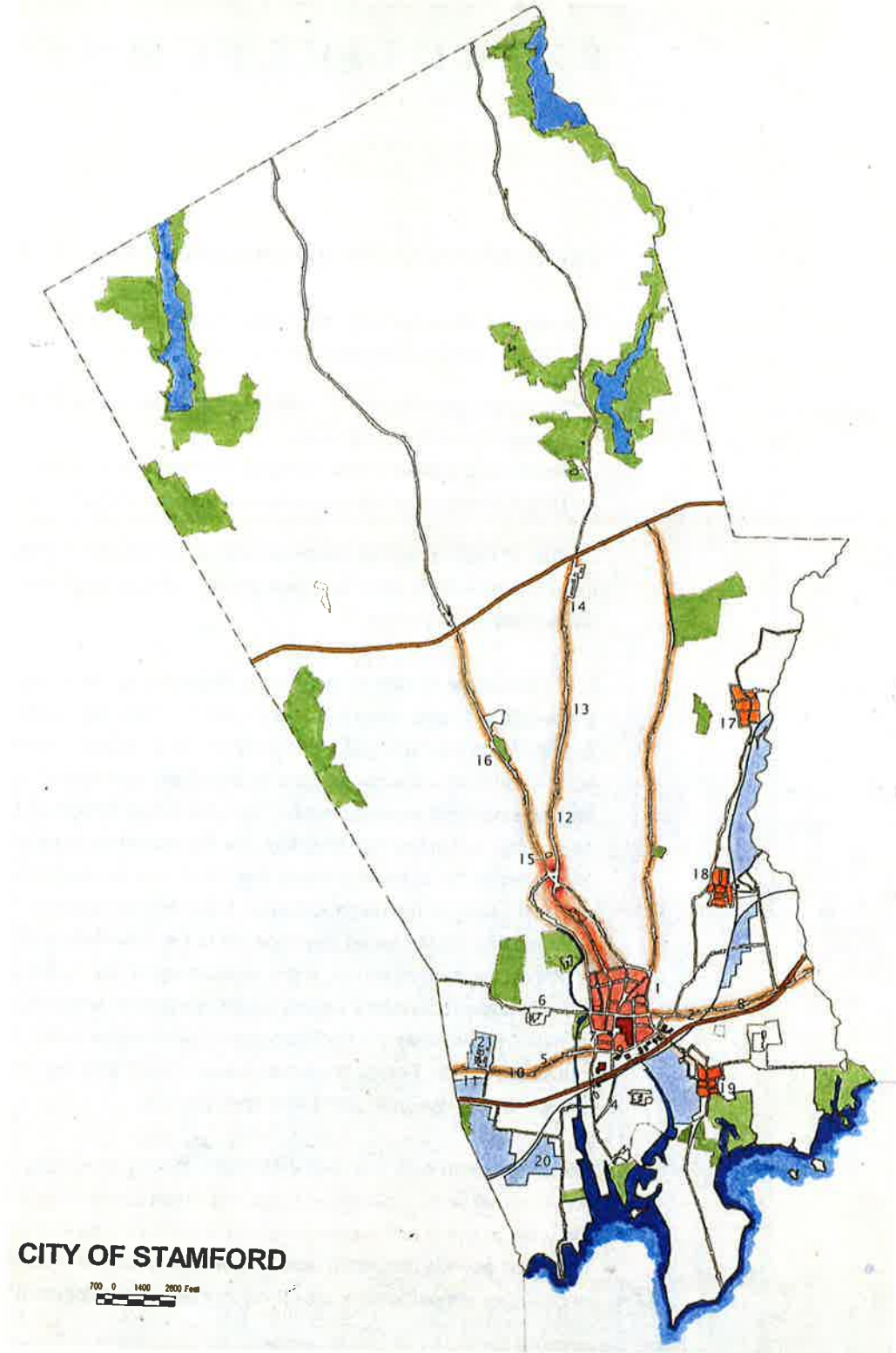
- 12. High Ridge Rd. #1 - pg. 78
- 13. High Ridge Rd. #2 - pg. 79
- 14. High Ridge Rd. #3 - pg. 80
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**NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS**

- 17. Springdale - pg. 90
- 18. Glenbrook - pg. 92
- 19. Shippan - pg. 94

**INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS**

- 20. Waterside - pg. 110
- 21. Cytec - pg. 112

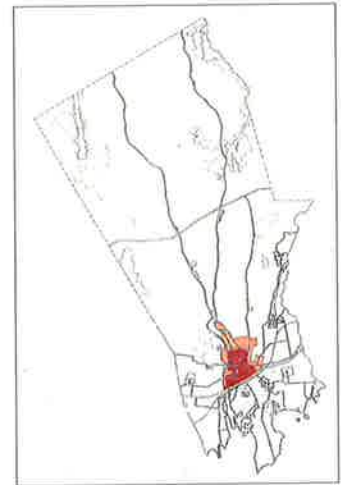


The key recommendations summarized below, and explored in detail in this special report, can be found primarily in the City Beautiful and Downtown sections of the City-wide Policies Report.

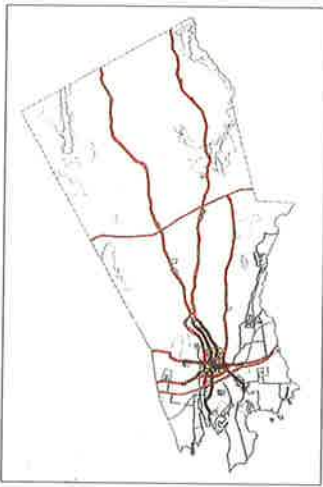
#### **Chapter I:**

#### **Reinforce the design and identity of the “greater downtown”**

A well designed downtown is a shared resource for all Stamford residents and it is the centerpiece of any growth management strategy for the city. The Stamford downtown has evolved with two centers of gravity: One center of gravity is created by the highway-scale developments along the I-95 corridor, including Tresser Boulevard. The other center of gravity is the original pedestrian core, still centered around the intersection of Atlantic Street and Broad Street. Some of the concepts in the existing Master Plan and zoning, including the boundaries of “downtown”, the definitions of “CBD” and “collar” areas, and the strategies for amenity bonuses linked to those definitions, should be re-aligned to reflect this reality. Other major dimensions of this initiative include the following:



- Reestablish Main Street, from the Mill River Park to Elm Street, as an integral part of the downtown pedestrian network, including a real connection through the Town Center Mall.
- Make the physical design of downtown more coherent by establishing normative height ranges and by managing transitions in scale between new developments and the existing neighborhoods in and around the downtown. Building height and bulk should reinforce the edges and identity of downtown.
- Create design guidelines for the remaining soft sites in downtown. These have been identified and modeled as part of the Growth Management study.
- Promote the long-term redevelopment and redesign of the eastern gateway to the downtown defined by the intersections of Elm, Main and Broad Streets.
- Weave the “green infrastructure” of the city into the downtown and link the existing open spaces to each other with an aggressive and comprehensive landscaping plan.



## Chapter II:

### Reinforce the role that the major roadway corridors play in organizing the city

In Stamford, the road network is made up of corridors of different kinds: The most important are the original “radial corridors” that historically have extended from the pedestrian core of the downtown into the adjacent neighborhoods. These include Elm Street, East and West Main Streets, Broad Street, Atlantic Street and the Bedford Street/Summer Street pair. There are also “edge corridors” that define the edges of the downtown – Tresser Boulevard to the south and Washington Boulevard to the west. These function less as neighborhood streets and more as through-connectors, primarily to I-95. Finally, there are the High Ridge and Long Ridge Road corridors that organize the neighborhoods between Bulls Head and the Merritt Parkway.

These different kinds of corridors, which together can create the armature for a comprehensible and well-organized city, each require their own set of strategies. Major dimensions of this initiative include the following:

- Develop streetscape, landscape, and building placement guidelines that reinforce the particular character and function of the radial corridors. The pedestrian and bicycle experience is as important as car circulation along these roads.
- Acknowledge the larger scale and automobile-oriented nature of Tresser Boulevard and Washington Boulevard while, at the same time, providing a well-designed and safe pedestrian experience.
- Special design consideration should be given to the intersections where the radial corridors, which connect the downtown pedestrian core to the surrounding neighborhoods, must cross Washington Boulevard and Tresser Boulevard.
- Along High Ridge and Long Ridge Roads, balance the needs of the automobile with the role that these roads can play in knitting together the extensive geography south of the Merritt and north of downtown.
- Along High Ridge Road, identify and reinforce the design of the intersections that serve as the gateways into neighborhoods, intersections with important east-west roads or important crossing points. This can be part of a larger long-term strategy for creating a High Ridge Road residential boulevard.



**Chapter III:  
Reinforce neighborhood “town centers”**

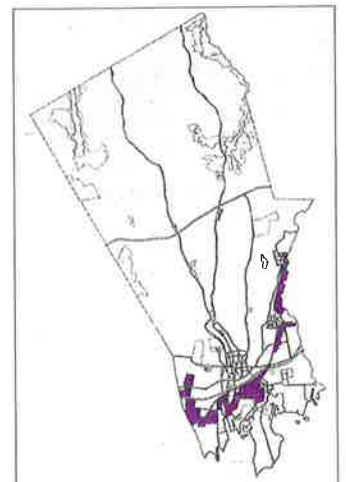
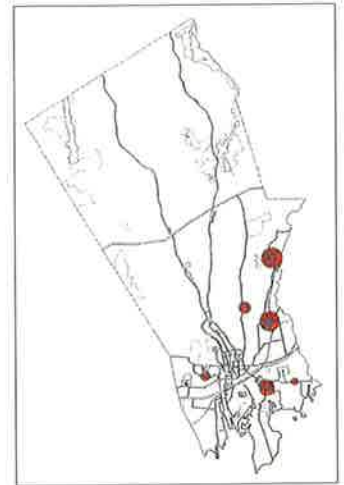
Neighborhood concentrations of retail and service businesses are extremely important in creating a sense of scale within a city the size of Stamford. While these concentrations exist in almost every neighborhood, those that seem to have their own discreet identity as town centers include the Belltown shopping area around Belltown Road, the Shippan Avenue shopping area, and especially, Glenbrook and Springdale which even have their own train stations. Major dimensions of this initiative include the following:

- Promote new, contextual infill development, uniform streetscape and landscape treatments, façade and signage guidelines.
- Rationalize and interconnect parking lots behind stores
- Repair the discontinuities in the street network to create new blocks and development parcels.
- Complete greenway connections.

Stamford’s neighborhoods are unique in the physical elements that define them—landscape, streetscape, building massing and siting—and design review must focus on those elements that are most important in each neighborhood (see Design Review discussion in the Citywide Policies Report). In addition, Stamford’s growth continues to put tremendous pressure on existing neighborhoods for residential expansion and redevelopment. For this reason, and as part of a comprehensive and balanced strategy for affordable housing, new design guidelines for multifamily housing are important.

**Chapter IV:  
Exploit the potential of the industrial districts to make the edges of important roads and complete neighborhoods.**

By providing space both for traditional manufacturing and for the hybrid uses of the new economy, Stamford’s industrial districts can preserve the diversity of employment that is so important to a growth management strategy. As the nature of manufacturing and its role in Stamford’s economy continues to evolve, so too will the physical character of the industrial districts: large properties may be redeveloped for new uses; obsolete factory buildings may be



subdivided and reused for new purposes – every thing from live-work housing to flex industrial incubators. With so much land area under pressure and in transition, design strategies for the industrial districts will be important. Major dimensions of this initiative include the following:

- Promote the mixed-use redevelopment of large underutilized or downsized industrial campuses. A mixed-use program can include residential uses while preserving technology-based light industrial uses.
- Where industrial districts are surrounded by residential neighborhoods, exploit the potential to create new connections in the neighborhood or complete fragmented street and block patterns.
- Where industrial districts abut important road corridors, and along the edges of neighborhoods, design guidelines should control the edges and entry points of the industrial districts.



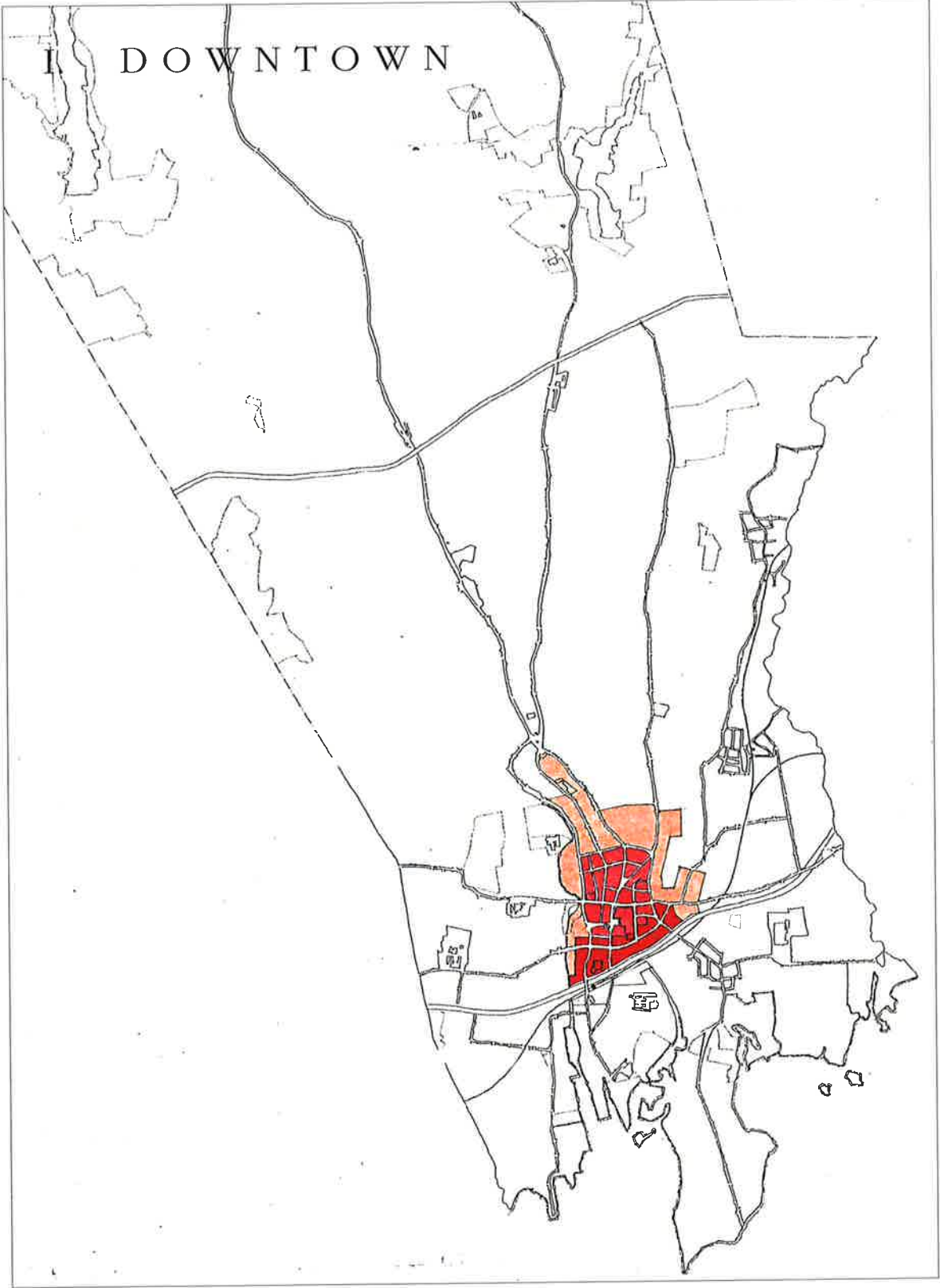
#### **Chapter V:**

#### **Reinforce the “green infrastructure” of Stamford and create a continuous network of open spaces and greenway connections**

There is an extensive array of public and private open spaces throughout Stamford that are largely disconnected. Because natural systems (streams, ground water, habitat) are continuous, the livability and environmental sustainability of the city will depend on linking as many of these resources together as possible. The elements that must be linked range from the most rural (the large tracts and reservoirs in North Stamford) to the most urban (street trees and parks in the downtown core) and must include the water's edge (a resource of still unrealized potential for the city). Major dimensions of this initiative include the following:

- Negotiate access easement agreements on strategic private parcels, including the large corporate campuses along Long Ridge Road which can become part of a north-south pedestrian and bicycle connection.
- Preserve strategic parcels along existing watercourses.
- Make linkages to the larger statewide greenway network including the Merritt Parkway trail.
- Knit the greenway, park and open space opportunities into the downtown with landscaping, streetscaping and other urban landscaping devices.
- Continue to acquire important private parcels, especially in North Stamford.

# I DOWNTOWN





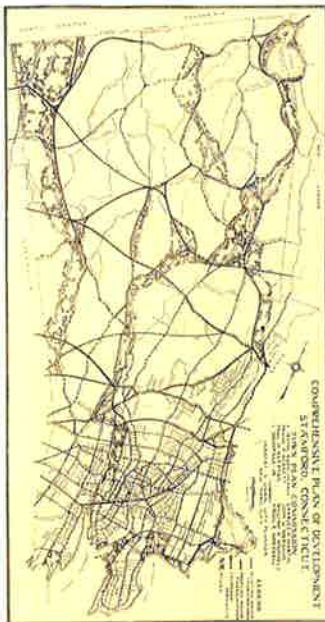
**INTRODUCTION: STAMFORD STREET AND BLOCK PATTERN**

Downtown Stamford, from an urban design point of view, is a fascinating place. Unlike many American cities which are laid out on a grid, Stamford is organized around a highly idiosyncratic pattern of radial streets, interestingly shaped public spaces, and oddly shaped oversized blocks; all of this a combination of historic patterns and large scale redevelopment projects.

This was recognized as early as 1929 by Herbert S. Swan in his wonderful *Plan of a Metropolitan Suburb: Stamford, Connecticut*:

The street plan of Stamford is full of little jokes and idiosyncrasies; it bubbles over with them; The streets of other cities are often illogical enough, but they are illogical in a different manner; it is the pranks played by its street system that differentiates Stamford from other cities. Indeed, it is these whimsicalities of its streets that give Stamford a character all its own—in a very unique sense, they are Stamford.

Seventy years later it is still possible to share his assessment of this pattern: that it is at once frustrating for any planner who would attempt to rationalize it, and at the same time, it is the very thing that gives Stamford its special identity. The oddly shaped streets and open spaces are something that is generally associated with the centers of European cities. But this potential asset—of a downtown organized around a highly articulated and well-defined network of streets, plazas and mid-block passageways—is realized only if there is an aggressive effort to infill the core of the downtown as a uniformly dense and compact center. The ideas discussed below support this vision.



**1.01** The map of Stamford as it appeared in *Swan Plan*, 1929

**Stamford is organized around a highly idiosyncratic pattern of radial streets, interestingly shaped public spaces, and oddly shaped oversized blocks. (These three plans are the same scale.)**



**1.02** Stamford block pattern



**1.03** Florence, Italy block pattern



**1.04** Midtown Manhattan block pattern

### WHAT ARE THE EDGES OF DOWNTOWN?

This is a question that sits squarely at the intersection of urban design, growth management and land use policy.

From a growth management perspective, it is essential that most of Stamford's future growth be directed to the downtown: to protect other parts of the city from unwanted intensification, to assure transit accessibility for new developments and to complete the vision shared by all Stamford residents for a vibrant cultural and commercial center with a distinct identity.

While there may not be complete consensus on the exact limits of downtown, there seems to be a shared sensibility about a number of edges, informed by the overall geography of the city – the scale of buildings, the scale and character of roadways and natural features. It is important to understand and articulate the underlying geometry of the downtown, as this informs the boundaries and characteristics of the three proposed master plan land use categories that describe the "Greater Downtown": Core, Corridor and Collar. The boundaries of the downtown and its Core, Corridor and Collar components described below, are important because a number of zoning regulations have been, and will continue to be, linked to the mapping of these areas.

The 1984 Master Plan Amendment described Downtown in terms of a Central Business District (CBD) and a Collar area to the north. Fifteen years later, it is important to revisit those boundaries both in terms of the physical realities of development patterns as well as in terms of the shared perception that has evolved of a Core bounded by Grove Street, Hoyt Street, Tresser Boulevard and Washington Boulevard.



**1.05 Aerial photograph of downtown:** South End and Bedford/Summer to Bulls Head

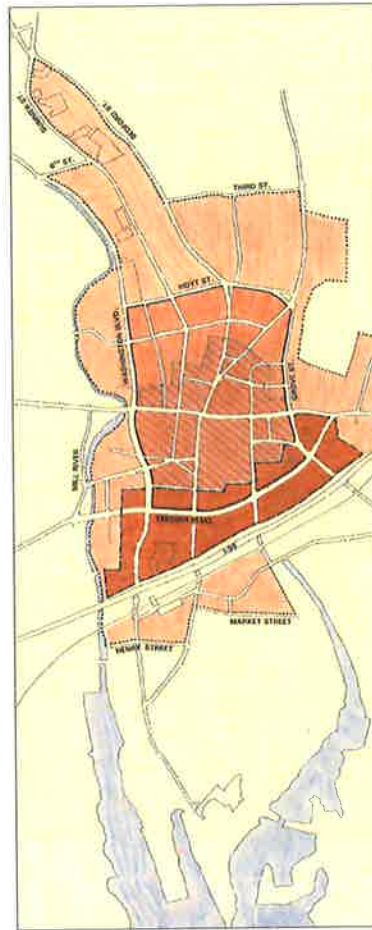
This is summarized in Figure 1.06. The areas in red are places where downtown-scale developments exist outside of the 1984 Downtown boundary, suggesting the extension of the Collar. Of course, some of these existed at the time of the 1984 mapping, but they nevertheless obscure the identity of the Downtown. Some of these should be part of the new



**1.06 Actual densities versus 1984 Downtown boundaries** (dashed line): red represents high density development outside of the original Downtown boundary; tan represents lack of density within the 1984 Downtown bounds.

Collar which would use design guidelines to promote transition to these more intense developments as well as to manage the scale and character of future developments.

The areas in tan are the areas where downtown scale development was never achieved within the boundaries of the



**1.07 The proposed edges of downtown: Core (red), Corridor (dark red) and Collar (pink).** The striped area is the focus for pedestrian improvements.

Downtown. Despite the fact that there are site assembly and parking issues associated with aggressive in-fill development, these are the areas that should be intensified to reinforce the perceived boundaries of the Downtown Core—Grove, Hoyt, Washington and Tresser (Figure 1.07).

Actual development patterns do not reinforce the identity of the 1984 Downtown Boundaries (fig. 1.06). Future development should support the identity of a pedestrian core bounded by Grove, Hoyt, and Washington and a collar that makes a transition to existing high density development north of Hoyt Street.



**1.08 Tresser Boulevard**—the south edge of the Core



**1.09 Washington Boulevard**—the west edge of the Core



**1.10 Hoyt Street**—the north edge of the Core



**1.11 Grove Street**—the east edge of the Core

### *Defining the Core*

Over the years, a number of roadway projects including the urban redevelopment work centered around Tresser Boulevard and I-95, the widening of Washington Boulevard, completion of the Hoyt Street Connector, and most recently improvements to Grove Street, have made these four roads the south, west, north and east boundaries of the downtown Core.

Within this Core is a smaller “Pedestrian Core”, the most urban, pedestrian-friendly part of the city, with the greatest concentration of older mid-rise buildings that make these streets and public spaces among the most clearly defined and distinctive in the city. Despite the impact of a few over-scaled developments, this has remained the heart of the city, centered around the intersections of Broad and Atlantic, extending north along Bedford Street to John Latham Park, and to the south, along West Main, Columbus Park and old Town Hall. The exact limits of the pedestrian core are suggested in Figure 1.07 by the striped area. It is this area that must become the focus for ground floor and pedestrian amenities.

### *Defining the Collar*

Beyond the Core is an area of intermediate scale development that acts as a transition to the lower scale of the neighborhoods surrounding the downtown. This is the limit of the “Greater Downtown” of Stamford. As with the Core, the Collar area also has boundaries that are informed by the scale of roads, character of development and natural features.

To the east, the edges of the Greater Downtown are defined by the existing high-rise residential developments along Glenbrook Road and the established residential neighbor-



hoods between Glenbrook Road and Grove Street. The apartment buildings on Glenbrook Road are higher in scale than many of the blocks within the Core, suggesting that one has already arrived at the edge of downtown at this point.

To the north, the edges of the Greater Downtown are defined by the high-rise and mid-rise residential buildings north of Hoyt Street, and beyond that, by the blocks between Bedford Street and Summer Street, from Hoyt Street north to Bulls Head. The commercial developments north of 6th Street, especially the hotel and office buildings, did not conform with the intent of the 1984 Master Plan or the underlying CN zoning (Neighborhood Commercial) under which they were built. Also, the haphazard intensification of the blocks between Bedford and Summer Streets is regrettable. Nevertheless, the extension of the Collar concept acknowledges the large-scale commercial developments north of 6th Street and, in conjunction with design guidelines, the Collar concept can help manage the on-going transformation of this area.

To the west, the Greater Downtown is defined by the Mill River corridor. The river is a natural boundary that will be reinforced by the proposed intermediate and low-rise scale residential neighborhood, Mill River greenway and park.

To the south, the Collar boundary of the Greater Downtown is defined by the blocks on either side of the proposed Stamford Urban Transitway (formerly known as the "Dock Street Connector"). A Mixed-Use Overlay District (MOD) is suggested for this area to capture the development benefits of proximity to the Transit Center, take advantage of site assembly facilitated by realignment of the right-of-way, and to promote development that is compatible with the Downtown.



**1.12 Glenbrook Road**—east edge of the Collar



**1.13 Bulls Head**—north edge of the Collar



**1.14 Mill River**—west edge of Collar



**1.15 Stamford Urban Transitway**—south edge of Collar



**1.16 Tresser Boulevard**—spine of large scale office buildings over structured parking



**1.17 Columbus Park**—heart of the pedestrian core characterized by mixed use and a dense pattern of low-rise and mid-rise buildings

## TWO CENTERS OF GRAVITY

There are two important focal points for the transit lines in Stamford—the railroad station—and the Square at the intersection of Main Street and Atlantic Street in the heart of the business center.

Herbert Swan, 1929

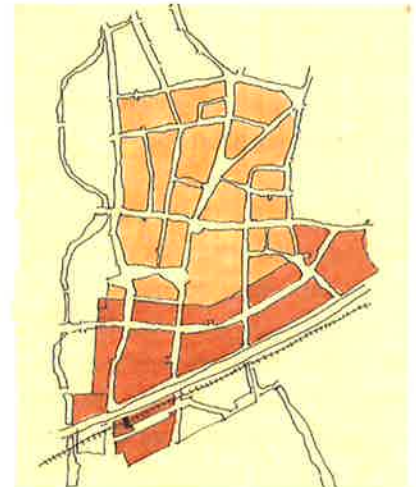
The Stamford downtown has evolved with two centers of gravity: One center of gravity is created by the highway-scale developments along the I-95/Tresser Boulevard corridor. The other center of gravity is the original pedestrian core, still centered around the intersections of Atlantic Street with Broad and Main Streets. This is also the center of the area that was described in the 1984 Amendment as a Historic/Conservation Area, the intent of which was to preserve the “traditional” downtown. However, the concept of a conservation area has never been institutionalized in the zoning.

Along the Tresser Boulevard/I-95 corridor is a tremendous amount of office space, concentrated in a number of 250,000 to 500,000 square foot office buildings sitting on top of, or adjacent to, multi-story garages. While the scale of development is certainly urban, the pedestrian experience is definitely not: There is almost no ground floor retail activity. There is no uniform distance by which buildings and their entrances are set back from the sidewalk. This, together

**The existing (1984) Master Plan and zoning concepts (fig. 1.18) do not recognize the differences in scale and character between two centers of gravity: the Tresser Boulevard/I-95 Corridor and the pedestrian Core entered on Broad and Atlantic (fig. 1.19).**



**1.18 Densities as conceived in the 1984 Master Plan and Zoning**



**1.19 Actual densities**

with the scale of Tresser Boulevard and the crossing distances at intersections make Tresser Boulevard more an automobile environment than a pedestrian precinct. (See discussion of design suggestions in the Roadway Corridors section below).

The other center of gravity is the historic center of the City, concentrated around the intersections of Atlantic Street with Main Street and Broad Street. From an urban design perspective, the characteristic that most distinguishes the historic core is the clearly defined streets and open spaces—a function of the dense and, for the most part, uniform pattern of low-rise and mid-rise buildings, “shoulder-to-shoulder” at the edge of the sidewalk. While many of the buildings are undistinguished from an architectural point of view, almost all meet the minimum urban design qualification for any downtown—that there must be visible activity at the ground floor to assure a lively and continuous pedestrian experience.

While the automobile is ubiquitous in the downtown, including in the Core, the pedestrian experience is the priority. Not surprisingly, almost all of the ground floor retail in the entire city is in this network of well-defined, pedestrian-oriented streets and public spaces. Unfortunately, the historic core occupies a relatively small portion of the downtown and is challenged in a number of ways:

- There are significant underutilized and vacant sites, especially along Broad Street, that disrupt the pedestrian experience.
- There are several out of scale developments that do not make a comfortable transition to the prevailing scale of the pedestrian core.
- There are some developments that do not relate to the sidewalk (such as Avalon Grove and the windowless department store on Broad Street).
- The historic pedestrian network along Main Street is made discontinuous by the Town Center mall.
- The Park in front of the mall does not work as an urban space, primarily because of the relationship of the surrounding buildings to the space is very weak, with few entrances or windows at the park level.



1.20



1.21

**1.20 and 1.21 Veterans' Memorial Park is underutilized**



**1.22 Public spaces** need both to be designed and programmed to encourage lively interaction at different times of the day

As different as these two centers of gravity are—in terms of scale, character and pedestrian experience—at present they are both encompassed by a single master plan concept, CBD, and by two zoning districts, CCN and CCS, that do not make significant distinctions in scale, massing, or character. As long as this is the case, it will be more difficult to achieve the goal of completing the pedestrian experience in the Core. In the worst case, there is the danger of new developments that are out of scale with the strong urban context in this portion of the downtown.

The urban design analysis illustrates a number of ways in which the 1984 Master Plan and zoning are misaligned with existing development patterns and are potentially at cross-purposes with the goal of articulating a well-defined Core and Collar for the downtown.

Figure 1.23 describes the height thresholds that are allowed under the existing CCN and CCS Zones as mapped in the '84 Master Plan. (The districts are grouped within 50', 90' 150' and 250' thresholds. Note that some districts appear in more than one height bracket, as the site area can determine maximum building height.)

Figure 1.24 shows actual building heights, organized into the same threshold brackets. This clearly illustrates the persistence, in spite of the potential to build higher, of the intermediate scale pattern of the pedestrian core north of Tresser Boulevard.

Finally, Figure 1.25 illustrates a number of the existing and potential scale conflicts that the existing Master Plan and Zoning pattern promotes.

HEIGHT RANGE	ZONING CATEGORIES
50 FT.	R5, RMF, CI, MG, CL, RH, CB, CN, R71/2
90 FT.	MXD, PD, CG, CL
150 FT.	RH, MXD, PD, CG
250 FT.	CCN, CCS



**1.23 Existing zoning heights:** four ranges of building heights under current zoning



**1.26 Aerial photograph of Downtown, showing scale conflicts.**



**1.24 Ranges of heights of existing buildings**



**1.25 Future development sites where scale conflicts may occur. Striped areas are existing scale conflicts.**

Existing buildings have not reached the heights allowed under current zoning and CBD boundaries (figs. 1.23 and 1.24). Without massing guidelines, future developments may create scale conflicts within the downtown Core and Collar (fig. 1.25).

**Any space that is not animated with street level activity, however well appointed, is ultimately an obstacle to the vision of the Pedestrian Core.**



**1.27 The Biltmore plaza** is out of scale with Broad Street



**1.28 The public plaza**, provided here as a floor area bonus, detracts from the character of Broad Street as a coherent pedestrian corridor



**1.29 The public plaza at Canterbury Green** is a well-designed urban amenity

**TWO CASE STUDIES**

The Biltmore is an example of an existing high quality development that is nevertheless out of scale with the Pedestrian Core and which illustrates a number of the issues related to the mapping of the CBD and associated CCN zoning.

First, this building is out of scale with the overall context of Broad Street and Pedestrian Core. The excessive height and bulk is in part a result of the ability under CCN zoning to stack floor area allowances for commercial and residential uses. Even more, it is the result of the absence of any massing strategy that could create a transition from the tower to the intermediate scale of Broad Street.

The development also exposes problems with the Plaza Bonus. While it is true that the current zoning would no longer permit the above-grade portion of the plaza, the at-grade plaza at the corner of Greyrock and Broad makes little contribution to the pedestrian life of the downtown. The paving pattern, even though it is elaborate and well-executed, contributes little to the Broad Street corridor because it is not part of a larger unified design for the entire corridor. Any space that is not animated with street level activity, however well appointed, is ultimately an obstacle to the vision of the Pedestrian Core.

By way of contrast, Canterbury Green accomplishes a number of urban design objectives which should be encouraged for other sites in the downtown Core. The building massing steps down to the scale of St. Johns Church at Elm Street. The plaza bonus was used to create a well-defined, south-facing space in the middle of the block with pedestrian connections to surrounding streets. However, even this project seems to be out of scale with Broad Street.

**TOWARDS A VISION FOR DOWNTOWN:  
REINFORCING THE CORE, CORRIDOR AND COLLAR**

*Inadequacy of FAR as an Urban Design Tool*

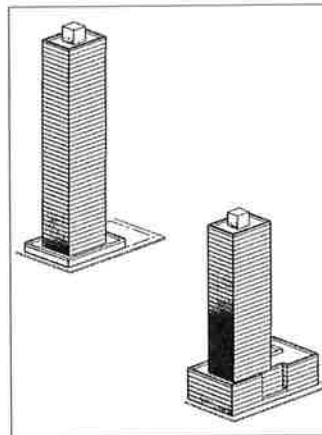
It is tempting to rely on "floor area ratio" (FAR) as the principle indicator of scale, but it is an inadequate tool from an urban design perspective and from the point of view of trying to distinguish and manage the differences between the Pedestrian Core and the Tresser Boulevard corridor. In fact, many of the smaller, older buildings in the Pedestrian Core, which cover their entire sites ("zero lot line") have higher FARs than the buildings on Tresser Boulevard. Rather, a set of comprehensive height, bulk and setback regulations must assure that new buildings are in-fill buildings with high coverage, maintain the street wall and are massed in such a way that they make transitions to their immediate context. One model for this kind of zoning is the contextual zoning regulations developed in NYC which were meant to address many of the same issues Stamford faces such as the jarring changes in scale and inanimate plazas created by lower coverage developments.

These goals are illustrated in the massing studies for several downtown infill sites which are found at the end of this chapter.



**1.30** The intermediate scale of this portion of a highrise building creates a transition from the tower to the scale of the adjacent buildings on the avenue.

**A set of comprehensive height, bulk and setback regulations must assure that new buildings are in-fill buildings with high coverage, maintain the street wall and are massed in such a way that they make transitions to their immediate context.**



**1.31** New York City contextual zoning eliminates the plaza in favor of a contextual tower and base strategy.

**1.32** Tower and base massing can be used to articulate important intersections and make transitions to context.

### ***Realign bonuses***

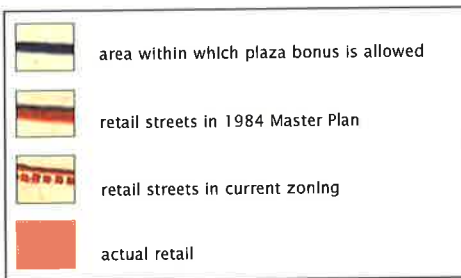
The zoning bonuses that are meant to promote a pedestrian-oriented experience in downtown—in particular, the plaza bonus and the ground floor amenity bonus—must be realigned to reflect the differences between the Core and Corridor and the goal of reinforcing the pedestrian core.

The 1984 Master Plan was overly expansive in terms of its goals for retail streets, which were mapped extensively, including the area along Tresser Boulevard. In fact, 20 years of experience shows the extent to which ground floor retail has remained concentrated in a relatively small area of the downtown center, not surprisingly, within the Main Street, Broad Street, Atlantic Street and Bedford Street pedestrian core. Current zoning acknowledges this, and so the ground floor retail amenity bonus is available within a much smaller area. This supports the existing concentration of retail and reflects the reality that Tresser Boulevard will never become a pedestrian friendly “main street.” Some refinements to the current zoning are suggested. Also, the mapping of retail streets in the 1984 Master Plan Amendment should now be superseded by the mapping of the Pedestrian Core suggested in Figure 1.34.

The existing zoning is less appropriate with regards to the plaza bonus. This is currently allowed throughout the CBD (in districts CCN, CCS, CL and CG), both within the Tresser Boulevard Corridor and the Pedestrian Core. The plaza bonus may make sense in the Tresser Boulevard Corridor where new open spaces could become part of a larger, integrated landscaping strategy that incorporates other spaces in front of the buildings along Tresser Boulevard. However, the plaza bonus is not appropriate in the Pedestrian Core. Here, activity at the sidewalk is at a premium. It is far better to have an appropriately scaled building with ground floor activity at the sidewalk, even if it is architecturally undistinguished, than to have a plaza which, however well designed, interrupts the continuity of the pedestrian experience within the Core.

If one of the priorities is to complete the Pedestrian Core, then bonuses for ground floor retail and streetscape amenities should be linked to an overall unifying design. Perhaps the ground floor amenity bonus could be granted for sites throughout the Greater Downtown, but would be used to finance streetscape improvements only within the Pedestrian Core. In this way, the pedestrian improvements could be completed incrementally, and the whole would be greater than the sum of the individual and disconnected bonuses currently granted.

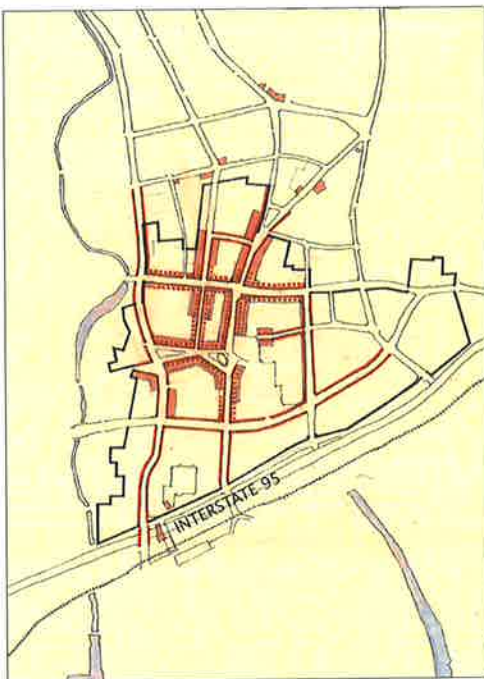




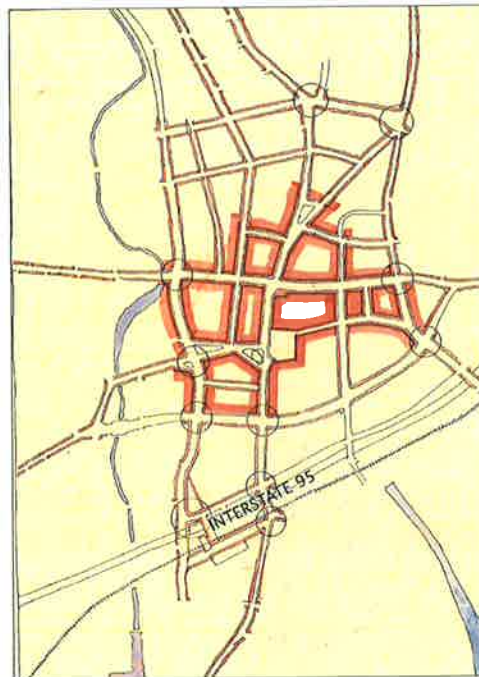
**1.35 Existing pedestrian-friendly areas are limited** to several places within the historic core.

### REALIGN ZONING BONUSES

The 1984 Master Plan was overly expansive in terms of the extent of viable retail streets, allowing for plaza bonuses in places where street walls are needed (fig. 1.33). Master plan and zoning strategies should be targeted to a smaller pedestrian core, reinforcing existing retail and eliminating the plaza bonus in favor of a continuous, pedestrian-friendly street wall (fig. 1.34).



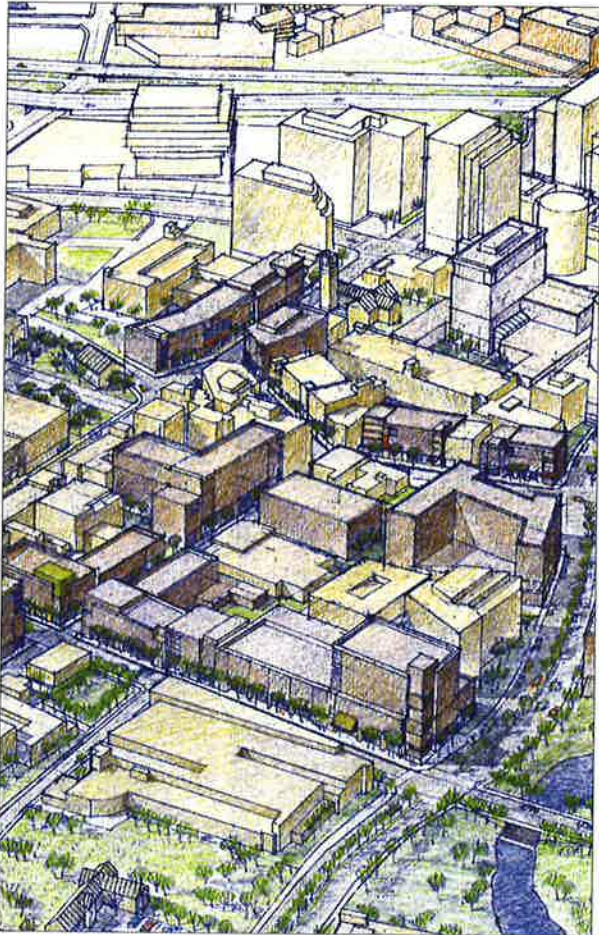
**1.33 Actual Retail versus 1984 Maser Plan and Zoning Strategies**



**1.34 Proposed Pedestrian Core and Improvements**

### ***Realign development intensity***

The following series of diagrams and massing models is an attempt to summarize the issues raised above. In particular, they address the goal of realigning development intensity both with historic development patterns and with shared perceptions about the edges of Downtown and the concepts of Core, Corridor and Collar.



The first diagram and model (Figure 1.37) illustrate the way downtown was conceived in the 1984 Master Plan. It was a rational model which provided for a progressive stepping down in scale from the most intense development, represented by the master plan category with the higher number (8D – Central Business District) to intermediate-scale master plan categories (7 – Intermediate Business), to a high density multi-family housing (Category 5), and finally, to the medium and low density multi-family zones of the surrounding neighborhoods (Categories 4 and 3).

The next diagram and model (Figure 1.38) show the actual pattern. The kind of intensity envisioned for Master Plan Category 8D (CBD), exists only along the Tresser Boulevard I-95 corridor. Elsewhere, there is no clear pattern, supporting the criticism that is often leveled at downtown Stamford—that it seems to be more a collection of disparate pieces than an integrated whole.

The last diagram and model (Figure 1.39) represent the proposed pattern that the new master plan categories and policies will support. This reflects a number of considerations, especially the reality of the Core and Corridor centers of gravity and the proposed edges of the “Greater Downtown,” specifically:

- That there are two centers of gravity in the downtown, with a fundamentally different scale on the Tresser Boulevard corridor.
- That the Pedestrian Core should become a uniformly dense environment of clearly defined streets and public spaces.

**1.36 Acknowledge “two centers of gravity”**—a Tresser Boulevard Corridor of towers and a Core scale of dense and compact urban environment



1.37 1984 density concept



1.38 Actual density pattern



1.39 Proposed density and massing concept



- That the character of Summer Street should be maintained as a well-defined and uniform corridor of intermediate density.
- That Broad Street should be reinforced at a similar intermediate scale.
- That the somewhat lower scale of the historic center of the city, focused around Columbus Park and John Latham Park, should be maintained.
- That the intermediate scale development originally mapped in the area immediately around the transit center should be extended along the Stamford Urban Transitway to the east channel.
- That the Bedford Street/Summer Street blocks can, as originally conceived in the 1984 Master Plan Amendment, support higher density development if appropriately designed.

**Proposed density and massing concept: reinforce the Core bounded by Tresser Boulevard, Hoyt, Grove, and Washington Boulevard, and articulate the Summer Street and Broad Street corridors within the Core (fig. 1.39).**



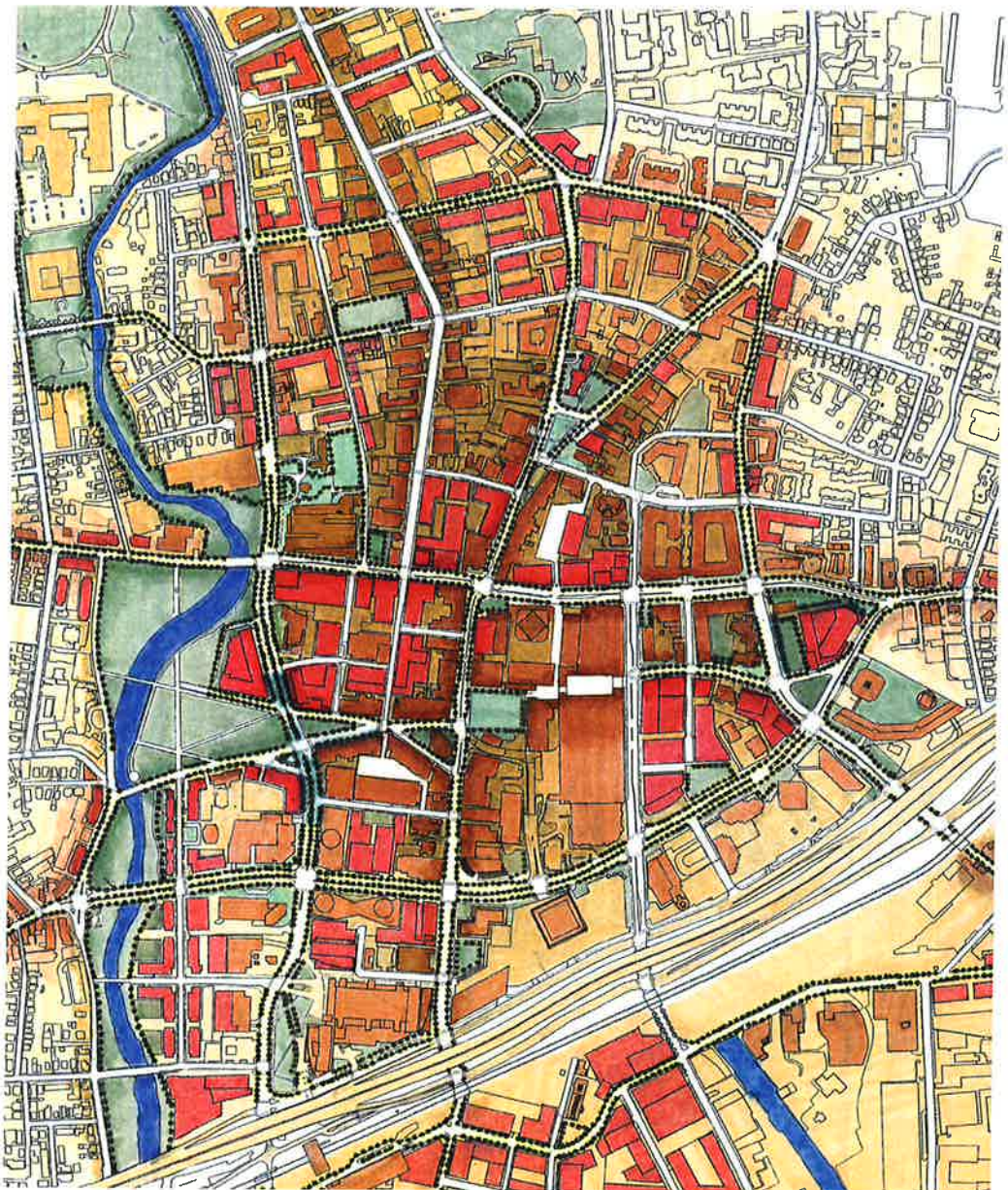


**This drawing illustrates the vision for a compact pedestrian environment within the Core. (Darker buildings are redevelopment concepts. See Massing studies in this chapter.)**

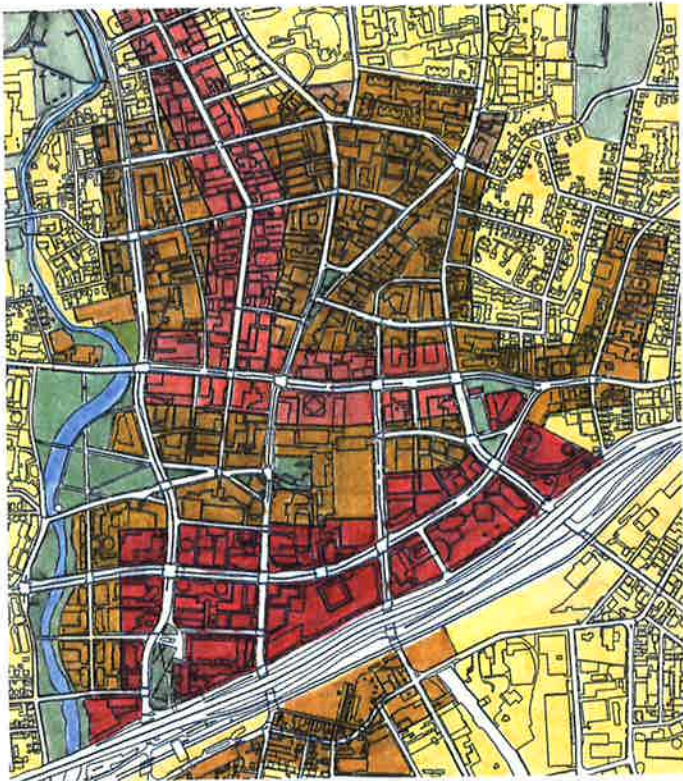
1.40

## ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN OF DOWNTOWN

- The Pedestrian Core is a uniformly dense environment of clearly defined streets and public spaces.
- The edges of the core as defined by Grove Street, Hoyt Street, Washington Boulevard and Tresser Boulevard are reinforced.
- Open spaces are linked into a comprehensive network and the "green infrastructure of the parks" is brought into the Core as street trees and parks of various sizes.
- The interiors of the oddly shaped and over-sized blocks are thought of as part of the pedestrian experience and linked accordingly.
- A Main Street- Broad Street Downtown Loop is established (see discussion following) including a new gateway at the east edge of town, a robust connection through the Mall and improved Mill River Park.



1.41



**1.42 Design guidelines for new development** should reflect this hierarchy of scale, from higher (darkest color) to lower (lighter color):

- "Highway scale" development in the Tresser boulevard/I-95 Corridor.
- Intermediate scale development along the Summer Street and Broad Street corridors to reinforce their importance within the Core.
- Development to reinforce the edges of the Core along Grove Street, Hoyt Street and Washington boulevard, with emphasis on transition to surrounding neighborhoods.
- High coverage, high FAR infill development throughout the Core with emphasis on massing transitions to historic context.



**1.43 Aggressive infill development** (below) helps reinforce the Core as bounded by Grove, Hoyt, Washington and Tresser.

## THE MAIN STREET-BROAD STREET DOWNTOWN LOOP



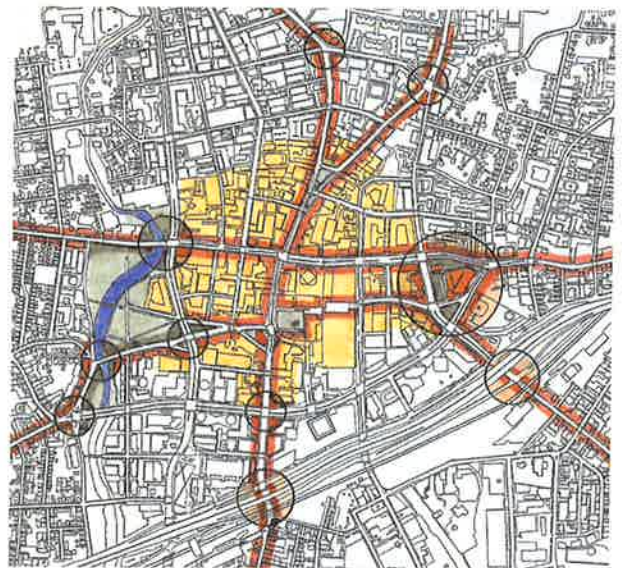
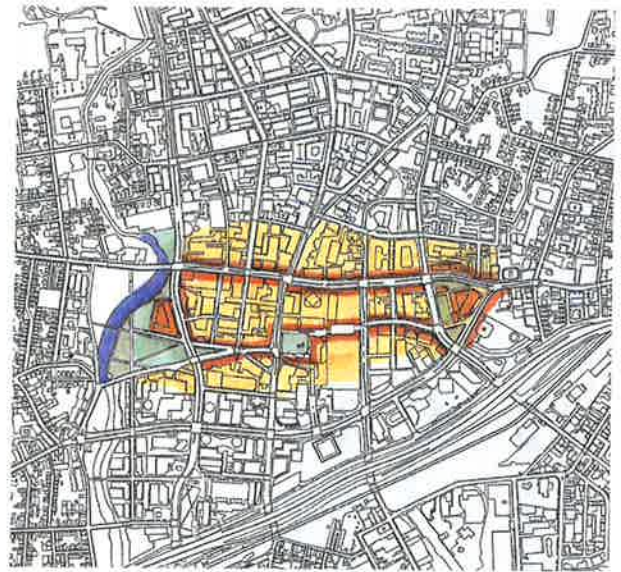
**1.44** Historically, the principle route through downtown was the Boston Post Road (US 1). This is "Main Street" in Stamford and in countless other towns between Boston, New York City and beyond.



**1.45** The urban renewal plan made Main Street discontinuous at the Town Center Mall and created Tresser Boulevard as a high-volume through road. Approaching the city from the east and west, Tresser Boulevard draws people away from the Pedestrian Core. The connection through the core is discontinuous as Main Street (from the east) dead-ends at the Mall and Broad Street continues west to Washington Boulevard.



**1.46** A new Main Street-Broad Street loop is proposed to make the pedestrian experience in the core continuous.



## CORRIDORS TO THE CORE

**1.48** Several significant corridors link the neighborhoods around downtown to the proposed Main Street-Broad Street Loop (see discussion in Chapter 2 of this report). There are several key gateways to downtown that need to be addressed, especially where these corridors cross Washington and Tresser Boulevards.



**THE MAIN STREET-BROAD STREET DOWNTOWN LOOP**



**1.49 Downtown Gateway**

Major components of the proposed Main Street-Broad Street Downtown Loop:

- At the east side of town, use new development and open spaces to create a gateway that connects Broad Street and Main Street and clarifies the choice between two destinations: the office buildings on Tresser Boulevard or the Pedestrian Core centered on Broad and Main Streets (fig. 1.49).



**1.50 Downtown Mall**

- Reestablish Main Street through the Core by creating a robust connection through the Mall, perhaps by creating a true, multistory arcade or atrium (fig. 1.50).

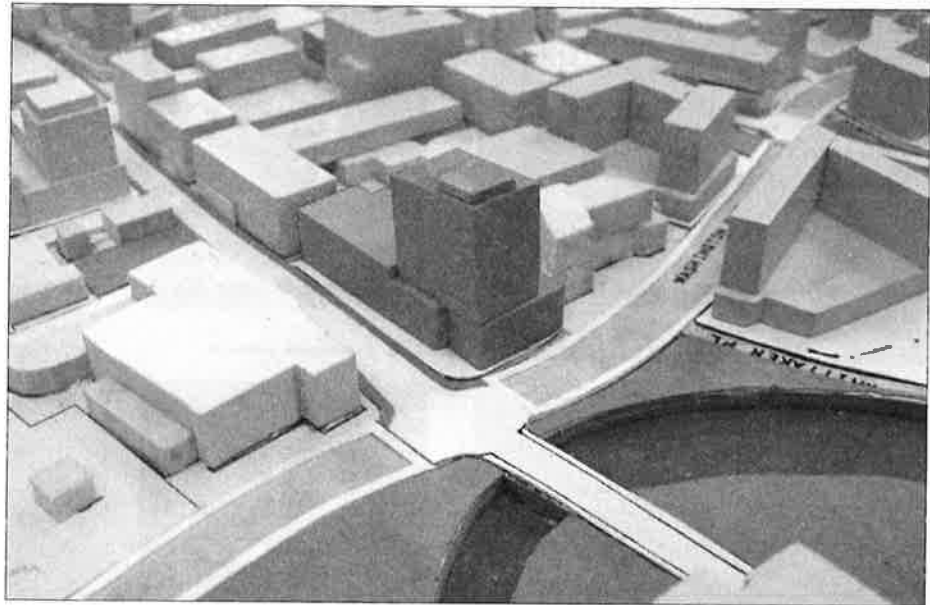


**1.51 Washington Boulevard**

- At the west side of town, improve Washington Boulevard (see design study in Chapter 2 of this report) and the Mill River Park to connect Broad Street and Main Street (fig. 1.51).

## MASSING STUDIES FOR SELECTED DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT SITES

On the following pages are massing studies for a variety of sites and areas in the downtown. These studies reflect the urban design goals for the downtown. The proposed developments shown on these sites were used to generate the build-out square footages used in the Economic Development Report and the Growth Management Model.



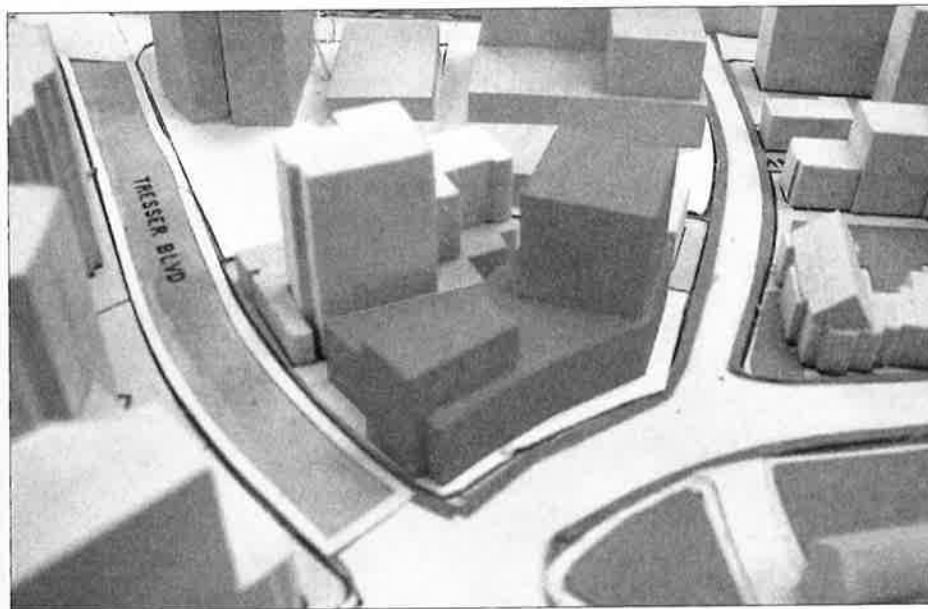
**A. SITE AT CORNER OF WASHINGTON BOULEVARD AND WEST BROAD STREET**

**Open Space Connections:** This is a strategic site, as it is the western anchor to the Broad Street commercial and residential corridor, and an essential part of one of the most important gateways into downtown Stamford. Open space considerations include adjacency to the Mill River Park and to the widened sidewalks and the "vest pocket park" associated with the UConn campus. Direct open space connections include the passageway into one of the most important large, irregular blocks, where linkages are made to a system of new passageways in the center of the block created by the Park Square West redevelopment project.

**Massing Strategies:** High massing should be at the corner creating a visual marker for this gateway. The massing should respond to view corridors as one approaches from the north on Washington Boulevard and as one approaches either from the east or west along Broad Street. The rest of the site should be at the intermediate scale of the Broad Street corridor.

**Entry and Ground Level Access:** Primary entry should be from Broad Street. Secondary access from Washington Boulevard. Pedestrian-oriented retail uses should be required along the Broad Street frontage. The Washington Boulevard frontage should also be pedestrian oriented because of its proximity to the park and the desire to treat this section of Washington Boulevard as a true boulevard for pedestrians as well as automobiles. Service should be from the block interior.

**Uses and Growth Management Assumptions:** Because of its location at the edge of the Pedestrian Core, this site can support a mixed-use development - residential as well as commercial uses. Retail uses are required along Broad Street.



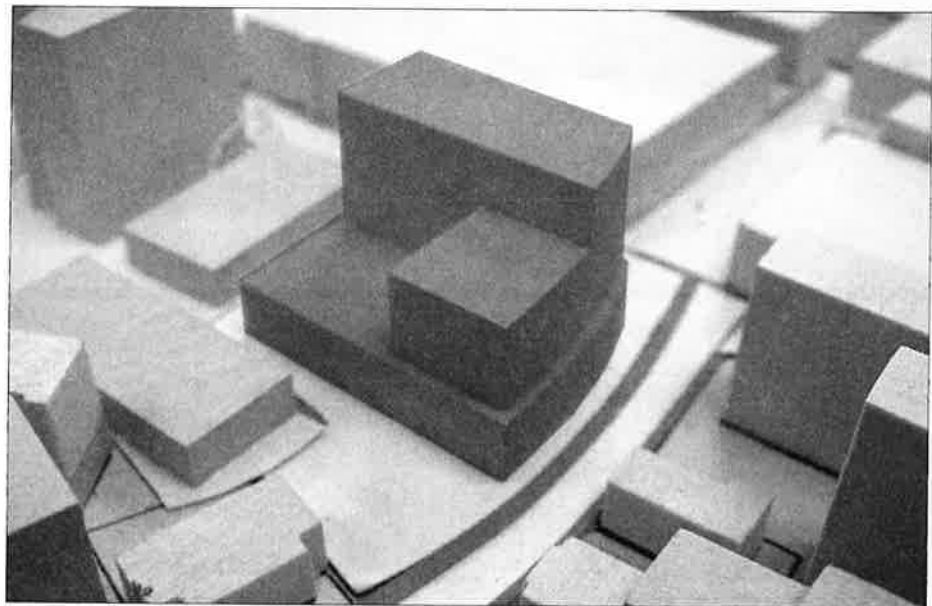
#### B. SITE AT CORNER OF GROVE, TRESSER AND EAST MAIN

**Massing Strategies:** The buildings on this site should create a well-defined edge to St. Johns Park as well as help contain the potential new open spaces on the east side of Elm/Grove. In order to respect the light and view issues around the residential towers, as well as the scale of the Church, an intermediate scale tower is placed on the East Main frontage. This also helps emphasize the beginning of the East Main corridor into the downtown Core, as well as a visual terminus to the Elm Street approach from the south-east. A change in massing also marks the corner of Tresser and Elm.

**Entry and Ground Level Access:** Primary and secondary entrances are on East Main and Tresser Boulevard. Pedestrian-friendly uses are required on the Elm Street and East Main frontages. Because this is a large, irregularly shaped block, access agreements should allow for service from the interior of the block.

#### **Uses and Growth Management**

**Assumptions:** The immediate context has office uses, residential uses and several institutional uses in the nearby churches. It also has several open spaces existing (at Canterbury Green) or proposed as part of the redesign of this gateway. Thus the site could support residential, office, or mixed development. The site is accessible to transit, especially if the various pedestrian connections are made.



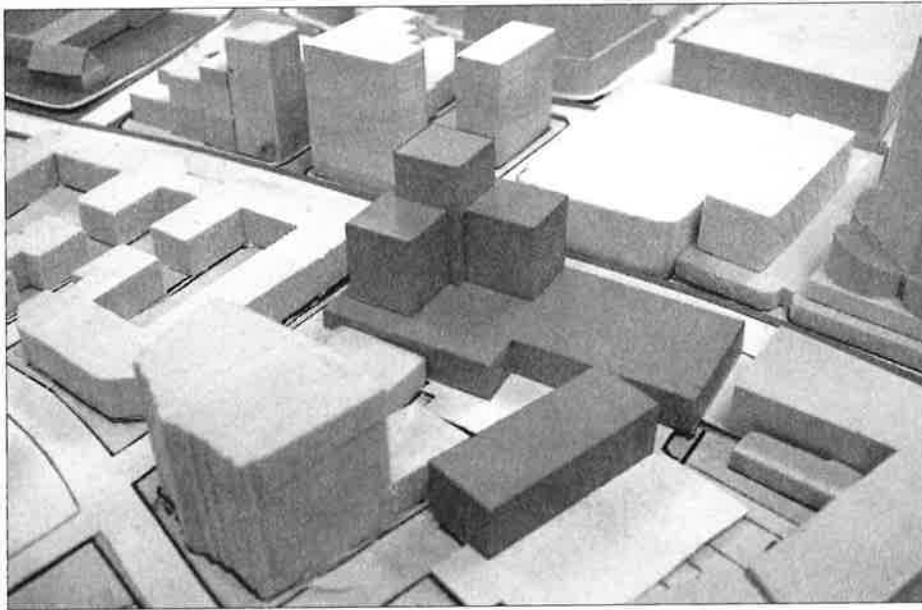
**C. SITE AT CORNER OF EAST MAIN AND GREYROCK PLACE**

**Open Space Connections:** The planning for this site should allow for a connection to the interior of the block to facilitate service to the several redevelopment opportunities, including the Tresser Boulevard site.

**Massing Strategies:** The new buildings should define the entrance to the Main Street connection through the Town Center Mall. This will be especially important if, as proposed in this study, the connection through the mall becomes a true arcade or other large public space. High massing should be closest to Greyrock Place and the mall. The massing steps down to the east in response to the scale of the buildings on East Main and the existing firehouse.

**Entry and Ground Level Access:** Primary access should be from East Main Street, with secondary access from Greyrock Place. Pedestrian-oriented uses should be required along the East Main frontage, and encouraged along Grove Street. Service should be from the interior of the block.

**Uses and Growth Management Assumptions:** There are both residential and office uses nearby. This site is accessible to transit, especially after Stamford Urban Transitway improvements, and can therefore fulfill the policy goal for concentrating housing or office development in the "Greater Downtown."



#### D. SITE AT CORNER OF GREYROCK PLACE AND BROAD STREET

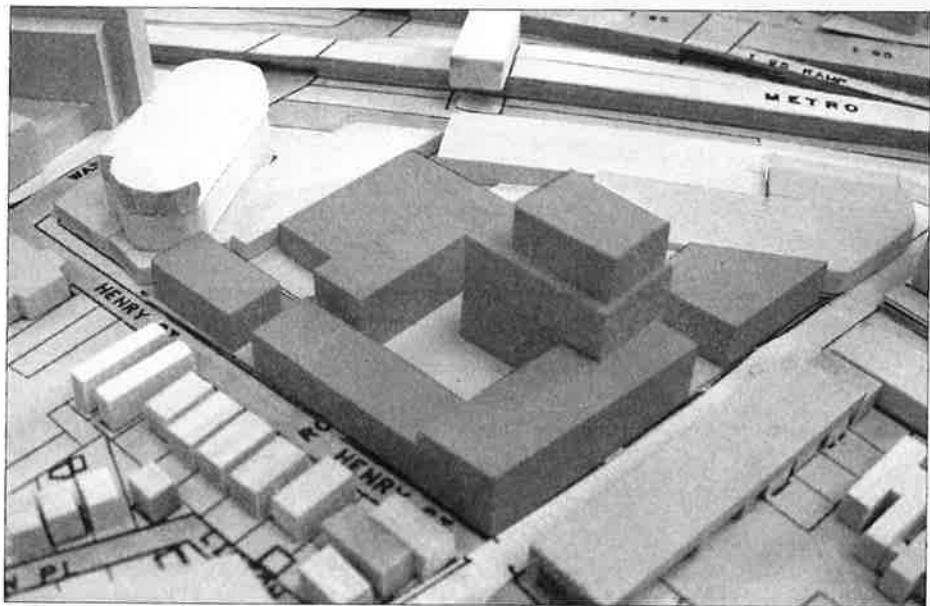
**Open Space Connections:** The redevelopment of this block is an opportunity to re-organize the interior of one of the large irregular blocks. A new parking structure should be positioned to define a space in the center of the block that is part of a through-block connection between Forest Street and Broad Street. The Broad Street entrance to the block interior should be coordinated with the entrance to Landmark Square on the opposite side of the street. From the interior of the block it is also possible to access the backs of the stores on Bedford Street.

**Massing Strategies:** Higher massing should be at the corner of Greyrock Place and Broad to allow the massing to step down to the lower scale of the block frontages on Bedford Street. An intermediate height tower is appropriate.

**Entry and Ground Level Access:** Primary access to the tower portion of the development should be from Broad Street. Pedestrian oriented uses should be required on all Broad Street frontages. Service access should be from the interior of the block.

#### **Uses and Growth Management**

**Assumptions:** This site, in the heart of the Pedestrian Core of the downtown, should be a mixed-use development.



**E. SITE AT CORNER OF HENRY STREET AND ATLANTIC STREET**

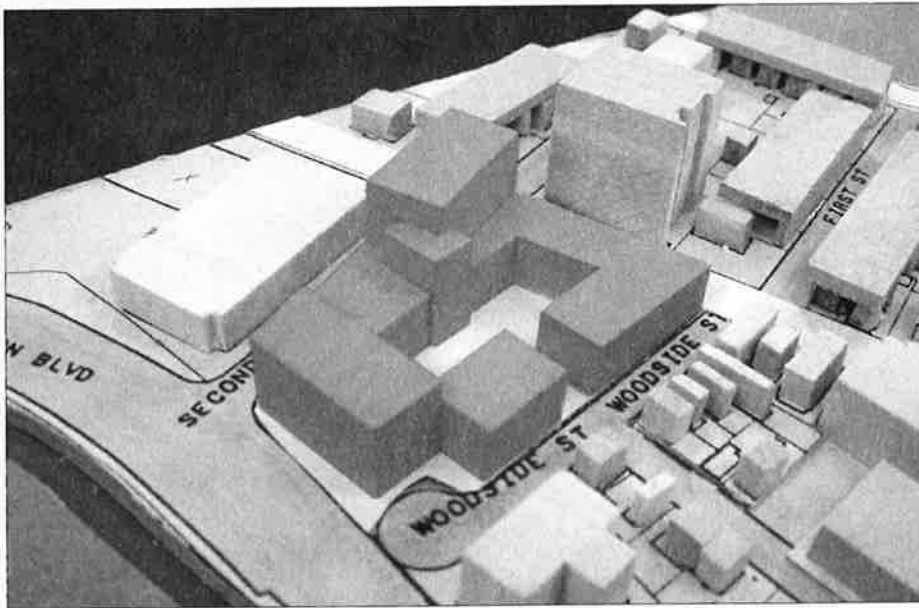
**Open Space Connections:** Redevelopment at this site should help reorganize the interior of this large, irregular block. Site planning should consider the possibility of a direct connection to the Transit Center from the north edge of the site.

**Massing Strategies:** The massing should create a transition from any higher structures to the low-rise scale of the surrounding neighborhood. Any tower massing should relate primarily to Atlantic Street, an important connecting corridor between the South End and the Pedestrian Core of the Downtown. Low-rise structures are appropriate along Henry Street. The frontage along Atlantic should be low-rise but somewhat higher scale than the single-family houses that line much of the corridor.

**Entry and Ground Level Access:** Primary access should be from Atlantic Street with secondary access from Henry Street. Pedestrian oriented uses should line the Atlantic Street frontage with residential scale windows and entrances along Henry Street. Service can be from the interior of the block.

**Uses and Growth Management**

**Assumptions:** The context suggests residential uses, although office uses can be justified on the basis of access to the transit center, garages and the highway.



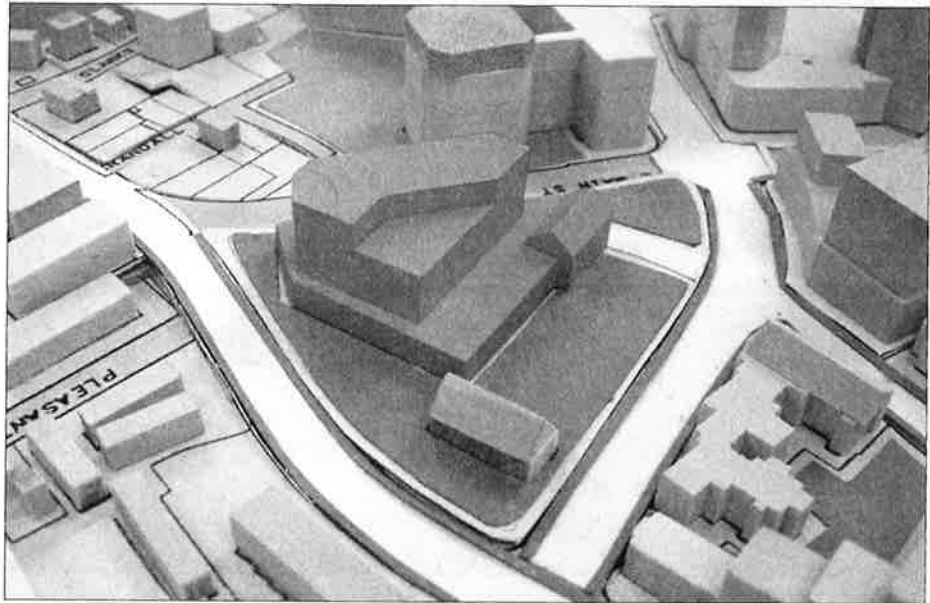
#### F. SITE AT WOODSIDE STREET AND FRANKLIN STREET

**Open Space Connections:** The configuration at this site should respond to the termination of Franklin Street. Woodside Street and Second Street are potential crossing points to the Mill River greenway.

**Massing Strategies:** The massing should accommodate the scales of the surrounding context: the intermediate scale of Bedford Street and Washington Boulevard and the low-rise scale of the single-family houses on Woodside Street. Higher massing is at the corner of Second Street and Bedford, creating a gateway to the intermediate scale of the rest of Bedford Street. The massing also responds to the termination of Franklin Street.

**Entry and Ground Floor Access:** Primary access is from Summer Street. Secondary access is from Woodside Street. While ground floor retail or business uses would not be required on Summer Street, being this far north of the Pedestrian Core, the facades on both Summer Street and Woodside Street should have a pedestrian scale.

**Uses and Growth Management Assumptions:** This site, like most of the infill sites between Hoyt Street and Second Street, favors residential uses and, in particular, can anchor the residential uses between Washington Boulevard and Bedford Street.



#### G. BLOCK BOUNDED BY EAST MAIN, BROAD STREET AND GROVE

**Open Space Connections:** This odd-shaped block bounded by East Main Street, Broad Street and Grove Street is one of the most important gateways into Stamford. While the existing building is generally in the right place, the long term re-design of this gateway should re-establish East Main Street as a connection to the Pedestrian Core of downtown; create views and an open space link to Broad Street and the Pedestrian Core. This would mean reconfiguring the service areas along Broad Street and opening up space around the church, creating open space along Grove Street that provides an appropriate setting for St. Johns Church. This open space is part of a larger system that includes the public plaza at Canterbury Green, St. Johns Park and monument, and even the grand stair up to the plaza at the General RE Building.

**Massing Strategies:** Larger scale massing is oriented towards East Main and signals the beginning of the larger scale of Tresser

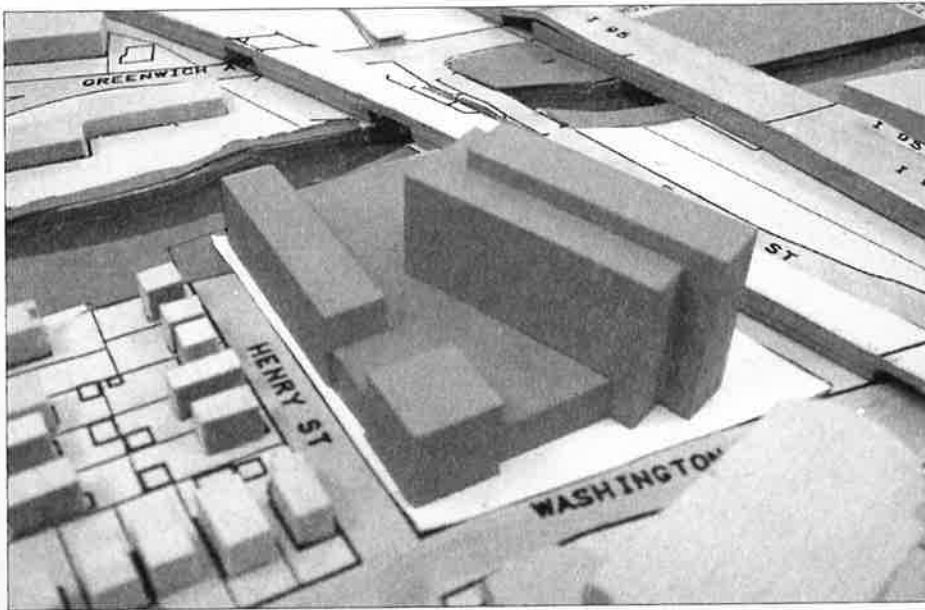
Boulevard. The building must also signal the beginning for the Broad Street corridor, so the corner of the building must also be oriented to the north. The building should step down to the scale of the churches and monument along Elm Street/Grove Street.

**Entry and Ground Level Access:** Primary access should be from East Main/Tresser. However, the low-rise portions of the development should be transparent and active, facing the new open spaces along Broad Street and Elm/Grove. Service will probably continue to be from Broad Street, but must be internal to the building.

#### **Uses and Growth Management**

**Assumptions:** Continuation of the hotel use is appropriate if the open space improvements materialize as described. Some residential development is also possible.





#### H. SITE AT CORNER OF HENRY STREET AND WASHINGTON BOULEVARD

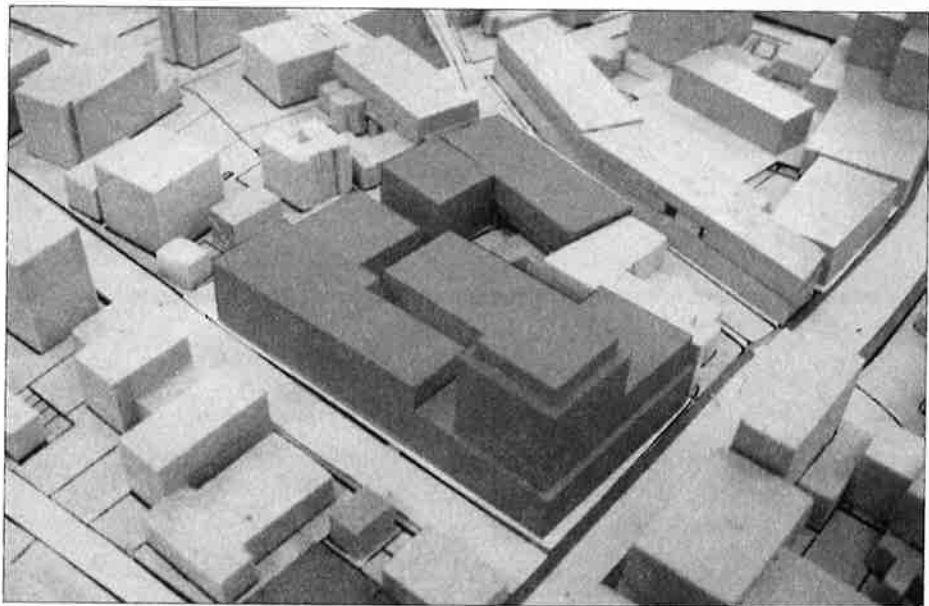
**Open Space Connections:** The site planning on this block should anticipate pedestrian connections to the Mill River, either along Henry Street or as an extension of the station plaza drive along the north side of the site.

**Massing Strategies:** The illustrated massing supports two agendas. 1) The creation of a gateway between the South End and Downtown. 2) Placement of the high massing on the north side of the site proximate to the highway, minimizing shadow effects on the neighborhood.

**Entry and Ground Level Access:** Primary access should be from Washington Boulevard. Service should be from the interior of the site accessible from an east-west connection just south of the highway. Transparency is required on the ground floors facing Washington Boulevard and Henry Street.

#### **Use and Growth Management Assumption:**

The scale of the site and its proximity to the transit center and the highway, suggests that the site should be reserved as one of the few remaining sites for large-scale office development. However, a mixed-use program could include pedestrian-friendly retail and business uses along Washington Boulevard and Henry Street and perhaps contextual residential uses along Henry Street.



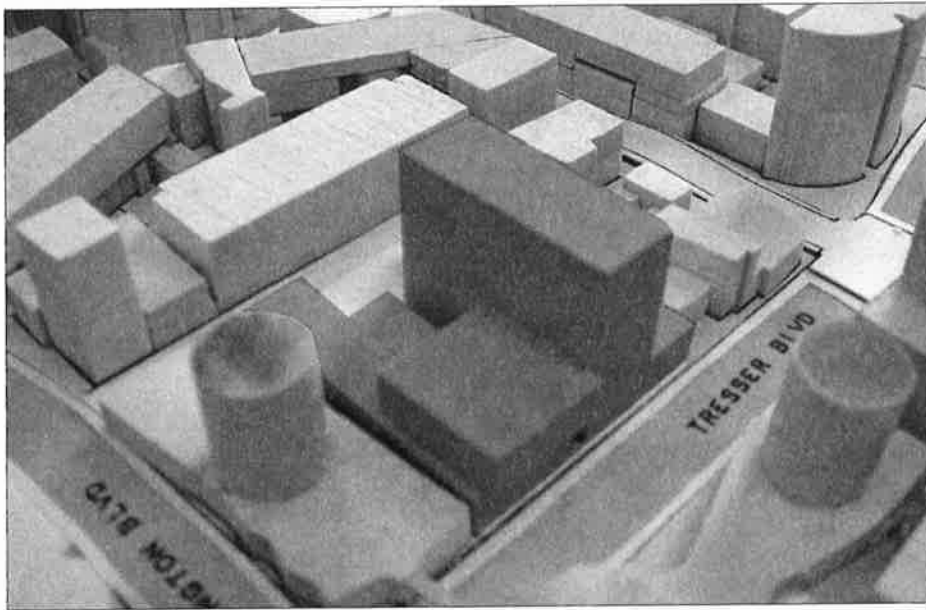
**I. SITE AT CORNER OF BEDFORD STREET AND BROAD STREET**

**Open Space Connections:** There are no special requirements for this site. However if there is a connection to the interior of the block, it can respond to the pedestrian connection that leads to the small park opposite U.Conn on Franklin Street.

**Massing Strategies:** The building should reinforce the intermediate scale of the Broad Street corridor and reinforce the importance of the intersection with Summer Street. In this study, this is accomplished by siting the tower at that corner which steps down to an intermediate scale base along Broad Street. The building steps down again along Summer Street to provide a transition to the somewhat lower scale of the Core north of Broad Street.

**Entry and Ground Level Access:** Primary entrance and orientation is to Broad Street, with secondary entrances along Summer Street. Ground floor retail and pedestrian-oriented businesses are along Broad Street and Summer Street.

**Uses and Growth Management Assumptions:** Because this site is at the heart of the Pedestrian Core, this should be a mixed-use development.



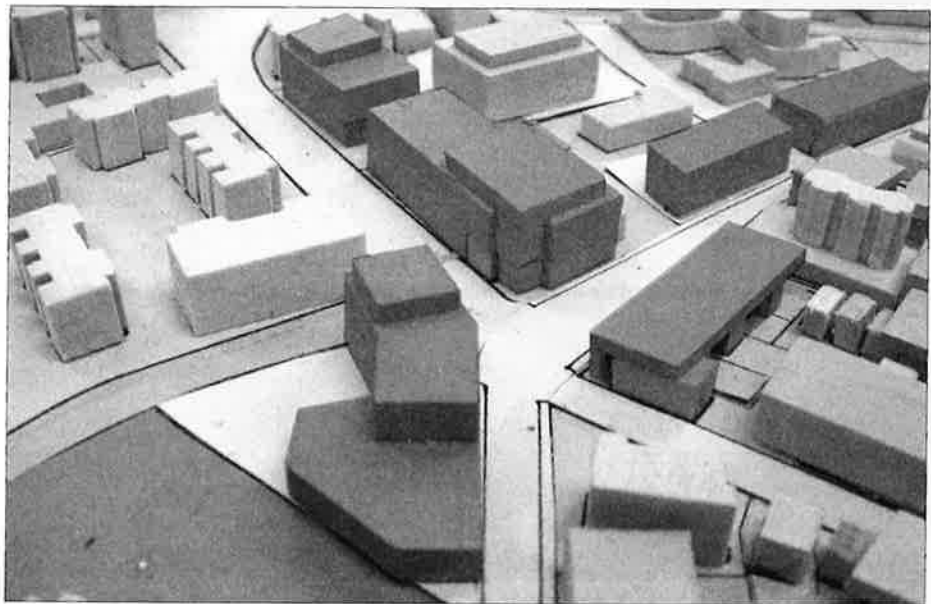
#### J. SITE ON TRESSER BOULEVARD ADJACENT TO ST. JOHN'S TOWER

**Open Space Connections:** The development at this site will be at the heart of a "super block." The development should provide for a pedestrian connection between Bell Street, the Bell Street garage and Tresser Boulevard. An open space, midway in this block, would facilitate pedestrian connections.

**Massing Strategies:** A tower on this site should be located to the east in order to encroach as little as possible on the Saint John's residential tower. The orientation of any tower on the site should maximize the amount of light that reaches the open spaces in the middle of the block. (Link bonuses to other things) A low-rise or mid-rise base should mediate between the tower and the scale of the adjacent buildings (the Rich Forum, the Church, and the St. John's deck).

**Entry and Ground Level Access:** Primary access should be from Tresser Boulevard, secondary access from Bell Street. Service should be from Bell Street, clearly demised and screened from pedestrian connections in the middle of the block. Transparency is required on ground floor, facing Tresser Boulevard.

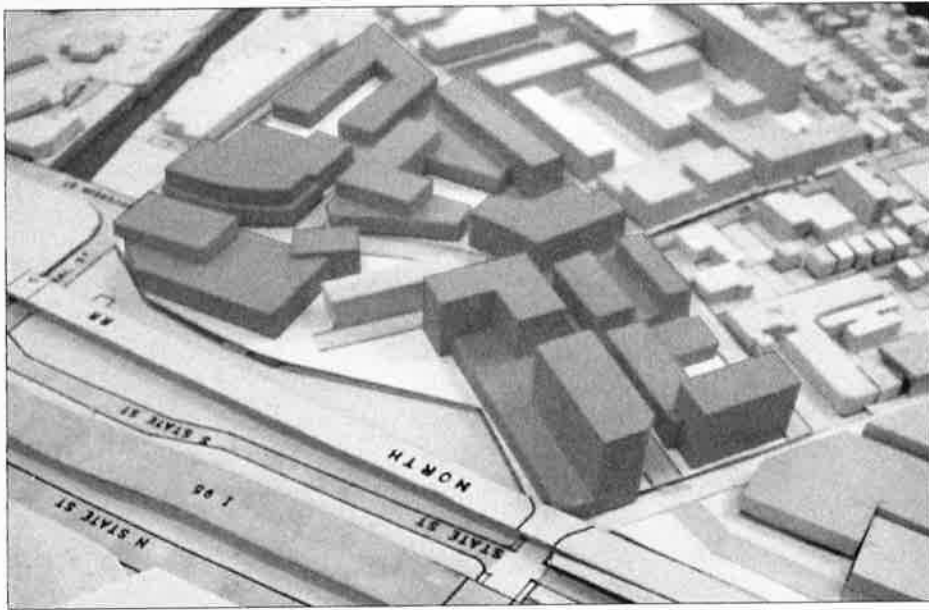
**Uses and Growth Management Assumptions:** The scale of the site, its proximity to the Transportation Center and the character of Tresser Boulevard suggests that this site should be reserved as one of the few remaining sites for large-scale office development. Residential development or mixed-use residential and office development can be justified on the site, given proximity to the St. John's Towers and the overall Master Plan goal of putting new housing in downtown.



#### **K. THE HOYT / BEDFORD INTERSECTION**

This is one of the important gateways along the edge of the Pedestrian Core. At the moment, the north side of the intersection is one-story retail with surface parking. The police station is located on the south side of Hoyt Street, a one-story building surrounded by surface parking. The massing described here suggests intermediate scale buildings, comparable to the mid-rise housing on the north side of Hoyt Street. This is also in keeping with the scale of the nearby Courthouse. The massing of the buildings should articulate the corners of the intersection.

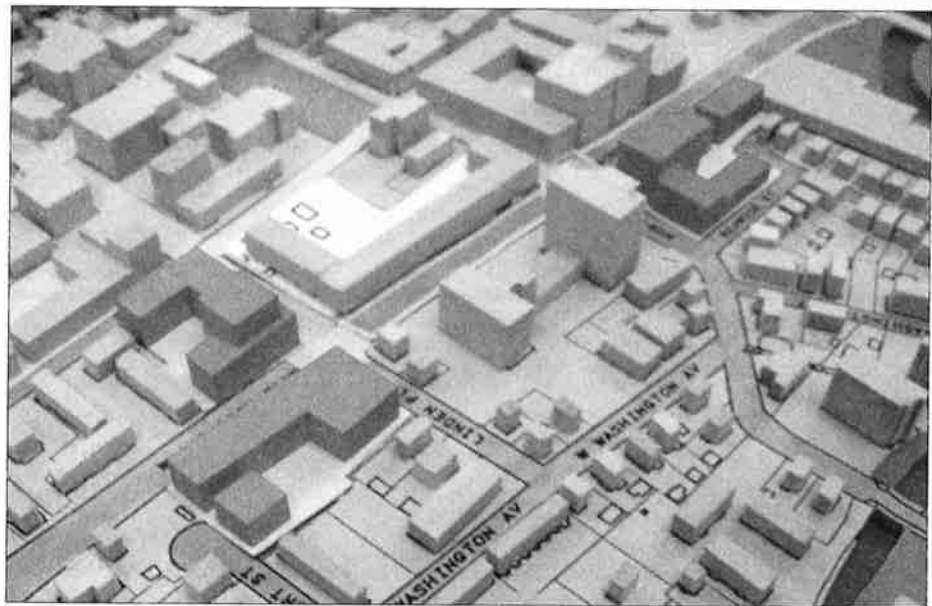
In terms of use, both sites can support mixed-use development. The south east corner could contain government-related offices, providing a new site for the police station and supporting the courthouse. The north side could be residential, as it is proximate to the church and the largely residential area between Bedford and Summer Streets.



#### L. THE STAMFORD URBAN TRANSITWAY

Over time, the Stamford Urban Transitway will sponsor the redevelopment of adjacent properties. The overall scale of development should be comparable to the intermediate, mid-rise scale of the Collar office areas, such as Summer Street. In addition, massing should be guided by the following considerations.

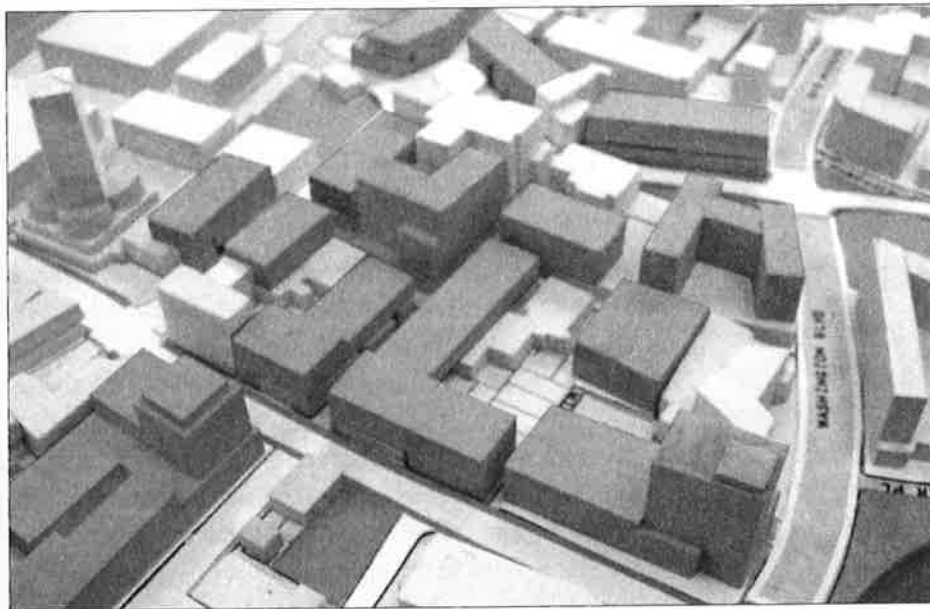
- Create a gateway to the corridor at the Canal Street intersection.
- Create a gateway to the Atlantic Street intersection that relates both to the transit center and the approach to the railroad and highway underpasses. Higher massing at this corner will also be visible as one approaches the downtown along Atlantic Street.
- Maintain a continuous street wall along both sides of the Transitway with parking behind or within buildings.
- Provide a transition from the intermediate scale of the corridor to the low-rise scale of the South End neighborhoods.



#### **M. WASHINGTON BOULEVARD CORRIDOR**

The scale of Washington Boulevard suggests that it can support intermediate scale residential development, comparable to the recently completed Avalon Corners project at Hoyt Street.

- Because this is within the "Collar," the transition to the adjacent low-rise neighborhood is essential. (The existing MX-D development on Washington Boulevard at North Street and Linden Place is an example of a building that is out of scale and does not make a transition to the neighborhood context.)
- Primary orientation should be towards Washington Boulevard
- Massing should acknowledge the importance of the corners of intersections
- Parking and service should be screened from adjacent properties.



#### **N. THE PEDESTRIAN CORE**

The bulk and massing strategies in the Pedestrian Core are meant to create a uniformly horizontal and compact urban environment. There is a premium on continuity of street wall, pedestrian-oriented ground floor activity and sensitivity to scale of adjacent buildings, including massing transition to lower structures. "Zero lot line" infill development on small sites will require creative strategies for off-site parking. On larger sites, parking must be interior to the development.

The scale of massing should reinforce the identity of Broad Street as the most important east-west road in the Core and Summer Street as an important north-south corridor that organizes the portion of the Core between Broad Street and Hoyt Street.

### **A NOTE ABOUT THE DOWNTOWN AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

The vision presented here of a vibrant Downtown depends on directing significant amounts of future development to the downtown Stamford. For example, even if only one or two of the pending proposals are built, most of the projected office growth in the Low Growth scenario will be absorbed.

If the redevelopment projects such as the Mill River Park and Stamford Urban Transitway are built, as well as the rest of the sites for which there are pending proposals, this would account for most of the growth in the Trend Growth scenario.

The completion of the other "soft sites" in Downtown, in combination with the contextual infill on smaller sites, is only possible if most of the growth forecast in the High Growth scenario is directed to Downtown.

For a more detailed discussion, see the Economic Development report as well as the Transit and Traffic Reports.



**Analysis of existing Master Plan and Zoning Categories**

CBD BIG IDEAS as stated in the 1984 Master Plan Addendum:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• most intensive</li> <li>• full range of uses</li> <li>• highest density residential</li> <li>• historic conservation &amp; preservation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "humane environment" for pedestrians</li> <li>• unified entity" for pedestrians</li> <li>• variety of building scales and styles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• site for most of future business growth to protect other areas</li> <li>• mixed use development planned</li> <li>• not a max build out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complete S.E. Quadrant &amp; link to Transportation Center</li> <li>• housing over stores (Atlantic)</li> </ul>
MP CATEGORIES (exist'g)	ZONING (existing)	CRITIQUE	RECOMMENDATION	
<p><b>8-D: commercial, CBD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• see "big ideas" above</li> </ul> <p><b>7: commercial: intermediala business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• intensive business development adjoining CBD or major arterials</li> <li>• in scale with abutting neighborhoods</li> <li>• multi-family high density residential development: 60-90 du /acre</li> </ul>	<p><b>CCN:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAR 2 to 3.5 with bonuses</li> <li>• height: 270 to 330 feet</li> <li>• 100% coverage in CBD</li> <li>• bonuses: see below</li> </ul> <p><b>CCS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAR 2 to 2.5 with bonuses</li> <li>• height: 210 feet</li> <li>• bonuses: see below</li> </ul> <p><b>CG:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAR 1.8 to 2.2 (w/ amenity)</li> <li>• height: 150 feet</li> <li>• low-rise, multi-family, residential multi-family development and mixed-use development in CBD</li> <li>• bonuses: see below</li> </ul> <p>Note: all of these districts are eligible for the following bonuses: daycare, public plaza, lower coverage at upper floors, arcades, direct garage access, short walking distance, community room, Mill River development, transportation center connection, through-block connection, historic preservation, shared parking, ground floor retail (except in CCS)</p>	<p>1. No distinction between highway scale office development at I-95 &amp; Tresser and scale of pedestrian core</p> <p>2. Zoning allows unreasonable changes in scale both within the zones and opposite zones adjacent to CBD</p> <p>3. CBD is not yet a "unified entity" for pedestrians</p> <p>4. Amenity bonuses for: arcades, thru-block connection, public plazas &amp; walking distance are not targeted</p> <p>6. No special protection for "historic/conservation" area</p> <p>8. CBD area adjacent to south side of the tracks &amp; highway has not materialized</p>	<p>1. Re-map "downtown" and "CBD"</p> <p>2. Mandate height limits in some areas and setback/massing transitions in others</p> <p>3. Map a "pedestrian core" that becomes the target area for streetscape, landscape, facade, traffic calming and other initiatives as well as for the urban design amenity bonuses. Reinforce system of radial corridors that connect the pedestrian core to the adjacent neighborhoods.</p> <p>4. As with ground floor retail, tie urban design bonuses to a comprehensive pedestrian design that reflects current realities and "two centers of gravity". Eliminate plaza bonus and target retail bonus within a compact pedestrian Core.</p> <p>6. Identify buildings to be preserved and establish maximum heights &amp; setback requirements.</p> <p>8. Rezone area along future Urban Transitway for intermediate scale development with special attention paid to scale transition with existing neighborhood.</p>	
<p><b>11-D: planned mixed-use (floating-mapped)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• urban, 24-hr, mix of uses, ground floor retail</li> </ul> <p>historic/conservation area</p>				

**Analysis of existing Master Plan and Zoning Categories**

**COLLAR AREA BIG IDEAS as stated in the 1984 Master Plan Addendum:**

- highest density residential development
- medium density residential development from First to Sixth streets, high density from First Street to CBD/Broad Street
- PD possible in some areas
- downtown development at south side of tracks to preclude intensive commercial development in South End

MP CATEGORIES (existing)	ZONING (existing)	CRITIQUE	RECOMMENDATION
<p><b>7: commercial: intermediate business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• intensive business-oriented development adjoining CBD or major arterial</li> <li>• in scale with adjacent neighborhoods</li> <li>• multi-family high density residential development: 60 du/acre</li> </ul>	<p><b>CL: limited business district</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAR: 1</li> <li>• height: 45 feet</li> <li>• height: 75 ft with ground floor amenity bonus in Downtown</li> <li>• floor area ratio: 1.0</li> <li>• floors, garage connection, canopy, fire greenbelt, historic preservation, shared parking</li> </ul> <p><b>RMF: multi-family residential</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• high density multi-family in low-rise buildings</li> <li>• apartments and attached &amp; detached dwellings</li> <li>• 40 ft height limit</li> </ul> <p><b>RH: multi-family design district, high density</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• high density high rise dwellings</li> <li>• height: 125 ft or less than an acre</li> <li>• height: 125 ft or less than 100,000 sq ft</li> <li>• 30% coverage</li> </ul> <p><b>RS: multi-family medium density</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 to 40 ft height</li> <li>• 30% coverage</li> </ul> <p><b>PD: planned development district</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• primarily housing</li> <li>• retail &amp; office possible</li> <li>• commercial houses or hotel</li> <li>• integrated, contextual design</li> <li>• 88 du/acre</li> <li>• height: 110 to 170 feet</li> <li>• water features north of Atlantic and Main intersection</li> </ul> <p><b>MX-D:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• primarily housing</li> <li>• apartment houses or hotel</li> <li>• height: 125 ft or less</li> <li>• integrated, contextual design</li> <li>• FAR: 2 to 3 (2 acres or more)</li> <li>• height: 80 to 150 feet (2 acres or more)</li> </ul>	<p>1. The original mapping of Category 5 did not respect the boundaries of "downtown" and the RH developments north and east of downtown have compromised the identity of downtown</p> <p>2. The residential densities suggested for downtown have not been achieved</p> <p>3. The existing zoning permits unreasonable contrasts in scale, especially at edges of RH zones and the floating zones PD and MX-D</p> <p>4. CL zoning over the Category 6 Master Plan has resulted in downtown-scale buildings on sites intended for neighborhood-scale commercial development</p> <p>5. The existing office buildings along Summer Street cannot be replaced under the revised zoning, yet the scale of the existing structures is appropriate for this corridor.</p>	<p>1. Jointly review regulations in the CL, CL and CS zones to rationalize FAR and other requirements to promote intermediate-scale infill development.</p> <p>2. Re-calibrate height, coverage and density requirements to promote higher density development. Promote wider mapping of RH within the core of the downtown with appropriate height and set-back guidelines</p> <p>3. Mandate height and set-back transitions between developments, subject to design review</p> <p>4. Down-zone commercial structures in Category 6 to create intermediate-scale structures with massing transitions to abutting neighborhoods</p> <p>5. Map mid-rise, high density residential uses as well as small office buildings along the corridor.</p>
<p><b>6: residential: multi-family, high density</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote and protect high density multi-family development convenient to shopping, mass transit and recreation</li> <li>• 60 du/acre</li> <li>• higher density (106 du/acre) planned residential development contiguous</li> </ul>			
<p><b>4/6: residential: multi-family, medium density</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• transition areas to low density</li> <li>• mixture of apartments, attached or detached residences in mid-rise structures</li> <li>• 29 du/acre</li> <li>• local "centers" compatible with adjacent multi-family and single family neighborhoods (Category 6)</li> </ul>			

**Analysis of existing Master Plan and Zoning Categories  
BEDFORD-SUMMER STREET BIG IDEAS:  
as stated in the 1984 Master Plan Addendum:**

- neighborhood scale retail & services
- place for medium density multi-family housing

MP CATEGORIES (existing)	ZONING (existing)	CRITIQUE	RECOMMENDATION
<p><b>4: multi-family, medium density</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• transition from lower to medium density use</li> <li>• mix of apts, attached or detached residential mid-rise</li> <li>• 20 du /acre</li> </ul> <p><b>4/B: commercial neighborhood or local business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• local "centers" compatible with adjacent multi-family/ single family</li> <li>• residential density per Category 4</li> </ul>	<p><b>RMF: multi-family residential</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• high middle density in low rise buildings</li> <li>• apartments &amp; dwellings</li> <li>• 40 foot height limit</li> </ul> <p><b>CL: limited business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAR: 1</li> <li>• height: 45 feet</li> <li>• height: 75 feet with ground floor amenity coverage at upper floors, garage connection, community room, mall river greenbelt, historic preservation, shared parking</li> </ul> <p><b>CSCD: existing large shopping centers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to remake existing large shopping centers</li> <li>• compatible/integrate with adjacent neighborhoods</li> </ul> <p><b>CB: community business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAR: 5</li> <li>• retail &amp; services for several neighborhoods</li> <li>• 4 stories/60 ft</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. Has not achieved overall residential densities suggested by '84 Master Plan</b></p> <p><b>2. Awkward scale contrasts between small office buildings and single family dwelling units</b></p> <p><b>3. There are poorly designed multi-family developments and small office developments that conflict with the context.</b></p> <p><b>4. Office &amp; hotel developments at Bulls Head are inconsistent with master plan Category 6</b></p> <p><b>5. The existing office buildings along summer street cannot be replaced under the revised zoning, yet the scale of the existing structures is appropriate for this corridor.</b></p>	<p><b>1. Promote multifamily densities with aggressive design controls to manage transitions in scale. Restrict commercial development in this corridor.</b></p> <p><b>2. Mandate height and set-back transitions between developments, subject to design review</b></p> <p><b>3. Mandate design guidelines for infill development</b></p> <p><b>4. Downzone commercial structures in Category 6 to create intermediate-scale structures with missing transitions to abutting neighborhoods. Rationalize and coordinate CL, CL and CG zones to promote intermediate scale development.</b></p> <p><b>5. Map mid-rise, high density residential uses as well as small office buildings along the corridor.</b></p> <p><b>6. Reexamine limits of ground floor retail bonus on Summer Street</b></p>

