

Hill-to-Downtown



NEW HAVEN, CT



COMMUNITY PLAN SUMMARY

DECEMBER 2013



Connecticut
so revolutionary

Department of Economic and
Community Development

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COMMUNITY PLAN SUMMARY

Introduction

The Hill-to-Downtown Community Plan is the result of a 12-month collaborative effort between community stakeholders and the City of New Haven to understand the challenges and opportunities facing this key city district. Critical sponsorship and leadership for the project was provided by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, the CT Department of Economic Development, and the CT Department of Transportation.



CHURCH STREET REDEFINED as a pedestrian-friendly Main Street.
View from near the intersection with Columbus Avenue.



The plan builds on a strong foundation of market research and community input, which recognizes downtown New Haven's growing appeal as a location for new homes, workplaces, research and medical facilities, shopping and entertainment. The district is well placed to benefit from national demographic trends and changes that are drawing more people to diverse urban centers to live, work and play. Few places in the Northeast have the assets that are such a prominent part of the district: walkable and diverse urban neighborhoods; proximity to the heart of historic New Haven with its rich amenities; a strong institutional employment base represented by Yale-



New Haven Hospital, Yale School of Medicine, and Gateway Community College; a growing research presence; and the region's most important transportation center, Union Station.

Why the Community Plan is Needed

Despite the district's many assets, it continues to be burdened by the scars of urban renewal-era land clearance that resulted from construction of the Route 34/Oak Street Connector more than 50 years ago. Construction of the connector led to the development of a fragmented street network, isolating the district from both the Hill neighborhood and

neighborhoods and the city as a whole, most notably the Church Street South residential complex which is nearing the end of its useful lifespan, the former Yale School of Nursing property, and the Sacred Heart campus on Columbus Avenue.

Today, Hill-to-Downtown is well-positioned to undergo transformative change in line with the vision outlined in this Community Plan. But timely action will be needed by all of the community, governmental and institutional stakeholders to ensure that this opportunity is not missed.

downtown New Haven, and has fostered a suburban pattern of development that has done little to attract investment and residents to the area.

As a consequence of this history, much of the property within the district remains underused and neglected, occupied by outmoded buildings or large surface parking lots. Renewal of several large properties are especially important to revitalization of the district, with benefits for surrounding

Community Process

Over the course of a year, the Hill-to-Downtown community has worked with the City of New Haven to create a vision and plan for this important city district. The plan that has emerged reflects the contributions of hundreds of city residents and other stakeholders who participated in the seven public workshops listed below, shared their goals and visions, reviewed market studies and technical analyses, considered alternatives, and reached broad consensus on the outline of a plan.

This document, the Hill-to-Downtown Community Plan, outlines this shared vision and plan and describes the action steps needed to make it happen. Through continued cooperation among residents, businesses, elected leaders, and New Haven institutions, the plan outlined here will become a reality.

PUBLIC MEETING #1 | September 12, 2012

Kickoff

PUBLIC MEETING #2 | March 12, 2013

A Conversation with the Development Community

PUBLIC MEETING #3 | April 16, 2013

Church Street South Tenants Meeting

PUBLIC MEETING #4 | April 22, 2013

Presentation of Analysis and Market Findings

PUBLIC MEETING #5 | May 29, 2013

Church Street South and Hill-to-Downtown

PUBLIC MEETING #6 | June 25, 2013

Three Scenarios

PUBLIC MEETING #7 | September 25, 2013

Preferred Framework Plan

Goals of the Plan

New Haven's strong base of assets creates the potential for attracting new growth, providing significant benefits for Hill-to-Downtown and all New Haven. The goals outlined here are consistent with those established within the community planning process that provides the foundation for this Plan. Key goals of the Plan include:

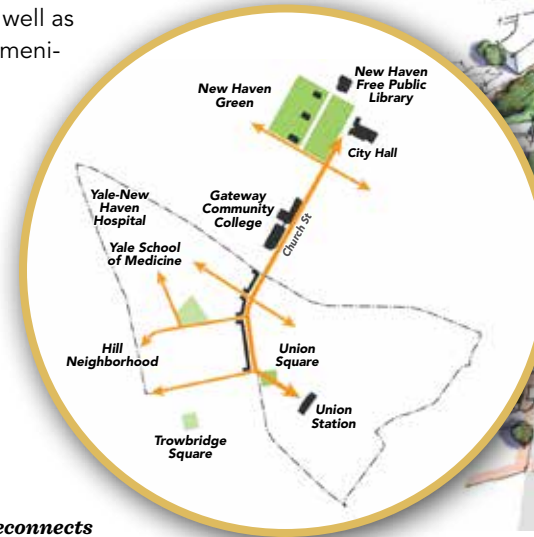
- **Encourage Development of Commercial, Residential, and Retail Space in the Areas Around Union Station and within the Medical District Areas**, providing a stronger gateway to the city and promoting expanded transit use
- **Strengthen the Existing Neighborhood** through creation of a safer, more attractive, more walkable place that includes new shopping and entertainment venues, open space and other community amenities
- **Improve Connectivity within the District and to Downtown** through improvements to the street grid and expanded transit access
- **Create New Job Opportunities for Residents** through the continued expansion of medical and research uses that can grow employment and provide job opportunities at a wide range of skill levels over the next 5 to 10 years
- **Expand the City's Tax Base** with development in the district that will contribute to providing additional financial support for a wide range of public services

Vision for the District

Create a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use district.

The Community Plan envisions a dramatic transformation of the district. A place that seems neglected today, its identity shaped by surface parking lots, can become a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use district combining new homes with growing medical and research uses, served by new retail and entertainment venues, walkable streets and new public spaces.

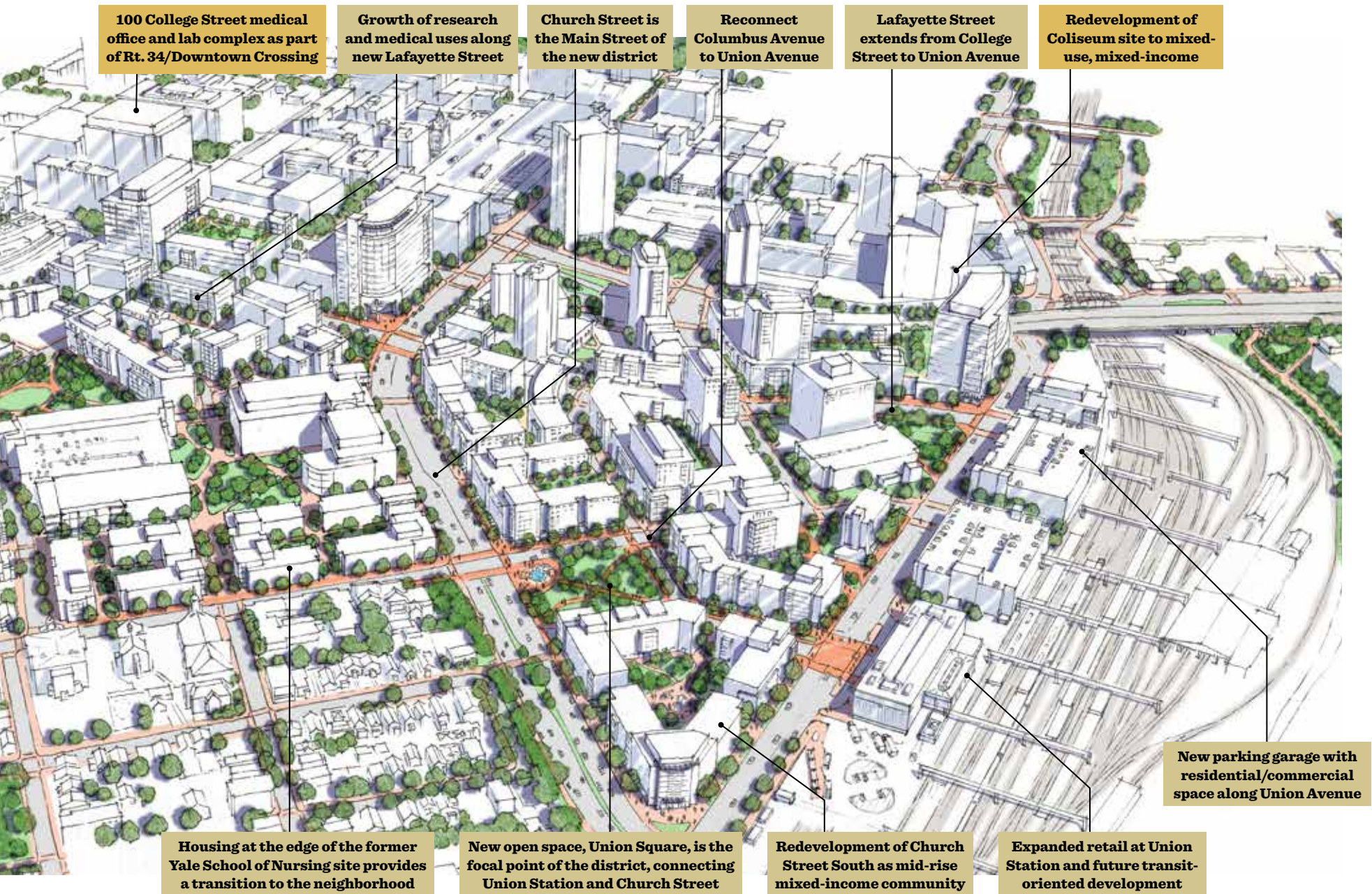
Church Street can become the attractive centerpiece of this new area, a great street that reflect the city's vitality and urban traditions, mixing housing and research, open space and places to socialize for the entire community. An improved street grid will fill in missing links and make it easier to get around—for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as drivers. Residents, area workers, and visitors can also benefit from improved access to and from Union Station as well as expanded retail and amenities within the station itself. New homes, businesses, research and medical uses will take the place of surface parking lots that define much of the area today, with parking accommodated within new structures.



The Community Plan reconnects Union Station to the district, surrounding neighborhoods and downtown.



Continued investment around Trowbridge Square



100 College Street medical office and lab complex as part of Rt. 34/Downtown Crossing

Growth of research and medical uses along new Lafayette Street

Church Street is the Main Street of the new district

Reconnect Columbus Avenue to Union Avenue

Lafayette Street extends from College Street to Union Avenue

Redevelopment of Coliseum site to mixed-use, mixed-income

Housing at the edge of the former Yale School of Nursing site provides a transition to the neighborhood

New open space, Union Square, is the focal point of the district, connecting Union Station and Church Street

Redevelopment of Church Street South as mid-rise mixed-income community

Expanded retail at Union Station and future transit-oriented development

New parking garage with residential/commercial space along Union Avenue

Create a new public open space, Union Square, as the hub of the district.

To the east of Church Street, a new predominantly residential district will be developed around Union Station, with opportunities for office, retail and entertainment uses. This area will be centered on a redevelopment of the Church Street South residential complex where the 300 existing units of housing will ultimately be replaced by up to 750 units of mixed-income housing and other related uses.

A central aspect of this redevelopment will be creation of a major new public space, Union Square, surrounded by housing and retail uses, and providing direct access between Union Station, Church Street and the district as a whole. This new public space will become a focus of activity, serving current and future residents, area workers and visitors to the city.

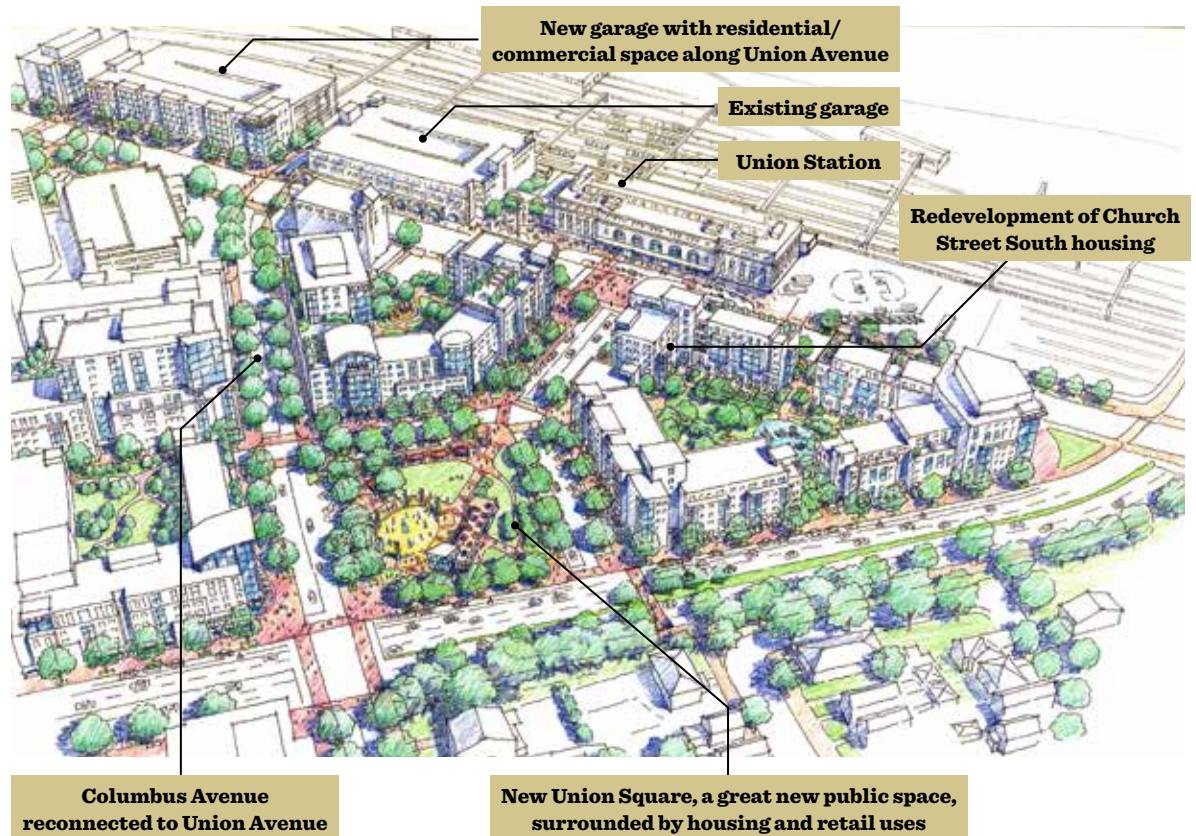
Strengthen and grow the existing medical district west of Church Street.

To the west of Church Street, the primary uses will be research and medically-oriented uses with supporting housing and retail activity. Taller buildings will be sited near Route 34, with building heights stepping down to neighborhood edges. The plan envisions development of housing along Columbus Avenue in order to form an attractive transition between the medical area and the adjacent neighborhood.

Invest in infrastructure and improve street network.

New streets will be developed to fill in missing links in the street grid and make it easier to get around. Key improvements include the extension and realignment of Lafayette Street to provide direct access between College Street and Union Avenue and re-establishing the connection of Columbus Avenue

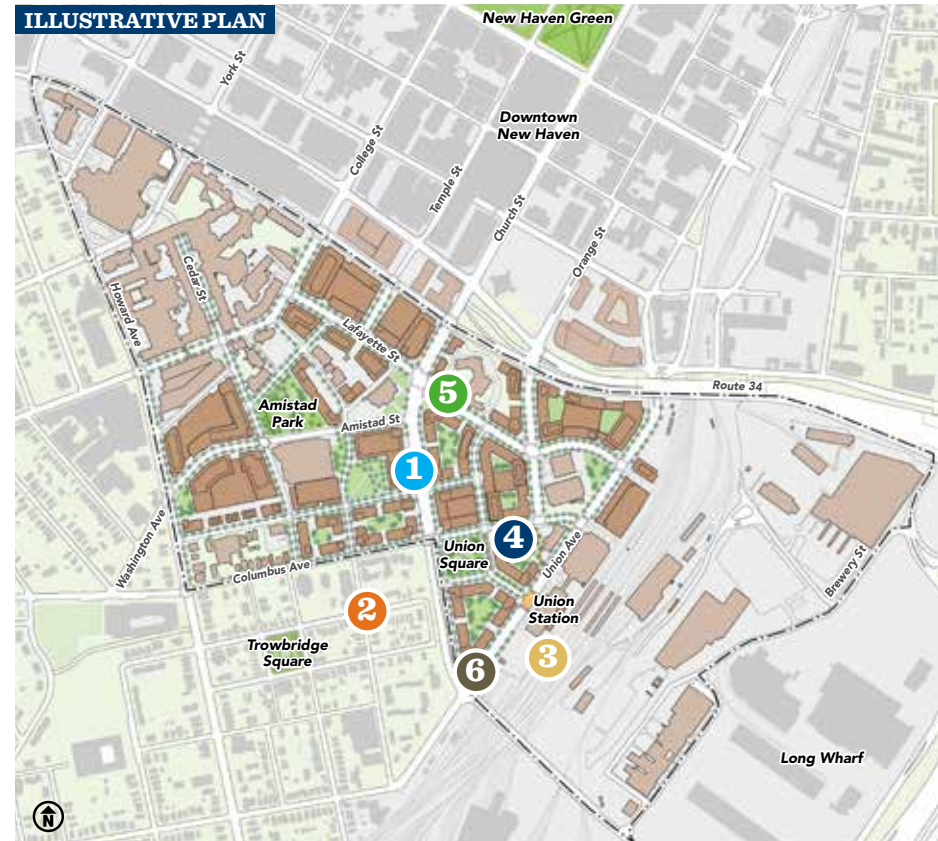
between Church Street and Union Avenue. This plan also integrates with the Downtown Crossing project recommendations for establishing new connections at Orange and Temple Streets. The Community Plan includes guidelines for development of all streets, allowing phased improvements over time as circumstances and funding allow.



UNION SQUARE looking towards Union Station: The new square connects the station to Church Street and downtown and also provides a central gathering place and activity center surrounded by shops and housing for Hill-to-Downtown.

Key Initiatives

- 1 Establish Church Street as the Center of a Walkable, Mixed-Use District**
 The Community Plan establishes Church Street as an active, pedestrian-oriented roadway defined by new housing, open space, retail, research and institutional uses.
- 2 Invest in Existing Neighborhoods (Columbus, Howard, Trowbridge)**
 The Community Plan promotes strengthened connections between Hill-to-Downtown and Trowbridge Square. A significant reuse opportunity exists at the Sacred Heart Church campus on Columbus Avenue, with several infill opportunities on Cedar Street and Howard Avenue. Funding should be established for these targeted investments that will strengthen the existing neighborhood.
- 3 Connect Union Station to Church Street**
 The Community Plan seeks to reestablish a historic connection between Union Station and Downtown by creating a new pedestrian/vehicular corridor extending from the front doors of Union Station directly to Church Street.
- 4 Redevelop the Church Street South Residential Complex**
 The Community Plan shows a potential scenario for how this critical area of the district could be redeveloped as a new mixed-income residential community including retail, restaurants and a new destination open space at the doorstep of downtown.
- 5 Build a New Lafayette Street**
 The Community Plan establishes a New Lafayette Street, enhancing access, assisting with traffic demand management, and opening up significant development opportunities on key parcels of land along Route 34. The new street builds on the plan for New Orange and Temple Streets that is part of the Downtown Crossing initiative.
- 6 Strengthen Union Avenue**
 The Community Plan proposes roadway improvements for Union Avenue, making it a “complete street”—one that balances the needs of autos, pedestrians, and cyclists and anticipates future development next to and across from Union Station.





LAFAYETTE ST. looking north toward Church St. and the medical area. This new street can become an attractive spine—making it easier to get around for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers—while linking research and residential areas, and supporting higher density development.



COLUMBUS AVE. looking toward Church St., with new housing on the left and the Sacred Heart Church campus on the right. Residential development at the edge of the former Yale School of Nursing site could transform Columbus Avenue and create an attractive transition to surrounding neighborhoods.



Market Opportunities and Economic Benefits

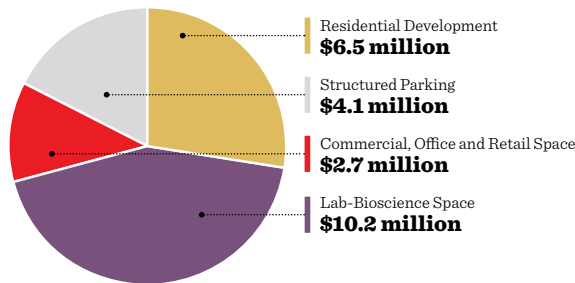
The analysis of market opportunities and economic benefits for Hill-to-Downtown was conducted by experts on the planning team including W-ZHA, Zimmerman Volk, Ninigret Partners, MJB Consulting, Nelson\Nygaard, and Goody Clancy. These analyses concluded that the district, like many other compatible medical and research districts nationally, has great potential to attract new development in the near- and longer-term, resulting in substantial economic benefits for the neighborhood, the city and the region.

New Haven was Connecticut's fastest growing large city between 2000 and 2010, with a population increase of 5% to 129,799 residents. The City of New Haven is the economic center of the New Haven-Milford Metropolitan Statistical Area economy with 78,640 jobs.

New Haven is recognized as the center for biotechnology and health sciences in Connecticut. The City is widely recognized for containing the 2nd largest bioscience cluster in New England, second only to Cambridge.

Over the next 10 years, the market analysis concluded that development of up to 1 million square feet of lab/research space and related office use is possible (in addition to the 500,000 square feet currently under construction at 100 College Street), resulting in the creation of 2,500 new permanent jobs and accounting for \$165 million in annual payroll. Approximately 10,000 construction-period jobs will also be created. The residential market analysis concluded that up to 1,400 residential units can be

ANNUAL NEW PROPERTY TAX REVENUE OVER THE LONGER TERM

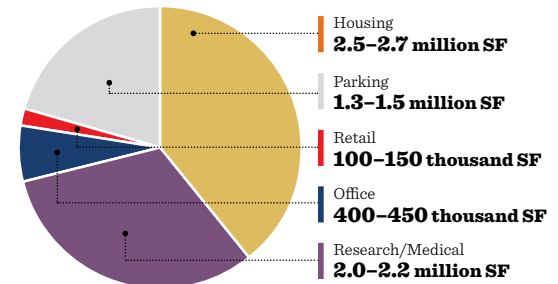


Full development of the Hill-to-Downtown district has the potential to generate over \$23 million in new annual property tax revenue for the City of New Haven.*

supported. Of these units, there is a 20% to 25% goal for affordable, workforce housing. The retail market assessment concluded that up to 40,000 square feet of convenience retail is possible with additional potential for larger format retail. The 10-year development program is shown in the table at the top of the next page.

Over the longer-term, the district has the capacity to support over 2 million square feet of institutional and private sector lab and research space and more than 2,000 new homes, including a substantial element of housing to support the area's workforce. This growth in jobs and residents will create the potential for an expansion in shopping and entertainment uses that serve both existing and future workers and residents.

HILL-TO-DOWNTOWN LONG TERM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



NOTE: LONG-TERM PROGRAM DOES NOT INCLUDE 100 COLLEGE STREET, DOWNTOWN CROSSING OR COLISEUM SITE DEVELOPMENT.

Over the next 10 years, implementation of the Community Plan could result in the creation of 2,500 new permanent jobs, accounting for \$165 million in annual payroll. Approximately 10,000 construction-period jobs can also be created.

When fully developed, the district can make a major contribution to the city's tax base with annual tax revenues over \$23 million.

* City of New Haven estimates; estimates assume a mix of private sector and institutional space.

HILL-TO-DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM	
OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS	LONG TERM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,400 new housing units • Including approximately 300 low to moderate income units • Potential for 600,000 to 1,000,000 sf of lab/research space • Potential for approximately 20,000 to 40,000 sf of convenience retail • Creation of 2,500 new permanent jobs • \$165 million in annual payroll • Approximately 10,000 construction-period jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.2 million square feet of institutional and private sector lab and research space • More than 2,000 new homes • Potential for 100,000–150,000 square feet of retail • Potential for 400,000–450,000 square feet of office

Changing Zoning to Support the Plan

Current zoning within the district will need to be amended to allow full development of the Community Plan. In particular, revisions will be needed to allowable uses, building heights, allowable density (Floor Area Ratio), and parking requirements. New zoning should ensure that building heights adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods within the Hill are compatible with adjacent homes. Taller, higher density development should be concentrated closer to Lafayette Street and Route 34.

There does not appear to be an appropriate zoning designation within the New Haven zoning ordinance so a new designation will likely need to be developed to address the unique needs and opportunities associated with this district.

New zoning should provide a clear and predictable path for future development proposals that are consistent with the Community Plan. To the extent possible, as-of-right zoning models are preferred.

TDM Strategy

Over time, existing surface lots within the district will be phased out and replaced with new homes, research or medical space, offices and retail uses. Surface parking will need to be offset by a limited number of new parking structures and an aggressive program to reduce the number of car trips through bicycle and pedestrian enhancements. In the design and placement of parking structures, every effort will be needed to ensure they are well integrated within the district, screened from the street by buildings or designed in ways that make them appealing elements of the district’s streetscape.

An important goal of the Community Plan is to make the most efficient use of new parking structures, taking advantage of opportunities to share parking between uses that have peak needs in different time periods. The plan also supports efforts to reduce parking demand associated with new and existing uses through transit improvement, or other initiatives, to provide more choices for residents and area workers. In the near term, new parking structures (or

underground parking where feasible) will be needed in order to free key surface lots for development. Early development of new structures by large employers is an essential step to advancing the Community Plan.

Preserving Housing Affordability within the District

As the district changes, it must continue to serve the people who live there today. The plan includes development of approximately 1,400 new housing units over the next 10 years with approximately 300 new homes allocated to people of low- and moderate-incomes. Each new residential development within the district should aim to incorporate an allocation of affordable units. New development will allow current residents to continue to reside in the district. New development will include 2- and 3-bedroom family-style units.

Critical Factors for Success

Implementation of the Hill-to-Downtown Community Plan will occur over time based on a myriad of economic and market forces and through the coordinated work of many stakeholders. City staff working in concert with the Hill-to-Downtown Steering Committee will submit the Community Plan with its recommendations for zoning, infrastructure, parking, commercial and residential developments to the Board of Aldermen for approval. Once approved by the Board, the Hill-to-Downtown Community Plan will become a blueprint by which the public and private sectors can work collaboratively to move forward with development in the district. The following five strategies will be employed to nurture implementation of the Plan over the next several years. Further descriptions are provided in the Implementation chapter of the Community Plan.

Strategy 1: Continue Citizen and Stakeholder Involvement.

This can be accomplished through a citizen's action committee or steering committee that represents neighborhood groups and individuals who participated in the Community Plan process and who wish to assist in moving the plan forward. Continued involvement of other key stakeholders will also be critical. Every national model involving successful revitalization of comparable districts demonstrates the power of robust community, governmental, institutional and private-sector partnerships to accomplish transformational changes. In addition to residents, those that should remain involved include the City, private landowners, Yale-New Haven Hospital, Yale School of Medicine, and owners of the Church Street South residential complex.



UNION AVENUE can be redefined through streetscape and infrastructure improvements, combined with redevelopment of Church Street South as a mixed-income, mixed-use community.

Strategy 2: Institute a Zoning Amendment Process. Critical zoning changes are needed in order to align with the recommendations in the Community Plan. A city process needs to be established that will create the zoning modifications and facilitate implementation. Without such changes, the City's own development regulations will serve as an obstacle to moving forward with the vision outlined within the Community Plan.

Strategy 3: Move Forward with Union Station and Transit Investments. Planning for Union Station enhancements and development north of the existing garage are underway. In addition to parking needed for commuters, development in and around the station must incorporate high quality urban design, and include retail, mixed-use and transit-oriented development components.

Another key goal is to create a better local transit system serving the neighborhood centered on Union Station. A new dialogue will need to be initiated with CT Transit and local institutions regarding bus and shuttle routes that can expand transit accessibility within the area. In view of the limited resources available at the state level to support local transit, institutional leadership and partnerships will be essential and could open up creative solutions to addressing the district's needs.

The City of New Haven owns property within the Hill-to-Downtown district. The City will work actively to market these parcels, once the Board of Aldermen has approved this Hill-to-Downtown Plan. Development of these parcels can be a catalyst for launching other developments within the District.

The City will also explore opportunities for redevelopment of the Post Office site on Brewery Street.

Strategy 4: Identify Funding to Support Infrastructure Improvements, Gap Financing, and Cost of Construction. Public infrastructure improvements will set the stage for the key initiatives in the Community Plan. Funding mechanisms will need to be identified and captured to phase-in supporting pieces of the Community Plan over time. If the resources needed to make key changes to the district's infrastructure are not forthcoming, new investment within the district will be much slower or entirely lost to other locations outside the city. In addition to infrastructure investment, gap funding will also be required to support development of residential, commercial and research facilities.

Strategy 5: Create New Development Tools to Facilitate Investment in the District. The city and state need to develop new funding and development tools to support implementation of large-scale infrastructure and parking improvements needed to spur investment in the district.

