

RECOMMENDED DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Seven projects are recommended to realize the City's vision of an expanded downtown area, and are consistent with the development goals and policy recommendations in sections 3.0 and 4.0:

1. Core Transportation Project
2. Merrimack River Park System Project
3. Arts / Culture / Education Project
4. West Side Project
5. Gaslight District Project
6. South End Project
7. Queen City Commercial Center Project

Each of the above projects contains a series of related actions that are recommended to be studied together but may be undertaken independently or combined to allow for the incremental implementation of the plan.

5.1 Core Transportation Project

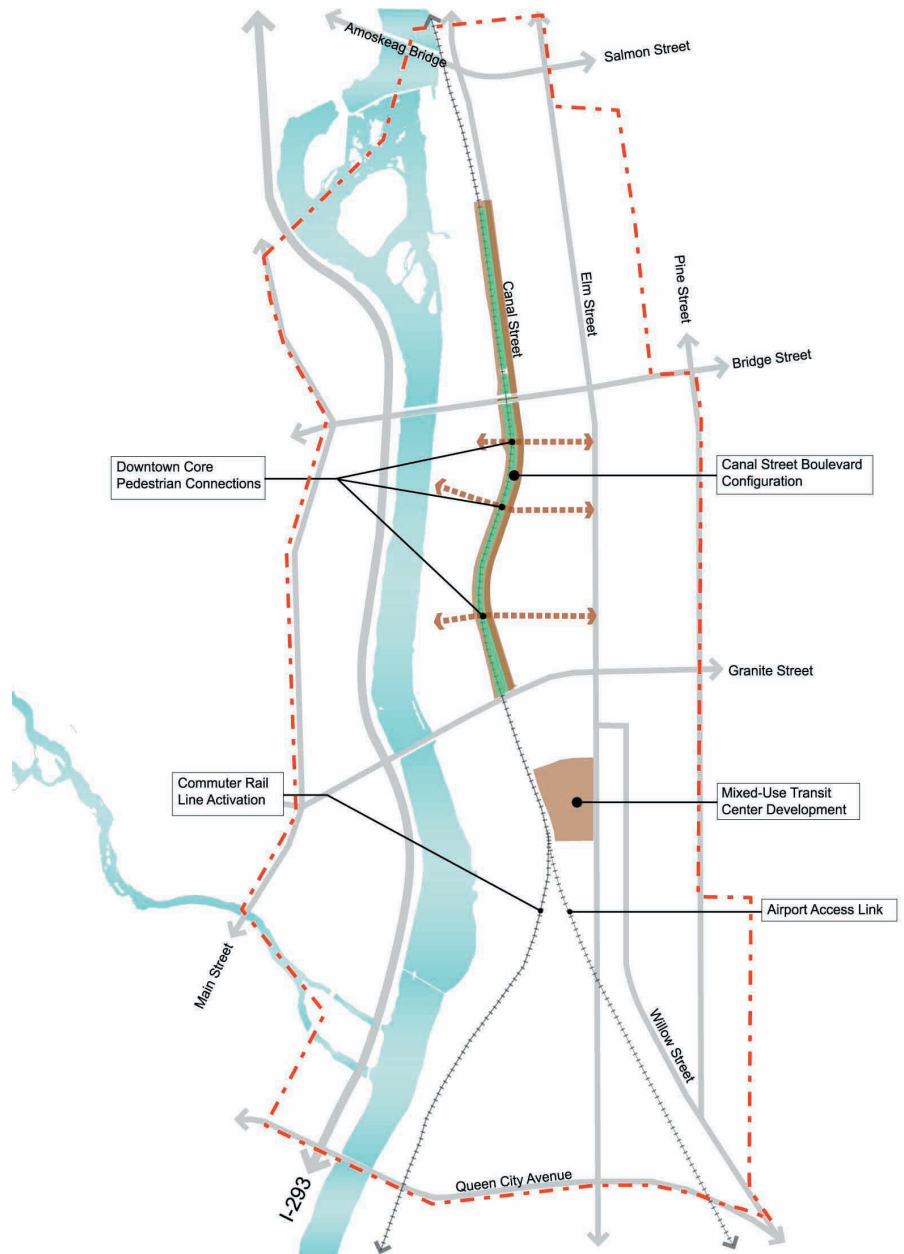
Currently, the overall connectivity of the downtown area is limited. Within the study area, gaps in the continuity of the pedestrian experience create isolated sections in the downtown. Furthermore, vehicular transportation provides the predominant mode of access to the downtown.

The goal of this project is to improve overall connectivity of the downtown area and promote alternative modes of transportation. The recommended actions build upon Manchester's existing transportation infrastructure to facilitate movement within the downtown and link to the surrounding area.

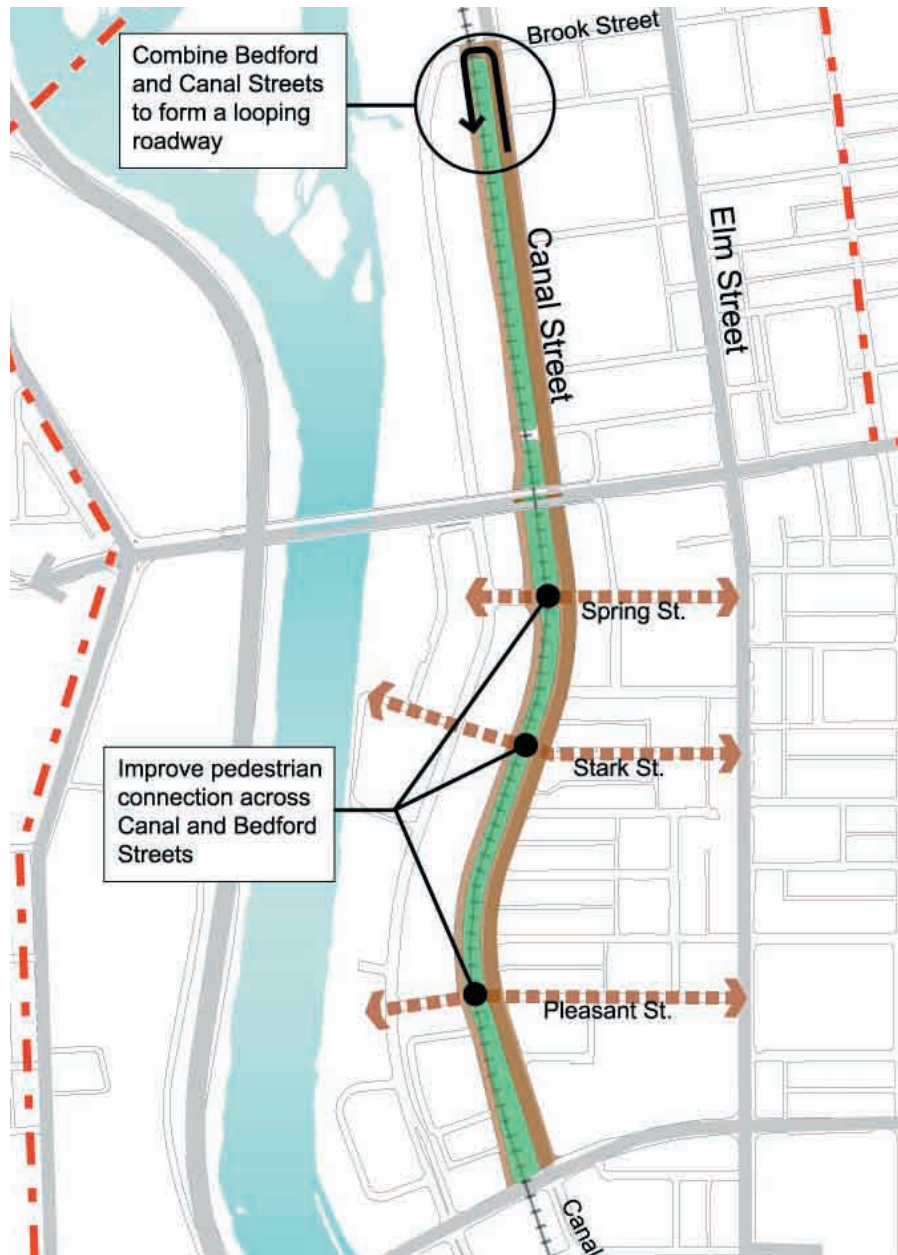
This project recommends the following actions:

- Canal Street Boulevard Configuration
- Downtown Core Pedestrian Connections
- Commuter Rail Line Activation
- Airport Access Linkage
- Bike Trail System Integration
- Mixed-Use Transit Center Development

Both the Intown Manchester Development Plan and the Manchester Millyard Landscape Revitalization Plan identified problems with Canal Street and its associated crossings. The lack of streetscape elements along the streets connecting Elm Street with the Millyard have yet to be resolved. Another recommendation of the Intown Plan, construction of a multi-modal transit center, is crucial to continued growth in Manchester's downtown. It is necessary to expand public transit services with new routes (such as an airport link) and new transit options (such as commuter rail service to other regional destinations).



Core Transportation Project Map



Canal Street Reconfiguration Focus Area Map

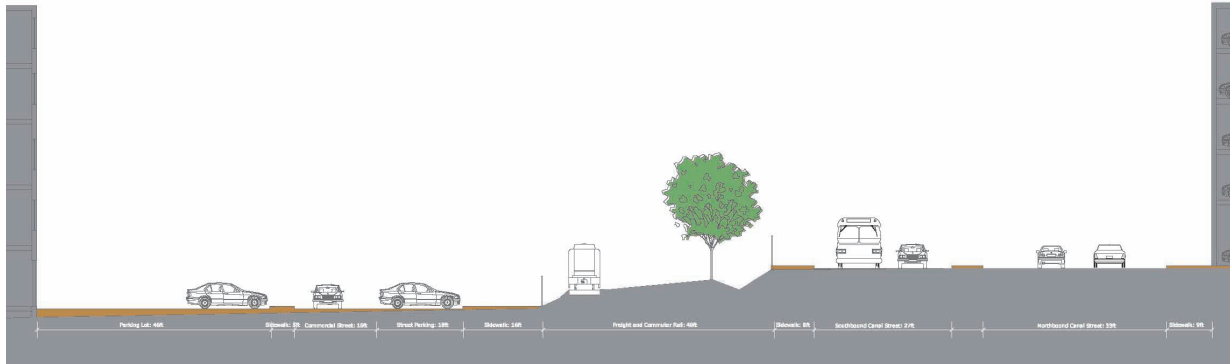
5.1.1 Canal Street Boulevard Configuration

This plan recommends transforming Canal Street from a highway to an urban boulevard to calm traffic and enhance the pedestrian environment. Currently, Canal Street provides traffic lanes in both directions separated by a small median. Next to the roadway on the mill side of the street run two rail beds – one used for heavy freight transport and the other available for re-use (although the tracks have been removed). On the other side of the tracks, Bedford Street runs north-south between Granite and Bridge Streets. There is street parking located along Bedford and also in the large mill building parking lots that front on Bedford Street. In addition, there are grade changes that pose accessibility problems for those with disabilities. The entire area is oriented to the automobile rather than the pedestrian.

There are two approaches that could be taken to the Canal Street reconfiguration. The first would combine the existing Canal Street with Bedford Street to create one looping roadway. The Canal Street roadway would be narrowed and the center median removed, allowing for one-way northbound vehicular traffic. Sidewalks would be located on either side of the northbound traffic lanes and would be wide enough to accommodate outdoor dining or sidewalk displays and would provide street furniture - banners and lighting - and additional street trees to create a pleasant pedestrian environment. Northbound traffic would use the Canal Street roadway while southbound traffic would travel the Bedford Street roadway. The unkempt strip of land around the rail line between Canal and Bedford Streets would become a landscaped island with pedestrian amenities and signalized, ADA crossings. The rail right-of-way would be re-graded to allow pedestrian crossing and would be able to accommodate a commuter rail line as well as heavy freight rail. While this would eliminate parking on Bedford Street, parallel parking would be provided on Canal Street in both directions, greatly increasing the overall attractiveness of the area and encouraging increased activity.

An alternative approach to restructuring Canal Street is to create an urban boulevard using the existing Canal Street roadway, slightly widening its existing center median, re-grading, and landscaping it. Pedestrian crossings would be signalized and made ADA accessible. Instead of combining Canal Street with Bedford, Bedford Street would become a service road only, but continue to provide parking for tenants in the nearby mill buildings. Restricting vehicular access to service vehicles and local traffic only will help to calm traffic and provide a safer environment for pedestrians making their way from the Central Business District to the Mill District and the River.

Through the proposed reconfiguration, the City has the opportunity to address the barrier created by Canal Street. This area of “no man’s land” has the potential to become a comfortable pedestrian environment, one that encourages the flow of people from the downtown core throughout the historic mill district along the Merrimack River.



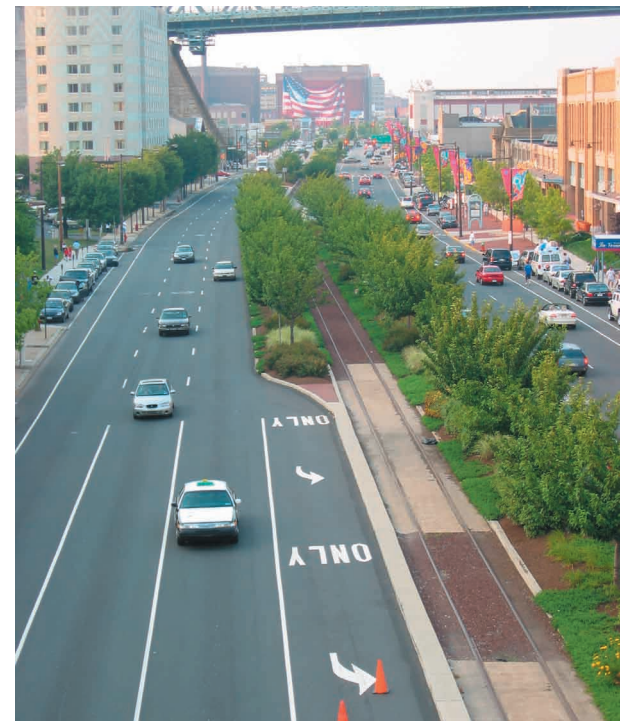
Existing cross-section of Canal and Bedford Streets at Pleasant Street



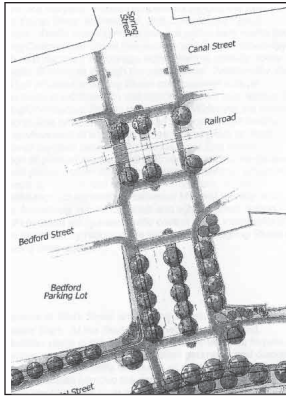
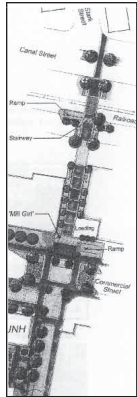
Possible cross-section of Canal Street reconfiguration at Pleasant Street with recommended roadway upgrade



Existing conditions on Canal Street



Conditions accommodating multiple modes of transportation on Delaware Avenue in Philadelphia, PA



*Upgrades to Spring and Stark Streets recommended by the Millyard Landscape Revitalization Conceptual Master Plan.
(Source: City of Manchester)*



Hanover Street streetscape with pedestrian amenities



Tulare City, CA streetscape

5.1.2 Downtown Core Pedestrian Connections

Stark, Spring, and Pleasant Streets connect Manchester's downtown core with the Merrimack River, but do not encourage pedestrian use due to the lack of streetscape amenities. Currently there is little retail or commercial activity along these streets so they do not draw people for activity reasons. Because they have unattractive streetscapes, there is little incentive for people to travel them at all. In addition, these streets cross Canal Street, which is currently a barrier that must be overcome in order to improve all types of traffic flow throughout the area.

Recommended streetscape improvements include the use of awnings, banners, plantings, bollards, curb bump-outs, lighting, and selective building materials. Improving the streetscape on these streets combined with reconfiguring Canal Street could encourage traffic between the Mill District and downtown Manchester. The Manchester Millyard Landscape Revitalization Conceptual Master Plan contains specific guidelines for streetscape improvements which should be implemented in conjunction with the reconfiguration of Canal Street and its intersections.



Rapid bus transit in Curitiba, Brazil



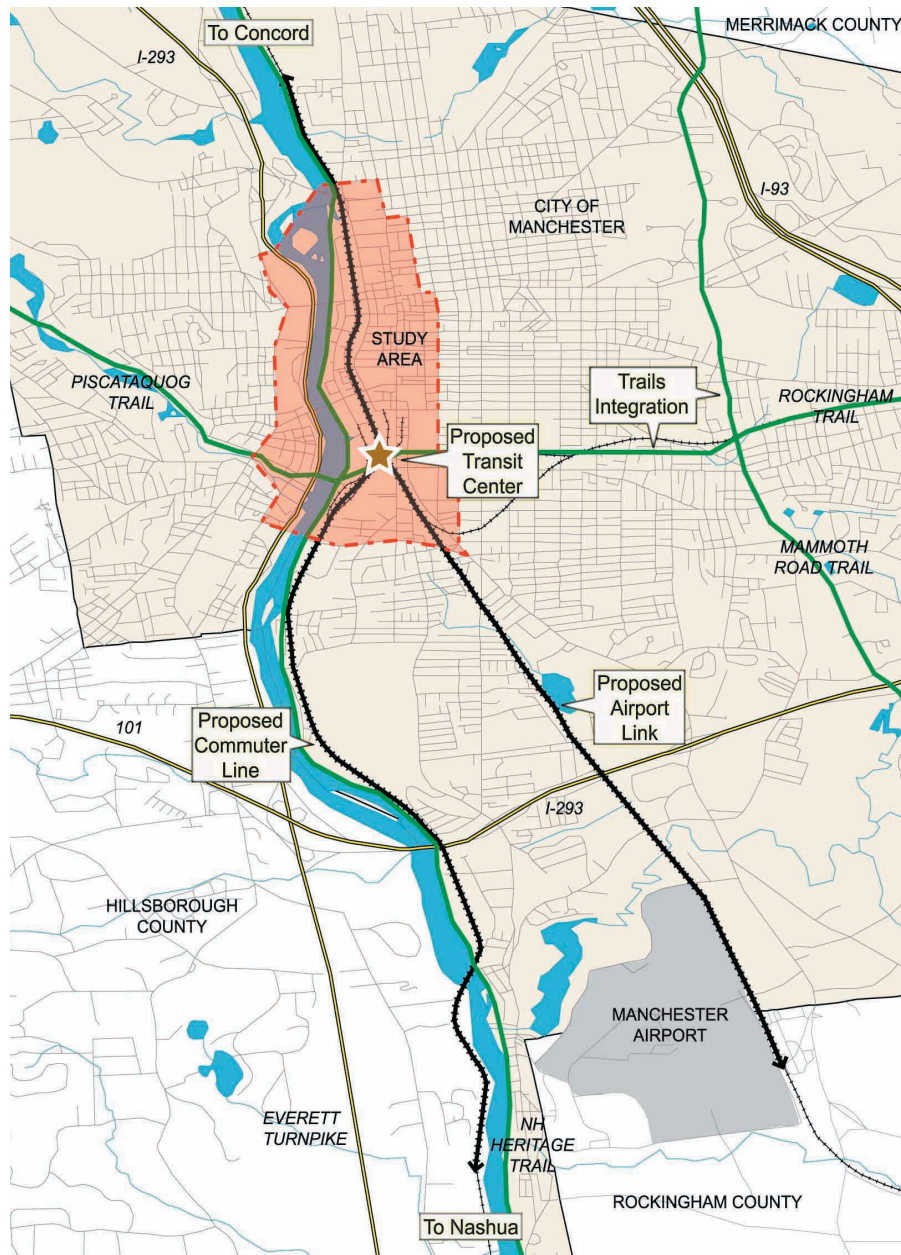
Wallkill Valley Rail Trail, NY



Commuter rail in West Orange, FL



Continuous sidewalks and bike lanes



Proposed Projects Context Map

5.1.3 Commuter Rail Line Activation

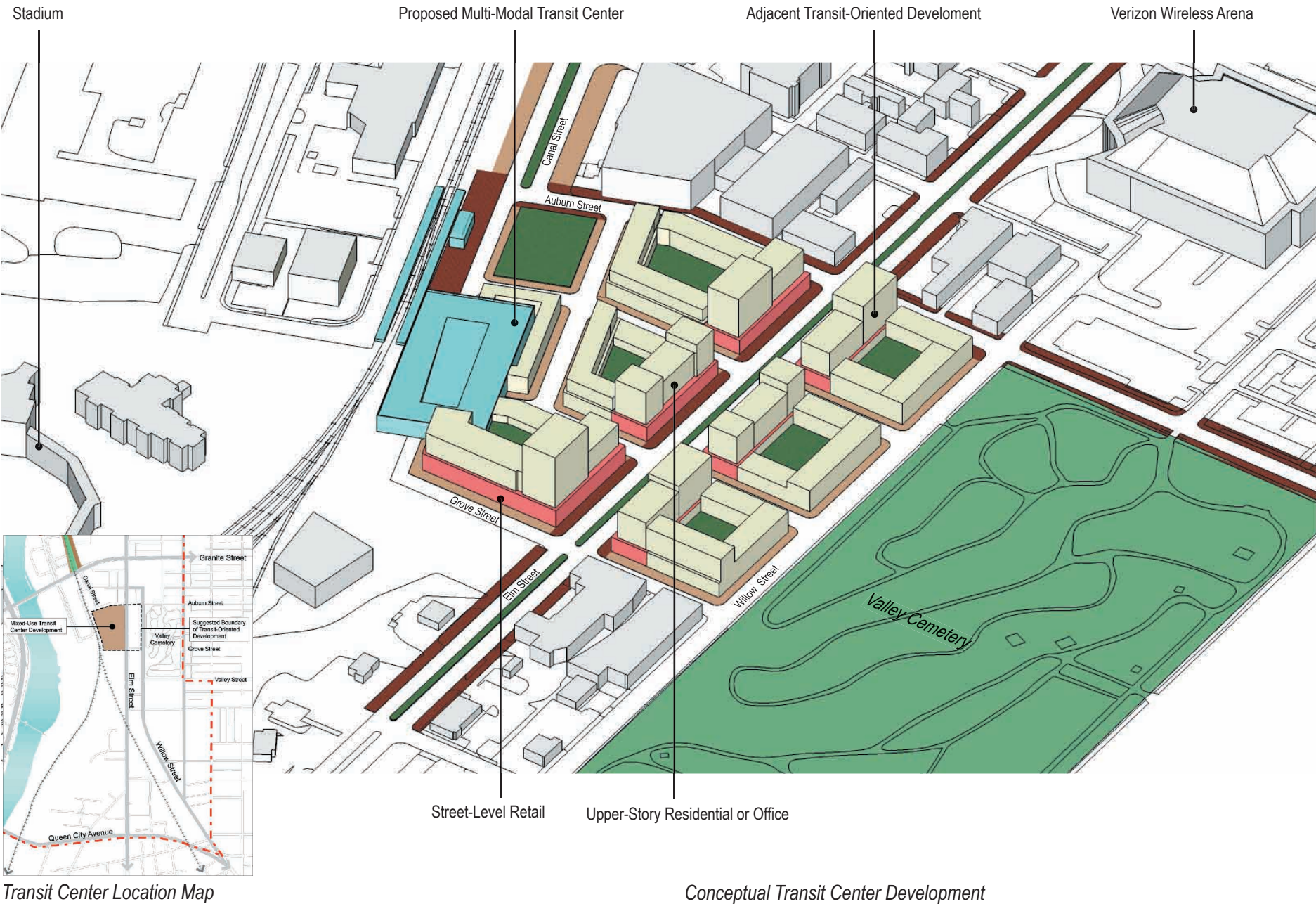
A commuter rail line providing service from Manchester to Concord and Nashua could provide additional impetus for increasing activity downtown. It would provide people from nearby cities an easy opportunity to work downtown or attend classes in the Mill District. Furthermore, more people may be attracted to downtown living if they could easily travel to other places. While links to Nashua and Concord alone are probably not feasible, combining service to those cities with service to Boston is a realistic possibility that should be explored.

5.1.4 Airport Access Linkage

Manchester has done a lot to market its airport as a convenient alternative to Logan Airport in Boston. A direct link with Manchester's downtown could encourage those traveling to the area to explore what downtown has to offer. A direct downtown link coupled with commuter connections to other regional destinations could greatly increase Manchester's appeal as a convenient transit hub. This link could be established via bus or light rail, depending on the amount of funding available and the city's priorities.

5.1.5 Bike Trail System Integration

Healthy cities provide accommodations for all types of traffic, including bicycles. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation has recognized the importance of providing routes for non-motorized traffic and has authored two recent plans that impact Manchester. The New Hampshire State Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan provides funding and support for connecting the State's major destinations. The I-93 Salem to Concord Bikeway Feasibility Study evaluated ways to provide a continuous route from Salem to Concord. Trails and bikeways are important regional amenities and linking them with the existing road network can create greater ease of access and more visibility throughout the community. Manchester's local system of trails should be linked with the larger trail network and the infrastructure upgrades recommended in this plan provide an opportunity to integrate bicycle traffic into the transportation network by providing bike lanes on roadways and trails. Supporting bike travel will be important in attracting young professionals to the City.





Transit-oriented development projects with different architectural styles

5.1.6 Mixed-Use Transit Center Development

While Manchester does have several active bus routes, the current extent of public transit options offered in the area are very limited. The airport, an important city amenity, is not linked directly to the downtown core and Manchester commuters are required to drive. It is recommended that the City build a multi-modal transit center capable of bringing together several other transit components – an airport link, commuter rail, and transit-oriented development.

The multi-modal transit center should be centrally located, either in a mixed-use structure or as part of a mixed-use site (it is recommended below that an urban grocery store be included in the design) and provide accessible facilities for bus and rail service alike. A recommended site for this development is located at the intersection of Elm and Auburn Streets on the site of the industrial building. This central location provides another opportunity for the City as well – the chance to construct a signature building, a structure that represents the spirit of the City while providing an iconic piece of architecture for the 21st century. Feasibility studies should be conducted to determine whether to implement bus or light rail service to the airport and how to establish commuter rail links with other New England cities.

Transit-oriented development (TOD) nearby will serve two purposes. First, it will provide a critical mass of people to support the new transit center. Second, it will provide new residential development to support and grow Manchester's downtown. A provision for TOD in the development of the new transit center will greatly strengthen this project component in addition to contributing to the redevelopment efforts recommended for the South End.

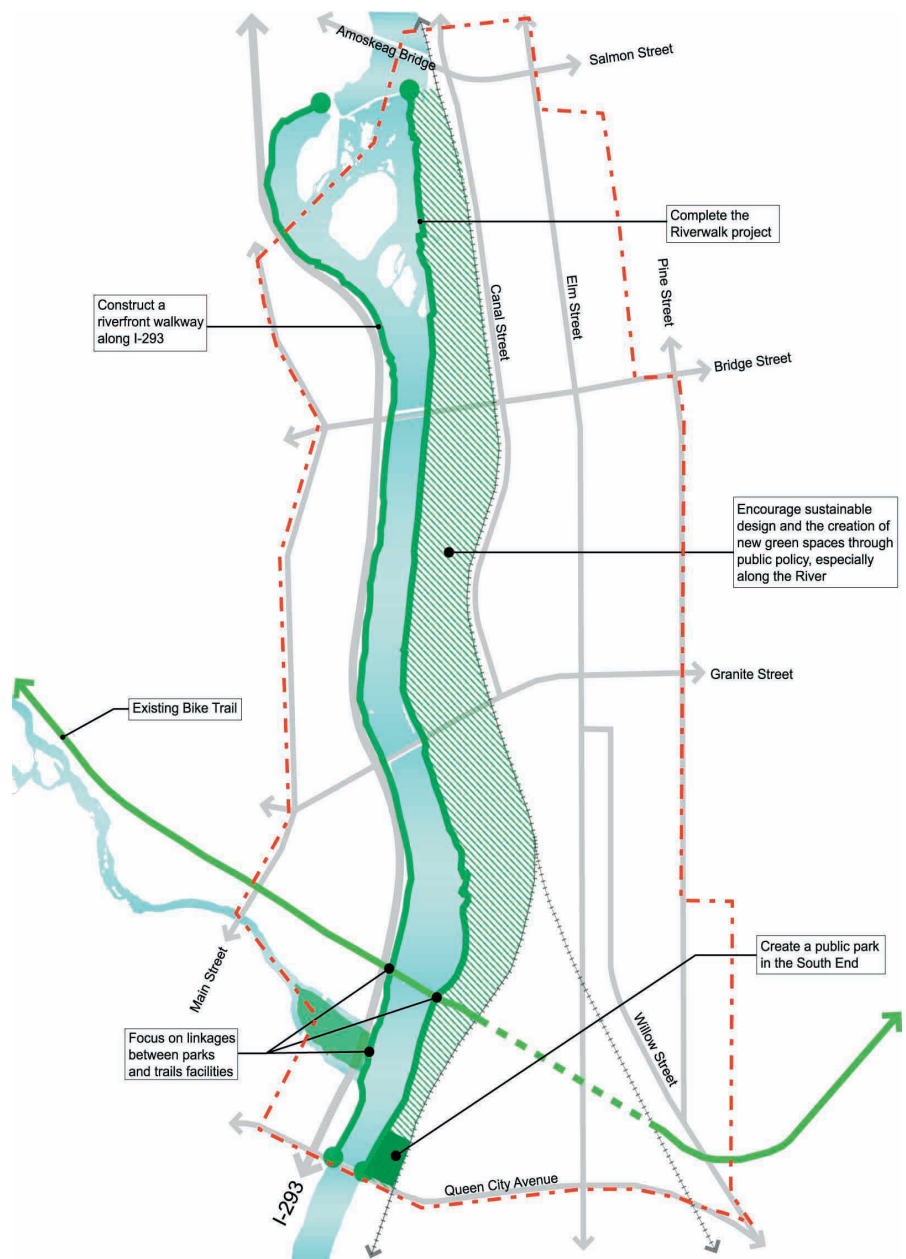


Industrial building with large surface parking lot fronting on Elm Street

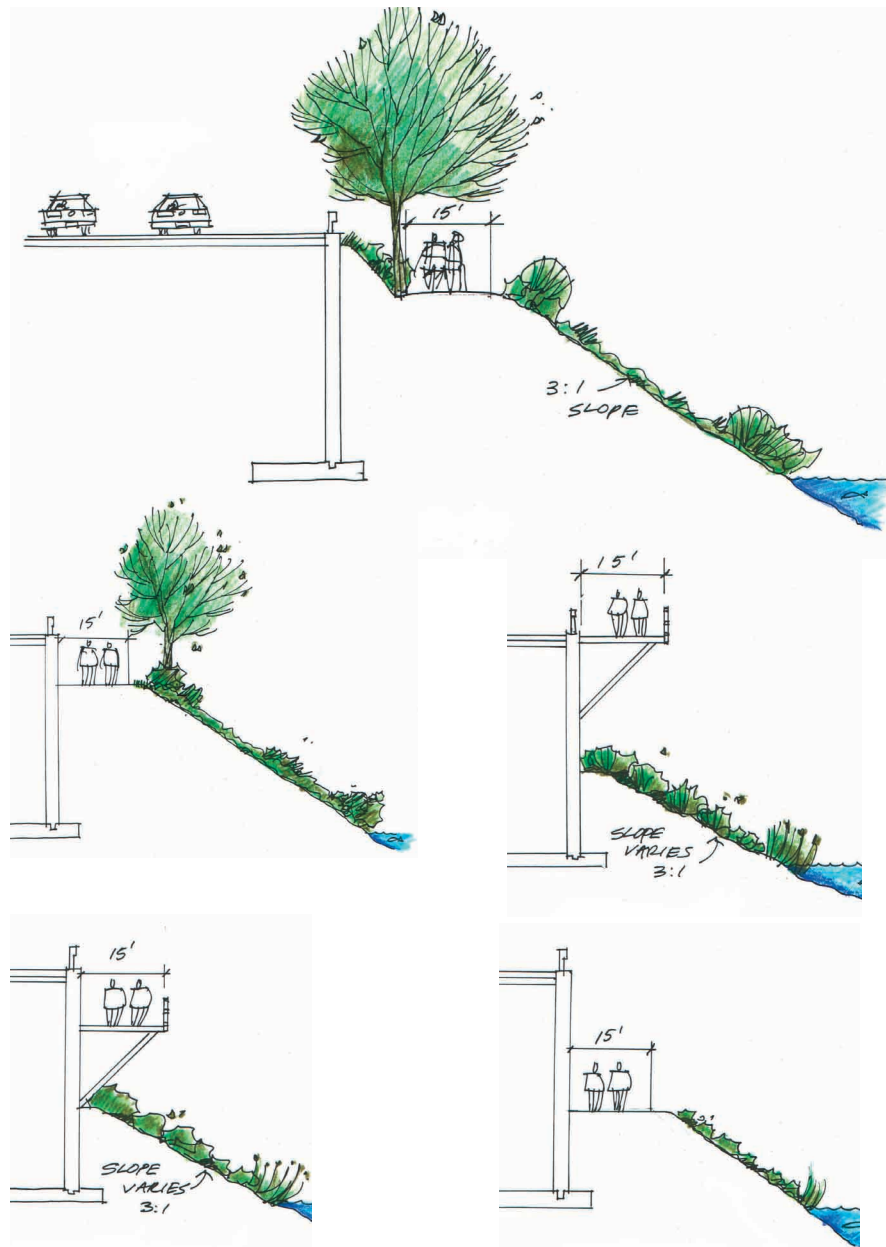
5.2 Merrimack River Park System Project

Manchester has an impressive system of parks, trails, and open space and is currently undergoing a parks master planning effort. This report recommends three priority actions aimed at improving connections within the overall park system and integrating the natural amenities with the “downtown experience:”

- I-293 Riverfront Walkway
- South End Riverfront Park
- River-Oriented Signage, Programming, and Landscaping



Merrimack River Park System Project Map



Options for creating a structured pathway along I-293

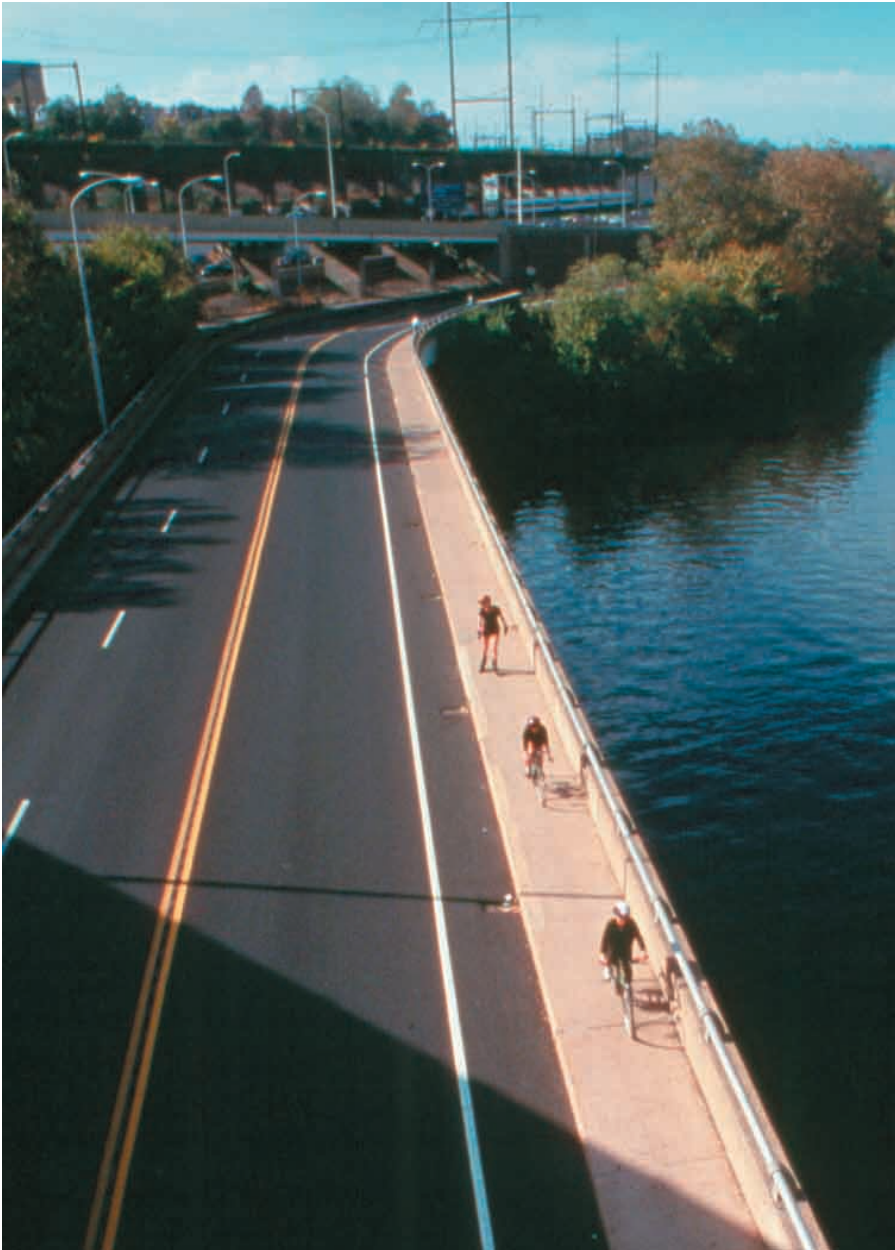
5.2.1 I-293 Riverfront Walkway

A structured pathway running along the River's west edge would not only be a valuable recreational resource to west side residents and an opportunity to connect them with the downtown core, but would benefit the overall objective of the city to refocus its image on the historic Merrimack River. As previously mentioned, one of Manchester's large public improvement projects is the I-293 Highway Expansion project. While the current structure of I-293 effectively eliminates access to the Merrimack River on the west side of the City, the highway expansion project provides an opportunity to return river access to the public. It is recommended that the City create a riverfront walkway along I-293 and connect it to the Riverwalk on the east side of the Merrimack. This walkway should also be linked to the trail improvements recommended in the Cross Trails plan, including the Hands Across the Merrimack Bridge.

Numerous options exist for constructing a pathway between I-293 and the Merrimack River. A platform could be constructed at street level or below and cantilever over the banks of the River. A pathway could also be constructed at ground level between the highway and the River's edge. All options could be provided with varying levels of street furnishings and/or landscaping to enhance the pedestrian experience.



View from the west side of the Merrimack showing I-293 along the River's edge



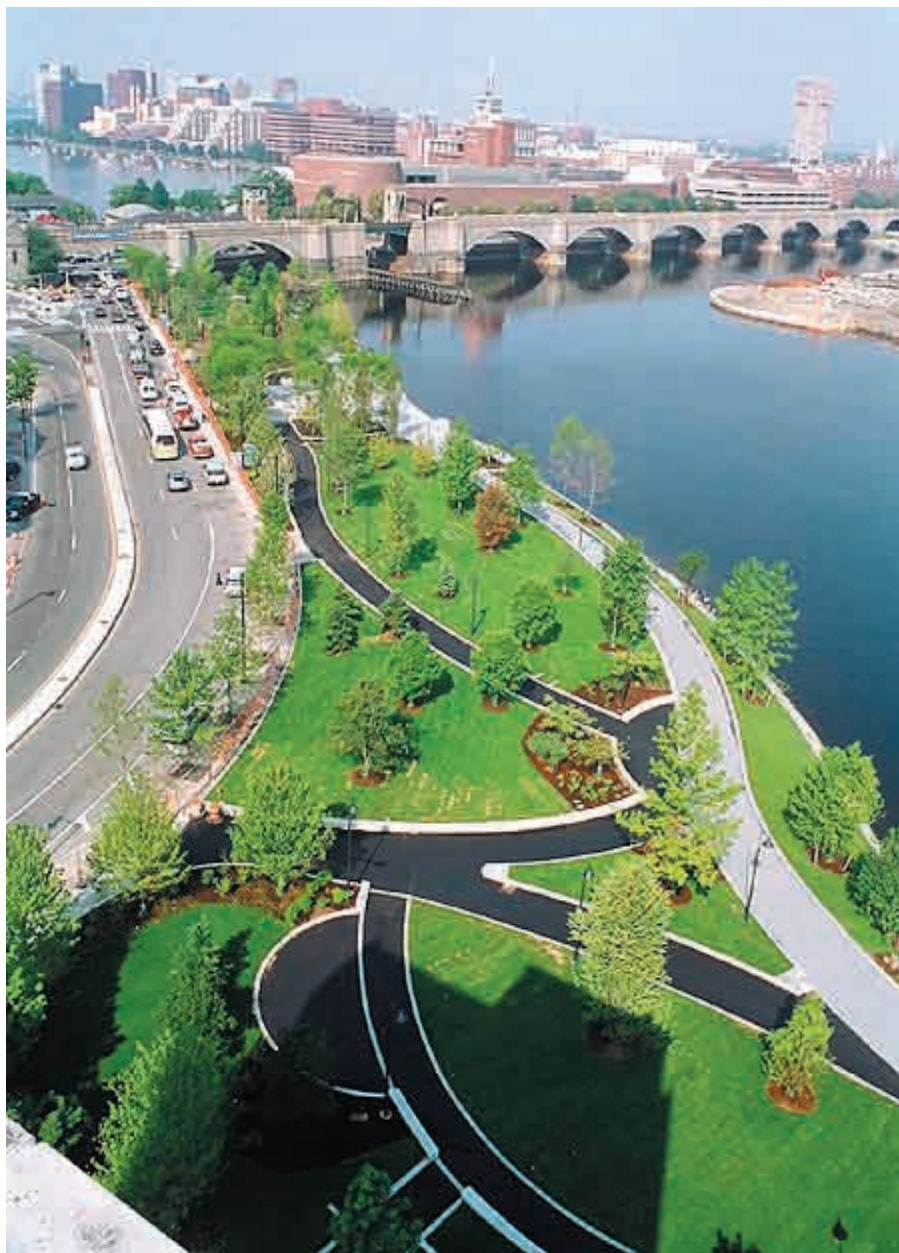
Pedestrian path and bikeway along the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia, PA



Waterfront pedestrian walkway and seating in Battery Park City, NY



Pedestrian and bike path along a canal in Ottawa, Canada



Nashua Street Park on the Charles River in Boston, MA

5.2.2 South End Riverfront Park

The Riverfront Development Plan suggested that a park be constructed in the portion of the Study Area now home to the Riverfront Stadium and associated hotel and residential towers; however, the possibility still exists for a park in the South End. This part of the Study Area has the largest potential for redevelopment (and, as such, is zoned RDV) due to the location of large surface parking lots, the JAC PAC site, and the new Riverfront Stadium and associated new development. Other than Bass Island Park, which has limited access to the Merrimack due to I-293, Manchester does not have a large public space downtown along the River. The creation of a riverfront park in the South End would greatly enhance the new residential development projects and draw people to the River while providing a natural opportunity to increase activity programming of the River.

5.2.3 River-Oriented Signage, Programming, and Landscaping

Undertaking a targeted campaign to create an open space campus oriented to the River will not only attract people to the area, but will re-focus the image of downtown Manchester on its most important natural resource, the Merrimack River. Interpretive signage, river-oriented programming and uses, and extensive landscaping are highly recommended for the area between the rail corridor and the Merrimack River.

The interpretive signage should be incorporated with the overall signage master plan recommended in section 4.4.5 and also easily identifiable as part of a special waterfront district with unique amenities. Natural, cultural, and historic resources should be identified and access points to waterfront amenities (such as the new riverfront park in the South End, the Heritage Trail, Arms Park, etc.) featured. Overall, the interpretive signage program should convey Manchester's heritage in a way that attracts interest while educating visitors and residents alike.

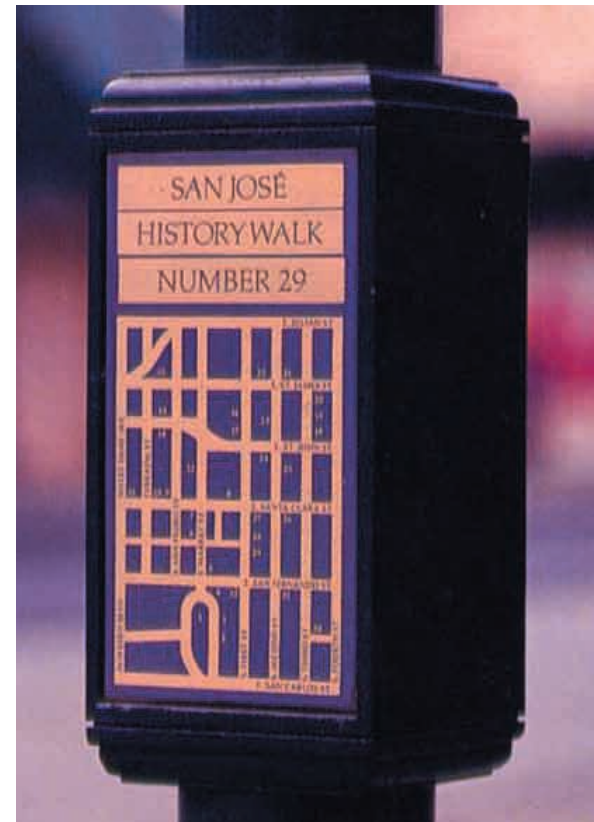
The River should be evaluated for greater use as an educational and recreational resource. Loeb Plaza, Arms Park Boat Landing, Gateway Park, and other access points should be evaluated for ease of River access, needed improvements, and appropriate uses such as swimming, boating, fishing, rafting and other water sport programming as well as supporting commercial enterprises to offer food, drink, and restroom facilities. Bass Island Park could provide needed recreation and nature interpretation trails for the neighborhoods west of the River. The Amoskeag Fishways Learning and Visitor's Center could be the home base for an educational program about the environmental and cultural history of the river and its habitat, wildlife, industry and development in Manchester, as well as an interpretive "Island Falls Nature Trail." The continuous pedestrian loop connecting downtown plazas, the newly proposed South End Park and Gateway Park, Arms Park Boat Landing, and Loeb Plaza Boat Landing as well as other newly created open spaces would be an ideal location for an arts or river festival with temporary and permanent art installations along the pedestrian loop and related activities located in adjacent parks and open spaces. Winter programming elements could be provided such as those Quebec City provides during its Winter Carnival when ice sculptures dot the downtown area and river walks. Ice skating might be provided in the inlet north of the Mill District beneath the Amoskeag Bridge. These and other possible programs that require physical analysis for built improvements should be part of the master plan for Manchester's park system recommended in section 4.4.4.



Historical and directional signage in Philadelphia, PA



A landscape plan for the area between the railroad corridor and the River should incorporate the LEED principles reviewed in section 4.2. Parking in the Mill District from Canal Street to the River should be consolidated or structured wherever possible to create a better pedestrian environment and increased green space. Of first priority would be to remove the very few cars parked immediately adjacent to the River to easily create a continuation of the Heritage Trail and Amoskeag River Walk. In addition, the landscape plan should provide a strategy for the gradual greening of the extensive surface parking system currently serving the mill buildings. It should provide a balance between the parking needs of the mill tenants and the cultural significance of Manchester's downtown waterfront through the use of landscaping.

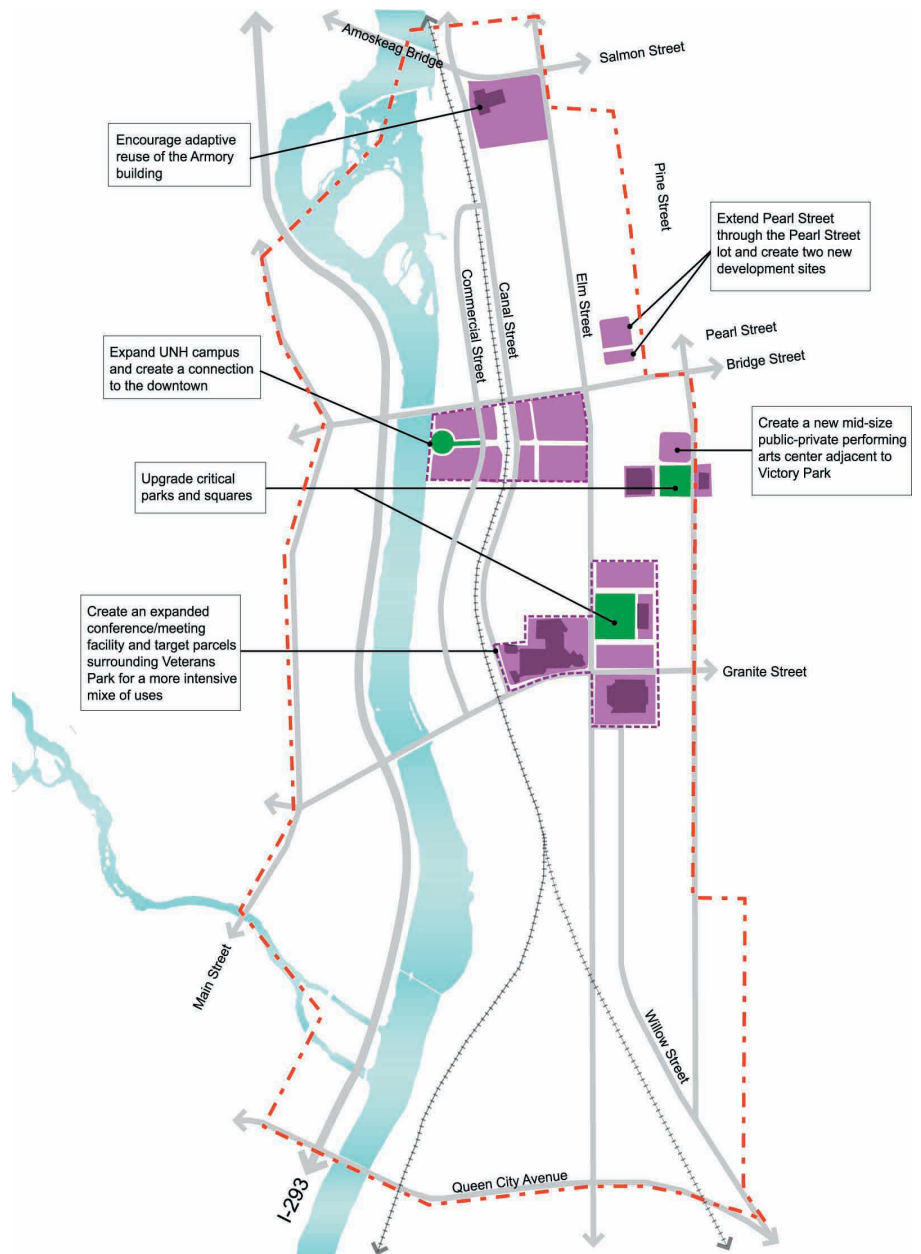


Historical signage in San Jose, CA

5.3 Arts / Culture / Education Project

The City of Manchester has worked to increase economic activity downtown through the tourism industry. The Manchester Area Convention and Visitors Bureau works to promote Manchester as a regional destination. Their website provides links to historical attractions, dining, lodging, and events in the area. Additional support for arts and culture projects can be found in the Cultural Plan for Manchester which provides a picture of how the cultural environment can substantially enhance the overall quality of life and sense of place. The following projects are recommended to build upon Manchester's previous successes in promoting the City and its cultural and historical heritage while providing key amenities currently missing from the package Manchester offers:

- Critical Parks Upgrade
- Performing Arts Center
- Conference / Meeting Space Expansion
- UNH Campus Expansion
- Pearl Street Development
- Armory Building Reuse



Arts / Culture / Education Project Map



Green open space for public gathering

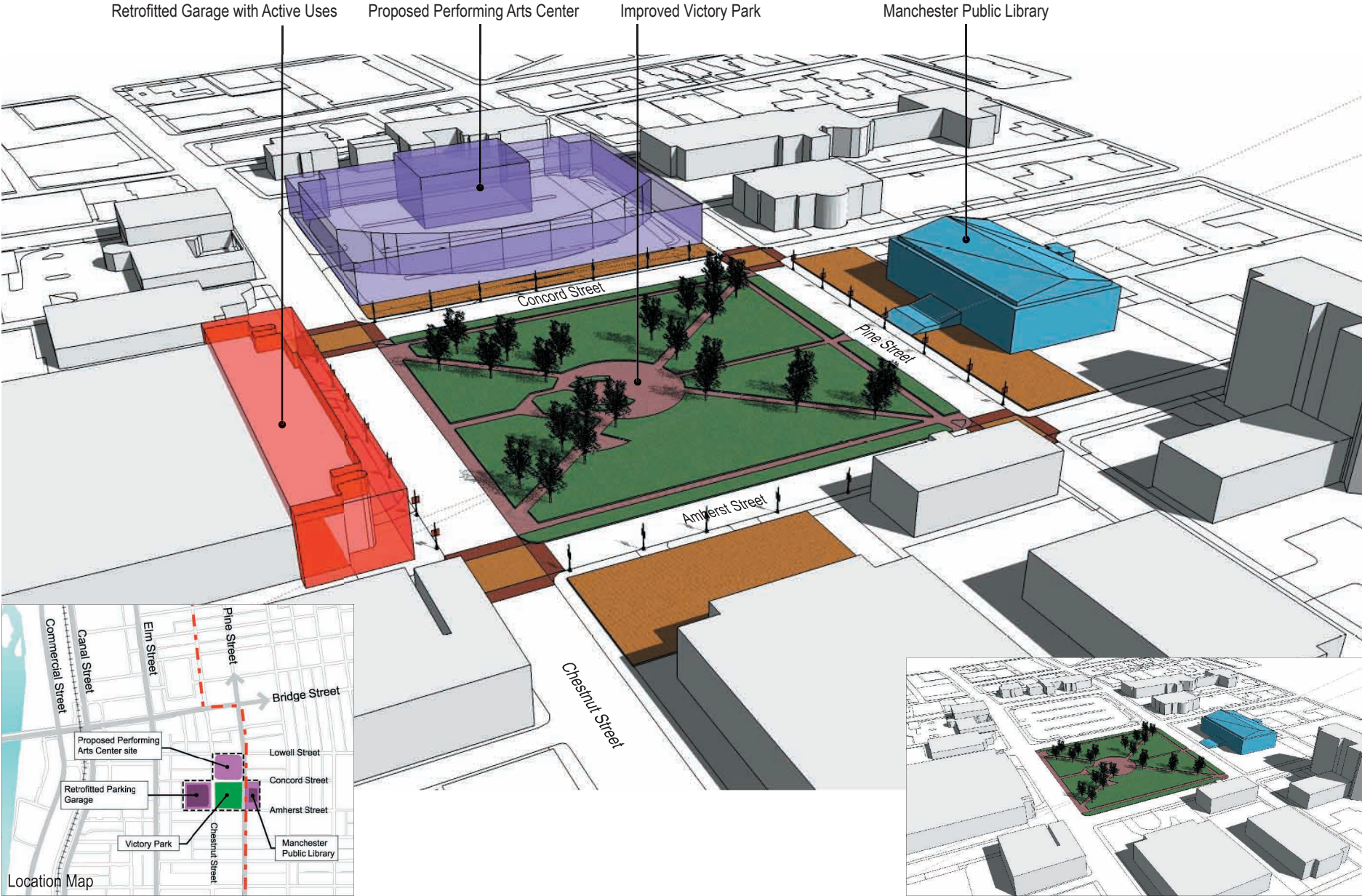
5.3.1 Critical Parks Upgrade

Manchester is fortunate to have a system of parks and squares all throughout the City; however, most of its large public parks, including Veterans Park and Victory Park, are in need of upgrades. There is also an opportunity to create new public open spaces, like pocket parks, on currently vacant land parcels.

Neighborhood and pocket parks should be created within downtown residential areas to allow ready access to safe play and gathering. These small neighborhood parks should be planned into any new street pattern and/or housing development project. They can also be created on abandoned or underutilized land or parcels too small for other development purposes. Pocket parks serve an important and different purpose for families by allowing parents and children to interact with neighbors in a location that is close to home.

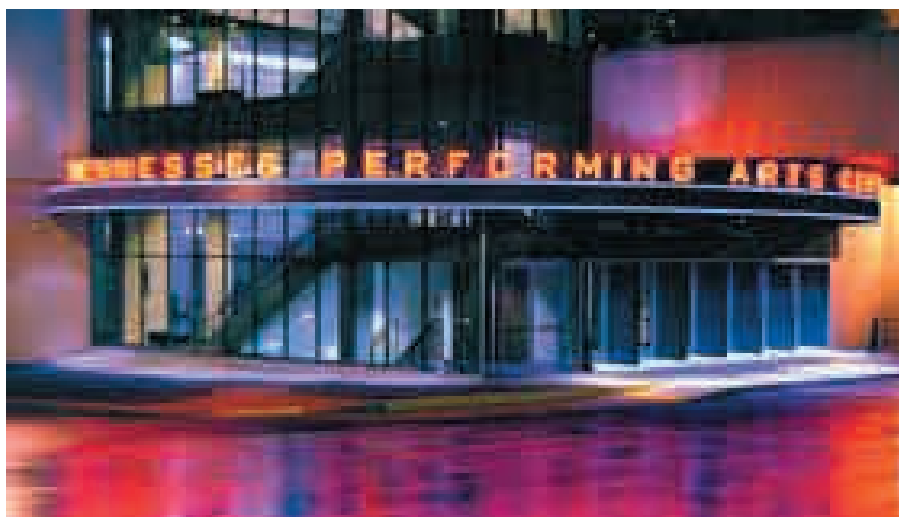
Victory Park is envisioned as the heart of the Cultural District surrounded by the New Hampshire Institute of Art, the Palace Theatre, the Carpenter Library, the Franco American Center, and the newly proposed mid-sized performing arts center. Redesignated as a flexible park with improved night lighting, power access, accessibility and signage, among other improvements, the revitalized park would become a cultural asset for increased programming space for events, receptions, performance, and festivals. In addition, the garage adjacent to the park should be fronted with active uses.

Veteran's Park has a critical location in downtown Manchester on Elm Street across from the Convention Center, close to the Arena. It could become the open space core for cultural business activity strengthened by an expanded conference meeting facility and redeveloped mixed-use parcels around the perimeter of the park. Currently, Stanton Park (across Elm Street from Veterans Park) is underutilized and in disrepair and it is proposed that the site of the Park be used for the expansion of the existing convention facilities. This would position Veterans Park as the forecourt for the newly expanded Convention Center by creating an entry that completes the street edge and creates a dramatic new presence on Elm Street. The park should be redesigned to accommodate new and increased uses due to the expanded



Suggested Configuration of Proposed Victory Park Performing Arts Center

Existing Conditions



Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Nashville, TN



Barnaby Civic Center, British Columbia

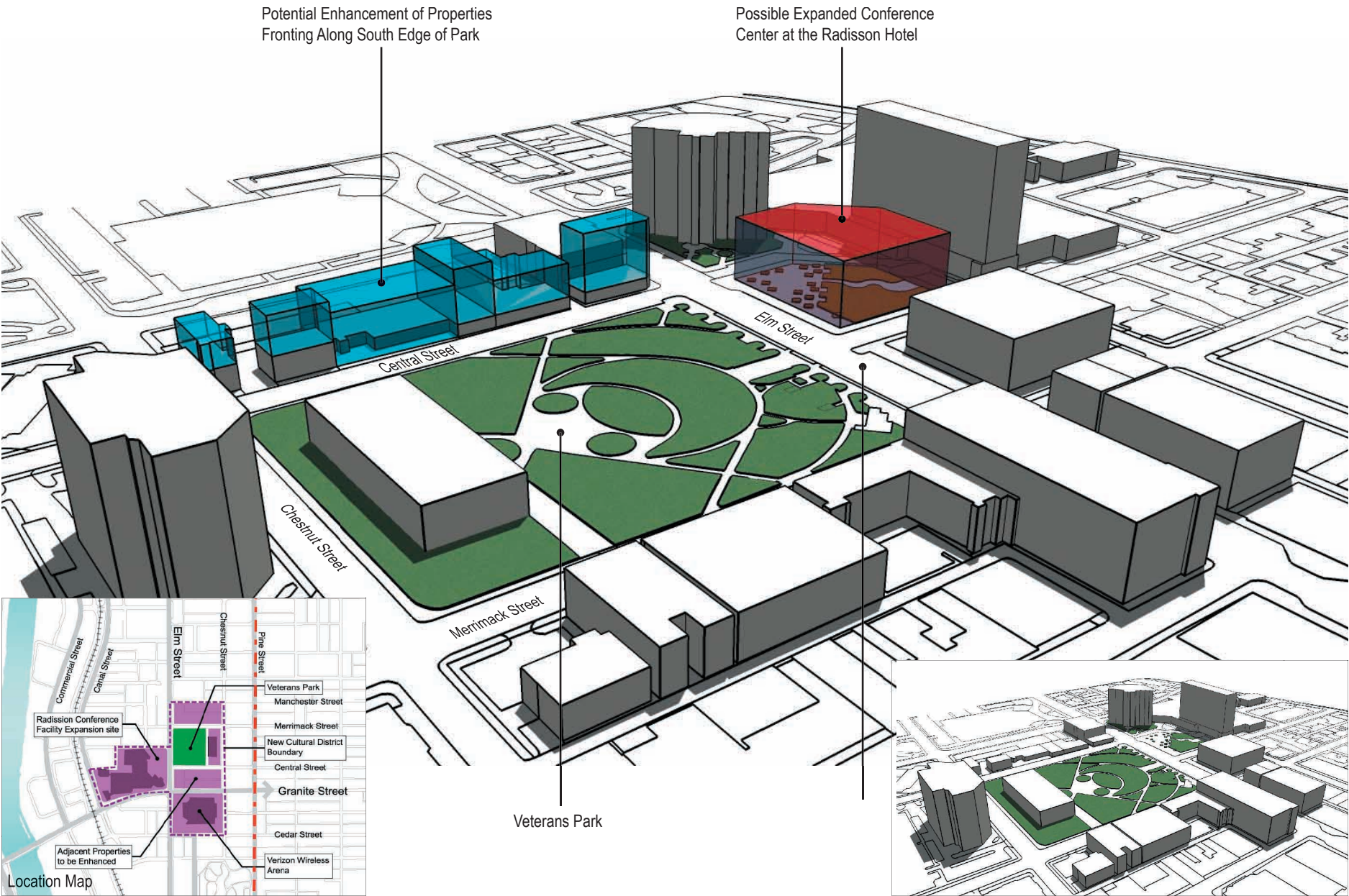
convention center and increased development along its perimeter. Night lighting should be improved, plantings should be updated, and multi-functional amenities and infrastructure should be provided to provide maximum flexibility in programming. The renovated park space should be viewed as a real amenity for future development as it extends the ability of business owners to serve customers with cafes, outdoor art exhibits, seating for reading, night-time performances, festivals and many other programs related to the business, performance, and convention industry that can be enjoyed by visitors and residents.

5.3.2 Performing Arts Center

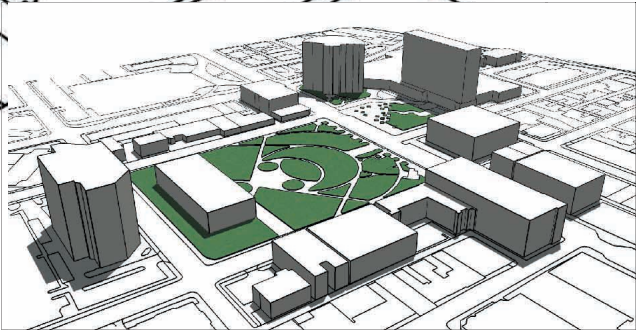
The Intown Manchester Plan established an Arts District along Hanover and Manchester Streets near Victory Park. It is recommended that the District be expanded to include Victory Park as the activity core by creating a new mid-size performing arts center on an adjacent parcel that is currently a surface parking lot.

While Manchester has a vibrant performing arts scene, it lacks a mid-size (approximately 2,500 seat) performing arts center. Competing local venues are significantly smaller in scale and in seating capacity; there are no facilities of similar size in nearby communities. In addition to potential use by the orchestra and the opera, there are a significant number of performing arts shows that are well suited to mid-size venues.

The facility could be privately managed by a major venue operator and a joint development partner could be sought to assist the City in managing project cost. Public incentives would likely be required for construction although facility operations could be self-sustaining. Prior to initiating development of a mid-size performing arts center, it will be necessary for Manchester to conduct a feasibility study to evaluate key issues including competition, potential markets and industry trends, the cost of development, the organization and ownership of the facility, and the financing for the project.



Suggested Improvements to Area Surrounding Veterans Park and Expansion of Conference Facilities





Properties fronting along the south side of Veterans Park



Radisson Hotel & Conference Center on Elm Street



Possible conference center expansion across from Veterans Park

5.3.3 Conference / Meeting Space Expansion

Recent trends in the convention and business meeting industry indicate that, while there have been significant increases in the supply of space in recent years, the pace of supply growth is now slowing. Since 2001, the demand for both exhibition and meeting space has fallen, but most forecasts for future demand growth are positive. Because competition among locations remains stiff, only well-located, well-planned facilities in attractive locations will prosper. Manchester's compact, attractive downtown, coupled with an appealing facility location could absorb additional convention and meeting space.

Frequently, public investment is required to cover construction and operating costs of exhibition and meeting space. Growth in space rental rates has not kept pace with inflation and is not a reliable source of revenue. Municipalities often employ a per-room hotel tax or a car rental tax to help cover funding costs. However, conventions and meetings can bring a significant influx of economic activity if the center is efficiently booked, especially since meeting visitors' per capita spending is higher than that of typical tourists. Furthermore, Manchester's existing hotel and meeting facilities are highly utilized.

Although a feasibility study will be required to determine the actual market, this plan recommends that the City consider doubling the conference center space at the downtown Radisson Hotel from 65,000 to 130,000 square feet. This increase, coupled with the redevelopment of underutilized land around Veterans Park, would enable Manchester to attract larger conferences and shows and enable simultaneous multiple events, without competing with large facilities. When looking at competing venues in and around Manchester, there appears to be a local niche for a center of this scale.

In addition, the Radisson's prime location on Elm Street across from Veterans Park presents an opportunity to create another "place" in the downtown core. As the vitality of downtown and the downtown residential population increase, this plan recommends that the City encourage property owners along the south side of Veterans Park to upgrade their building facades and retail mix in addition to encouraging others to develop new, higher density uses.

A feasibility study should address the following outstanding questions:

- Will the Manchester market support an increase in meeting facilities?
- If yes, how much should it increase?
- Would there be significant benefits to downtown and would the benefits exceed the costs?
- What would be the best means to grow Manchester's facilities?
- What would the public role in the project be?
- Who will own/manage the center?
- How will the project be funded?

Competing Convention Venues Near Downtown Manchester		
Center	City	Capacity
NH Radisson	Manchester, NH	65,000 sq. ft.
Sheraton Nashua Hotel	Nashua, NH	7,700 sq. ft.
Lowell Auditorium	Lowell, MA	Seating for up to 3,000
UNH Whittemore Center Arena	Durham, NH	Seating for up to 7,500
Holiday Inn	Boxborough, MA	28,356 sq. ft.
Sheraton Ferncroft Resort Hotel	Danvers, MA	30,000 sq. ft.
Centrum Convention Center	Worcester, MA	100,310 sq. ft.

Shreveport Convention Center, LA		
Sq. Ft.	Cost	Completed
350,000	\$70 million	January 2006

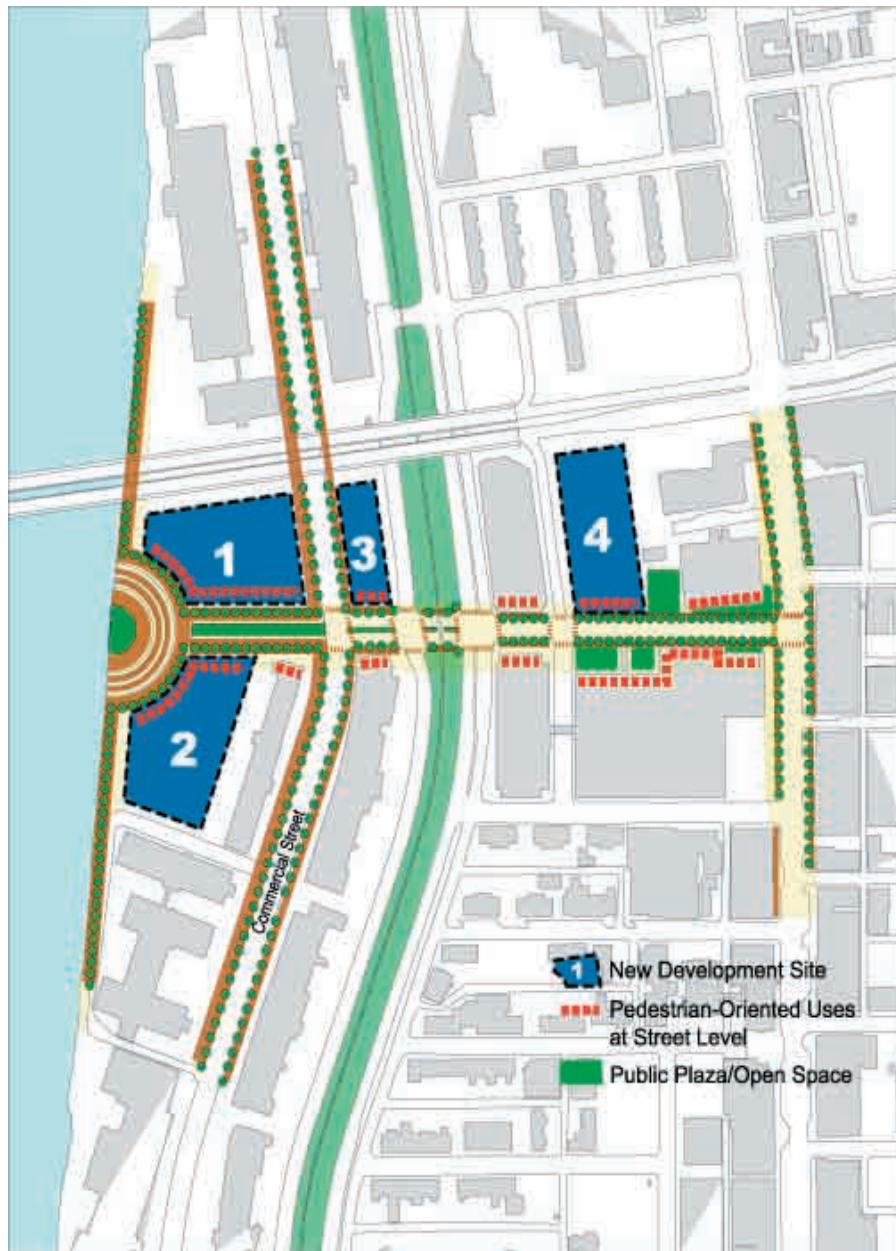
Fort Worth Convention Center, TX		
Sq. Ft.	Cost	Completed
253,226	\$75 million	April 2003



Shreveport Convention Center, LA



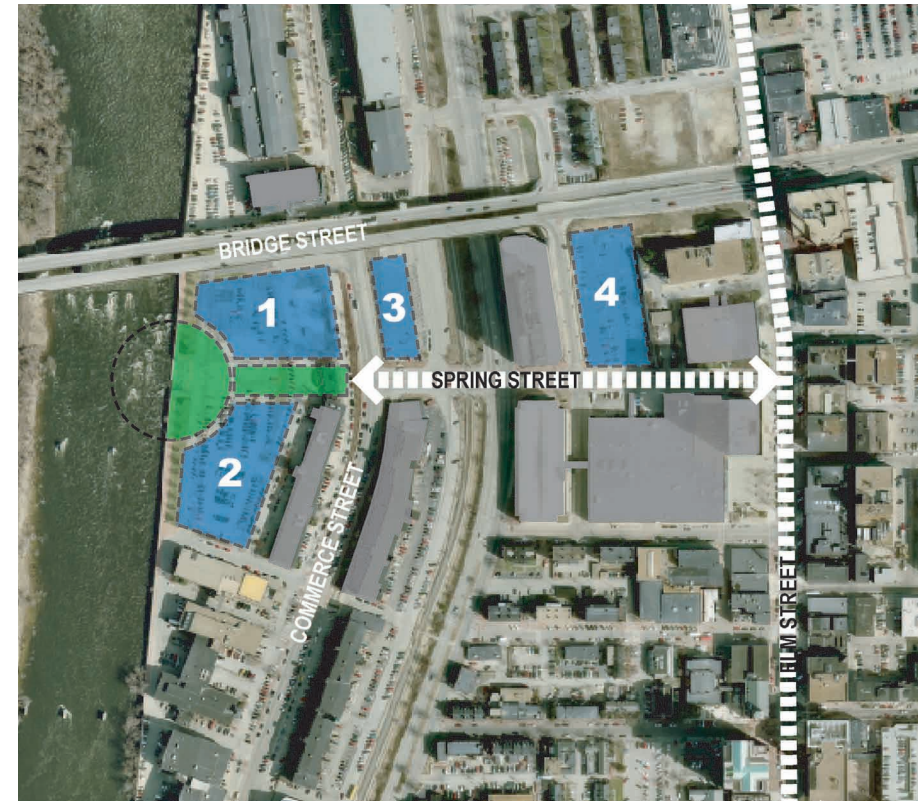
Fort Worth Convention Center, TX



Conceptual UNH Expansion Map

5.3.4 UNH Campus Expansion

While a portion of the Riverwalk has been completed at the edge of Arms Park along the River, a large surface parking lot dominates the bulk of Arms Park between the River and the mill building that houses the University of New Hampshire's Manchester campus. This lot has created an unattractive gap along the Merrimack River and discourages pedestrians from crossing it to access the waterfront. Expansion of the UNH campus through infill development of the parking lot provides the City with an opportunity to create a dynamic public space on the River and, combined with streetscape and pedestrian enhancements along Spring Street, a direct link from the downtown core to the Merrimack River.



View of conceptual UNH expansion and the existing area

5.3.5 Pearl Street Development

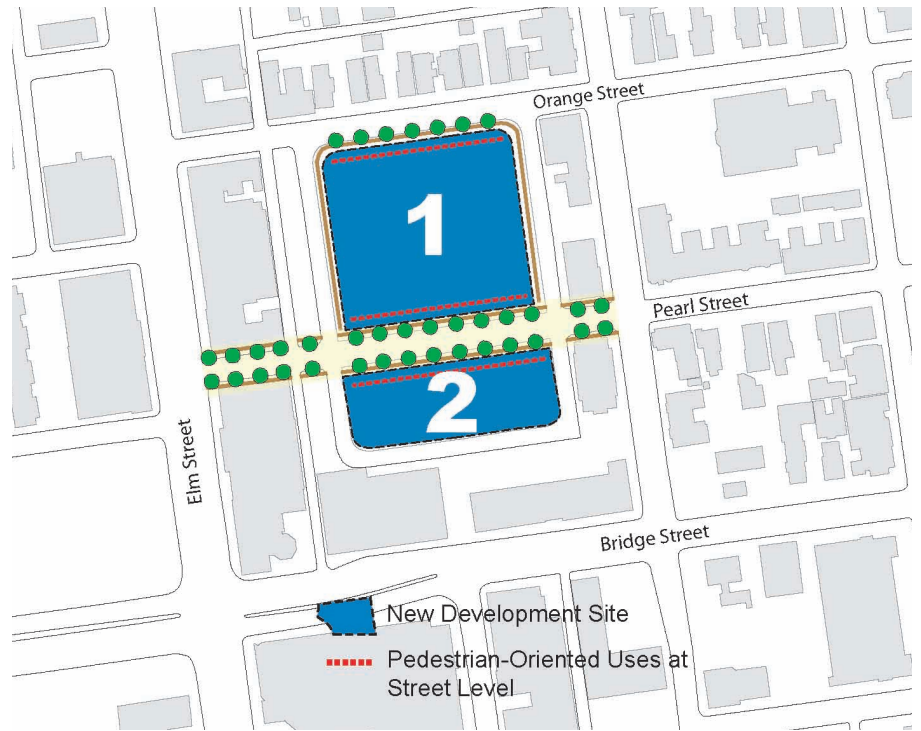
Located just east of Elm Street and just north of Bridge Street, the Pearl Street surface parking lot creates a large zone of inactivity right outside of the traditional downtown core area. This dormant land area forms a barrier between the active portion of Elm Street and the adjacent residential development along Chestnut Street. Repairing the urban fabric by extending Pearl Street through the surface parking lot and creating two new development sites will bring new investment into the area. In addition, it will strengthen the connection between Elm Street and Manchester's residents.

5.3.6 Armory Building Reuse

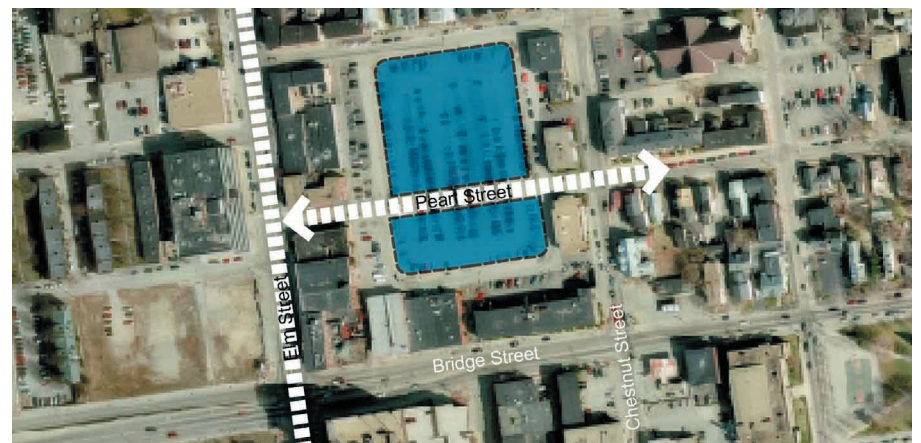
While this plan recommends that most new development activity occur along the southern portion of Elm Street, the City should support market based reuse of the Armory Building (located on Canal Street just south of the Amoskeag Bridge) when it becomes available. Any new development or uses planned for this site should complement and be consistent with the residential nature of the northern downtown.



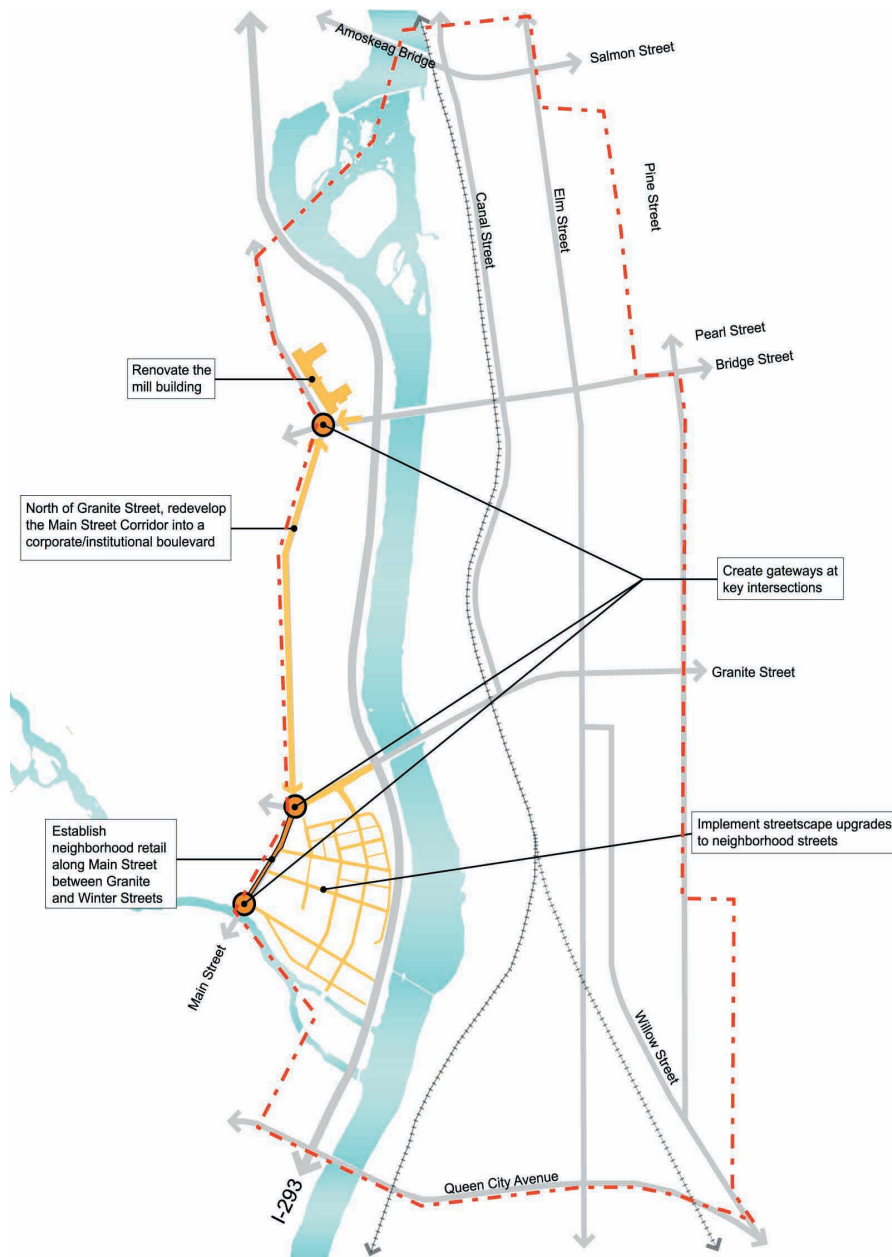
Armory Building Site Context Map



Conceptual Pearl Street Lot Development Map



View of conceptual development of the Pearl Street lot and the existing area



West Side Project Map

5.4 West Side Project

While the area of west of the Merrimack River is not part of Manchester's downtown core, it is possible to give this part of the City its own unique character and sense of place. Already a street with a strong institutional presence, the following projects are recommended to reinforce Main Street's existing character while increasing its overall attractiveness and appeal to residents and businesses:

- Main Street Employment Corridor
- West Side Neighborhood Development
- Main Street Gateways

5.4.1 Main Street Employment Corridor

Main Street is the north-south local street for Manchester on the west side of the Merrimack River. Two major institutions dominate Main Street between Bridge and Granite Streets – the Catholic Medical Center and West High School. In keeping with the existing character of the area, the Main Street streetscape should be enhanced to become a corporate and institutional avenue utilizing concrete sidewalks and clean, modern lines of furniture, lighting, and signage. A streetscape upgrade and a marketing campaign to attract new businesses would enable Manchester to build upon the character of its existing institutions to create a high-quality employment corridor.

Furthermore, one of the remaining unimproved mill buildings, located just north of Bridge Street, should be renovated as an anchor for the new employment corridor. The other, just south of Bridge Street, is completely renovated and houses numerous businesses.



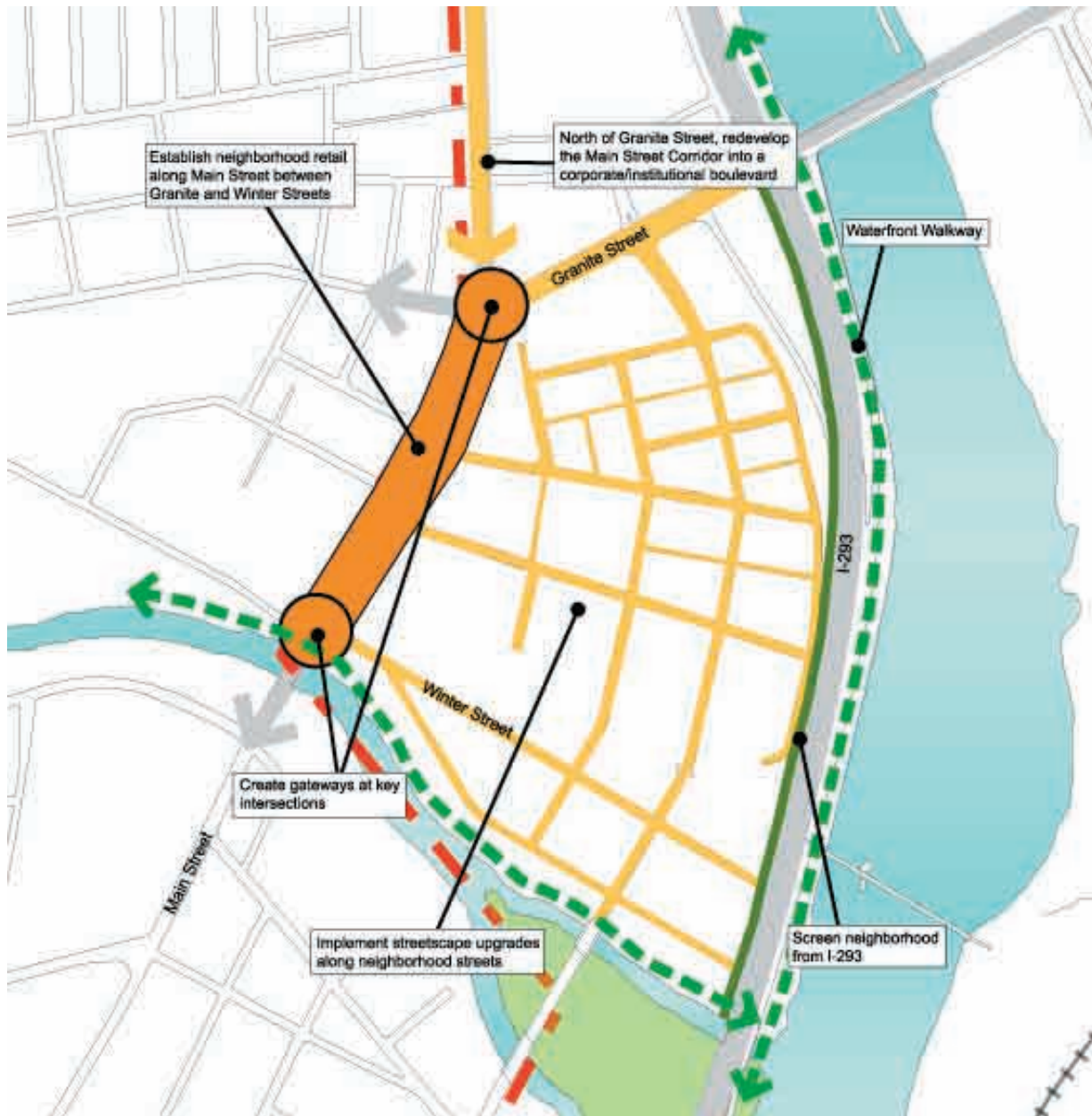
Corporate campus in Philadelphia, PA



Penn's Landing gateway in Philadelphia, PA



Corporate/institutional signage in Philadelphia, PA



West Side Neighborhood Focus Area Map

5.4.2 West Side Neighborhood

Granite Street marks the end of the corporate/institutional portion of Main Street. South of Granite between Main Street and the Merrimack River is a residential neighborhood with light industrial sites scattered throughout. Cut off from the River by I-293, this neighborhood has not seen the type of private investment necessary for revitalization. In addition, Manchester's zoning of this area also permits some highly auto-intensive uses which are inappropriate in a residential neighborhood. (Zoning changes for this area were recommended in section 4.1.)



Existing residential development in West Side neighborhood



Neighborhood retail corridor in Fredericksburg, VA

This report recommends investment in streetscape upgrades to reinforce the residential neighborhood and attract infill development. Streetscape improvements (including sidewalks of adequate width, easily identifiable pedestrian crosswalks, prominent placement of signage and plantings, attractive lighting, and street furniture) coupled with the development of new pocket parks and the erection of adequate screening from I-293 will greatly increase both the safety and desirability of this neighborhood.

The portion of Main Street between Granite and Winter Streets is ideally positioned to serve as the commercial center for the adjacent residential neighborhood. Providing walkable shops and restaurants to nearby residents who will also enjoy downtown amenities enabling them to walk and bike safely throughout their neighborhood will give Manchester west of the Merrimack another downtown residential community. Coordinating streetscape upgrades in the nearby community with the development of the neighborhood commercial center on Main Street will allow the City to maintain a consistent sense of place throughout.



Fredericksburg, VA retail street



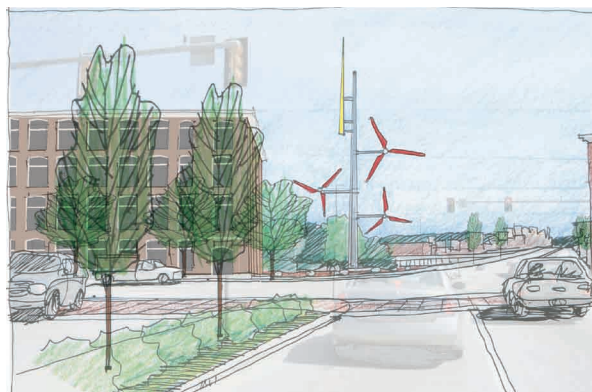
Screening from I-95 in Philadelphia, PA



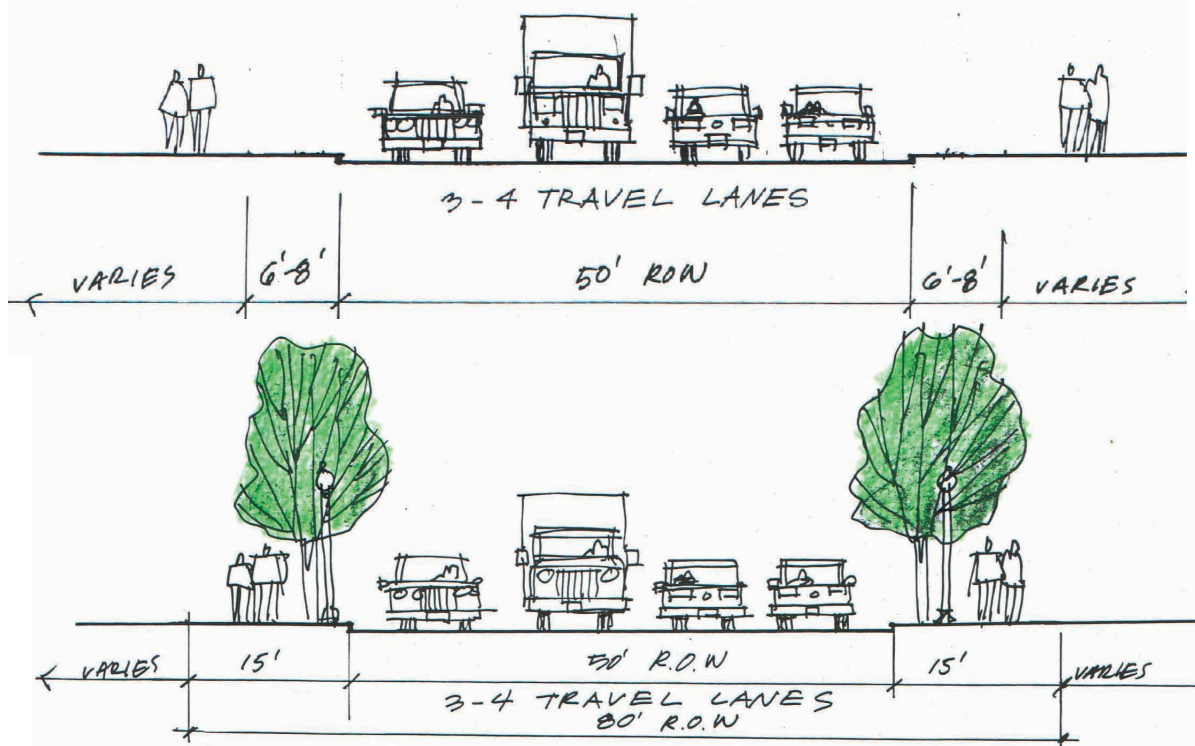
Neighborhood street in Cranbury, NJ



McGregor & West Bridge Streets intersection



Possible streetscape upgrades to the McGregor & West Bridge Streets intersection



Current and possible Main Street after upgrades

5.4.3 Main Street Gateways

Three gateways have been identified along Main Street as a way to mark the important points of transition along the corridor. A gateway should be created at the intersection of McGregor and West Bridge Streets to delineate the entrance to the employment corridor and to enhance the appeal of the mill buildings located on the west side of the Merrimack. Two additional gateways should be established at either end of the neighborhood-oriented retail corridor to recognize the shift in scale and land use from adjacent stretches of Main Street. These gateways will help to bookend the streetscape enhancements suggested for this neighborhood.

5.5 Gaslight / Warehouse District Project

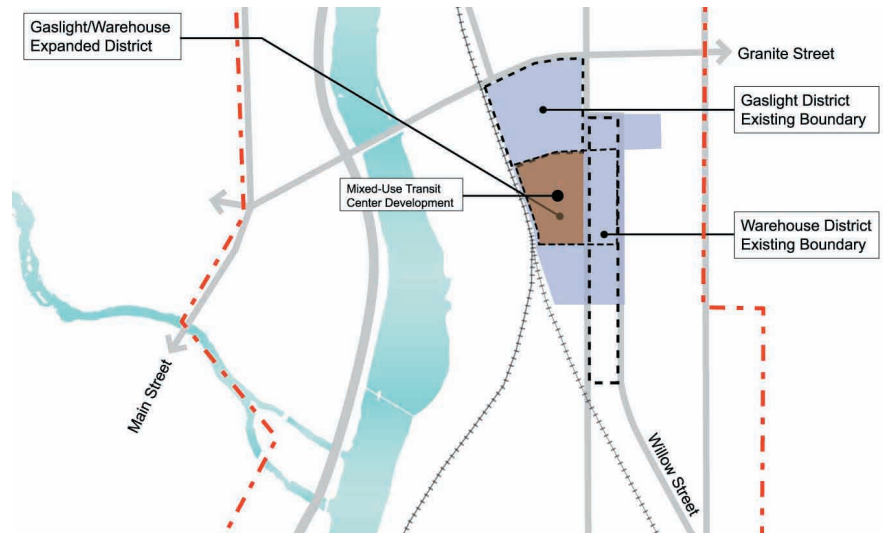
The Gaslight and Warehouse Districts (as described in the Arena District Urban Design Guidelines report) have a tremendous amount of potential for creating new life in downtown Manchester. This plan recommends two priority strategies to maximize that potential. Through expansion of the district, a direct connection with the proposed transit-center, related mixed-use development including an urban grocery store, and other public realm enhancements, the area will be primed to increase activity and connectivity in the downtown.

5.5.1 Gaslight District Expansion

Manchester's Gaslight District currently encompasses a small area bounded by Elm Street, the railroad tracks, Granite Street and West Auburn Street. It is adjacent to the Warehouse District which extends south to Willow Street. It is recommended that the Gaslight District be expanded south so that it includes the proposed site of the new multi-modal transportation center. Streetscape improvements and programming efforts are needed in this area; Manchester's Civic Center Area & Gateway Corridor Plan should be implemented to address these needs. As mentioned in the Policy section under Design Review / Approval Facilitation, the Arena District Design Guidelines should be implemented in this entire area.

5.5.2 Downtown Grocery Store

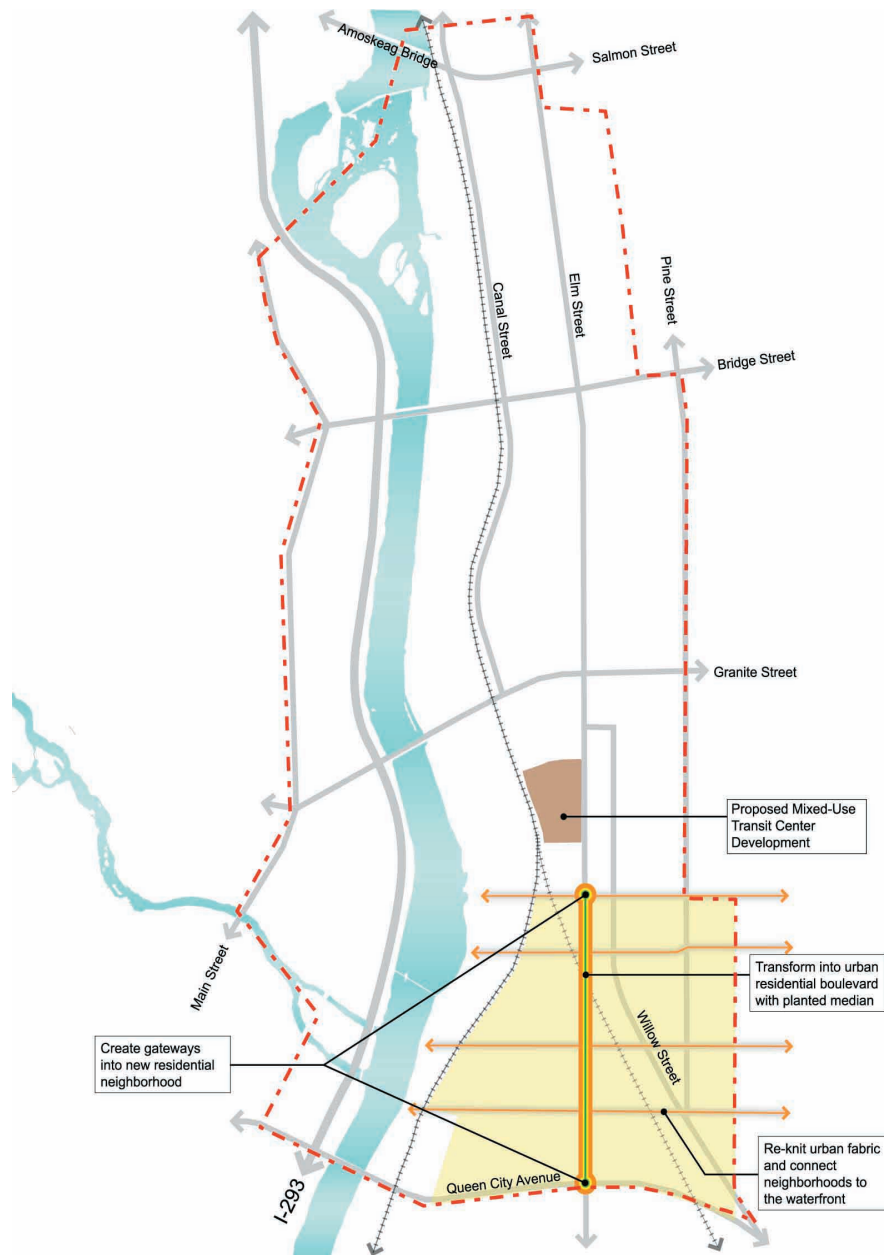
The Gaslight District is an ideal location for an urban grocery store, an amenity that downtown residents currently do not have. A site should be identified to accommodate a mixed-use development that includes the grocery store and parking along with other amenities. Ideally, the urban grocery store would be incorporated into the mixed-use transit center project or located within a mixed-use building on an adjacent site. Whole Foods Markets is a national supermarket chain that has participated in similar urban grocery store / mixed-use developments elsewhere in the country.



Gaslight Project Focus Area Map



Mixed-use (housing, parking, and office) Whole Foods supermarket project in Baltimore, MD



South End Project Map

5.6 South End Project

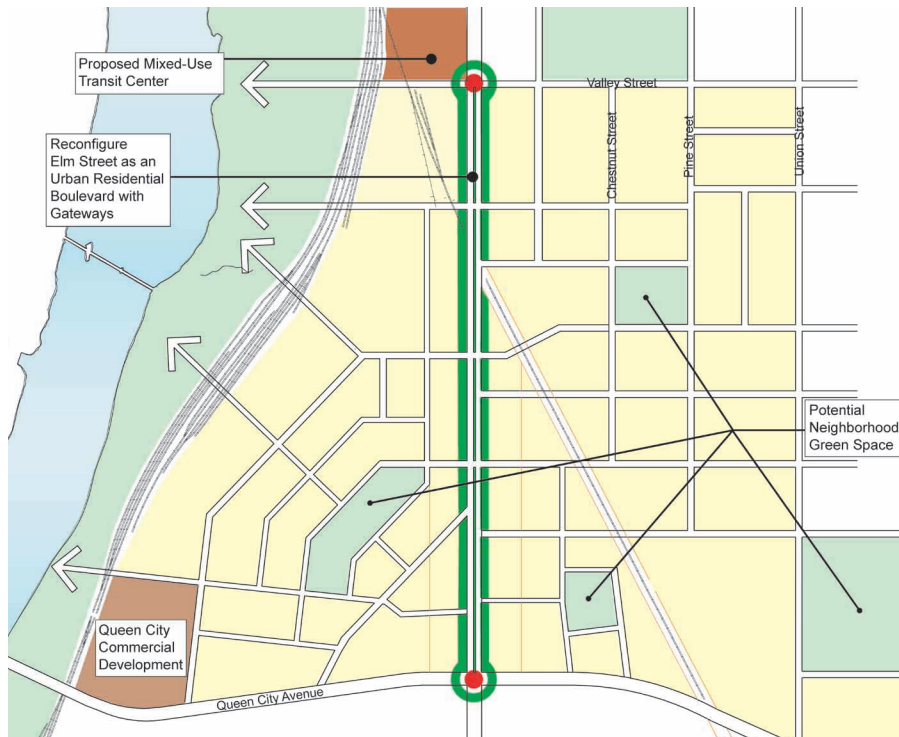
As recognized in Manchester's recently published Action Strategy for Housing, the city is currently experiencing a shortage of available housing in its central core. Redevelopment within the South End provides an opportunity to not only expand the boundaries of the downtown, but also to increase the number of housing options available in the City. A residential development could also serve to remove the barriers and connect existing neighborhoods east of downtown to the waterfront. Two major infrastructure investments are recommended to spur private residential neighborhood development.



Riverside mixed-use community in Atlanta, GA



Boulevards with differing streetscape elements, development scales, and landscaping.



Possible reconfigured street grid in the South End



Existing conditions along Elm Street in the South End

5.6.1 Elm Street Residential Boulevard

The portion of Elm Street between Willow Street and Queen City Avenue is currently unpleasant to walk along and has very few pedestrian amenities and safe crossings. It is recommended that the existing roadway be reconfigured to include a planted median separating the north-south travel lanes and pedestrian amenities along the sidewalks. Future commercial and retail development on this portion of Elm Street should be neighborhood-oriented to support the new residential neighborhoods planned for this area. Along with streetscape enhancements, open space gateways can be used to signal one's entrance and exit from this residential part of Elm Street.

5.6.2 South End Neighborhood Development

Connecting the residential neighborhoods east of Willow Street to the River by extending Hayward, Silver, and Clay Streets and re-knitting the neighborhood street fabric will create opportunities for residential development on a neighborhood-oriented scale. Focusing on residential growth targeted to attract certain target populations will help to increase not only the critical mass of people living downtown, but will increase the median income level. This, in turn, should fuel growth in other sectors. Population segments that should be targeted for downtown residential growth include:

- 50+ age group
- 20-30's age group
- Students
- Recent immigrants

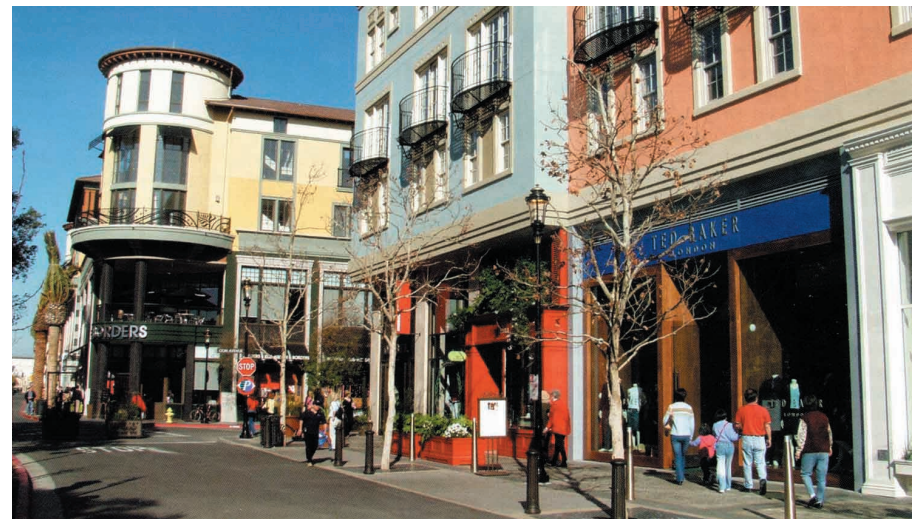
Re-knitting the street fabric will allow for new housing options appropriate for upscale, modern living. In combination with the infrastructure upgrades and new amenities included in this Plan (especially the new park in the South End) as well as the many amenities Manchester already offers, this will attract the niche populations necessary to spur downtown growth.



Residential street in Cranbury, NJ



Existing South End neighborhood



Neighborhood shopping along Santana Row in San Jose, CA



Queen City Commercial Center Project Map

5.7 Queen City Commercial Center Project

In order to increase the opportunities available for office development in the central core, this report recommends looking to the southern edge of the expanded downtown boundary along Queen City Avenue on either side of the Merrimack River. Already used primarily for industrial purposes, these sites are of adequate size, have easy access to nearby highways, and are suitable locations for the creation of quality employment centers. These centers can serve to attract new residents to the neighborhoods on the West Side and in the South End while still offering a variety of job options to existing, local residents. Creating a vision for this district will guide its development and ensure that it is well-connected to the adjacent neighborhoods.



Sprint World Headquarters, Overland Park, KS

