

Executive Summary: Cedar North Station Area

What Do “Transit Oriented Development” (TOD) Districts Look Like?

Successful TOD districts have a blend of housing, retail, and/or office and a good measure of density, whether job density or housing density. Development is more compact and less dependent on parking and auto use. Infrastructure costs for streets, water, sewer, and utilities are reduced while property values are typically increased.

Other key elements include an attractive, safe and inviting pedestrian environment as well as public space integrated with the transit station and commercial space to create a “sense of place.” Buildings are located near the street edge with several windows and doors on the ground floor. Public streets and walkways are organized in a grid pattern that creates comfortably sized blocks. The districts are usually within a ¼ to ½ mile radius around a station, or a comfortable five to ten minute walking distance.

Municipal Advisory Committee

Douglas Whalen, Committee Chairperson - Planning & Zoning Commission, Town of Newington

Edmund Meehan - Planning Department, Town of Newington

Michael Mancini - Public Works, Town of Newington

Laurie Leonard - Economic Development Commission, Town of Newington

Dan Moran - Central Connecticut State University

Dennis Hebert - Planning & Zoning Commission, Town of Newington

Tom Ganley - Planning & Zoning Commission, Town of Newington

Michael Fox - Planning & Zoning Commission, Town of Newington

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Capitol Region Council of Governments

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For more information or to see the full report contact CRCOG at 860-522-2217 or go to CRCOG’s or Newington’s websites at CRCOG.org; www.ci.newington.ct.us

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Implementation

The key to implementation involves coordinating development of two privately owned parcels. One is along Fenn Road south of the shopping center and the other is the former National Acme site, a brownfield site. Securing funding for clean-up of the brownfield site will be an important step. The following summarizes the phasing of the key development components:

Short-Term: 2004-2009

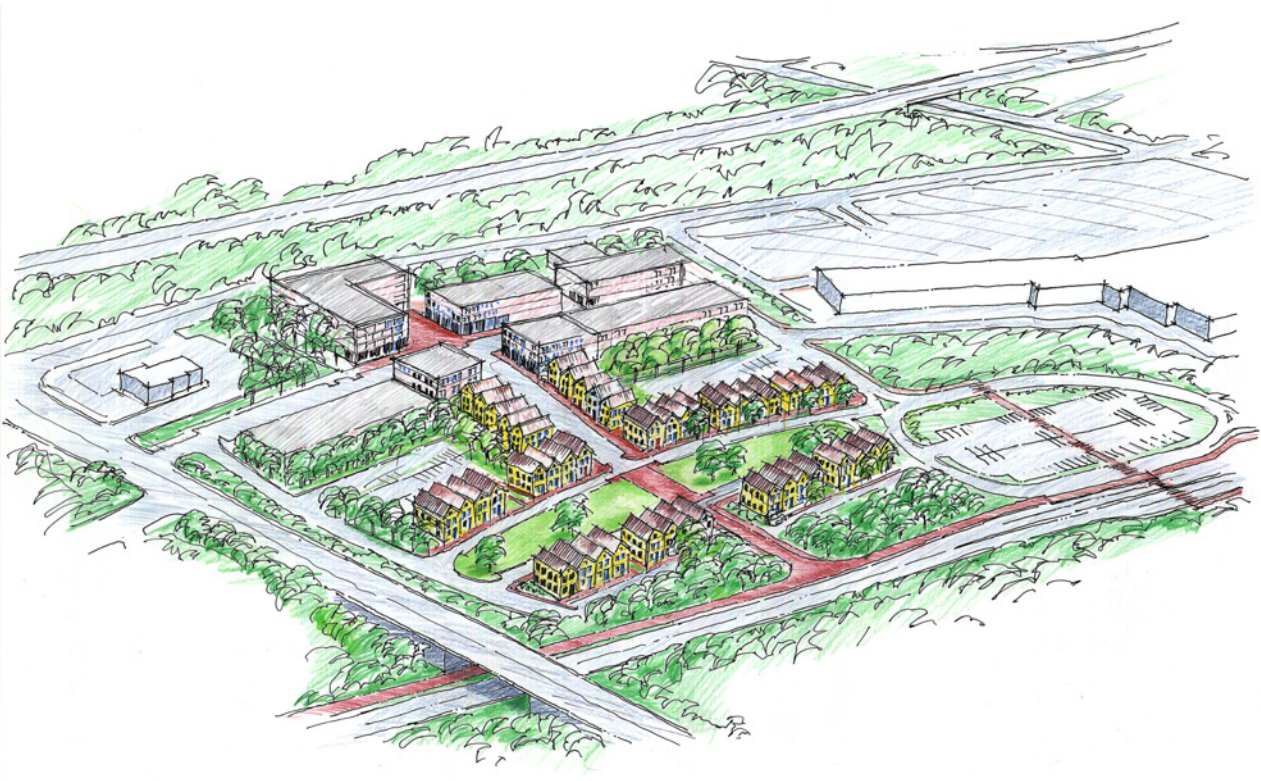
- Work with CCSU, ConnDOT, CRCOG and Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency on access improvements
- Consider incorporating station area plan into Plan of Conservation and Development
- Consider adopting a TOD zoning district.
- Identify sources of funds for capital improvements
- Identify sources of funds for environmental clean-up
- Conduct environmental assessment and develop mediation plan for National Acme parcel
- Issue RFP for Clean-up
- Develop an RFP for development the National Acme parcel (if acquired by the Town)
- Begin clean-up of National Acme parcel
- Work with Hayes-Kaufman on developing a TOD plan for the Kozcera parcel, or for the Kozcera and National Acme parcels
- Work with the State to amend the Brownfields Funding Programs to allow funds to be spent on site cleanup for projects that will include a housing component.

Medium to Long-Term: 2010-2025

- Work with CCSU, ConnDOT, CRCOG and CCRPA on access improvements
- Complete clean-up of National Acme parcel
- Issue RFP for development of the National Acme parcel
- Work with developer of National Acme parcel

Prepared in cooperation with citizens, the Cities of New Britain and Hartford, the Towns of West Hartford and Newington, the Capitol Region Council of Governments, and the Connecticut Department of Transportation. The opinions, findings and conclusion expressed in this publication are those of the respective Municipal Advisory Committees that served on the project and do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the Connecticut Department of Transportation and/or the U.S. Department of Transportation.

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Mixed-use development on brownfield site adjacent to transit center and existing shopping center. This perspective view shows a main-street style mixed use district extending from the existing shopping center to Cedar Street. A new townhouse development and associated open space connects housing to the bike path, new commercial development, and the transit station.

Station Area Planning Project

The Capitol Region Council of Governments, working with citizens and the Town of Newington, has developed plans for the areas near stations for the New Britain - Hartford busway.

Please examine the development plan shown here to learn how the Cedar North station area could change. The ideas presented here are designed to make the most out of the proposed transportation investment and are intended to stimulate discussion.

Planning around transit (bus or rail) stations is

known as Transit Oriented Development and it has been successful throughout the country. The Pittsburgh busway and the Washington D.C. Metro are examples where districts surrounding the rapid transit systems thrive, adding to the quality of life in these communities.

The New Britain-Hartford Busway Project is a new rapid transit facility being built by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. It is an exclusive 9.4-mile long busway, linking downtown New Britain with downtown Hartford’s Union Station. The busway has

stops in New Britain, Newington, West Hartford and Hartford.

The goal of this Station Area Planning project is to coordinate transportation and land use planning for the areas around proposed stations in order to enhance economic benefits to Newington while increasing ridership. Development concepts are focused on strategies to create vibrant walkable districts with easy access to regional transit.

This summary provides an overview of the plan for the Cedar North station area.

Why Cedar North?

Cedar North was one of six station areas chosen for detailed study. The station location and large undeveloped parcels in the vicinity of CCSU provides an opportunity for new mixed-use development. The existing brownfield site also provides an opportunity for the town and a developer to work cooperatively to create a transit oriented development while recapturing land for productive use.

“The Bones” / Key Development Principles

The Plan shown here is conceptual. As individual projects evolve over time in response to market conditions, funding opportunities and parcel availability, it will be important that the project designs adhere to the following guiding principles - “the bones” - of the plan:

- Create pedestrian accessible mixed-use development adjacent to transit station.
- Take advantage of access to bike path (shown in yellow on plan at right) by providing a direct visible connection to proposed east/west street.
- Connect mixed-use district to neighboring shopping center with sidewalks, crosswalks, and streetscape.
- Encourage planning, design, and development of the entire site as one project even if it is developed in two phases.
- Create pedestrian-scaled streets with housing and/or retail sited at the back of sidewalk.
- Housing density should be a minimum of 12 units/acre; research shows that starting at this density, the dependence on the automobile begins to decline.
- Create streets with pedestrian amenities, rather than driveways, to both serve the new development and link the mix of uses on the site.

Economic Benefits

Based on the development summary outlined below, this plan will have an estimated construction value of approximately \$35 million, which would generate an estimated \$7 million dollars in payroll, as well as 145 years of employment.

Once development was fully absorbed, the annual, permanent sustained economic and fiscal impact would represent 348 direct and indirect jobs, \$5 million in payroll, 326 residents and \$880,000 in property taxes. All amounts are in constant 2004 dollars and do not include any impact from inflation and are based upon current construction costs, payroll levels and property tax rates.



A New Village in Newington

The development site is composed of two parcels. This plan assumes that developers of both sites are willing to work together (or that there is one developer for both sites) to create mixed-use, transit-adjacent development that is denser and includes more uses than could be accommodated if each parcel was developed in isolation.

The plan includes the introduction of a north-south street and an east-west street creating building frontage along pedestrian friendly streets. These streets have wide sidewalks, pedestrian amenities and on-street parking to create an attractive pedestrian and retail environment.

A portion of the retail development faces the existing shopping center and the remainder is organized along both sides of the new street. Some retail buildings have housing on the second and third floors. The devel-

opment also includes a 120-room hotel that could serve CCSU as well as other area destinations.

The entire development is within a two to five minute walk to the Cedar Street transit station and is connected to the multi-use path running from New Britain to Newington Junction. Parking is accommodated on-street, in surface lots, and in a garage.

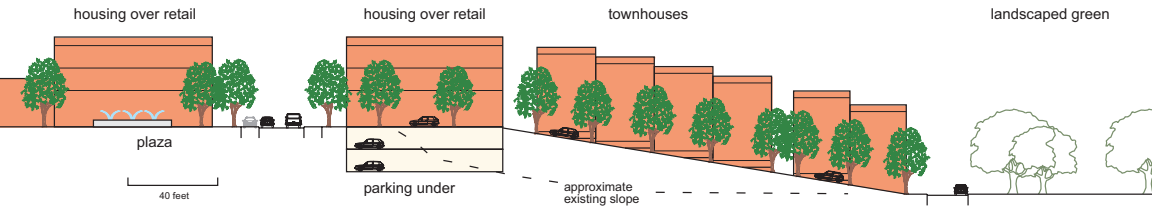
The eastern portion of the site includes 88 two-story townhouses oriented around a new “green” or park with parking underneath or behind the units. Additional townhouses line the new east/west street that slopes down from the mixed-use district. Units have views of the new green as well as the large open wetland to the east.



Aerial view of existing shopping center and proposed development site, looking east. Fenn Road is in the foreground with Cedar Street to the right. Station location is shown with a red dot.

Development Summary Table

Use	Total
Hotel	120 rooms
Residential	152 units
Retail	51,853 sq. ft.



Cedar Street North: Illustrative section along proposed new east/west street.