

Thursday, September 08, 2016

Gov. Malloy Announces I-84 Hartford Viaduct Project Moves Forward as Environmental Process Begins

(HARTFORD, CT) - Governor Dannel P. Malloy today announced that the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) will soon begin the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the I-84 Hartford Viaduct Project - a major step in the process to replace the 50-year-old elevated structure through downtown Hartford.

"The project to redesign and reconstruct I-84 in Hartford is critical to address this aging and obsolete section of interstate in our capital city - steps that should have been completed many years ago and are finally being addressed," Governor Malloy said. "I-84 is critical for local and regional commuters and truckers - our economic vitality in the region depends on it. We want Connecticut residents to have a best-in-class infrastructure that attracts growth and improves the quality of life for all who live here. By making these much needed and long overdue investments to the I-84 viaduct, we will finally make the bold steps toward an efficient, upgraded, and renewed infrastructure that advances progress, mitigates congestion, and creates jobs."

The Governor also noted that renewing this stretch of highway also provides the opportunity to improve the area's adjoining neighborhoods, freeing up as many as 45 acres of land for open space or development.

"As many as 20 acres near Sisson Avenue could be made available for housing and small businesses. Twenty to 25 acres near Asylum Hill and Bushnell Park, along with a new rail station, would be a strong catalyst for transit oriented development," the Governor noted.

CTDOT Commissioner James P. Redeker pointed out that the highway was originally designed to carry 50,000 vehicles per day. Today, it carries as many as 175,000 vehicles per day - the highest volume of any section of roadway in the state. Portions of I-84 in Hartford have a crash rate four times higher than other comparable state freeways. On average, there are two crashes per day, often causing severe travel delays.

"We need a modernized, safer and more reliable I-84," Commissioner Redeker said. "Much has been accomplished in the planning process in the past few years, and the public has helped tremendously in guiding the development of the various design alternatives. Moving forward with the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement is a major step toward a final decision of what the new I-84 will look like."

Commissioner Redeker has written to the Federal Highway Administration requesting FHWA to issue a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register, another necessary early step in this process.

The purpose of the I-84 Hartford Project is to address I-84's structural deficiencies, as well as improve traffic operations, safety, and mobility on the I-84 mainline and its interchanges between Flatbush Avenue and I-91 in Hartford. Other goals include reconfiguring the interstate in a manner that frees up land for development or open space; reducing the physical impact of the interstate by reducing its footprint; repairing the visual and physical connectivity of the neighborhoods that the interstate corridor divides; supporting the city's urban design goals; and enhancing pedestrian, biking and transit interconnectivity.

With significant public input, CTDOT has been analyzing several alternatives for replacing the aging viaduct and redesigning the two-mile section of I-84 in Hartford, which include:

- No Build Alternative - keeping the existing structure in a state of good repair;
- Elevated Highway Alternative - complete reconstruction of I-84 with much of the interstate on elevated structures;
- Lowered Highway Alternative - complete reconstruction of I-84 at ground level or slightly below; and
- Tunneled Highway Alternative - complete reconstruction of I-84, with approximately 4,000 feet in an underground section between Myrtle Street and Laurel Street.

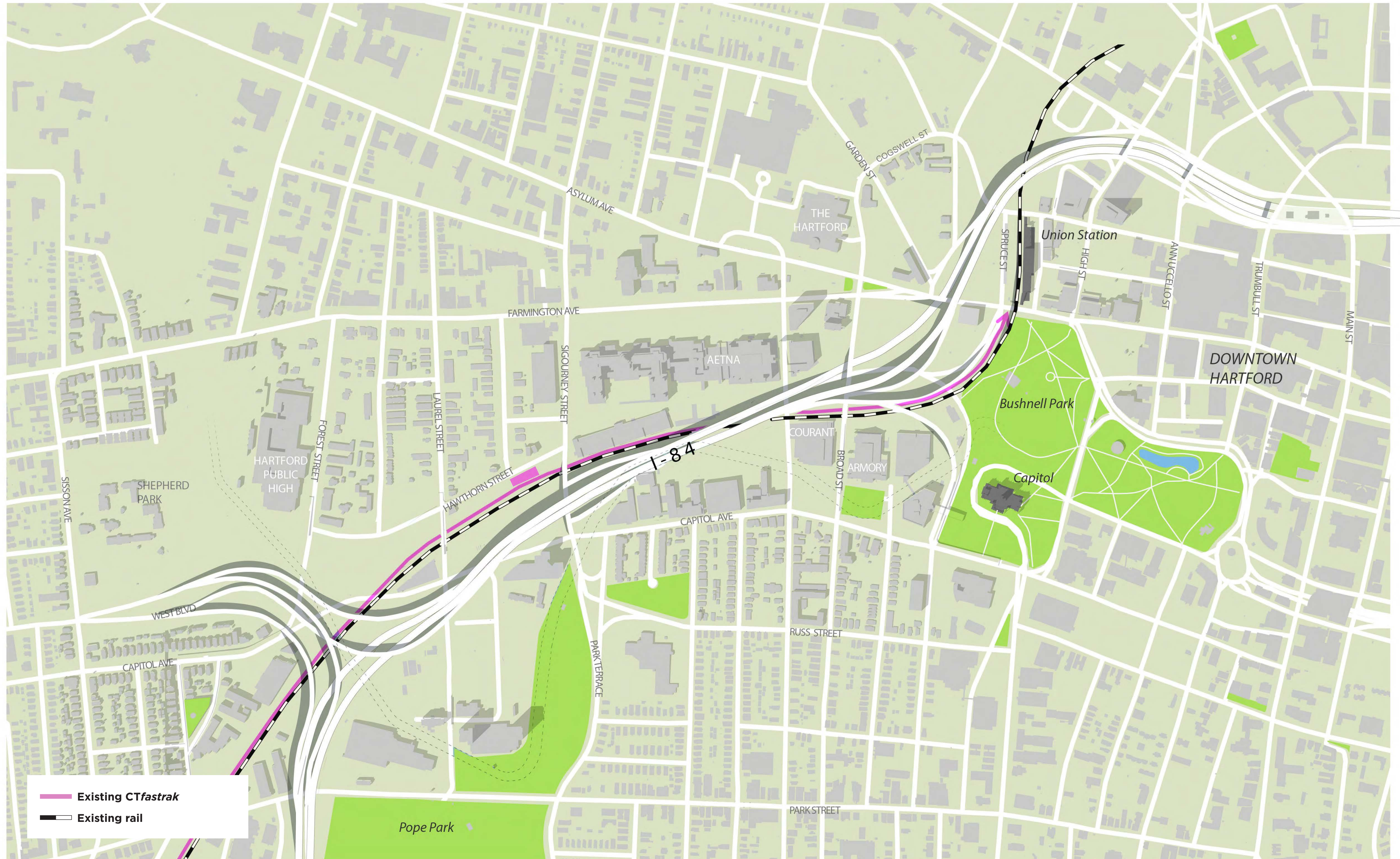
To date, as many as 150 design variations of these alternatives have been developed.

CTDOT's assessment of the design alternatives, which the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is currently reviewing, is that the Elevated Highway alternative would not meet the project's purpose and need, and the tunnel alternative would cause significantly more property impacts and have an extreme cost at \$10 to 12 billion. The tunnel alternative has been essentially ruled out.

The EIS will fulfill a requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act, which is the federal project decision-making process. An EIS is the most intensive level of review of effects on the built and natural environment. It will evaluate the environmental effects of the project to assure resulting decisions are made in the best overall public interest, taking into account a balanced consideration of the need for safe and efficient transportation; the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the proposed improvement; and national, state, and local environmental protections goals.

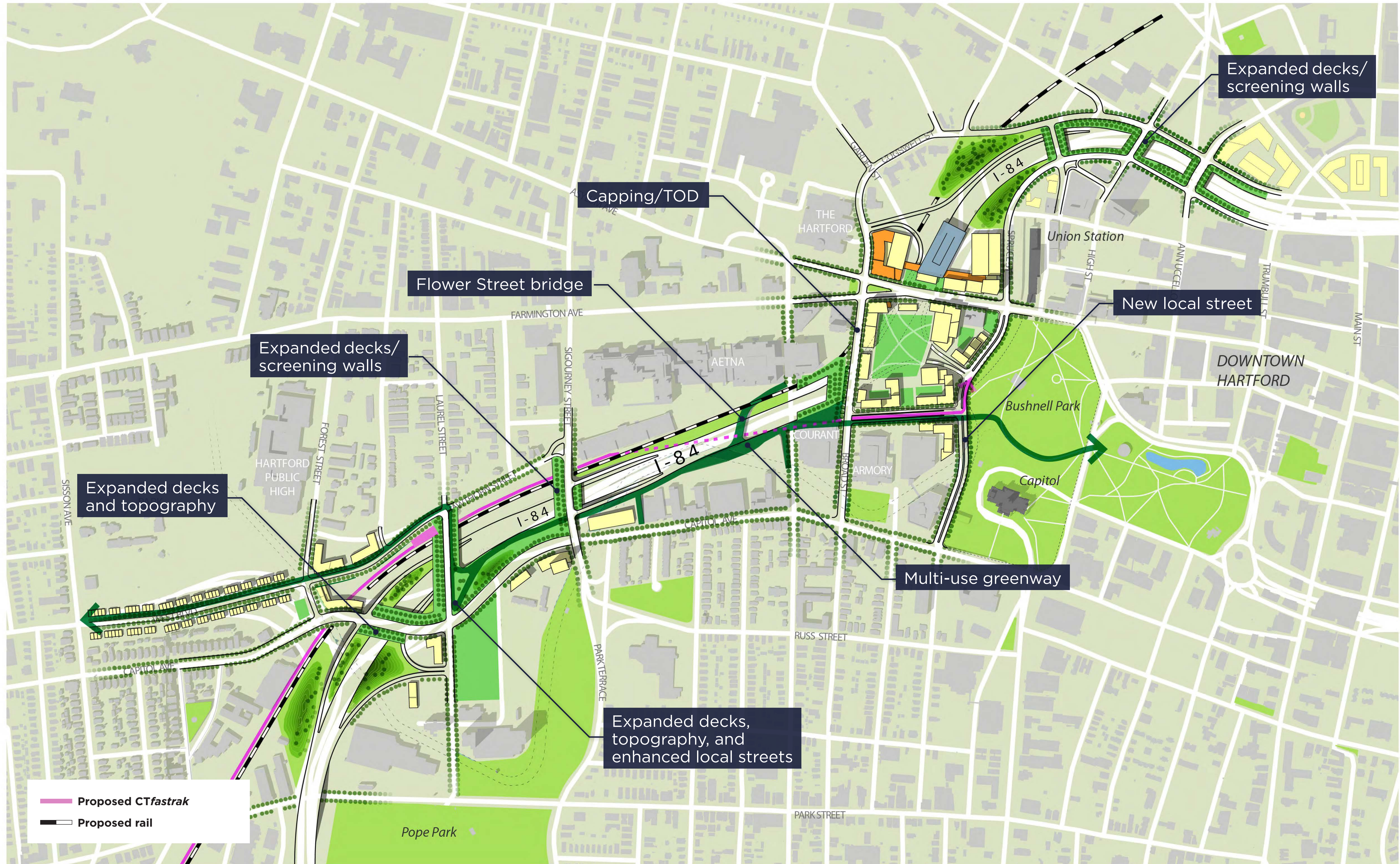


I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT EXISTING CONDITIONS





I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT INTEGRATING I-84 INTO THE CITY





I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT INTEGRATING I-84 INTO THE CITY

Challenges of integrating I-84 into the city

- Overcoming neighborhood discontinuity
- Mitigating the visual impact
- Mitigating the noise impact
- Creating quality local streets for pedestrians/bicyclists
- Creating attractive places

Strategies and tools to overcome challenges

- Capping
- Buildings/streets over lowered highway
- Expanded decking for bridges
- Landscape/raised planters
- Topography
- Screening walls

PRECEDENTS

HARTFORD, CT

Capping and park



Capping and buildings



COLUMBUS, OH

Capping and buildings



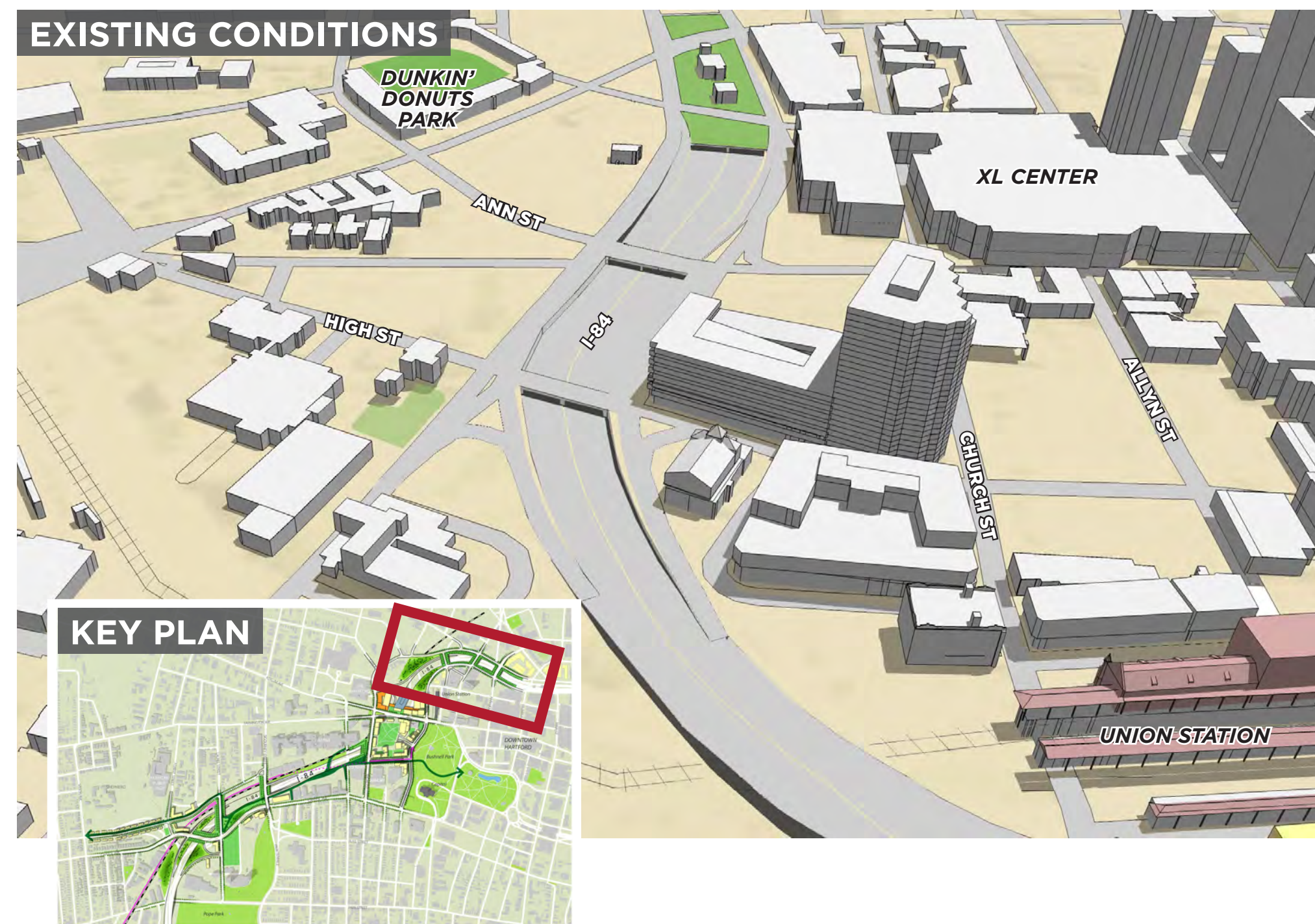
Expanded deck



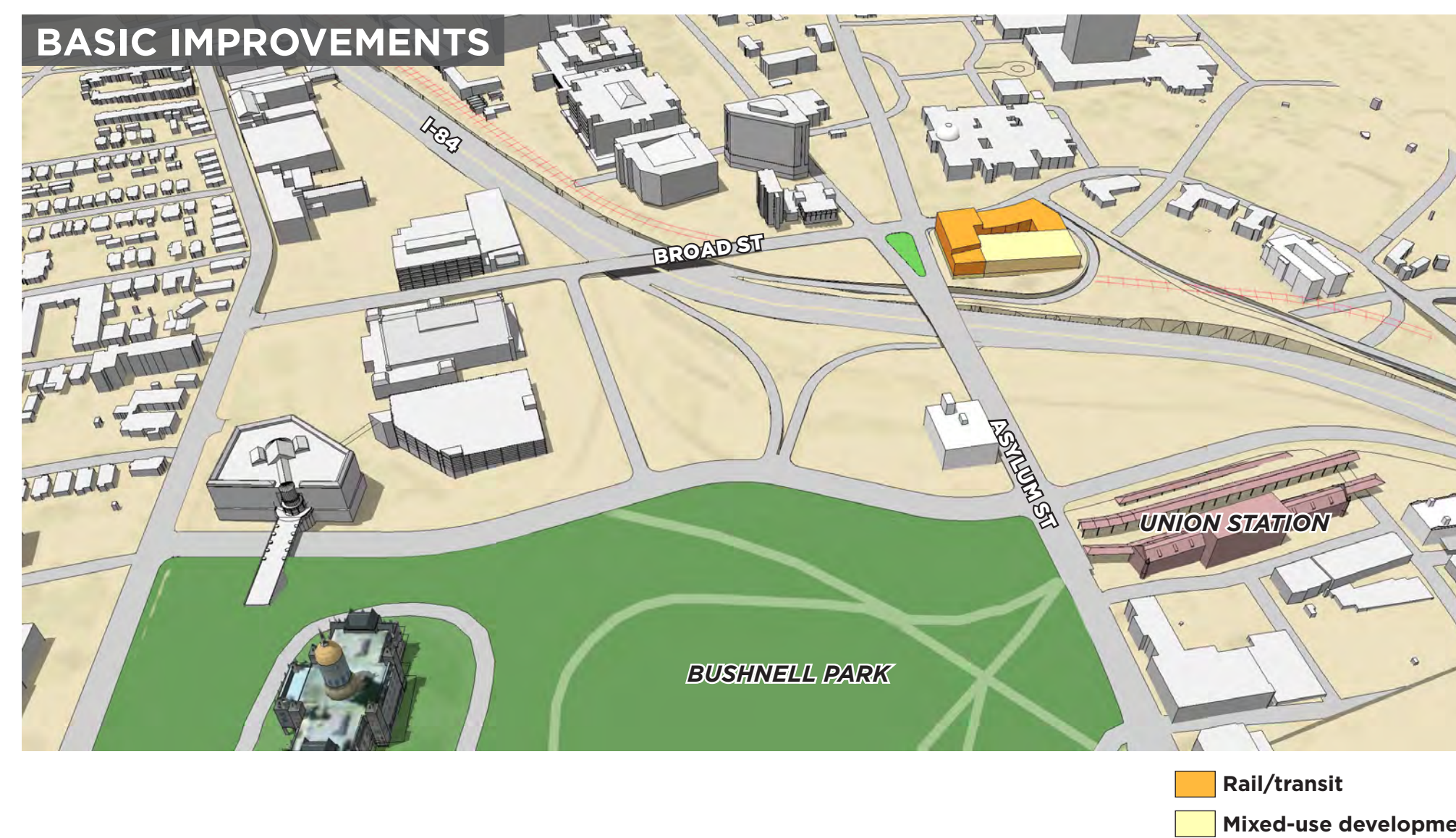
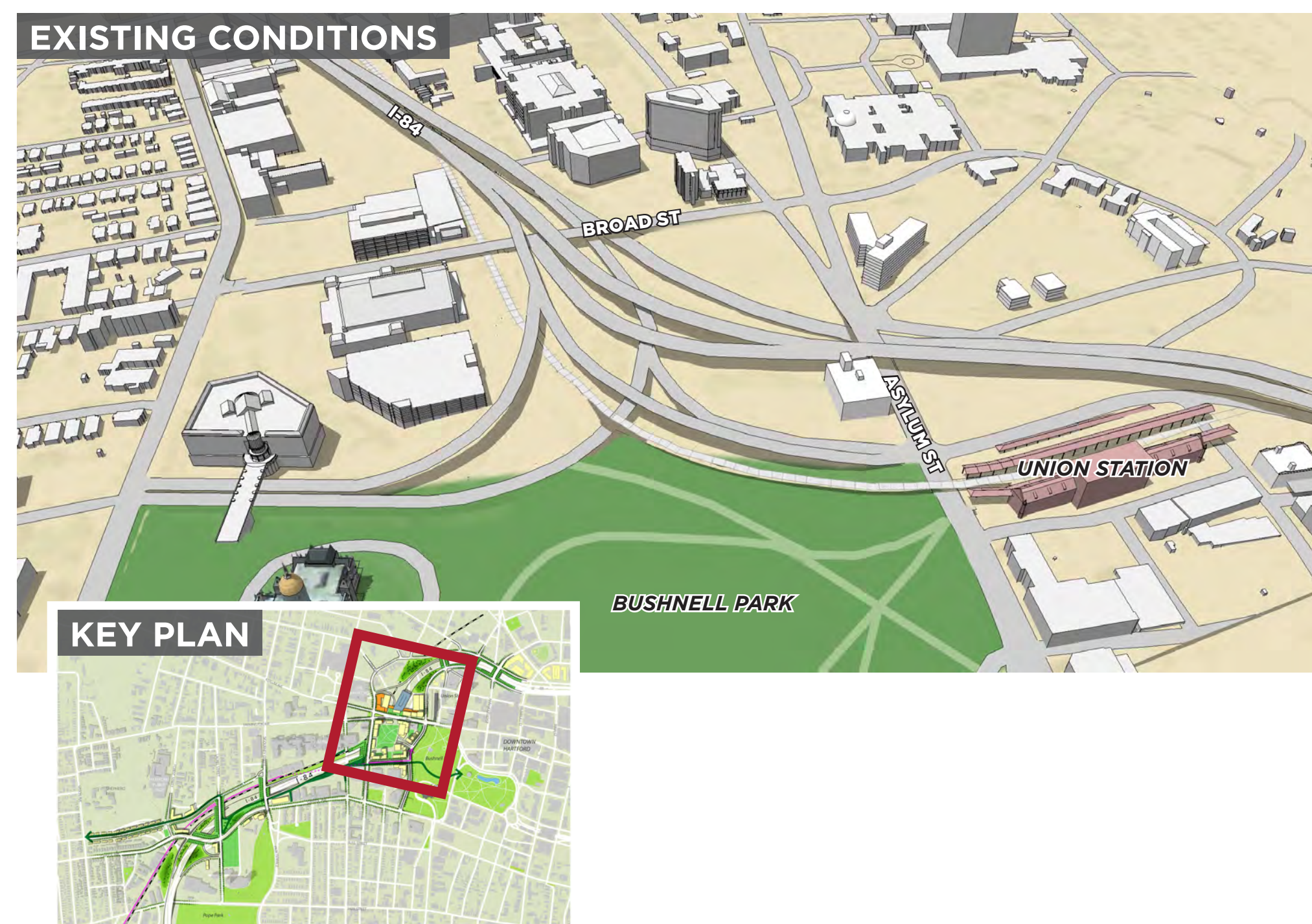


I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT INTEGRATING I-84 INTO THE CITY

I-84 between High Street and Ann Street



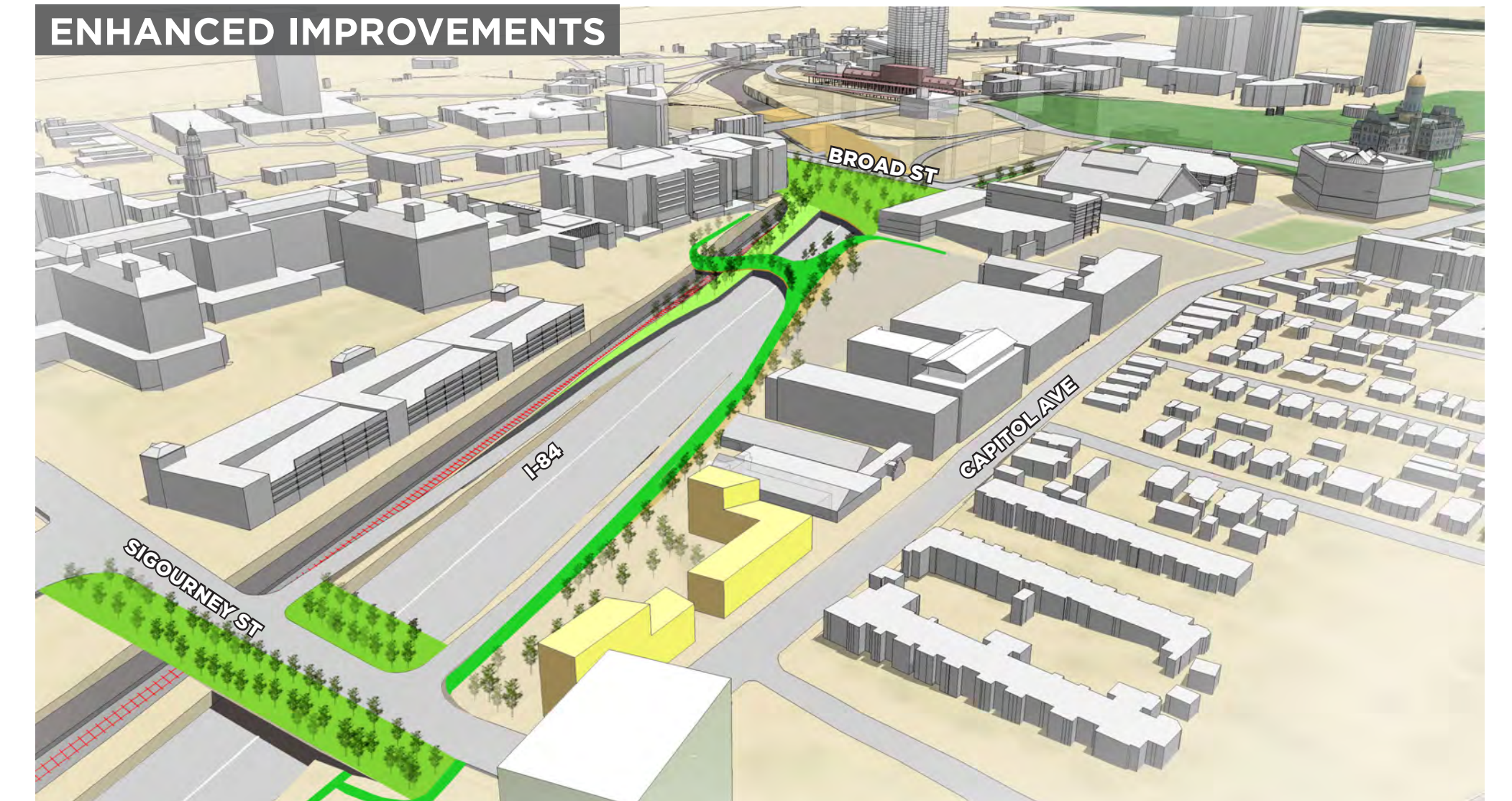
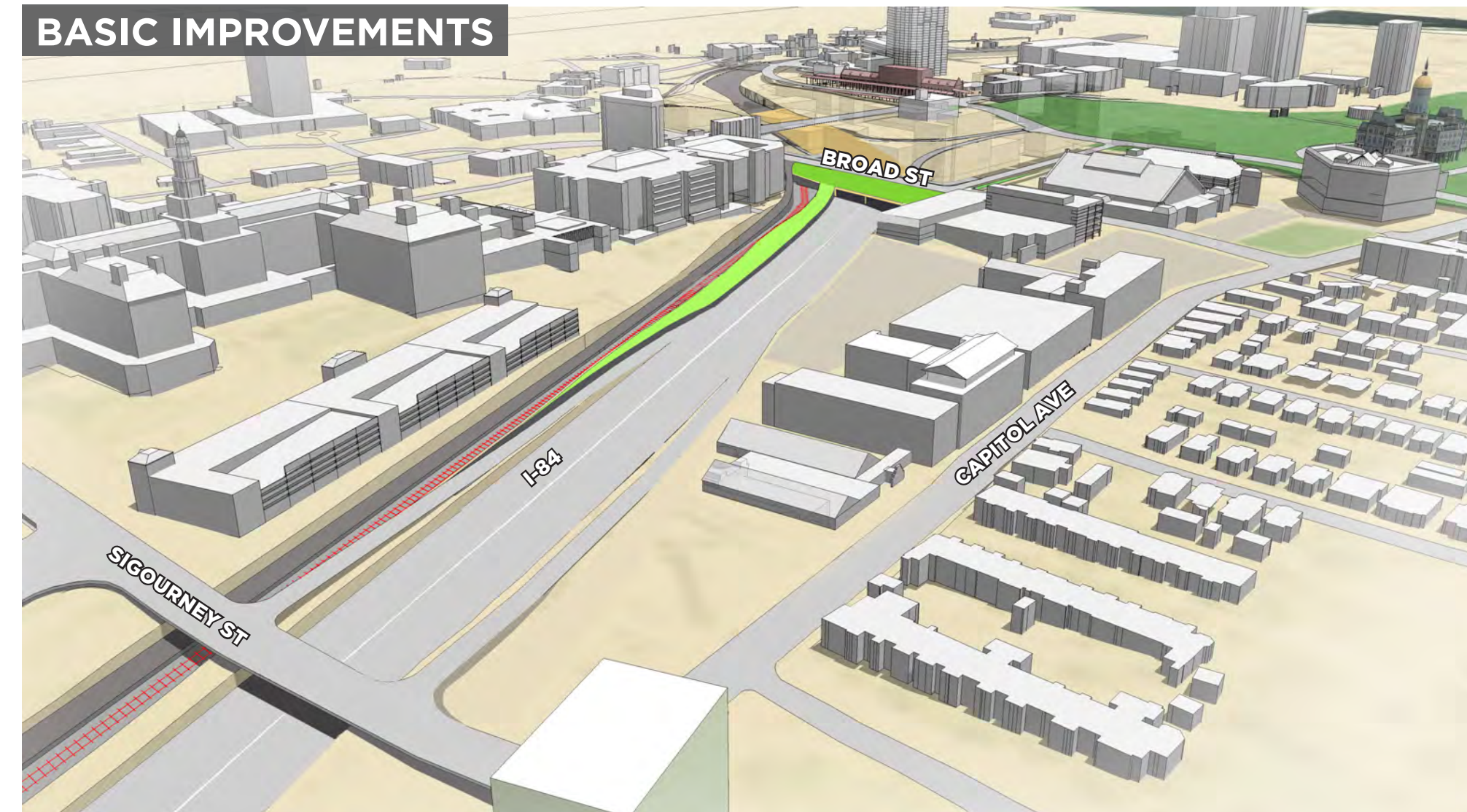
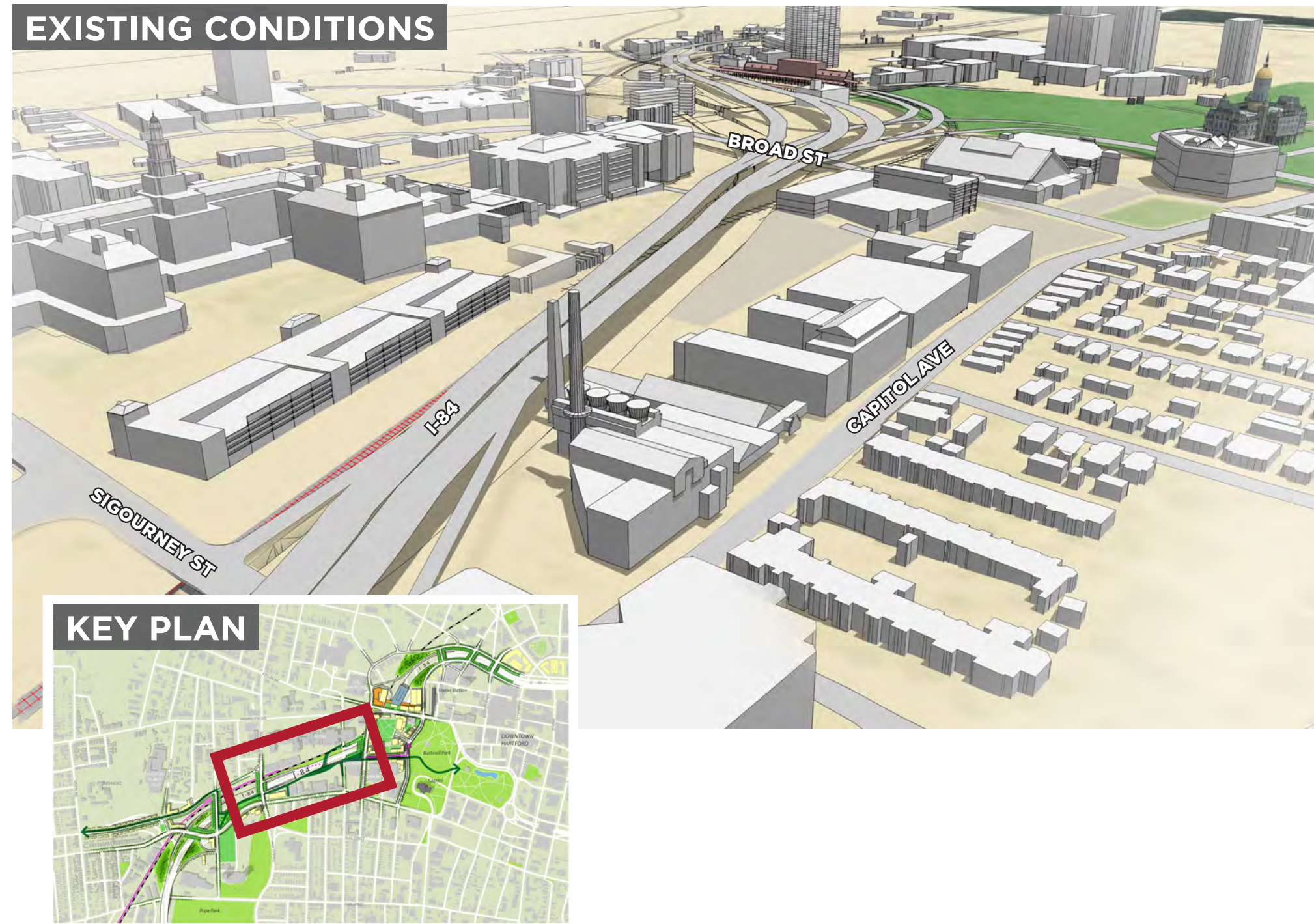
I-84 between Broad Street and Asylum Street





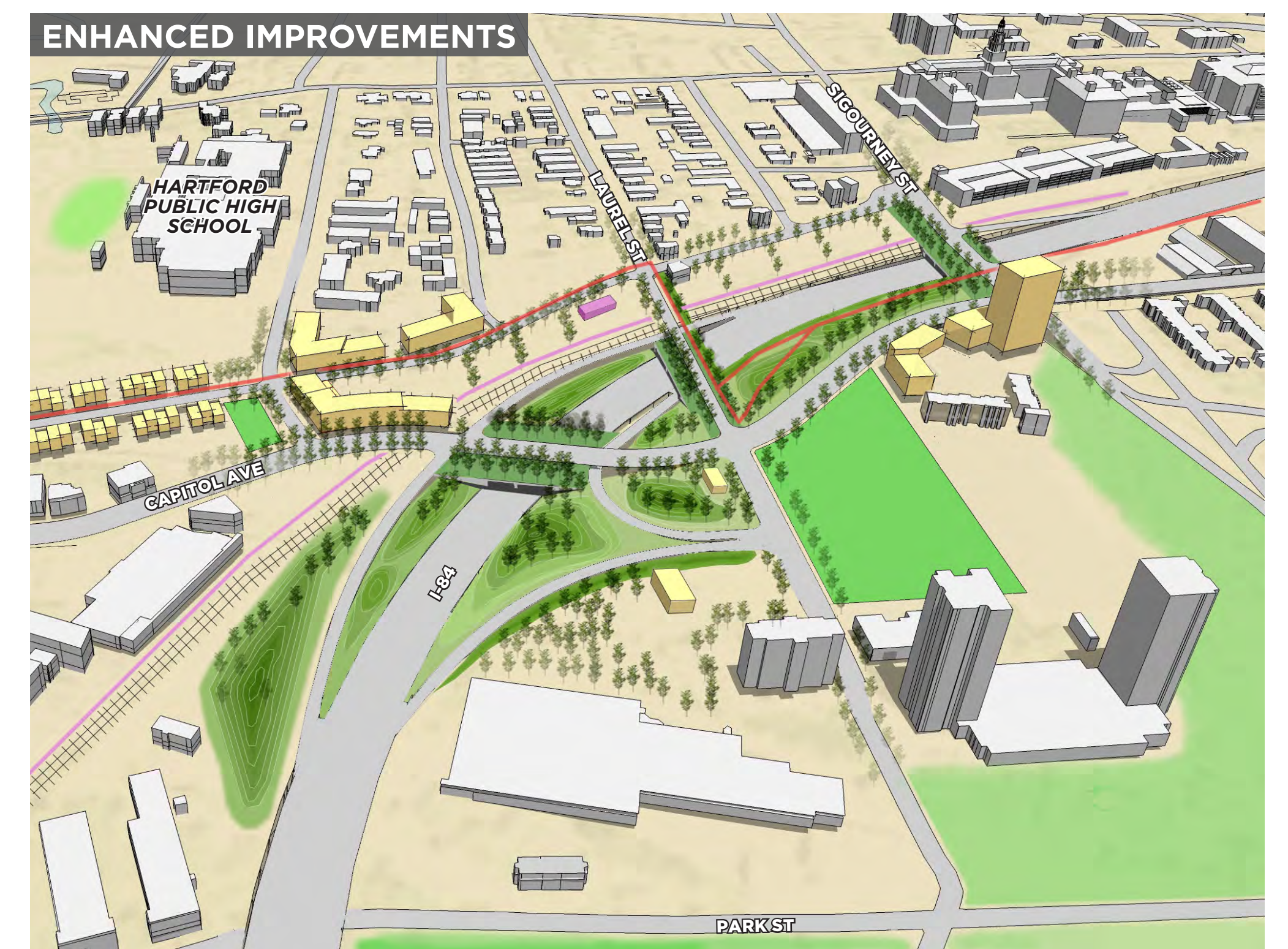
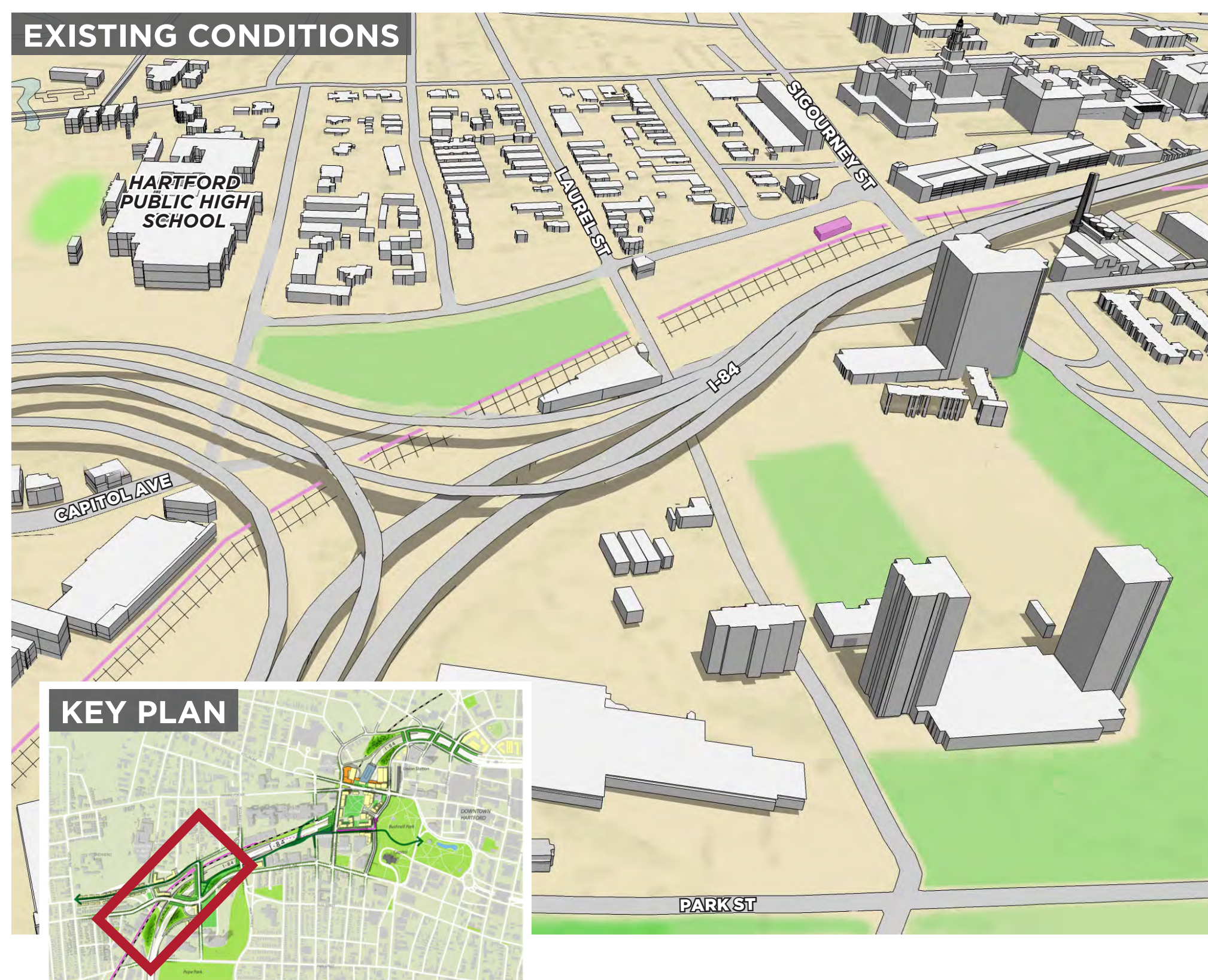
I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT INTEGRATING I-84 INTO THE CITY

I-84 between Sigourney Street and Broad Street



Mixed-use development

I-84 between Park Street and Sigourney Street



Mixed-use development



I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT INTEGRATING I-84 INTO THE CITY

Laurel Street looking south





I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT INTEGRATING I-84 INTO THE CITY

Sigourney Street looking south

EXISTING CONDITIONS



POTENTIAL

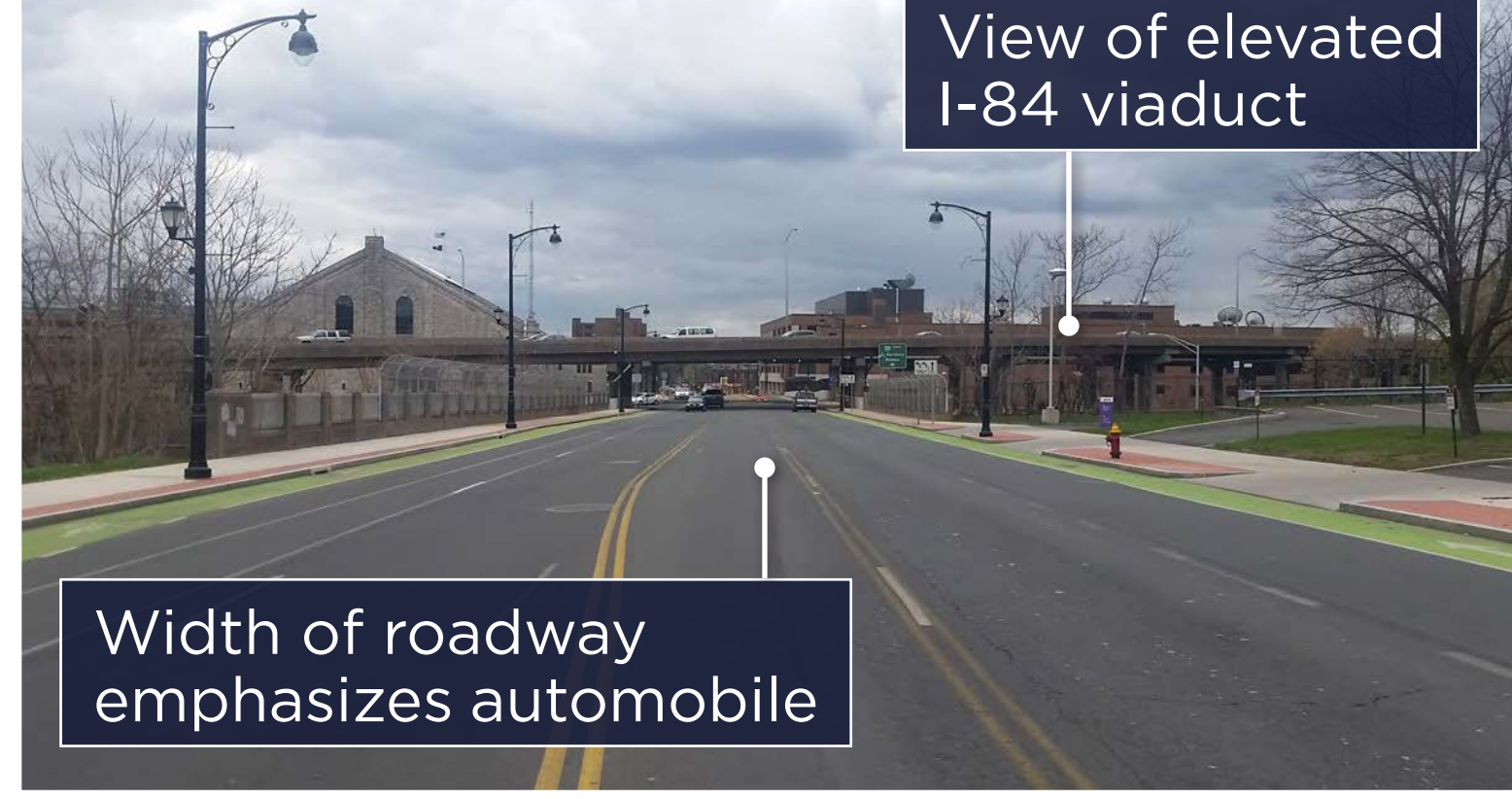




I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT INTEGRATING I-84 INTO THE CITY

Broad Street looking south

EXISTING CONDITIONS



View of elevated I-84 viaduct

Width of roadway emphasizes automobile

POTENTIAL



Dedicated bike lanes

Access to multi-use greenway

Expanded deck and plaza over I-84

Landscaped screening



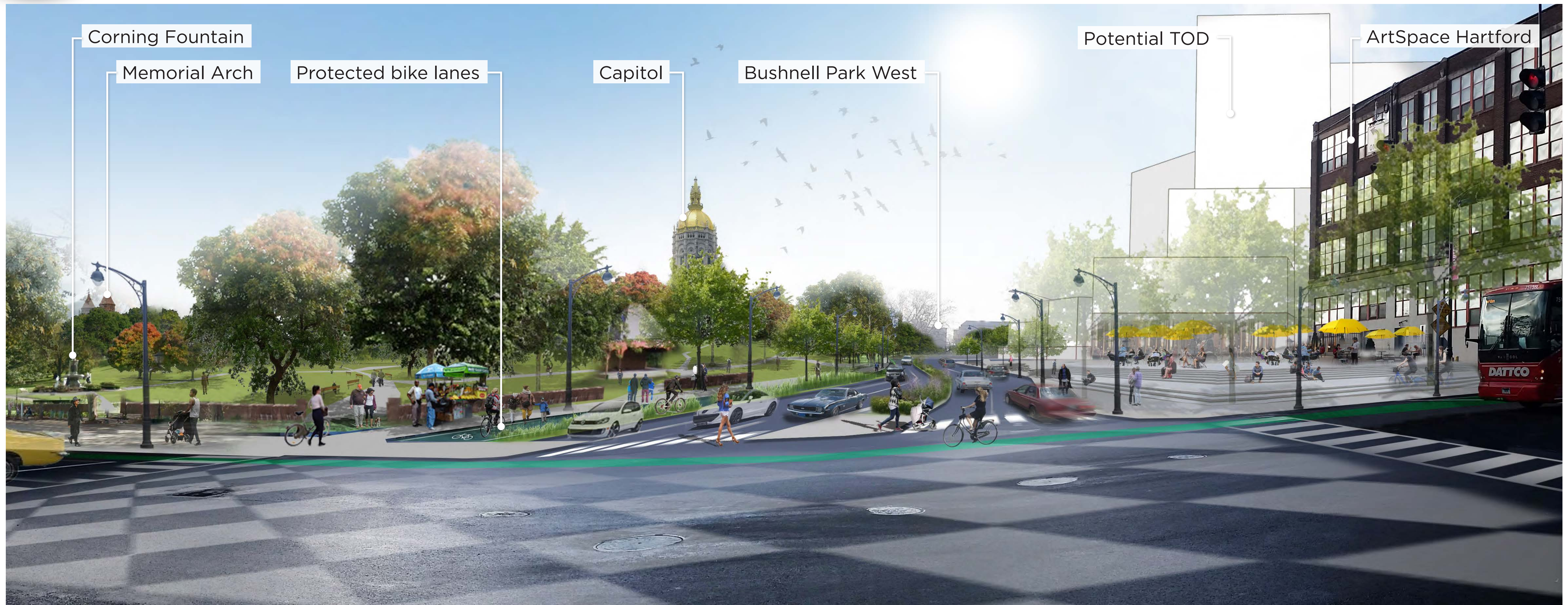
I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT INTEGRATING I-84 INTO THE CITY

Ann Street Bridge





I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT ASYLUM STREET



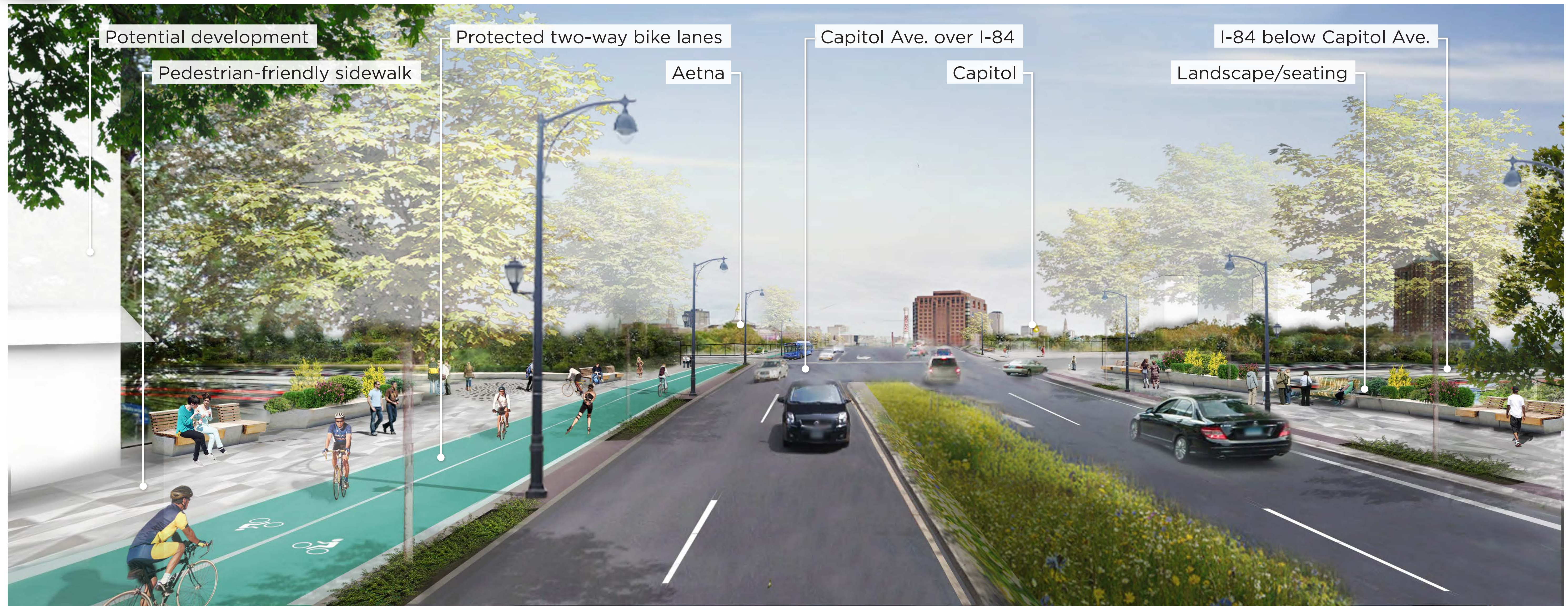
KEY PLAN



EXISTING



I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT CAPITOL AVENUE



KEY PLAN



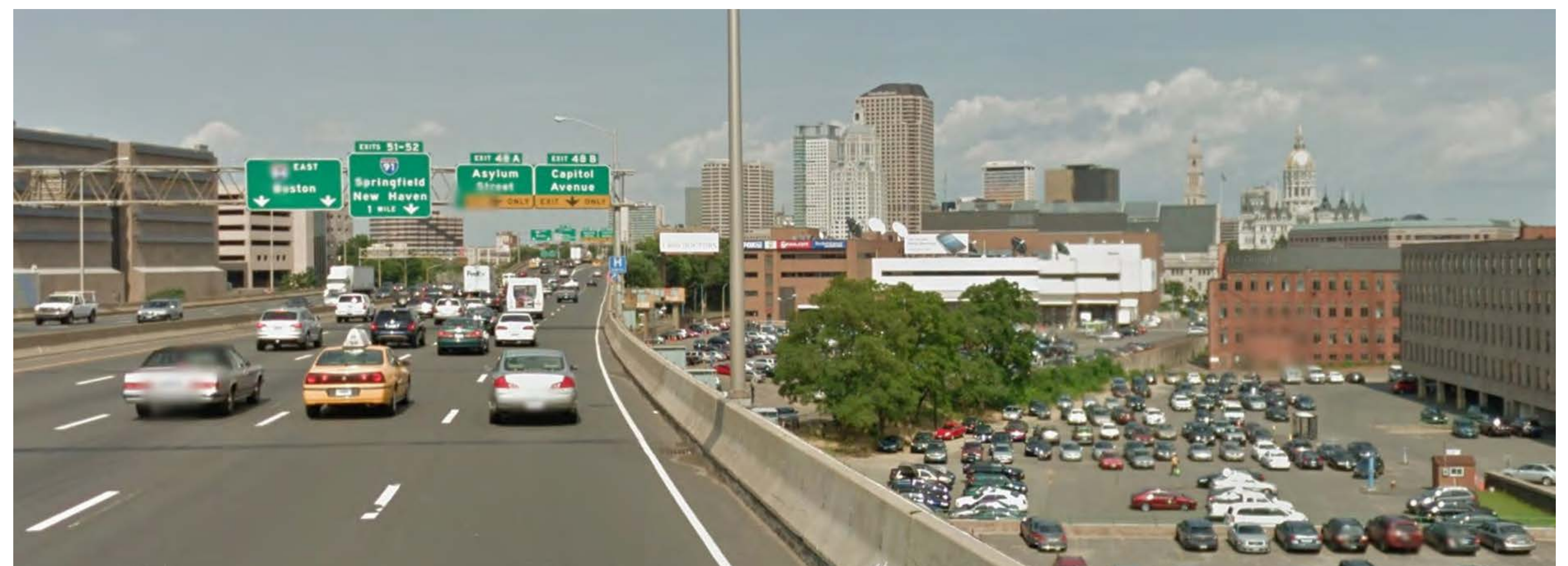
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I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT MULTI-USE GREENWAY



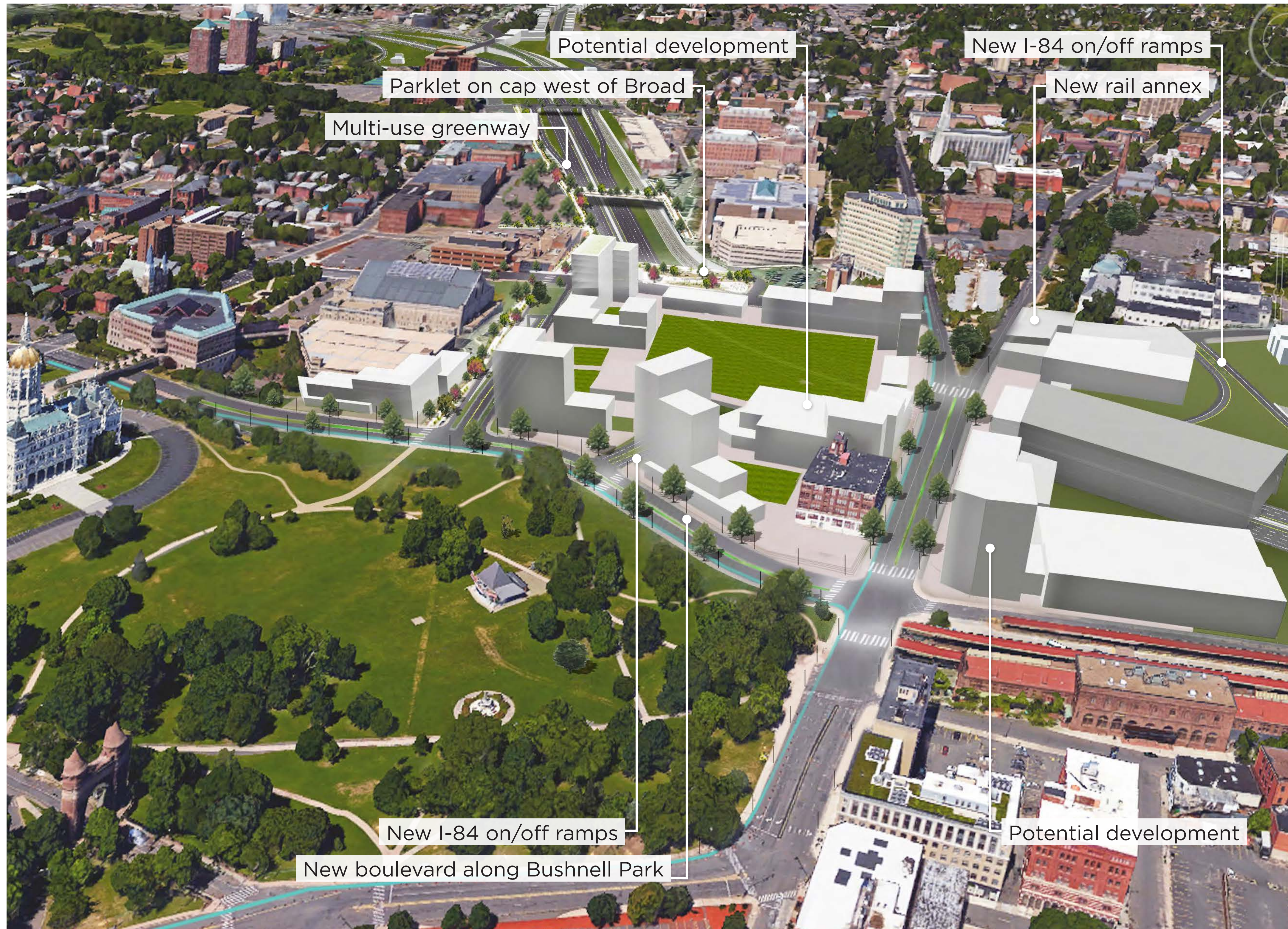
KEY PLAN



EXISTING



I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT POTENTIAL TOD OPPORTUNITIES



KEY PLAN



EXISTING



I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT ASYLUM STREET

TWO POTENTIAL VIEWS



ASYLUM STREET
LOOKING WEST TOWARDS
RAIL VIADUCT



EXISTING

SPRUCE/ASYLUM INTERSECTION
LOOKING TOWARDS THE CAPITOL



EXISTING





I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT PARK STREET

POTENTIAL VIEW LOOKING EAST

PARK STREET LOOKING EAST



EXISTING

