

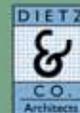
Springfield Educational Corridor Vision Plan



Prepared for
The State Street Alliance
Springfield, Massachusetts
July 2008

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Why An Educational Corridor?

The Educational Corridor Vision Plan is the result of collaboration among a diverse group of educational and community institutions based in Springfield's Mason Square neighborhood. Our institutions have joined together because we recognize the educational synergies among our missions—we span every dimension of education from pre-school through elementary, high school, and college, and from youth and community recreation to adult and job training. As we advance our missions, we also recognize the strong potential for our collaboration to spur physical renewal and revitalization around us and to create a stronger, safer, more vital future for our neighborhood and our city.

1 Location Plan



Wilbraham Avenue, can become the spine of a future Educational Corridor.

Some of our educational partners are already well-established within the area. Others plan to expand or relocate here. We all recognize that by locating together in an



educational corridor we will have the potential to share facilities such as large meeting spaces, recreation and open space. Beyond these important efficiencies, however, we have the potential to create a vibrant educational campus that will become the centerpiece of our community. Our students and the community as a whole can benefit from this effort to work and plan together. Across the nation, innovative partnerships such as this are among the most potent forces in strengthening urban education and our

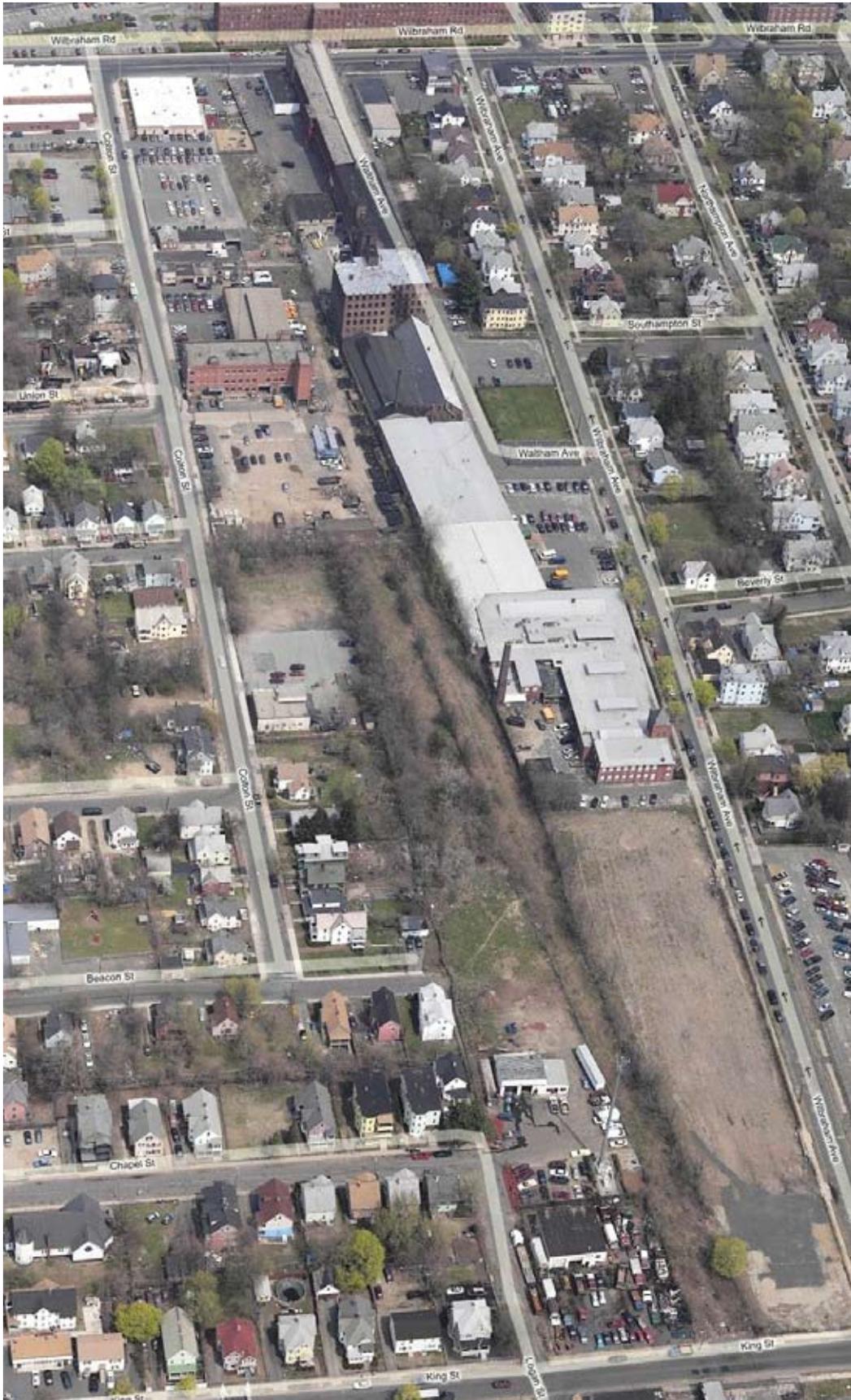
cities' neighborhoods. Communities from Hartford to Columbus to Chicago have demonstrated the potential of this model. As this effort moves forward, we look forward to reaching out to other potential partners who can contribute to the success of our mission.

Participants in this planning and visioning effort to date include:

- American International College (AIC)
- City of Springfield
- DeBerry Elementary School
- HAP, Inc. (Housing Partnership)
- Head Start
- Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center
- Massachusetts Career Development Institute (MCDI)
- New Leadership Charter School
- Old Hill Neighborhood and Upper Hill residents councils
- Springfield Partners for Community Action
- Square One
- Springfield College
- Urban League of Springfield

Note: The Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School of Excellence participated in initial planning but has recently found an alternative location to meet its expansion needs.

This process was launched under the auspices of the State Street Alliance, a coalition with business, educational, and neighborhood representation, as it worked to shape a redevelopment strategy for the State Street Corridor. Participants in the Alliance recognized the potential for creation of an educational corridor plan as an integral element of strengthening the Mason Square area and the State Street Corridor as a whole. The Vision described in this document represents a first step. The institutions that have joined this effort remain committed to working together to translate the promise into reality.



The focus of the education corridor planning effort lies between King Street and Wilbraham Road and contains several under-utilized buildings and parcels of land. Some parcels—particularly lots at the corner of King and Logan streets and the corner of Colton and Union streets—have recently been improved.

AERIAL PHOTO TAKEN JUST AFTER THE YEAR 2000 FROM WWW.LOCAL.LIVE.COM

Process for Creating the Vision Plan

The Vision Plan was developed through a multi-step process that brought together each of the participants to discuss initial ideas about facility needs, explore opportunities for more efficient use of shared facilities, and identify synergies among facilities planned together as part of a larger urban campus. Our institutions worked with a consultant team



led by Goody Clancy and that included Springfield architects Dietz & Company, and W-ZHA. The educational partners, representatives of the City of Springfield, and other neighborhood organizations met with the consultant team to discuss facility, open space, and parking needs and to evaluate potential siting options within the neighborhood. These meetings highlighted the significant potential for development of a shared vision and plan—with strong benefits for the city and the neighborhood—but also highlighted the urgent need of some of the partners to reach a decision on locating future facilities.

The process involved these steps:

- A kick-off meeting to review the goals and needs of each participating organization.
- Individual interviews involving the consultants and organizations with future space and relocation needs to discuss building, open space, and parking needs and other considerations.

- A meeting at which the consultants presented information on existing land uses/ownership within the study area and reviewed some preliminary options for locating new educational facilities; the parties agreed that it was best that the Vision Plan process keep several potential options open rather than settle definitively on a single option.
- A meeting at which the consultants presented for discussion a preliminary draft of the Vision Plan, based on comments made at previous meetings, along with several more-evolved land-use options showing possible locations for new facilities to serve each institution.
- A meeting to review a revised vision plan, to identify a preferred land use option, and to discuss next steps.

Discussions at the final meeting provided the basis for refining to the Vision Plan (shown on pages 16–17) and the land use options (shown on pages 19–25); the land-use options, including the Preferred Alternative, are intended to provide the basis for continued review and discussion among the institutions.



Institutional Needs and Goals

Several institutions are currently looking to expand or enhance their facilities within the Educational Corridor or to relocate to the area. Six of these institutions have near-term space needs or are considering other planned improvements, as described below; additional programmatic data are summarized on the page 9.

- **American International College (AIC)** offers undergraduate and graduate programs, including doctoral degrees in education and physical therapy, to a student body of 2,000. AIC's mission is to provide a transforming education to a diverse body of undergraduate and graduate students for lifelong leadership and success in a global environment. The school has recently completed an institutional master plan that envisions expansion to the west in order to create a larger presence in Mason Square. In particular, AIC would like to incorporate its radio station in the historic Mason Square Fire Station building with the potential to locate a café on the ground floor.
- **Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center** provides a range of community programs and services with a particular focus on after-school programming. The community center is seeking a larger space than the facility it currently owns at 106 Wilbraham Road. The community center could potentially share parking and open space with facilities that maintain different operating hours.
- **Massachusetts Career Development Institute (MCDI)** provides a range of services with a focus on adult job training and job-readiness programs for residents of Springfield and surrounding communities. MCDI also hosts a Springfield Public Schools alternative middle school and high school in its Wilbraham Avenue facility. MCDI's building needs improvements that will increase energy efficiency and enhance handicap

accessibility, and the organization hopes to reduce its high operating costs within the former box factory building. Currently a city department, MCDI will become an independent institution in the fall of 2008.

- **New Leadership Charter School** is a (grades 6–12) Horace Mann charter school located in temporary quarters on the campus of Western New England College. The school has been looking for a new location and would like to secure a location in the Mason Square area. Under a Horace Mann charter designation, the City of Springfield has the responsibility for securing an appropriate facility in which to locate the school, underwrite development costs, and fund transportation of students. Many of New Leadership's students live near Mason Square, so locating along the Educational Corridor is of great benefit.
- **Square One** provides a wide range of services to children and families, with a focus on providing child care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers at its Children's Center at 255 King Street. That building meets Square One's current needs, but the organization can only accommodate its desire for future improvements by renovating the upper floors and other areas. It has also identified needs for an off-street area for pick-up/drop-off and for additional parking and playground space that might be shared with neighboring uses.
- **Springfield College** has an undergraduate and graduate student body of 5,000 and is dedicated to providing an education for leadership in service to others. The college has historically been a pioneer in teaching and scholarship related to physical education, wellness and training of YMCA executives as well as throughout the social services professions. Springfield College also desires a stronger presence along the Educational

2 Mason Square Area Institutions



Corridor to support its many neighborhood partnerships and hopes to locate a Community Engagement Center (CEC) and a performing arts center near the intersection of Wilbraham Avenue and King Street. The CEC is intended to form a neighborhood anchor for community educational services, youth programs, and student-volunteer projects. It would also provide space for neighborhood councils and the colleges' Americorps program. The performing arts center would house a theater space with 500–600 seats and host both college-sponsored and community-oriented events and performances.

Other institutions and community organizations within the area—such as the DeBerry Elementary School, HAP, Head Start, Springfield Partners for Community Action, the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission, the Urban League and the Old Hill and Upper Hill neighborhoods—can be key contributors to the success of the plan. Needs and goals for some of these organizations include:

- **DeBerry Elementary School** (grades K-5) is located a block west of Eastern Avenue but has the potential to benefit from the activity and investment generated by the Educational Corridor. Alfred Stafford Field, adjacent to the school, was significantly upgraded over the summer of 2008 with new ball fields, lighting, fencing, and walkways. Stafford Field could potentially accommodate some of the outdoor green space needs of some of the educational institutions if they were to relocate nearby. DeBerry has also moved forward to develop a 10,000-square-foot outdoor classroom adjacent to the park that includes a garden, bird habitat, classroom seating for 30 students, and a dry riverbed.
- **HAP**, a nonprofit organization, provides services and programs to first-time home buyers and

others seeking affordable home-ownership opportunities. It has joined Springfield Neighborhood Housing Services, Springfield College and Habitat for Humanity in a collaborative effort to create 100 new housing units in the Old Hill neighborhood over the next five to ten years. HAP's ultimate goal is to revitalize the neighborhood, an objective that outweighs any interest in developing new homes on particular properties that may be more appropriately developed for institutional uses.

- **Head Start** provides education, health, nutrition and parent-involvement services to low-income families in Springfield. The program currently serves 275 children in eight classrooms in its facility on Wilbraham Road, with another four classrooms at a secondary facility at the south end of Eastern Avenue. While Head Start does not own the building in which it is currently housed, the program has been there for ten years and intends to stay in the Mason Square area.
- **The Springfield Sewer and Water Commission** (SWSC) has occupied its current site since 1912. The commission uses the five-acre-plus site, as its training and maintenance facility. It has recently expanded its on-site operation and is considering up to \$9 million in additional improvements and modernization, most likely carried out in several phases.

The matrix on the facing page summarizes the needs and issues of the organizations with near-term educational space requirements, reflecting interviews and conversations the consultants conducted during the spring of 2008. The required space is approximately 243,000 square feet for buildings (163,000 square feet of new space within the corridor area), one to three acres of open space, and 250 parking spaces, resulting in an aggregate need of 6.5 to 8.5 acres of land.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAMMATIC NEEDS	Building (GSF)	Assumed Footprint (GSF)	Open Space (GSF)*	Parking (GSF)	Approximate Land Area Needed (GSF)
American International College (AIC)					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key focus of recent master plan is strengthened presence on Mason Square • Acquisition of Indian Motorcycle Building for conversion to student housing over time • Interested in adaptive reuse of fire station for café and radio station (possible community theater on ground floor) • Willing to offer use of a portion of Shea Library for the Mason Square branch library 					—
Mass Career Development Institute (MCDI)					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing building needs significant investment to cut high operating costs—especially for energy • 5,000 gsf of additional space (currently owns 105,000 gsf and rents 30,000 sf to Springfield School Department) • \$700,000/year in operating expenses constrains budget • Grant money to underwrite energy-efficiency improvements • \$200,000 to fix parking lot 	80,000	40,000 (3-story)	30,000 (community garden space)	26,000 (75 spaces)	96,000 (±2 acres)
MLK Jr. Community Center					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking for a larger space • 23,000 gsf for Youth Center and administrative offices • 5,000 for Family Life Center • Playground (estimated at 5,000 sf), green space (estimated at 10,000 sf), and basketball courts (1–2 at 5,000 each) • 75 parking spaces (at 350 sf/space = 26,000 sf) 	28,000	20,000 (2-story)	10,000 (minimum) 25,000 (enhanced)	26,000 (75 spaces)	56,000–71,000 gsf (±1.5 acres)
New Leadership Charter School					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgently needs to relocate; hopes to locate in Mason Sq. area • Space for 500 students in 80,000 gsf • Outdoor space, ideally including basketball courts (two at 5,000 sf each), baseball diamond (10,000 sf), multi-use grassy area for football, soccer, other activities (45,000–65,000 sf) • 80–100 parking spaces (at 350 sf/space = 28,000–35,000 sf) 	80,000 (includes classrooms, labs, library, offices, cafeteria, etc.)	40,000 (3-story)	10,000 (minimum) 85,000 (enhanced)	28–35,000 (80–100 spaces)	78,000–160,000 gsf (± 2 to 4 acres)
Springfield College					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more visible presence on the Educational Corridor • Community Engagement Center (estimated at 15,000–25,000 gsf) • Performing Arts Center (black box theater, dance studios, large theater with 500–600 seats—estimated 20,000–30,000 gsf) 	35,000–55,000	20,000–30,000 (2-story)	—	Additional spaces may not be needed	35,000–55,000 gsf (± 1 acre)
Square One					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With improvements, existing building can accommodate future needs. • Outdoor educational space • More accessible kitchen (potentially moved from basement to 1st floor) • New entry lobby, elevator, and space for infants and toddlers on 1st floor (more toddler space on 2nd floor) • Additional parking for staff and vans 	—	—	—	—	Potentially confined to King Street building (32,650 sf) and site
TOTALS (not including Square One)					
	223,000–243,000	120,000–130,000	50,000–140,000	87,000 (250 spaces)	265,000–382,000 (6.5–8.5 acres)

* Note: Open space needs are approximate and do not necessarily reflect statewide standards.

The Corridor Today

The primary focus area for future siting of new educational uses is bounded by Wilbraham Road on the north, King Street on the south, Wilbraham Avenue on the east and Eastern Avenue on the west. This area contains a number of large, under-utilized properties—some under public ownership—as well as several under-utilized privately-owned buildings. Many of the large properties contain existing or former industrial uses, an anomaly within a largely residential section of Springfield.

Much of the potentially available land lies along a former rail corridor that has largely been sold to surrounding land owners. The corridor contains a subsurface jet fuel line. Development over the jet fuel line is not allowed, but open space and parking areas are possible. More productive use of land and buildings within the corridor could transform an area that has a potential blighting influence on surrounding neighborhoods into an important community asset and source of neighborhood pride.



1

Wilbraham Avenue at King Street looking north, with the MCDI Building in the background.



2

The SWSC site looking south towards King Street with the MCDI building at left

In the center of the corridor lies the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission's (SWSC) maintenance, storage and service yard. The SWSC has occupied this location since 1912 and intends to remain there for the foreseeable future. It has recently invested in site improvements and plans to invest up to \$9 million in additional enhancements.



3

Springfield Water & Sewer Commission parking at the intersection of Colton and Union streets

Most recently, the commission has built a new surface parking lot for employees at the corner of Colton and Union streets. Much of the rest of this block has potential for redevelopment; it includes a trio of vacant parcels and a handful of single-

3 Educational Corridor Study Area



family houses in varying conditions. These houses represent a mix of rental and owner-occupied homes.

Adjacent to the SWSC property is a row of brick industrial buildings, primarily built in the early 20th-century, along both Wilbraham and Waltham avenues. These include a former box factory that now houses MCDI (see photo on page 1), three single-story shed buildings; the six-story former Knox Automobile factory building; and the four-story Firestone building, subdivided into two parcels with different ownership. The Knox Automobile building is currently owned and used by Luster-On Products, a metal-finishing-coatings company that has been on the site since 1983. Based on an interview with



4

Luster-on Building with Firestone and Indian Motorcycle buildings beyond on Waltham Avenue.



5

Single- and two-family houses along Wilbraham Avenue near Southampton Street

the company president, the firm is happy with its location and has no intention of moving elsewhere. On the other hand, both portions of the Firestone building to the north are largely unused and in varying levels of disrepair. The northernmost portion of the building was placed on the market in the summer of 2008.

Both the Knox Automobile building and portions of the Firestone building rely on Waltham Avenue for primary access, whereas the residential properties on the other side of the street face Wilbraham Avenue only. The upper portion of Wilbraham Avenue close to Wilbraham Road is a mix of one- and two-family houses, owner-occupied and rental; some appear to be in good condition structurally and aesthetically and others less so. Street trees are intermittent but sidewalks and planting strips are in decent shape.



Further south, Wilbraham Avenue has several vacant lots and surface parking, all surrounded by chain-link fences. Street trees are not present in this stretch, and sidewalks are in poor shape. The former auto service yard at

the corner of King and Logan streets, now owned by the City of Springfield, has recently been tidied up and is available for reuse or redevelopment.

Parcel Ownership

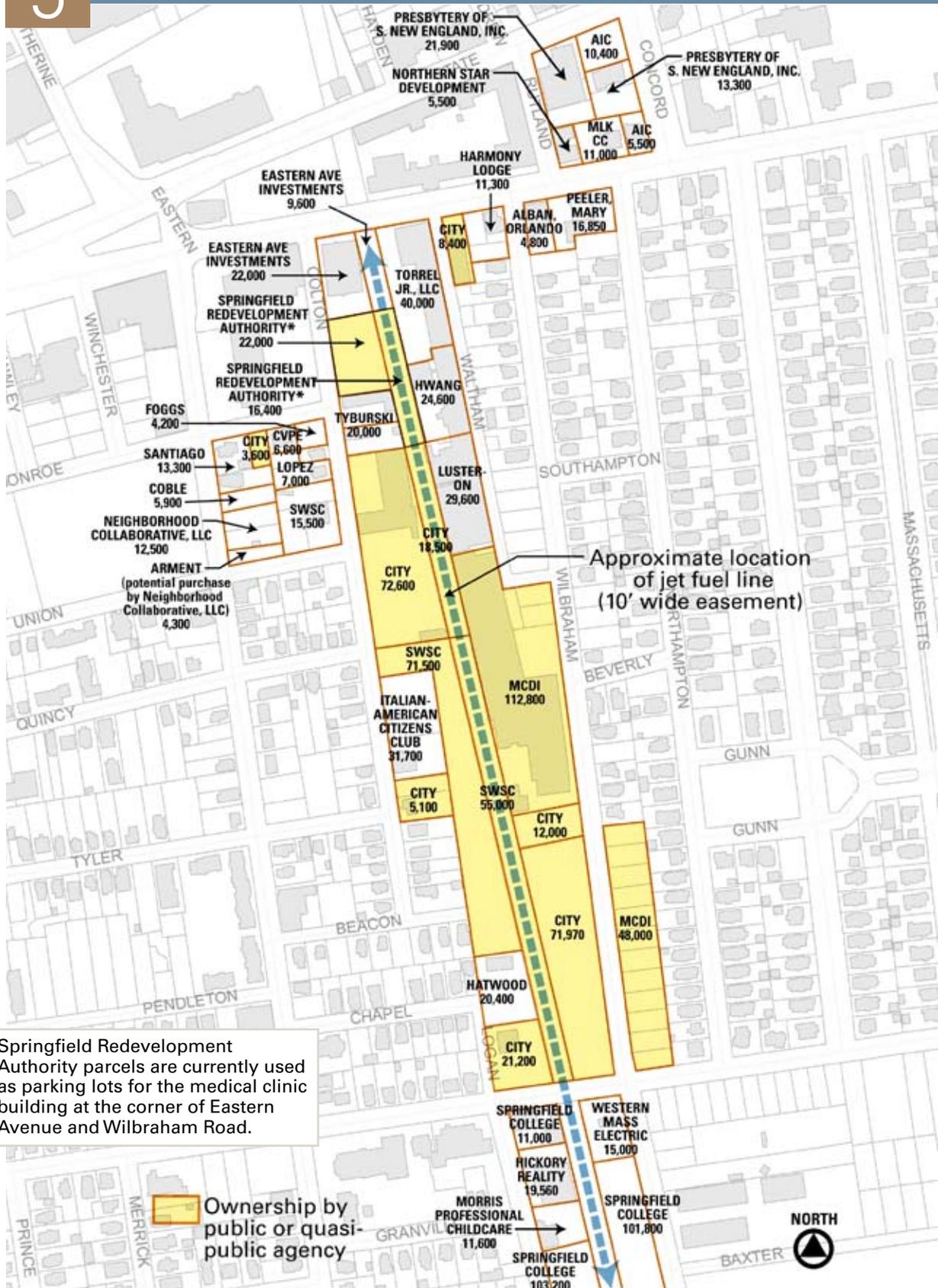
The Educational Corridor study area contains several parcels owned by the City, the Springfield Redevelopment Authority (SRA), or by quasi-public agencies like the Springfield Water & Sewer Commission. The adjacent map and the one on page 15 show property ownership and size; indicate which parcels are under public control; and identify parcels subject to tax liens or Land Court action, as of summer 2008.

The information on these maps was used to help identify possible candidate parcels for reuse or redevelopment as an educational or cultural use. A subsequent site analysis helped determine the opportunities and constraints presented by each property.



MAP COURTESY OF THE SPRINGFIELD OFFICE OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, WITH ENHANCEMENTS BY THE CONSULTANT TEAM

5 Parcel Ownership



* Springfield Redevelopment Authority parcels are currently used as parking lots for the medical clinic building at the corner of Eastern Avenue and Wilbraham Road.

SOURCE OF PROPERTY OWNERSHIP INFORMATION: CITY OF SPRINGFIELD BOARD OF ASSESSORS AND ASSESSORS DEPARTMENT WEB SITE.

Vision Plan



The development of this Vision Plan represents an important first step in advancing the educational corridor concept. Creating a new “urban campus” in the heart of the neighborhood, the Educational Corridor Vision Plan weaves together new and existing buildings, open space, and parking to accommodate the needs of the area’s educational and community partners. Implementing the Educational Corridor Vision can provide significant educational benefits and contribute directly to enhancing the attractiveness of the Old Hill and Upper Hill neighborhoods. The Vision can also add momentum to the effort to transform the State Street corridor into a proud symbol of Springfield’s vitality as a community.

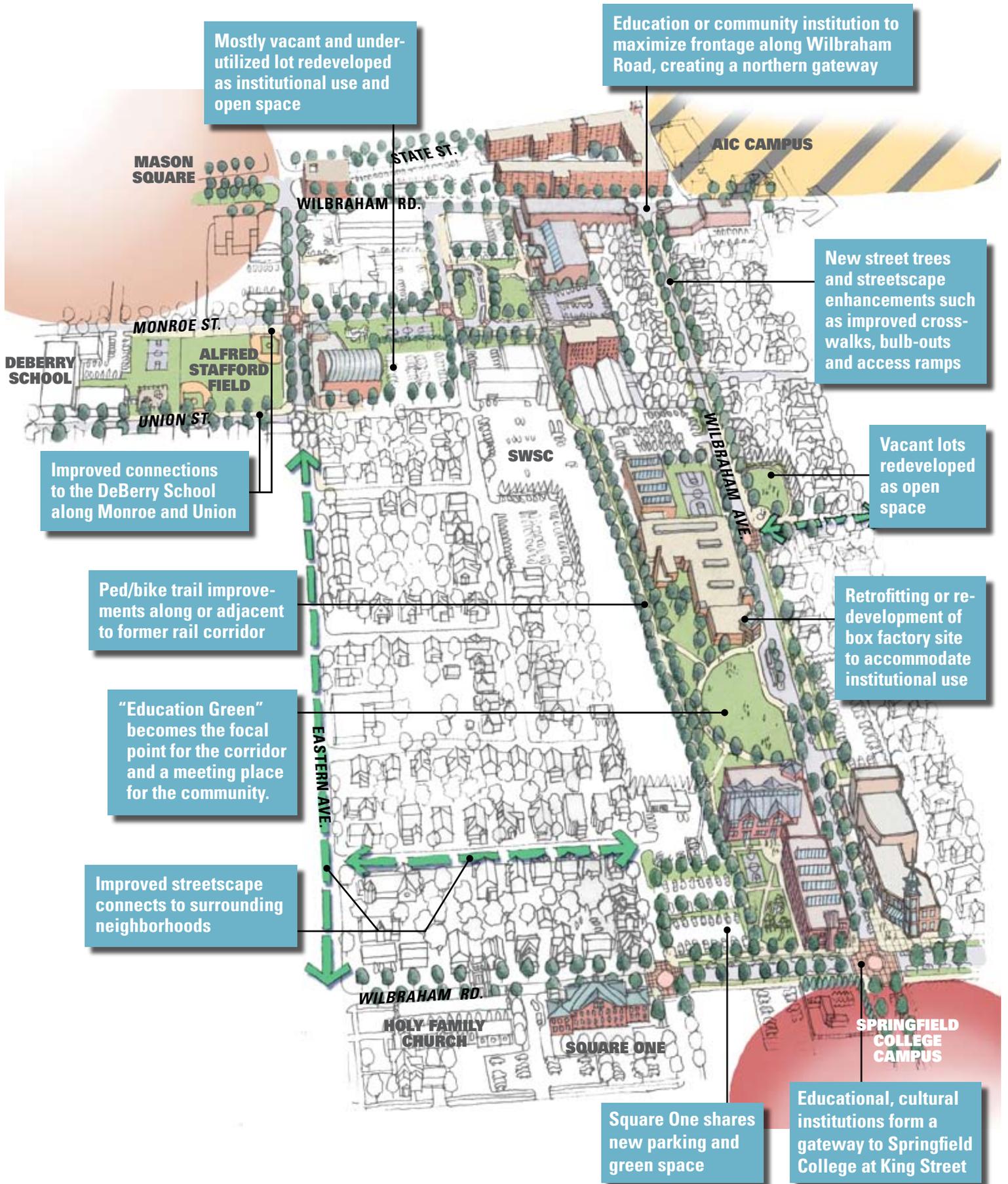
Stretching between Mason Square and the AIC campus on the north and the Springfield College campus on the south, the educational corridor links together educational communities that serve more than 10,000 students. Situated at the heart of the corridor is a new Education Green, a place shared between the schools and surrounding neighborhoods. The Vision Plan also seeks to create connections between the corridor and surrounding neighborhoods and between the corridor and the DeBerry School and adjacent parkland.

Implementation of the Vision Plan will provide many chances for collaboration and cooperation among the corridor institutions. Some of these involve shared use of facilities and greater efficiencies in the use of space, while others involve opportunities for mutual learning, training, and inspiration. While much land is available for redevelopment within the corridor, the needs of the institutions are quite significant. Over time as the institutions work together to refine and advance the plan, additional parcels may be identified that can further improve the Vision Plan. Continued efforts to fully meet the open space and recreational goals of each of the schools will be especially important.

The following pages present several ways the Vision Plan could be implemented, with alternative locations identified for each institution. The land-use options shown in this document—and several others—were discussed with project stakeholders over the course of the process that created the Vision Plan. These land-use studies will serve as a foundation for taking the next steps in advancing the Vision Plan.

6

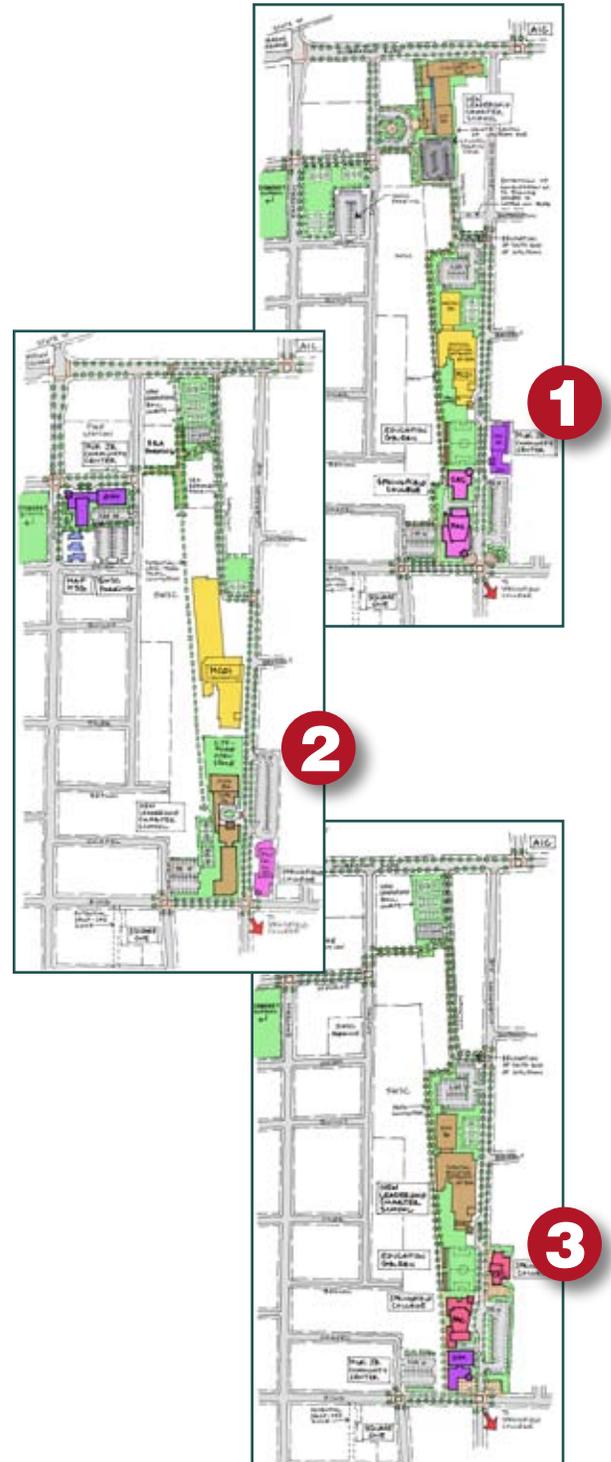
Educational Corridor Vision Plan





Land Use Options

Each of the participating institutions in the Educational Corridor planning process reviewed and discussed the three land use options described on the following pages, as well as numerous others developed over the course of the planning process. The three shown here are representative of the range of options the group considered. Of the three presented here, the group concluded that Land Use Option 1 offered the most benefits in terms of advancing shared educational goals and fostering neighborhood renewal. (The two additional options are also provided for reference.) Land Use Option 1 is, therefore, considered the Preferred Alternative and will serve as the starting point for the next round of discussions and actions that need to be undertaken to advance the Vision Plan, as discussed in more detail on page 26 in the “Next Steps” section.

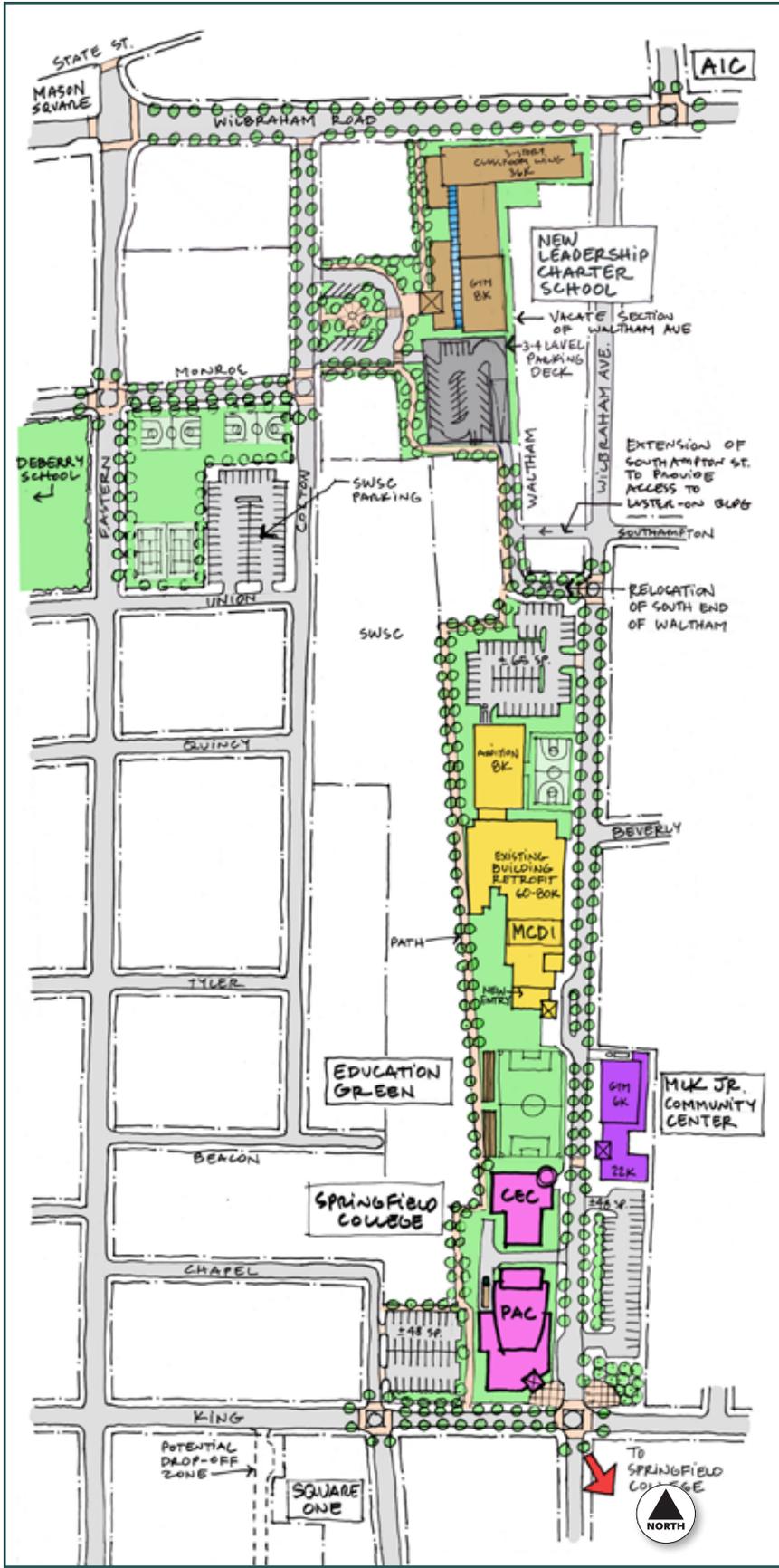


Land Use Option 1 (Preferred Alternative)

Major new educational facilities anchor both ends of the corridor—at Wilbraham Road and King Street—and a new Education Green at the center creates a focal point for educational activities, shared recreation and community events.

Specific elements include:

- **Education Green**
 - > A new open space on City-owned land on Wilbraham Avenue would become a focal point for the corridor and accommodate recreational needs of multiple schools and facilities as well as serving community needs.
- **New Leadership Charter School**
 - > Strong presence on Wilbraham Road anchors the corridor on the north and provides a strong connection between the new Educational Corridor and Mason Square.
 - > New two-and-three-story, 80,000-sf facility sits on a 130,000-sf site (currently occupied by the Firestone building, an auto-repair shop, the Harmony Lodge building, and an SRA parking lot).
 - > The parcel incorporates a 500-foot-long segment of Waltham Avenue.
 - > Primary access is from Colton Street.
 - > A three- to five-level parking structure accommodates 150–250 parking spaces to meet school needs and provides replacement parking for the SRA surface lot that now serves the medical office building at 11 Wilbraham Road.
 - > Ball courts and green space sit on the block defined by Eastern Avenue, Monroe, Colton and Union streets, adjacent to Stafford Field.
- **MCDI**
 - > Renovation of the main building; demolition of the single-story sheds and other ancillary buildings and their replacement with a new two- to three-story structure (16,000-24,000 sf) and outdoor recreational space and parking.
 - > Relocation of the southern end of Waltham Avenue approximately 150' to the north to create a more efficient parking layout for approximately 65 cars.
- **MLK Jr. Community Center**
 - > New one- and two-story, 28,000-sf facility sits on the north end of the parcel that now serves as MCDI's parking lot.
 - > As Community Center use peaks after 3:00 p.m., there is significant potential for shared use of outdoor recreational space, parking, and some facilities with the adjacent Community Engagement Center.
- **Springfield College's Community Engagement Center (CEC) and Performing Arts Center (PAC)**
 - > Location creates a strong connection between the campus and the Educational Corridor and anchors the corridor on the south.
 - > New two-story, 20,000-sf CEC sits on city-owned land along Wilbraham Avenue.
 - > New 25,000-sf PAC with 500- to 600-seat theater shares the same city-owned parcel.
 - > Up to 100 parking spaces would potentially be shared with other uses.
 - > Small landscaped plazas on either side of Wilbraham Avenue help to form a gateway to the Educational Corridor.
- **Square One**
 - > Remains at its current locations but with improvements within the current building and a new access drive and drop-off zone.
 - > Potential to share parking with Springfield College's Performing Arts Center.
- **Streetscape enhancements**
 - > Improved sidewalks, street trees, and lighting are needed in several areas, and an overall master plan for this work should be developed. Priorities for improvement include Wilbraham Avenue (and Road) and Colton, King, and Monroe streets.



> Create a walking trail linking King Street to Wilbraham Road and Mason Square. The path would lead from King Street along the back edge of the Performing Arts Center, Community Engagement Center, Educational Green, and MCDI; connect to Waltham Avenue; and run through the New Leadership Charter School site to Wilbraham Road.

Stakeholder comments on this option included:

- This option effectively connects Mason Square with Springfield College and forms strong gateways on the north and south. Add parcels to the New Leadership Charter School site to provide a larger area for play courts and green space.
- The winding trail/side-walk connection between King Street and Mason Square is indirect; creating a more direct trail connection with clear sight lines along the former rail corridor would be preferable.
- Additional City-owned properties or properties in tax-title proceedings along Wilbraham Road should be incorporated into the redevelopment plan to strengthen the northern gateway to the Educational Corridor.
- Removal of homes along Eastern Avenue and Monroe Street concerns the neighborhood and will require further discussion and consideration of alternatives.

Land Use Option 2

The New Leadership Charter School occupies City-owned land along Wilbraham at King while the MLK Jr. Community Center is located in the northwest corner of the corridor, close to the DeBerry School and Alfred Stafford Field. This option ties the institutions together with a potential trail connection along the former rail right-of-way

Specific elements include:

- **New Leadership Charter School**

- > New two-and-three-story, 80,000-sf facility located on a 120,000-sf site comprising multiple parcels owned mostly by the City of Springfield.
- > Providing continuous frontage along King Street would require acquisition of a portion of the former rail right-of-way from SWSC.
- > Primary access is from Wilbraham Avenue.
- > Parking is in the City-owned lot at King and Logan and in the shared lot across Wilbraham Avenue.
- > Playgrounds and ball courts are located on site and along the old rail corridor (requires working with the SWSC, the current parcel owner).
- > Across Wilbraham Avenue, Springfield College's Community Engagement Center and Performing Arts Center could serve as the charter school's primary auditorium space.

- **MCDI**

- > Renovation of the existing building

- **MLK Jr. Community Center**

- > New two-story, 28,000-sf facility sits on the northern half of the block bounded by Eastern Avenue, Monroe, Colton, and Union streets, with a small parking lot that is entered from Colton.
- > Stafford Field across Eastern Avenue serves as the community center's recreational space and also serves the DeBerry School to the west.

Traffic-calming along Eastern Avenue and at the Union and Monroe intersections with Eastern, shown here, would facilitate safe crossing to Stafford Field.

- > Planned housing by HAP and Neighborhood Housing Services will be redeveloped on the southwest corner of the block.

- **Springfield College's Community Engagement (CEC) Center and Performing Arts Center (PAC)**

- > Location provides a strong connection between the college's campus and the Educational Corridor and anchors the corridor on the south.
- > New two-story, 30,000-sf facility on the corner of King Street and Wilbraham Avenue occupies a parcel currently owned by MCDI.
- > Parking would be shared with other uses or use existing college parking across King Street.

- **Square One**

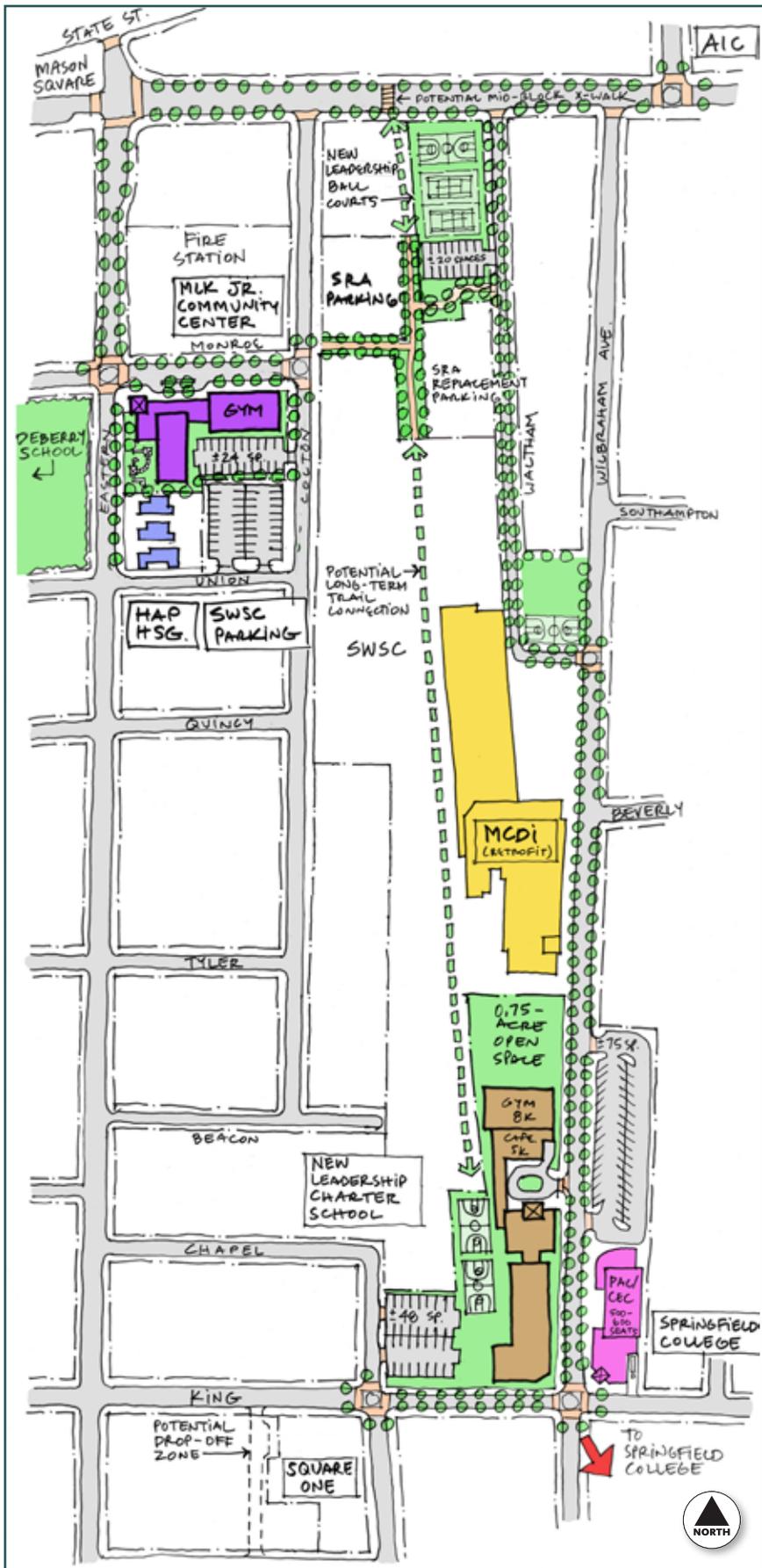
- > Remains at its current locations but with improvements within the current building and a new access drive and drop-off zone.
- > Potential to share open space and parking with New Leadership Charter School

- **Streetscape enhancements**

- > Improved sidewalks, street trees, and lighting are needed in several areas, and an overall master plan for this work should be developed. Priorities for improvement include Wilbraham Avenue (and Road), Colton, King and Monroe.
- Development of a linear path is planned, extending from King Street along the back edge of the New Leadership Charter School, MCDI, and a portion of the SRA-owned property to Wilbraham Road.

Stakeholder comments on this option included:

- The Educational Corridor needs a stronger



- presence on Wilbraham Road to tie it to Mason Square.
- The trail connection between King Street and Mason Square is appealing but will be difficult to implement because most of the land is owned and actively used by the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission.
 - Full implementation of this option would require removal of three houses on the block planned for the MLK Jr. Community Center, raising concerns for the neighborhood.

Land Use Option 3

The New Leadership Charter School—relocated to the parcel currently occupied by MCDI, which will in turn need to be relocated within the corridor or elsewhere—along with Springfield College’s Performing Arts Center (PAC) and Community Engagement Center (CEC) help to frame the Education Green, creating a focal point for educational activities, shared recreation and community events. Open space is provided on the Firestone building site.

Specific elements include:

- **New Leadership Charter School**
 - > Housed in either a new two- and three-story, 80,000-sf facility or in a retrofit of the former box factory buildings on a 125,000-sf site currently owner by MCDI.
 - > Primary access is provided from Wilbraham Avenue.
 - > Additional ball courts and green space are provided at the corner of Waltham and Wilbraham Road, on property now occupied by the Firestone building.
- **MLK Jr. Community Center**
 - > New one-and-two-story, 28,000-sf facility sits on the city-owned land at the corner of King Street and Wilbraham Avenue.
 - > Community Center parking at the corner of King and Logan streets can be shared with both Square One and the PAC.
 - > Small landscaped plazas on either side of Wilbraham Avenue help to form a gateway to the educational corridor.
- **Springfield College’s Community Engagement Center (CEC) and Performing Arts Center (PAC)**
 - > New two-story, 20,000-sf CEC sits on land now owned by MCDI.

- > New 25,000-sf PAC with 500- to 600-seat theater sits on city-owned land along Wilbraham Avenue.
- > Up to 100 parking spaces would potentially be shared with other uses.

- **Square One**

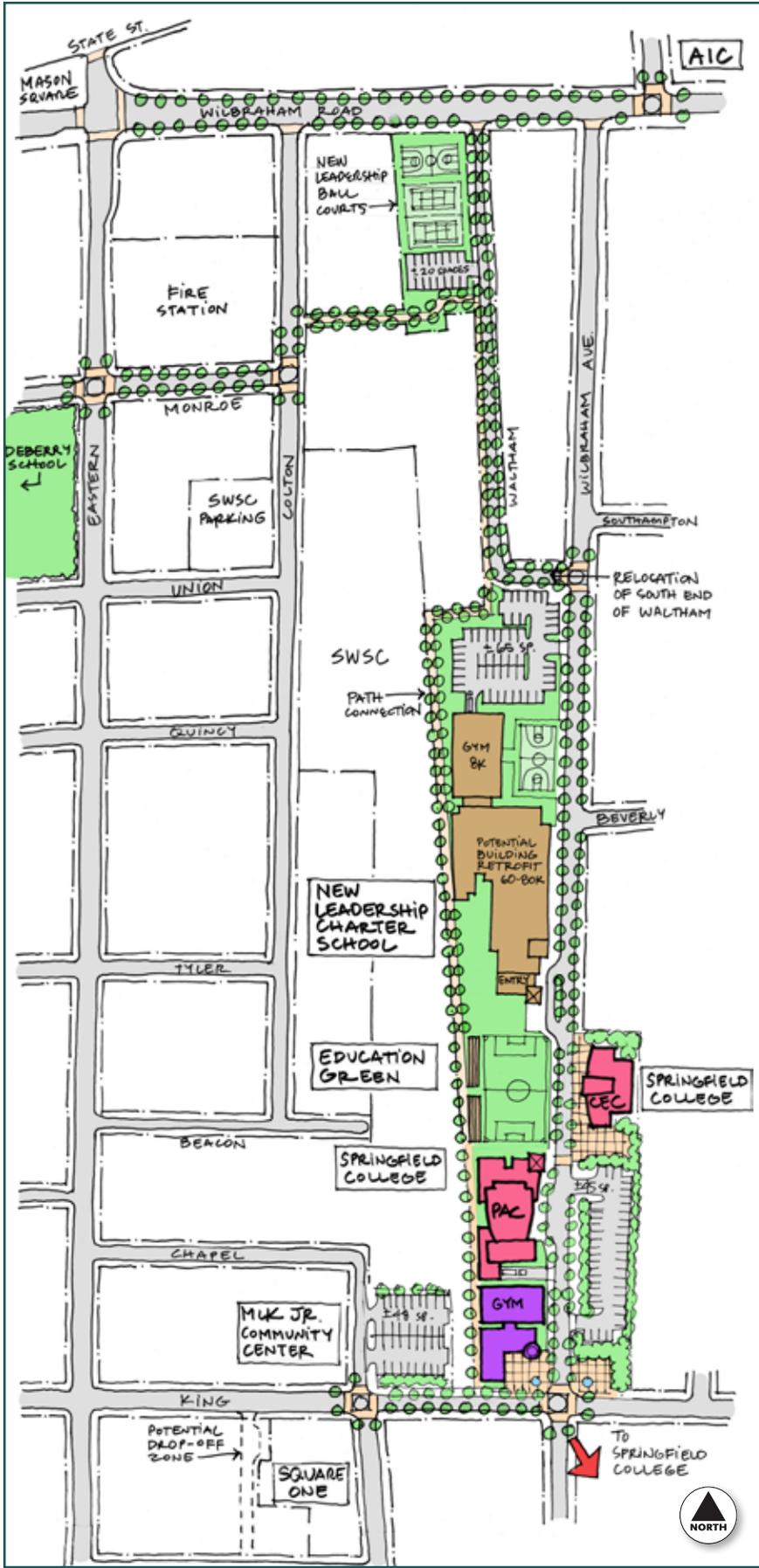
- > Remains at its current location but with improvements within the current building and a new access drive and drop-off zone.
- > Potential to share parking with MLK Jr. Community Center.

- **Streetscape enhancements**

- > Improved sidewalks, street trees, and lighting are needed in several areas, and an overall master plan for this work should be developed. Priorities for improvement include Wilbraham Avenue (and Road) and King and Monroe streets.
- > A linear path is planned, extending from King Street along the back edge of the MLK Jr. Community Center, Springfield College’s PAC, and New Leadership Charter School sites, connecting to Waltham Avenue and Wilbraham Road.

Stakeholders made these observations:

- While the option effectively creates a strong gateway to/from Springfield College at King Street, the Educational Corridor needs a stronger presence at the north on Wilbraham Road to link the corridor to Mason Square.
- Finding a large site within the corridor for MCDI’s relocation will prove difficult.
- Green spaces along Wilbraham Road are too far from New Leadership Charter School and the community center.



Next Steps

The Springfield Educational Corridor Vision Plan represents the first step in a longer process that will be needed to advance the Vision Plan into funding commitments, building design and construction. The key next steps include:

- ✔ **Continue discussion of the Vision Plan and land use options** among the institutions, surrounding neighborhoods, the City of Springfield and other potential partners. Identify potential plan improvements to be incorporated in ongoing work and other issues and concerns that need to be addressed.
- ✔ **Use the Preferred Alternative (Land Use Option 1) as the basis for moving** from the Vision Plan to establishing a development strategy.
- ✔ **Create an Educational Corridor Development Strategy and Plan** that at minimum includes more detailed versions of:
 - Corridor master plan (including concept-level plans for each institution's needs);
 - financial assessment/funding strategy;
 - environmental assessment;
 - parking needs assessment (including the ability to share parking resources);
 - traffic assessment;
 - regulatory assessment; and
 - implementation strategy, roles, and schedule.
- ✔ **Designate an organization or entity to play the lead role in advancing the Vision Plan.** Springfield College has offered to play this role, initially convening the larger group and subsequently taking a lead role in advancing plan development. The college's commitment to participate in this way represents a very important factor in ensuring that the plan moves forward successfully. Educational institutions increasingly serve as leaders for educational

planning and community revitalization efforts across the U.S., as in Hartford (Trinity College), Columbus (The Ohio State University), and Cincinnati (University of Cincinnati).

- ✔ **Identify potential public-sector actions needed to advance the Vision Plan.** The State Street Alliance and the educational partners who participated in creating the Vision Plan should work with the City of Springfield and the Springfield Redevelopment Authority to identify near- and longer-term public actions that could contribute to successful implementation of the Vision Plan. Key actions may include:
 - allocating land currently under public ownership within the corridor to support implementation of the Vision Plan;
 - exploring closure of Waltham Avenue and its potential incorporation into adjacent parcels; and
 - considering potential urban renewal designation for key parcels and land areas included in the Vision Plan.
- ✔ **Initiate key near-term actions required to advance the plan:**
 - Formally establish a lead entity to coordinate and lead efforts to advance the Vision Plan.
 - Acquire the Firestone building property to serve as a site for new school facilities and open space.
 - Consider other potential land acquisitions within the corridor that can help to advance the Vision Plan.
 - Initiate meetings with key corridor landowners, including HAP and the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission to review the Vision Plan and discuss potential cooperative efforts/next steps.

Acknowledgements

Springfield Business Development Corporation

- Maureen Hayes

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- David Spillane, Phil Goff
Goody Clancy
- Kerry Dietz
Dietz & Company
- Sarah Woodworth
W-ZHA

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MassMutual
- Scott Hanson
Springfield Office of Planning and Economic Development
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Old Hill Neighborhood Council
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Square One
- Lan Katz
Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School
- Sarah Moultre
Old Hill Neighborhood Council

- Chris Montemayor
Head Start
- Brendan Neal
Springfield College
- Adrienne Osborn
Upper Hill Residents Council
- Sara Page
HAP
- Dora Robinson
Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center
- Jill Russell
Springfield College
- Tim Snead
Massachusetts Career Development Institute
- Henry Thomas
Urban League of Springfield
- Mary Worthy
DeBerry Elementary School

The State Street Alliance and the consultant team thank the Springfield Business Development Corporation for coordinating the Vision Plan effort on the Alliance's behalf. We also thank the Springfield Office of Planning and Economic Development for the additional support it provided.