Worthington Street District Planning Study
08/13/14
There are Two objectives

- Build an Urban Lifestyle Experience
- Create an Innovation District
And they are interrelated

The city seeks to create an Innovation District by building on the existing energy and momentum in Springfield

Keep in Mind

Growth in innovation is driven by talent

and

Talent is attracted by a combination of opportunities and location

More specifically

Downtowns / urban-style environments

Therefore

Strengthening the urban lifestyle experience is critical to building a robust Innovation District
Core example of this transformation in thinking – Kendall Square, Cambridge

Density! By far, Kendall Square has highest number of biotech and IT firms per square mile

Source: Boston Consulting Group presentation, 2010
Even Kendall Square Focused on Vitality of Life
The Competition isn’t waiting

- New Haven Downtown-to-Hill (between Union Station and Yale Medical Complex)
The Competition isn’t waiting

Providence LINK
Place-making activities – Infrastructure and Public Spaces
Therefore the two objectives – are really one in the same

- Build an Urban Lifestyle Experience
- Create an Innovation District
- Worthington St District Provides the Best Location to Begin!
Driving Development in the Blast Area

• Forecasted market demand and existing development economics downtown present challenges to attracting a critical mass of people to support a desired urban environment.

• Accordingly, there needs to be a focus to create mass and density in key locations.

• To do so start with preexisting assets south of Chestnut Street by leveraging existing fabric and demonstrate demand for an urban lifestyle.

• Thereby, proving market potential and attracting developer interest to drive infill north of Chestnut Street.

• Requiring public improvements and catalytic projects provide physical linkages between the two areas to create a cascading effect.
Start with Pre-existing Assets

• Architectural character of the building stock
• Public ownership of a number of empty parcels
• Potential housing sites are easily walkable to other sections of downtown
• Existing housing stock that can be upgraded
• Pre-existing “places” that can serve as the anchors
  – Apremont Triangle
  – Stearns Square
  – Matoon St.
• Proximity to train station
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Driving Development in the Blast Area

- CASCADING DIAGRAM
How do we get there?

1. Reposition the Entertainment District as a dining and cultural destination
2. Focus housing (new or rehab) at key nodes to concentrate impact
3. Implement public improvement projects as the “base layer” for good urbanism.
4. Identify a key catalytic project and key strategic initiative to accelerate the innovation economy
Leveraging Casino visitors

To maximize the potential value of spin off impacts of the casino it is critical to have at least a “beta” test of this new downtown in place during the first 18 months of the Casino’s opening to take advantage of the likely initial surge in attendance.
Re-positioning the Entertainment District
Build “Base Layer” of Public Improvements
Focus Housing at Key Locations
The Innovation District
Re-positioning the Entertainment District

**Objective:** Convert club-dominant district to restaurant district.

- The current transition into a district that caters solely to large clubs is deterring from the universal appeal of the historic district
- It marginalizes the development potential for more productive uses.

**Recommendations:**

- **Small business entrepreneur meets real estate owners** that will subsidize ground floor retail/restaurant.
- Consider **placing size limits on venues** to discourage large clubs.
- Require **all venues to have full kitchens**.
- **Enforce design standards for the district** that require compliance for a percent transparency at the ground level.
- **Use façade improvement program funds** to improve aesthetic appearance of the district.
Re-positioning the Entertainment District

Consider new, unique programming & environments
Re-positioning the Entertainment District

Consider new, unique programming & environments

Cleveland’s East 4th St
Re-positioning the Entertainment District

Focus on what you can influence

Retail Sales Generation Chain

(Driven by the retailers & property owners)

Potential Customer Pool → Shopping Opportunities → Shoppers → Buyers

You can influence by:
- Accessibility
- Traffic flow
- Programming
- Aesthetics
- Safety
- Housing policy

In the hands of the retailer
- Zoning & parking
- Property taxes
- Recruitment
- Visibility

(Driven by the retailers & property owners)
Re-positioning the Entertainment District

Focus Housing at Key Locations

Build “Base Layer” of Public Improvements

The Innovation Economy
Focus Housing at Key Locations

Observations

1. Worthington Street Study Area is VERY close to soon-to-be-renovated Union Station with more frequent service and routes.
2. Housing sites are also close to other downtown assets.
3. The downtown has architectural character that most other TOD districts in the Connecticut River Valley do not have.
4. There is evidence that there is a shortage of quality downtown market rate housing.
5. Network of young entrepreneurs and residents want to see Downtown Springfield become more livable.
6. Future train service to Springfield brings opportunities for new development around Union Station.
Focus Housing at Key Locations

Concentrating housing is important to sustaining an active retail street

Local retail: Generic rules of thumb
• Local “neighborhood” retail
  – Soft goods local retail
    • Types
      – Hobbyist
      – Entrepreneur
    • Bankability for new development
  – Convenience retail / “coffee shops”
    • 1000 to 2000 rooftops within walking distance depending on disposable income
Focus Housing at Key Nodes

Local Retail: Ways to alter rule of thumb

- Ways to alter that rule of thumb:
  - “Thru traffic”
    - Amount of traffic
    - Purchasing power of traffic
    - Capture / intercept rate
    - A consideration for strategically changing one way streets

- Destination-making
  - Leverage existing destination asset
  - Co-location with non retail
  - Event programming
  - Uniqueness
Focus Housing on Key Locations

• Worthington Street District has a significant historic building stock

• Building improvement and rehab should be a first consideration for housing
Key Sites for Infill and Retrofit Housing

Focus Housing on Key Locations
Focus Housing on Key Locations

- **Morgan Square**
  - 68 Units (4 floors)
  - 4,700 sf ground floor
  - 75 parking spaces

- **Dwight Street**
  - 100 units (4 floors)
  - 7,900 sf ground floor
  - 92 parking spaces

- **Stearns Square**
  - 76 units (4 floors)
  - 10,400 sf ground floor
  - 46 parking spaces

- **Dwight and Worthington**
  - 97 units (4 floors)
  - 5,700 sf ground floor
  - 70 parking spaces

- **Willys-Overland**
  - 26 units (2 floors)
  - 16,000 sf ground floor

Key Sites for Infill and Retrofit Housing

Focus Housing on Key Locations
Long Term Development in Impact Area
Long Term Development in Impact Area

- Blast area had substantial building damage. Repairs are on-going.
- Development potential in the near term is concentrated around Apremont Triangle and the Willys-Overland building.
- The goal is to create a cascading development effect for underutilized land.
Long Term Development in Impact Area
Long Term Development in Impact Area

Existing Building Re-use as Commercial/Office
- Area: ~40,000 SF
- Parking Provided: 78 spaces
- Requires acquisition of parcels to accommodate parking demand

Residential Infill
- Units: 40
- Parking Provided: 46 spaces
- Does not require additional property acquisition except small portion of public ROW.
Re-positioning the Entertainment District
Focus Housing at Key Nodes
Build “Base Layer” of Public Improvements
The Innovation Economy
Coordinated Public Improvements

Observations

1. Worthington Street Study Area is a “mixed bag” of streetscapes and public parks

2. Stearns Square and Apremont Triangle both have “good bones”

3. Many of the downtown streets are oversized and overbuilt

4. Sidewalks are too narrow for people to pass comfortably, and often lack street trees.

5. Some streets in the Entertainment District are a good scale; they just need design improvements.
Coordinated Public Improvements

Recommendations for Public Improvements

1. Upgrade Stearns Square
2. Redesign Apremont Triangle open space and streetscape
3. Convert Dwight and Chestnut Street to two-way streets
4. Restripe travel lanes on cross streets
5. Retrofit Worthington and Bridge Streets in the Entertainment District
6. Improve Lyman Street, especially at entrance to Union Station
7. Incorporate public art and lighting into underpasses
Coordinated Public Improvements

• Ultimately public improvements should be a seamless network.
• In the short term, focus on those with the most potential.
Stearns Square (BEFORE)

Coordinated Public Improvements

Improvements around the square today, such as the surrounding streets, can be made to add to its appeal

Use decorative fencing or screen device on surface parking lots

Redesign Worthington and Bridge Street to narrow lanes and widen sidewalks

The Puritan: Once in Stearns Square

Improvements around the square today, such as the surrounding streets, can be made to add to its appeal.
Stearns Square (After)

**Coordinated Public Improvements**

- Increased hardscape space allows for flexible programming, such as outdoor dining, markets and cultural events.

- Turtle Fountain is restored and shifted to allow for a seamless transition through the park.

- A raised intersection at the cross streets provides a seamless experience between the park and the surrounding streets.

- New development can provide additional activity in and around the park, as well as physically frame the park space.
Stearns Square Precedents

Landscape character

Queens Plaza, Queens, NY

Parc des Freres Charon
Stearns Square Precedents

Temporary Programming of Space

Market Square, Pittsburgh
Worthington Street at Stearns Square
Worthington Street at Stearns Square
Stearns Square

Coordinated Public Improvements
Stearns Square

Coordinated Public Improvements
Apremont Triangle

Coordinated Public Improvements
Apremont Triangle

Coordinated Public Improvements
Apremont Triangle (Existing Condition)

Coordinated Public Improvements
Apremont Triangle (After)

Coordinated Public Improvements
Two-way Conversion

Coordinated Public Improvements

A Case for Two-way Conversions!

1. Economic Development
2. Pedestrian Enhancement
3. Public Safety
4. Convenient Access
   – Greater access and visibility
5. Traffic Reduction
   – Reduce unnecessary vehicular circulation
Downtown Lowell 2-Way Traffic Conversion Coming Soon!

- **UPDATE**: Please be advised, the start date for the two-way traffic conversion is **August 16th at 4:00 AM**.

- Construction is currently underway on the project to convert Lowell’s downtown 1-way streets to 2-way traffic.
- Merrimack Street, Market Street, Central Street and Shattuck Street will become two-way traffic streets once the project is finished.
- Prescott Street, Middle Street and Palmer Street will remain one-way streets in their current configuration.
- Expected conversion date is mid-August.
- For more information and details, public informational meetings will be held on the following dates:
  - Wednesday, July 9 at 6:30 PM in the City Hall Mayor’s Reception Room.
  - Wednesday, July 30 at 6:30 PM in the Lowell Senior Center at 276 Broadway.
- For more immediate questions and concerns, please contact the City Transportation Engineer, Eric Eby at (978)674-1417 or eeb@lowellma.gov.
- Click [here](#) for a detailed colored graphic of the conversion.

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**Planning and Development**

Diane Tradd  
Director, and  
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**Office Hours**  
M-F, 8 AM - 5 PM

**Location**  
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2nd Floor  
Lowell, MA 01852

978-674-4252 (P)  
978-446-7014 (F)

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**Related Links**

Hamilton Canal District webpage
Two-way Conversion

Coordinated Public Improvements
Dwight Street Two-way Conversion

Existing
52° C-C

Proposed
Option B
48° C-C
Dwight Street – Before
Dwight Street – After
Street Taxonomy

- Introduce a simple taxonomy of streets
Chestnut Street – A Street

- Narrow roadbed to increase sidewalk width
- Current travel lanes are oversized
- Improve landscape along surface parking lots where possible.
- Consider screening devices in the short term

**Existing 46' C-C**
- 7'
- 8'
- 15'
- 15'
- 8'
- 10'

SW P T T P SW

**Proposed 38' C-C**
- 14'
- 8'
- 11'
- 11'
- 8'
- 13'

SW P T T P SW
Worthington Street – B Street

- Narrow roadbed to increase sidewalk width
- Use sharrows to mark bike lanes
Lyman Street – C Street

- Convert Lyman Street to a two-way to improve overall circulation.
- Introduce curb extension at the entrance of the train station to give it a more significant presence.
Public Improvements = Priority Connections

Development and public improvements around Stearns Square, Apremont Triangle, and Bridge Street will form the backbone for the revitalization of the district.
Re-positioning the Entertainment District
Build “Base Layer” of Public Improvements
Focus Housing at Key Nodes

The Innovation District
The Innovation District

Two forms of innovation and entrepreneurship have emerged organically

Nascent “homegrown” tech-based activity

- Presence of Baystate Innovation Center creates an anchor and partner for health technology start-ups (business accelerator)
- Emerging support system in Valley Venture Mentors, Springfield Angels and River Valley Investors
- Tech Foundry to act as training ground for maintaining local skills and filling job openings
- While the foundational elements exist – they are still nascent and lack critical mass to have an initial major impact

The Springfield-based membership is larger than its parent organization membership
The Innovation District

- Network of fiber optic broadband systems in Springfield

MassBroadband 123
Fiber Route: Springfield

MassBroadband 123 Network
- Fiber-Optic Network
- Internet Point of Presence

Community Anchor Institutions
- Community Support Organization
- Higher Education
- Libraries
- Public Housing
- Medical and Healthcare Providers
- Schools (K-12)
- Other Government Facilities
- Public Safety Entities

The Massachusetts Broadband Institute reserves the right to change and/or alter the fiber route or CAI connections.

Map Date: 21 January 2014
ARRA Funded Project
The Innovation District

Innovation comes in many forms – the Innovation District should be about creating a place for innovation and entrepreneurship to thrive.

Find a catalytic project to help anchor the Innovation District and give a “face” to it.
The Innovation District

Catalytic project examples

Arts-based

*Glassworks Louisville*

Mixed use project that anchors Glassworks District and generates foot traffic to support local artisanal glass businesses that dot the neighborhood. Loft style housing has also developed in the neighborhood.

Industry-based

*Youngstown Business Incubator*

B2B software focused adaptive reuse project that controls 4 buildings (120ksft) on a city block. The Incubator provides space and leasing programs for software businesses across their lifecycle. Concentration of tech workers has resulted in transformation of adjacent properties.
The Innovation District

A facility could be supportive of many types of industry entrepreneurs

BioTech incubator

Garment Incubators

Collaborative Industrial Tools

Tech incubator

Food Incubators
An active ground floor is supportive of the overall repositioning of the District

AS220 - Providence
Willys-Overland Building

Innovation Economy Catalytic Project

- Willys-Overland Building has the potential for residential conversion on the upper floors with a flexible program at the ground level.
- It could capture the demand for maker space or small scale manufacturing.
Willys-Overland Building

Innovation Economy Catalytic Project

Exterior of Willys-Overland Building

Interior of Willys-Overland Building
• Existing column grid and building depth works well for residential conversion
• Window bays are spaced appropriately and provide ample natural light.
Willys-Overland Building

Innovation Economy Catalytic Project

- Second floor can be reused for parking as it was originally intended
- Existing internal ramp could be repurposed, as is.
- 27 spaces provided.
- In the future the 2nd floor could be residential units
- Upper floors can be a mix of one and two-bedroom units.
- 13 units per floor (26 units total)
- In the future the second floor could be retrofitted for residential use.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Improvements</th>
<th>Medium-term</th>
<th>Long-term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Re-stripe lanes on cross-streets to narrow travel lanes, add bike lanes and sharrows.</td>
<td>Upgrade Stearns Square to better suit outdoor flexible programming and low-maintenance landscaping. This includes relocation the Turtle Fountain.</td>
<td>Redesign park and streetscape at Apremont Triangle to narrow roadbed and increase park and sidewalk space.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convert Dwight and Chestnut to two-way streets to improve circulation efficiency downtown, narrow travel lanes and maintain on-street parking.</td>
<td>Retrofit Worthington and Bridge Streets in Entertainment District to complement the new Stearns Square and improvement pedestrian experience.</td>
<td>Add in-road cycle track and wider sidewalks to Dwight Street</td>
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<td>Add bike lanes to Dwight Street</td>
<td>Improve Lyman Street and underpasses at Main, Dwight and Chestnut to coordinate with the opening of Union Station.</td>
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<td>Restripe travel lanes where identified to narrow width, and add on-street parking where possible</td>
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<th>Downtown Housing</th>
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<tr>
<td>Upgrade existing residential building stock at key locations, namely Apremont Triangle to provide market rate units</td>
<td>Retrofit Willys-Overland Building for residential units and ground level “innovation space”.</td>
<td>Build new residential units at priority development sites in the district. Look for TOD opportunities.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Look for upper floor residential conversion opportunities in historic buildings</td>
<td>Prioritize sites near train station, Stearns Square and Apremont Triangle</td>
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| Entertainment District | | |
|------------------------| | |
| Implement policies and incentives to discourage large clubs and encourage smaller venues, such as restaurants and cultural amenities | | |
| Begin rebranding effort for the Entertainment District and consider renaming the area to create a unified identity. | | |
| Use facade improvement program to upgrade existing storefronts. | | |
| Allow for pop-up retail or programming in empty storefronts. | | |
| Increase police presence and safety measure in district during evening hours. | | |
THANKS!