



Torrington Development Corporation

SUMMARY OF CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TORRINGTON

PROJECT BACKGROUND

For more than a decade, the City of Torrington has been evaluating opportunities for both economic growth and revitalization of the city's downtown area. As a result of various planning efforts and community workshops in recent years, the city has developed a series of goals, objectives, strategies and initiatives aimed at restoring the economic vitality of Torrington's downtown. These elements form the basis for the city's Conceptual Master Plan for the Downtown Area.

The Conceptual Master Plan identifies infrastructure improvements and desired land use patterns that will encourage new business and attract shoppers, tourists and art enthusiasts to Torrington.

The TDC was established in 2004 as a non-profit entity charged with overseeing the planning and implementation of the downtown redevelopment plan. The TDC has an agreement with a private development company, Downtown Torrington Redevelopment LLC, who is working to promote investor interest in Torrington's redevelopment.

In accordance with Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) regulations, the State of CT Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) prepared an Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE). In November, 2006, The State of CT Office of Policy and Management (OPM) approved DECD's Record of Decision on the Conceptual Master Plan for Downtown Torrington, thereby allowing DECD to administer funding for the proposed project when monies become available.

DOWNTOWN CORE – MAIN STREET

OBJECTIVE

Improve the traffic flow of the five-way intersection, enhance the physical appearance of the core, create a pedestrian friendly environment, and focus on historic preservation and on assisting existing businesses.

ACTION:

- Realign Main Street to one-way northbound flow from Water Street to Pearl Street. This allows for wider sidewalks, increased green space, a drop-off area in front of the Warner Theatre and space for outside dining.
- Create diagonal parking on both sides of Main Street, increasing the number of on-street parking spaces by 30.
- Implement streetscape improvements to Main Street including sidewalk improvements, lighting, benches and landscaping.
- Study the feasibility of extending City Hall Avenue to East Main Street (Route 202) to intersect with Center Street.
- Create downtown façade improvement program to provide financial assistance for the renovation and restoration of commercial properties.
- Expand parking area behind Nutmeg Conservatory.

WATER STREET DISTRICT

OBJECTIVE

Create a seamless extension of Downtown to Water Street by using a significant land resource to boost downtown's economic base, create a pedestrian friendly environment, and draw a mix of large to medium size retailers to complement existing businesses.

ACTION

- Implement streetscape improvements to Water Street including sidewalk improvements, lighting, benches and landscaping.
- Create downtown façade improvement program to provide financial assistance for the renovation and restoration of commercial properties.

- Acquisition of key properties and relocation of tenants to be coordinated with Torrington Development Corporation.
- Conduct environmental assessment and remediation of properties for redevelopment.
- Work with the preferred developer to create 180,000-square feet of new retail; anchor stores will be located within a continuous row of shops with a mix of small and median shops in between.
- North of the Church Street intersection will be a mixed-use development of approximately 75,000-SF retail, 75,000-SF office and 75,000 SF residential. This will extend the residential neighborhood to the Courthouse and redeveloped Timken campus.
- Redevelopment to proceed in accordance with the *Torrington Design Review Guidelines for the Downtown Historic Area* to ensure that both rehabilitation and new construction complements the existing fabric of Downtown.
- End the rail line south of Water Street and relocate and restore historic train station from Kelley property to new Historic Plaza south of Water Street
- New surface parking behind commercial properties will be created to serve the stores on Water Street and provide pedestrian access to the river. Approximately 450 new parking spaces are proposed behind buildings on the south side of Water Street and 400 proposed on the north side of the street.

CENTER/ FRANKLIN STREET DISTRICT

OBJECTIVE

Eliminate blighted conditions; encourage mixed-use development near the downtown core.

ACTION

- Create downtown façade improvement program to provide financial assistance for the renovation and restoration of commercial properties.
- Streetscape improvements to lower East Main Street including sidewalk improvements, lighting, benches and landscaping.
- New construction to include approximately 125,000-SF of new professional office space and the relocated fire department headquarters.
- Renovation of parcels such as Torin Manufacturing building to residential use.

RIVERWALK, PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS AND GATEWAYS

OBJECTIVE

Create pedestrian connections through downtown to promote greenspaces and improve tourism; provide public access to the Naugatuck River; create gateways to greet visitors and provide directional signage to cultural, historic, or natural resources.

ACTION

- Create a pedestrian trail along the Naugatuck River from the Brass Mill Dam to the confluence with the East Branch. This will provide pedestrian connections in and around the redevelopment area, provide a link with the larger Naugatuck River Greenway project, and improve vegetation for aesthetic and wildlife values.
- Create a greenway along the former rail line to provide a pedestrian connection between the relocated train station and Christmas Village. This greenway can be extended towards the new Courthouse and redeveloped Timken campus.
- Create pedestrian connections to link green spaces such as Riverwalk, Coe Park, Center Cemetery and Christmas Village.
- Landscape and new signage at downtown gateways including the intersections of Litchfield/ South Litchfield Streets, East Main Street/ Wall Street and Water Street/ Church Street and Route 4/ Main Street.
- Create new welcoming signage along Route 8 from points north and south to divert traffic to Downtown Torrington.
- The East Main Street corridor acts as a major downtown gateway via Route 8. The long-term vision includes streetscape improvements, façade improvements and beautification efforts from Route 8 to the Naugatuck River.