

DRAFT



MANCHESTER TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PLAN

GOODYCLANCY

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I. The Opportunity

The TOD Plan enables new places to live, work, and play in an environment with safe and convenient options to walk, bike, or take transit to most destinations in Downtown Manchester.

Transit-oriented development, or TOD, is a type of development that emphasizes compact, mixed-use development integrated into a walkable setting and located near good transit service. The TOD approach helps attract investment and increase vitality in places with a mix of opportunities to live, work, shop, study, and play by providing a variety of convenient transportation choices. These include walking, bicycling, local bus service, and regional travel by bus and rail, so that development does not depend solely on driving, particularly private vehicle ownership, as its primary means of access.

Transit-oriented development could offer many benefits for Manchester:

Things to Do: The TOD Plan adds new apartments, condos, offices, shops, parks, and plazas all within a 5 to 10-minute walk of a new bus hub and rail station to support a mix of uses and attractive, people-friendly public spaces.

New Ways to Travel: The TOD Plan includes new street segments and paths designed to encourage walking and biking through safe intersections and on compact, attractive, and well-signed city blocks. Because transit-oriented development (TOD) places an emphasis on walking, biking, and transit to get around, parking takes up less space. The result is a compact neighborhood where fewer people need to drive for everyday trips.

Include Everybody: TOD provides livable communities for all ages. TOD communities give residents an improved quality of life through better access to jobs, shopping, healthcare, and entertainment. The growing number of senior citizens, young adults, and people who cannot or prefer not to drive all are well-served by the TOD Plan.

Efficient Redevelopment TOD approaches—with higher-density development, mixed uses, and shared parking—help maximize the value of real estate and make cost-effective use of public transportation and utility infrastructure. TOD has been used as a strategy for revitalization of in many communities in the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) service area and region.



Major technology and innovation employers are located just north of the study area across Granite Street and at SNHU in the TOD area. TOD and rail service will help support the long-term economic growth of Manchester as a major regional job center.



While there has been significant investment in the TOD area, including the SNHU Arena (left) and SNHU Millyard building and parking garage, there are also vacant and underutilized properties that are well-positioned for redevelopment, such as these parcels on Elm Street just south of the Arena.

The TOD area is ideally located, adjoining or overlapping some of Manchester’s most valuable development assets to leverage.

Assets include major employment centers in Downtown, the Millyard, and The Elliot at River’s Edge; regional transportation on I-293; and the Merrimack Riverfront. Adjacent to Manchester’s most walkable areas in Downtown and the Millyard, the TOD area is currently served by local and regional bus service. The area is becoming a linchpin of the regional trail network of multi-use paths; the Riverwalk/Heritage Trail segment in the study area connects to the Piscataquog Trail via the Hands Across the Merrimack Footbridge.

Other significant assets include a downtown grocery store (Market Basket) and regional entertainment destinations, including the 11,000 seat Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) Arena and 6,500 person capacity Northeast Delta Dental Stadium. Redeveloping the TOD area will have benefits that extend beyond the district, strengthening Downtown, the Millyard, and greater Manchester as a community and leader of the innovation economy in New Hampshire.



Existing desire lines and cut-throughs across the railroad tracks indicate the need for an additional crossing and clear pedestrian circulation in the TOD area.



SNHU Millyard is served by shuttles, bikeshare, a major parking garage, and high levels of pedestrian activity.



Significant grade changes and restricted pedestrian access make it difficult to traverse many parts of the TOD area on foot, including S. Commercial Street.

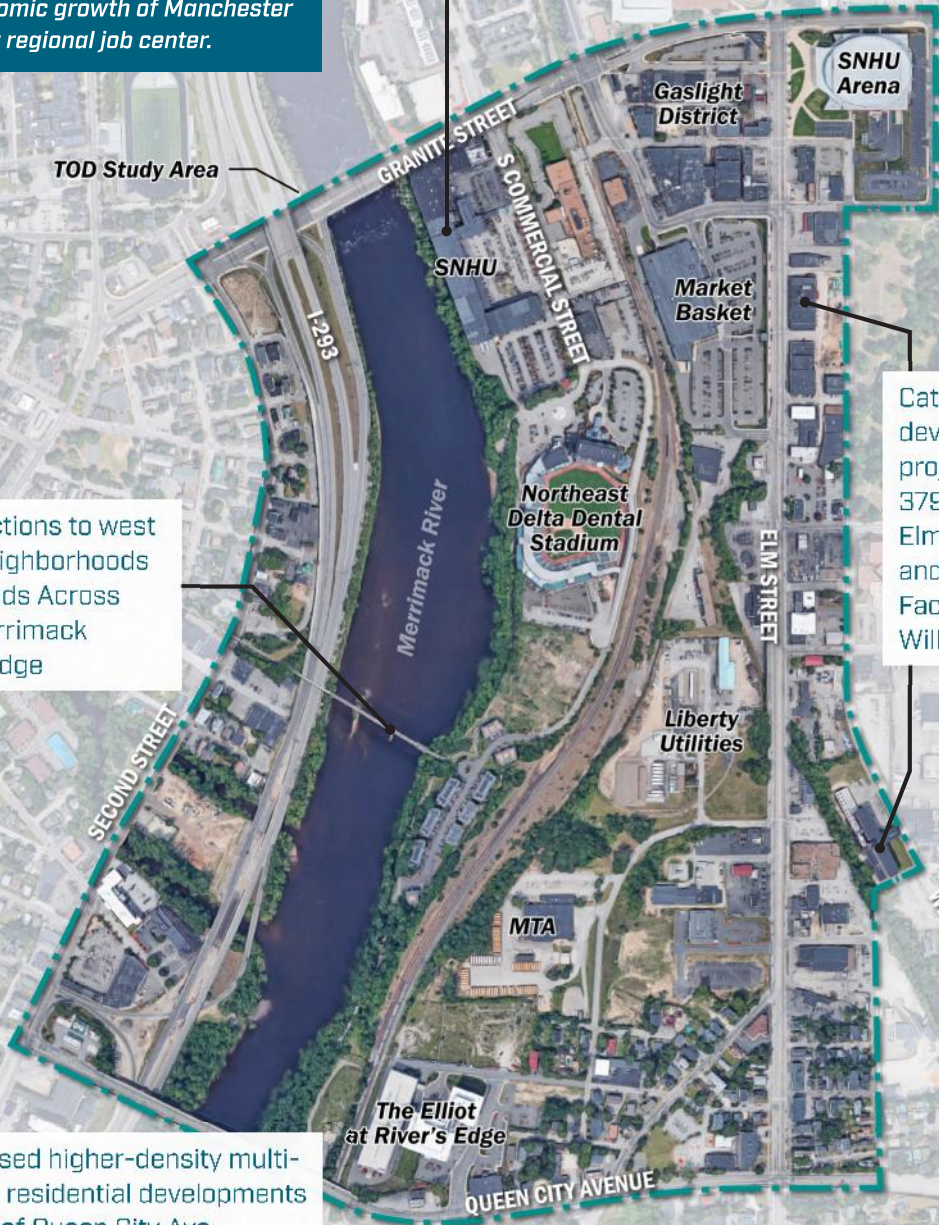
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Ongoing redevelopment and investment in Millyard and Downtown

TOD Study Area

Connections to west side neighborhoods via Hands Across the Merrimack Footbridge

Proposed higher-density multi-family residential developments south of Queen City Ave



Catalytic development projects at 379-409 Elm Street and the Factory at Willow

If rail service is extended to Manchester, the station will be located in the TOD area. Returning passenger rail service to New Hampshire and Manchester is a long-term, large-scale goal. Service into New Hampshire from Boston ceased in 1967. Over the last two decades, many options have been studied for returning rail services to New Hampshire and the Manchester area to better connect to the regional economy. New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) is currently moving forward with environmental studies for extending MBTA commuter rail service from Lowell to Manchester, with stops in Nashua and Bedford. The scope of the TOD Plan included selection of a station site as part of the alternatives planning process.

Because of the existing transit service, walkability, and bike facilities in the TOD area, the TOD Plan is not dependent on the arrival of rail for success.

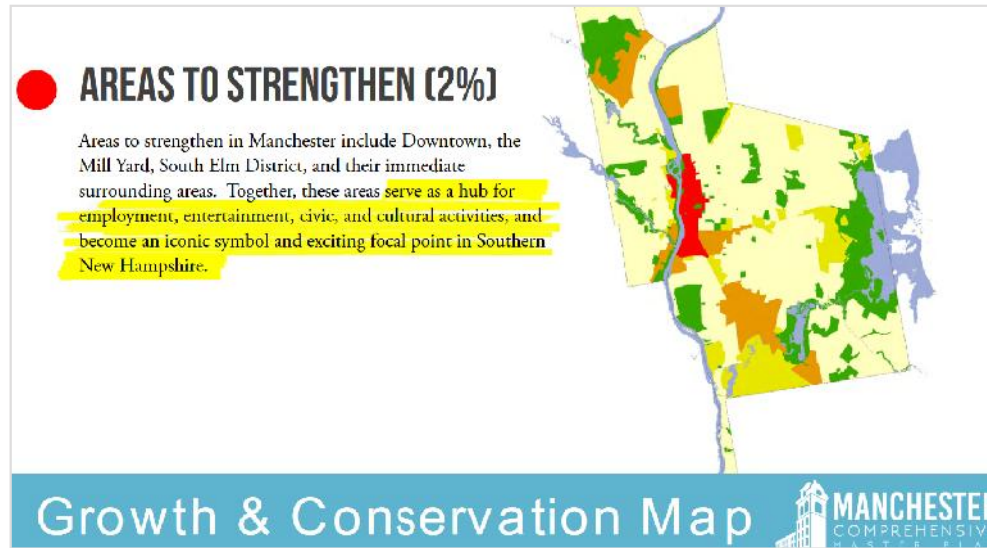
II. A Plan for TOD Driven by Community Priorities

Over the last two decades, Manchester has made incredible progress in revitalizing its historic downtown and the Millyard into a major employment center. Investment in the TOD area will build on that momentum.

Past and current planning initiatives inform the vision and focus of the TOD study area. As a result, the study area has been identified at a primary location for growth and investment.

Prior planning initiatives include the 2002 Civic Center Area and Gateway Corridor: Opportunities and Strategies, 2006 Downtown Strategic Plan, [2016 Manchester Connects](#). In addition to past planning initiatives, the City is currently updating the comprehensive plan through an extensive community process as part of [Plan Manchester](#). *Plan Manchester* has identified the need for new types of housing throughout Manchester, such as more multi-family housing development and accessory dwelling units, as a top priority.

Over the last decade, Downtown has emerged as a desirable residential neighborhood with a growing inventory of places to live across a range of housing types—including riverfront condominiums, downtown one-bedroom apartments, and micro-units. There is also energy and momentum around marketing of and placemaking in Downtown.



The Manchester Comprehensive Plan, currently underway, details the strategic focus of the TOD area for the future of Manchester and the region.



Reinvestment in downtown and the Millyard, including extensive renovation of historic buildings, is now spilling over into community-initiated placemaking like the cat crosswalk, completed in partnership with City government, and events initiated by the Manchester Connects effort including the October 14, 2017 project “Loop” kickoff event focused on better connectivity between the Millyard/Riverfront and Downtown.

Throughout the TOD planning process, the community prioritized a vision of long-term economic development that will connect Manchester residents and workers with the Boston region.

Over a dozen **stakeholder interviews with property owners, major employers, developers, and mission-driven organizations** were conducted as part of the planning process to supplement the team's knowledge of current conditions and to provide additional local perspectives on future opportunities.

Major themes and takeaways from the stakeholder interviews include:



There is a **strong demand for multi-family housing** and strong concern in the community about the **rising costs and low availability of housing**.



Developers are concerned about the **feasibility** of projects moving forward because of **rising land costs and construction costs**.



There is a desire to see the **Gaslight District** succeed as an entertainment destination and amenity for all of Manchester.



Higher-value development will not be possible without **parking solutions for the Millyard and TOD area**.



The city has successfully grown the **downtown population of workers, residents, and visitors** and there is a sense that it may be **at a tipping point** to support more services and amenities beyond restaurants.

PUBLIC CHARRETTE AND SURVEY EFFORTS

On Friday, January 31, 2020, the Manchester TOD Plan team hosted a public charrette from 2 to 7 pm. A demonstration shuttle project provided transit access to the venue from throughout the Millyard. Activities included Open House materials, a presentation by City Planning Staff and the consultant team, and facilitated breakout groups, including a role-playing exercise. Feedback was gathered as part of all of these activities and is included in the Charrette Summary Report.

Over 120 people answered an online survey in the two weeks following the charrette. The survey asked questions about respondents' experiences and priorities with transportation, housing, and other transit-oriented development amenities in Manchester. Further details on the charrette and survey can be found in the Public Charrette and Survey Summary Report.

SOME NOTABLE THEMES AND COMMENTS FROM THE CHARRETTE AND SURVEY INCLUDE:

Regional connections are important to Manchester's future and to many residents' quality of life now, even before rail service may come.

Many respondents cited taking regional bus service to Boston, Concord, and Nashua as important to their current job opportunities and family ties and were eager for more frequent service that would result in shorter waits and easier scheduling. Many respondents also take bus service to access Amtrak service and Boston Logan airport, and are eager for transit options to the Manchester airport. Others identified a hope for inter-city bus service to the Seacoast region and White Mountains.

Almost all survey respondents and charrette attendees who envisioned themselves as using rail service in the future also envisioned that others would use the rail to visit them in Manchester.



Regional bus service from the station just north of the study area is a useful amenity, but community members are eager for the greater reliability and frequency that rail service will provide.

Community members are concerned about the cost of projects, particularly passenger rail service.

Several respondents did not want to see **public funding for transit services** in Manchester, whether for rail service or other transportation strategies. Others were concerned that **passenger rail prices will be too expensive** for many residents to use.

Community members value Downtown as an entertainment destination and civic center beyond its role as a job center.

If they had looked for housing recently, many respondents emphasized their **desire to live within walking distance of Downtown**. There were also many concerns about **the affordability and quality of housing currently available in Manchester**. The quality of the school system was also a frequently cited concern.

Community members would like to see more retail and services in the downtown area.

For most respondents, the **Market Basket is the destination in the TOD area they come to most frequently. The grocery store is a key service.** Some identified a pharmacy as another downtown need. Others wanted to see a movie theater; while attracting a new theater may be difficult, there might be opportunities to expand entertainment

programming to help meet this desire through outdoor movie nights or other venues.

Ongoing Public Engagement

A Steering Committee met five times over the course of this planning process and provided important oversight and advice at each phase of the planning process, guiding community engagement and selecting the preferred development alternative. The Steering Committee included community leaders, major employers and property owners, development professionals, and City leadership and staff.

In addition to the Steering Committee, the TOD Plan maintained a regularly-updated project website at <https://courbanize.com/projects/manchester-tod/information>. The interactive website hosted multiple feedback activities, including a mapping exercise and surveys, in addition to serving as a home for project updates and materials. The website will continue as an archive.

The community’s participation in the Manchester TOD Plan has reinforced its strong civic base. Enthusiastic and committed stakeholders are needed to establish the strong partnerships to drive reinvestment.



Existing MTA public transportation is an essential service, but limited hours of service on evenings and weekends, limited routing, and infrequent scheduling are all challenges to attracting greater ridership.



Events such as the Labor Day weekend Cruising Downtown Car Show, Summer Concert Series organized by Intown Manchester, and other activities add to the overall vibrancy and potential of the Downtown, Riverfront, and TOD study area. Connecting this all together is key to maximizing potential.

III. The Manchester TOD Area: Ready for Future Rail

On the facing page is an illustrative plan for the preferred development scenario for the Manchester TOD area. The plan shows an example scenario for future TOD development throughout the district on feasible sites.

The TOD Plan provides a clear direction for both public and private investment. The TOD Plan thus reduces risk for developers seeking to invest in the TOD area.

Redevelopment shown on the illustrative plan is hypothetical. The TOD scenario does not commit any property owner to redevelop their property, but it does demonstrate redevelopment that could most likely be stimulated by investment in walkable streets and sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, the trail network, and transit improvements including a Millyard shuttle and rail service. Photos on this page show examples of comparable new, convenient transportation infrastructure and services that are improving quality of life and economic opportunity in other communities in the region. The illustrative plan shows the suggested location of these improvements and major new development projects. Smaller-scale building rehabilitation is also welcomed.

The vision for the TOD area is explained further beginning on page 12.



Manchester TOD Area Buildout

Legend

-  Rail Station Platform
-  Potential New Development
-  Potential Building Rehabilitation
-  New Parking
-  Public Green Space
-  Multi-use Path
-  Transit/Shuttle Route
-  Transit/Shuttle Stop
-  Existing Parking Structure
-  New Public/District Parking
-  Streets
-  Walkable Streetscape



	TOTAL CATALYTIC PHASES	LATER PHASES B-C-D	TOTAL ALL PHASES
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Proactive infrastructure investment

Street/Path	\$19.0M	\$21.3M	\$40.3M
Parking	\$26.6M	\$39.9M	\$66.5M
Shuttle	\$20.0M	\$7.0M	\$27.0M

Potential private real estate investment

Number of sample parcels	22	24	46
Gross floor area (SF gross)	1,320,000	1,620,000	2,940,000
Development value	\$264.7M	\$324.0M	\$588.7M
Residential (units)	861	941	1,802
Hotel (rooms)		154	154
Office (SF gross)	363,000	422,000	785,000
Retail (SF gross)	92,000	106,000	198,000

Cost-benefit

Development value/ infrastructure cost	4.0	4.74	4.40
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THE MARKET OPPORTUNITY

The TOD area offers strong potential for market-driven real estate development attracted by a walkable, transit-served setting. Some TOD projects are already complete or underway. The addition of mixed-use development and less reliance on the automobile—and associated parking—can help realize long-term goals for this area and for the northern part of the Millyard and for Downtown.

There are several recent development projects with characteristics of transit-oriented development, are all adjacent or within the TOD area. They include:

- 252 Willow Street renovation: 60 residential units, live-work capacity, commercial first floor
- 379–409 Elm Street redevelopment: retail/office space, 90 market-rate residential units

- 1195–125 Elm Street renovation: café/diner on first floor, 33 residential units, storage facility in basement, includes 24 parking spaces, adjacent to Pearl Street parking lot
- S Elm Street renovation: 23 residential units (one-bedrooms and studios) to serve as workforce housing, bus service as asset
- Dunbar Street project: 160 unit multi-family project, new construction along riverfront

The primary market opportunity within the TOD is for multifamily residential development, with estimated demand for 1,000–2,000 new units over the next decade (2020-2030). The largest challenge to meeting this demand is identifying adequate sites. Passenger rail will greatly enhance the opportunity for multifamily residential development.

Office uses are also an opportunity for development, in the range of 100,000–200,000 square feet, on larger available sites.

Passenger rail will enhance opportunity for office development. **Retail, entertainment, and restaurant uses also have market support, particularly in the Gaslight District, along Elm Street, and as part of select sites on Second Street.** These uses could be provided in the ground floor of mixed-use buildings and would grow as multi-family residential and office development occurs. Demand is estimated for 20,000–40,000 square feet over the next decade.

There is potential opportunity for new lodging uses as other uses emerge within the TOD area—possibly in the range of 85–125 rooms. There is weak opportunity for further manufacturing and warehousing development, apart from existing uses, because better sites are available elsewhere in the region.

Manufacturing associated with high-tech and bio-engineering industry remains a possibility due to industry needs to co-locate with existing medical, educational, and R&D partners.

	Regional Growth	TOD Competitive Position	Appropriate Sites in TOD	Influence of Passenger Rail	Overall	Comment
Residential	+	+	+	+	+	Regional demand for multi-family is exceptionally strong. Nashua seeing growth around proposed station sites. Proximity to Millyard is a positive. Dual interstate access at Granite and Queen City is very attractive. Downtown amenities (restaurants, SNHU arena, ballfield special events) are drawing cards. Demand is exceptionally strong for both rental and condo. Existing TOD developments doing well and several new projects are emerging. Fits lifestyle preferences of millennials and empty nesters. Largest constraint is available sites. Will require convenient (on site) structure parking. Major constraint is not market, but availability of sites.
Retail Trade, Food Service, Entertainment	+	+	+	●	+	Regional growth is strong; Proximity to Millyard, health care, Downtown are favorable. Gaslight District is an unrealized opportunity for restaurant and entertainment. Lacks conventional retail exposure. Convenient parking will have to be addressed. Possible to combine with residential and office. Elm Street and Second Street enhance potential.
Office Uses	●	+	+	●	●	Current market is weak, but expected to improve. Many users favor suburban sites, but proximity to Elliot, Millyard, Downtown, and CMC are positive factors. Elliot once proposed major medical office presence. Needs structured parking.
Wholesale Trade	+	-	-	-	-	Good regional growth expected. District has appropriate interstate access, but lacks appropriate sites as uses are land intensive. More appropriate use of TOD sites is possible. And warehouse uses probably more likely around airport and Pettengill Road.
Manufacturing	-	-	-	-	-	Existing TOD multi-floor buildings can and do accommodate manufacturing, but market is not vibrant; Millyard properties moving away from traditional manufacturing; Better sites for new construction available elsewhere in region. Rail not a major factor. Conversion of existing mill buildings to residential/office is a possibility.

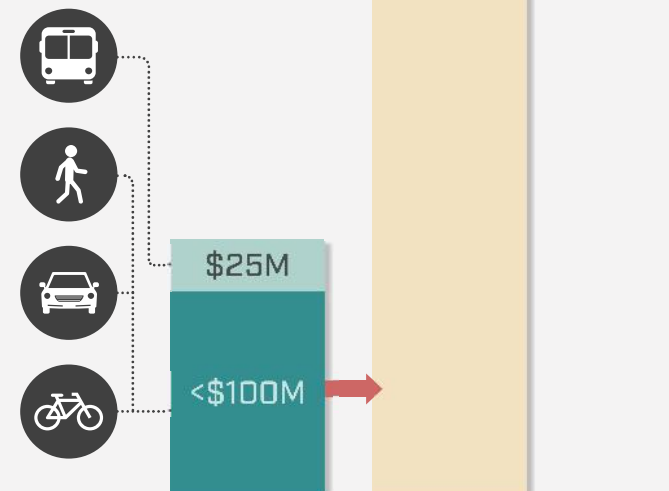
The potential for market investment in the TOD area is significant. Development of this area will redefine Manchester’s potential.

Within two to three decades, the area could reasonably accommodate approximately three million gross square feet of new mixed-use development worth approximately \$600 million.

This investment would also increase the value of some existing properties adjacent to the TOD area, including the Gaslight and Millyard Districts, and even Downtown. An expanded trail network and improved transit service would provide greater access to jobs and amenities for the surrounding neighborhoods.

A critical initial phase of infrastructure improvement offers similarly strong return on investment, enabling over \$180 million in new real estate investment with a public expenditure of less than \$30 million in streets, trails, and parking. The City of Manchester has recognized the need for public infrastructure investment in its application for Federal BUILD grant funds, which would be targeted toward these valuable near-term connections. There are real opportunities for developers to share some of the infrastructure costs through public-private partnership agreements.

Overall, a **phased investment of under \$100 million** in street, recreational path, and parking infrastructure, along with **companion investment of about \$25 million** in a frequent shuttle service linking the area with the Millyard, Downtown, and commuter parking, **would unlock the \$600 million in new real estate development value** at an attractive ratio of well over \$4 private investment for each \$1 of public investment.



IV. The TOD Vision

Fragmented today by a vanished railroad yard, the TOD area will become a cohesive place connected to the life and economy of Manchester around it. The TOD area can contain several walkable districts of distinct character, each reflecting a unique mix of activities, public places, scale, and context. Some of these, like the Gaslight District and South Elm, are already recognized today. Others can emerge as they are made more accessible by new street and path connections. These emerging places are described with preliminary names and character descriptions to the right. Over time, they should be given more permanent identities defined by the community members who help build and use them. **Each named district is sized so that its internal destinations are within an easy walk.** Other districts, adjoining existing areas of Manchester, and the new rail station will all be within a moderate walk, shuttle, or bike ride.

The following pages describe each district in greater detail. They also describe good building and site development prototypes for a walkable transit-oriented district, and explain the alternatives analysis process that identified the Switchyard area as the preferred location for the future rail station.

RIVERVIEW
New address for workplaces and housing, overlooking the Merrimack
SEE PAGE 16 FOR MORE DETAIL.



SOUTH MILLYARD
 Room for the highly successful Millyard to grow with new technology jobs, housing, and amenities
SEE PAGE 15 FOR MORE DETAIL.



GASLIGHT DISTRICT
 People-oriented place to connect with Manchester's history, culture, food, and entertainment at Downtown's gateway
SEE PAGE 18 FOR MORE DETAIL.

SWITCHYARD
 Historic railyard reborn as an active place to live, work, and play, anchored by frequent rail and shuttle service
SEE PAGE 20 FOR MORE DETAIL.

SOUTH ELM
 Amenity-filled neighborhood connecting historic Bakersville and Willow Street neighborhoods
SEE PAGE 17 FOR MORE DETAIL.



Development Typologies

Common building types and urban design across districts

Good real estate development typologies for transit-oriented districts have one most essential characteristic: they help provide inviting, safe places for walking along adjacent streets. Proven design principles that support this include locating facades close to the sidewalk along most of each block, including frequent ground floor windows and doors so that pedestrians do not feel isolated, ensuring sidewalks have adequate width for walking as well as street trees and/or other landscaping, and minimizing presence of driveways and service areas. It is also valuable to include a compact

landscape or furnishing zone between the sidewalk and façade so that ground level office and residential uses enjoy sufficient privacy that they need not close their blinds and so that retail and dining uses can extend their activity outdoors in good weather. It is best to cluster retail uses where possible so that they benefit from concentrated “destination” identity and activity.

Good buildings for transit-oriented districts also possess the durability and flexibility to serve as valuable real estate for many decades. Ground floors should be tall enough to accommodate a

variety of commercial, community-serving, or (where appropriate) residential uses over time. Upper floors can retain long-term value for many uses by having good access to daylight, and views to greenery whether along streets or in courtyards. Architectural design at ground and upper floors should relate to the scale of people and to the width of the street as a whole. Variations in building height are often welcome as long as lower stories provide relatively consistent height and quality walking environment.

Multifamily residential with ground floor service/workplace

This site typology locates upper floor apartments over ground floor retail, dining, or other uses such as work space or child care. It works well in district centers with concentrations of retail and other commercial use, and high pedestrian activity. Upper floor housing benefits from access to outdoor balconies or courtyards.



Sidewalk-oriented multifamily residential

Blocks with little retail or commercial activity can be good locations for ground floor residential use. Ground floor residential spaces should be provided privacy from the sidewalk with compact gardens, stoops, porches, and/or elevation above sidewalk level. Whether in an individual townhome or a larger multifamily building, ground floor housing units should preferably have a front door with direct access to the sidewalk to make the building frontage less institutional and more useful to individual residents. Live-work units may be appropriate on ground floors.



Office/workplace/service/institution

As with residential buildings, office and other commercial or institutional buildings may or may not contain accessory retail space at ground level. In any case, ground level space should have frequent window and doors, and be edged with attractive, usable sidewalk or landscaped area as with the ground level of other buildings.



Parking structures

Parking structures are encouraged in the TOD study area as a means of building and using parking efficiently, but should be screened from principal walking streets wherever possible. This can be accomplished by setting a parking structure behind an occupied building, integrating one or more parking floors below a building, or occupying the ground floor of the parking structure with retail or similar active use.



South Millyard

Room for the highly successful Millyard to grow with new technology jobs, housing, and amenities

SNHU anchors the South Millyard with its large facility in the restored mill building between South Commercial Street and the Merrimack. Northeast Delta Dental Stadium, Hilton Garden Inn, and Residences at Riverwalk complement SNHU to make this an established mixed-use district enjoying a prominent gateway location and access to the Merrimack Riverwalk/Heritage Trail and Hands Across the Merrimack Footbridge.

There are important opportunities for the district to mature further with improved access, higher-value development, and better public space. The extension of South Commercial Street across the railroad track to Elm Street, Willow Street, and Sundial Avenue, coupled with Millyard shuttle service, will make the district much more accessible, no longer reliant upon just one vehicular access point at Granite Street. Improved sidewalks and streetscape along South Commercial and east toward Elm Street will create synergies with the Millyard, Downtown, and Gaslight District – all close by yet hard to reach. Over time, additional prominent sites along Granite and South Commercial Streets may become attractive places for high-value redevelopment.



Over time, South Commercial Street can be transformed into a people-friendly, mixed use center of the Millyard through a combination of Millyard shuttle service, property redevelopment, and an improved walking environment.

Riverview

New address for workplaces and housing, overlooking the Merrimack

The Riverview area is anchored by the existing Elliot at River’s Edge medical facility, and can extend to the north along a bluff with signature views of the Merrimack River and Downtown. In addition to developable land owned by Elliot at River’s Edge, the Manchester Transit Authority (MTA) site is an important redevelopment opportunity if its existing bus maintenance and storage uses could be relocated to an alternate site. Sundial Avenue—extended from its current terminus at Hancock Street to connect with South Commercial and Valley Streets in the new Switchyard District—would form the backbone of this district, providing much improved

access along the planned Millyard shuttle route. Additional access could be gained via connections east to Elm Street via an improved Gas Street and/or the current NH Liquor and Wine Outlet access drive. **The parcels in this area are among the TOD area’s largest, well-suited to an office headquarters, research facility, multifamily housing, and/or other large-floorplate buildings, as well as structured parking, and offer significant flexibility for configuration of new buildings and streets.** Where redevelopment adjoins existing Bakersville residential properties, it should transition down in scale to fit well with the existing neighborhood.



Riverview parcels offer flexible opportunity for state-of-the-art commercial and residential development located along walkable, transit-served streets.

Precedent: Pittsburgh’s Bakery Square



A large vacant former bakery site nestled between Pittsburgh’s East Liberty, Larimer, Homewood, and Shadyside neighborhoods, Bakery Square has been redeveloped by Walnut Capital as a live-work-shop-play neighborhood anchored by Google’s Pittsburgh offices. The site combines a renovated bakery building with new buildings, walkable streets, and public spaces featuring frequent social events.

<https://bakery-square.com/>

South Elm

Amenity-filled neighborhood connecting historic Bakersville and Willow Street neighborhoods

Manchester’s historic Bakersville neighborhood has long been split by busy traffic on Queen City Avenue and South Elm Street. While a recent redesign of South Elm improved conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists, Bakersville still lacks the cohesion it once had. **Redevelopment of parcels in the TOD study area on either side of South Elm Street can restore the character of the street as neighborhood main street, rather than a channel for traffic.**

Various parcels have flexibility to accommodate multifamily housing, ground floor neighborhood retail, and commercial space. Sidewalk and path improvements can connect east to an extension of the South Manchester Rail Trail, with off-street recreational connections to Downtown and the Merrimack Riverfront, as well as to neighborhood areas along and east of Willow Street. New street connections extending west from Elm will provide access to the Millyard shuttle and build synergy with reinvestment in the Riverview district.



New development in the South Elm area should include neighborhood-serving businesses, new housing choices complementing those in the neighborhood today, and safe, inviting sidewalks connecting to jobs, transit, and parks.

Gaslight District

People-oriented place to connect with Manchester's history, culture, food, and entertainment at Downtown's gateway

The Gaslight District is already an established destination for dining, entertainment, and the arts amidst historic buildings, some still used productively for industry. Yet, two factors have caused it to fall short of its potential: the limited number of establishments – especially ones open by day – and challenging pedestrian access across busy Granite and Elm Streets. **Coordinated reinvestment in Franklin Street and adjoining parcels as a place for outdoor dining, music, and fun will transform the Gaslight District into a compelling destination for people of all ages throughout the day and week.**

A new mid-block crosswalk across Granite Street at Franklin Street and an improved path linking west to South Commercial Street will create much easier, safer connections to parking and to complementary events at the SNHU Arena, Northeast Delta Dental Stadium, and Center for New Hampshire. As an early implementation strategy, a stormwater infiltration pilot project along Franklin Street would provide public investment in visual and landscape amenities while also providing a cost-effective means to limit stormwater run-off.



The Gaslight District's Franklin Street has the right location and qualities to become a community destination for food, music, and fun, within an easy walk of Downtown, the Millyard, major entertainment destinations, Manchester's recreational path network, Millyard shuttle, parking, and the new South Millyard and Switchyard TOD districts.



Placemaking opportunities in the Gaslight District can demonstrate new green infrastructure strategies for stormwater controls and support its evolution as an entertainment district. A shared space with pervious pavers allows for easy street closures for events, while still allowing for deliveries and loading. Outdoor dining and overhead lighting support entertainment uses. Continuing the Franklin Street connection from Depot Street to West Auburn Street would add connectivity and take advantage of the area's historic character.

Switchyard

Historic railyard reborn as an active place to live, work, and play, anchored by the rail station and frequent shuttle service

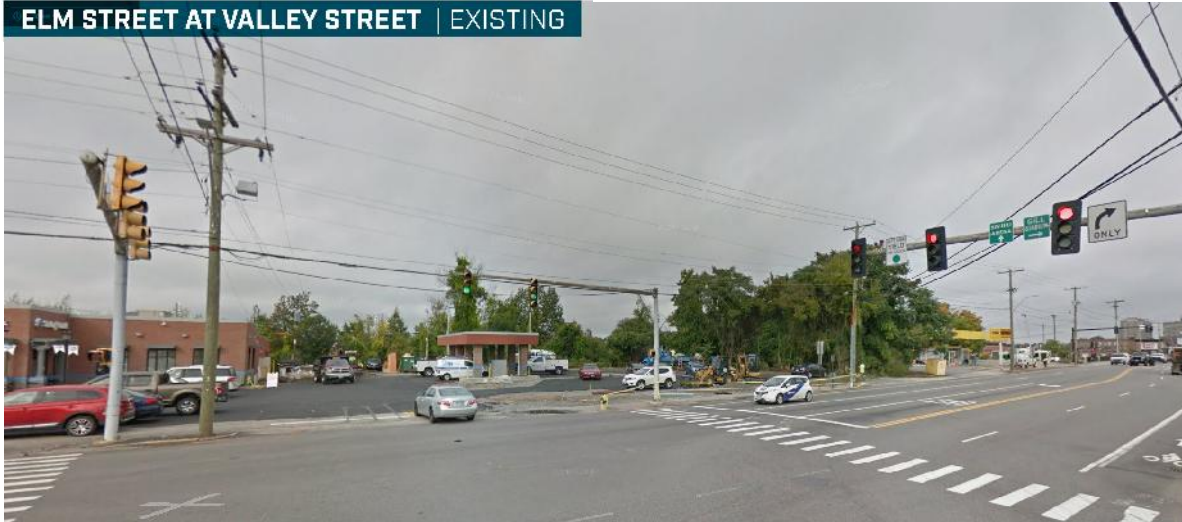
The Switchyard is the place that will stitch the TOD area and Manchester together – as it did when it was a junction of five Boston and Maine Railroad routes. Now, however, the stitching will be made with a variety of good access options: streets, sidewalks, recreational paths, frequent shuttles, and eventual rail transit that provide residents, workers, and visitors many convenient options. Short segments of new streets and paths connecting South Commercial Street, Elm Street, and Willow Street across the existing railroad track will dramatically expand ease of access through the study area and to many parcels with reinvestment opportunity. The City

of Manchester’s application for BUILD Grant funding already focuses on this infrastructure for its inherently strong return on investment. Besides a place of transportation connections, the Switchyard offers prominent opportunities for office, retail, residential, and hospitality development that connects with Downtown’s vitality along Elm Street and with neighborhoods along Valley and Willow Streets. At the heart of the Switchyard, the historic Boston & Maine Switch Tower can be restored and reoccupied with retail or community uses, adjoining park space, and a new shuttle and rail station.

ELM STREET AT VALLEY STREET | POTENTIAL



ELM STREET AT VALLEY STREET | EXISTING



Undistinguished today, the intersection of South Elm and Valley Streets will become a prime gateway to the Switchyard and its convenient transit connections to the Millyard and Boston.

Placemaking at Manchester Station should include clear wayfinding and signage for the station and Millyard shuttle. The historic Switch Tower could be renovated to provide amenity retail and public spaces near the station.

New mixed-use development at scale to support TOD, including retail and services in priority locations along Elm Street and Valley Street to the station.

Bike infrastructure should be improved while taking into account maintenance, snow removal, and other needs. When physically-separated bike facilities are not possible, they should be visually prominent. Snow removal is important for bicycle and pedestrian access throughout the TOD area.

New road connections provide access to new development and include high-quality pedestrian environments. Frequent high-visibility crosswalks, sidewalks at least 6 feet in width, including street trees in the sidewalk, and orienting the building and entrances to the sidewalk all help promote a walkable TOD area.



Analyzing Development Scenarios

Three different development scenarios tested the implications of key infrastructure – particularly siting a future commuter rail station location – and development decisions to inform discussion about the future of the TOD area. All of the scenarios incorporated common assumptions about core infrastructure:

- **Rail station:** a consistent size rail platform; “mini-hub” bus transfer area with at least 6 bays; “kiss and ride” drop-off and pick-up area
- **Commuter parking is district parking** – shared with larger uses, not always immediately adjacent to the station but within an easy walk
- **Infrastructure investments:** New north-south street connection paralleling rail right-of-way; Investment in transit/shuttle service linking

study area, Millyard, Downtown, parking, and other destinations

- **BUILD grant:** consistent location of new trail, road and at-grade crossing. There was a robust coordination with the City of Manchester on the 2020 submission as part of the planning process.

All three scenarios were presented to the Steering Committee for discussion and vote amongst core stakeholders. While some stakeholders would prefer the North alternative, with a rail station that could serve the Millyard and Downtown within easy walking distance, many had concerns about feasibility given the need for significant land acquisition and potential opposition to the project. Many steering committee members were also enthusiastic about

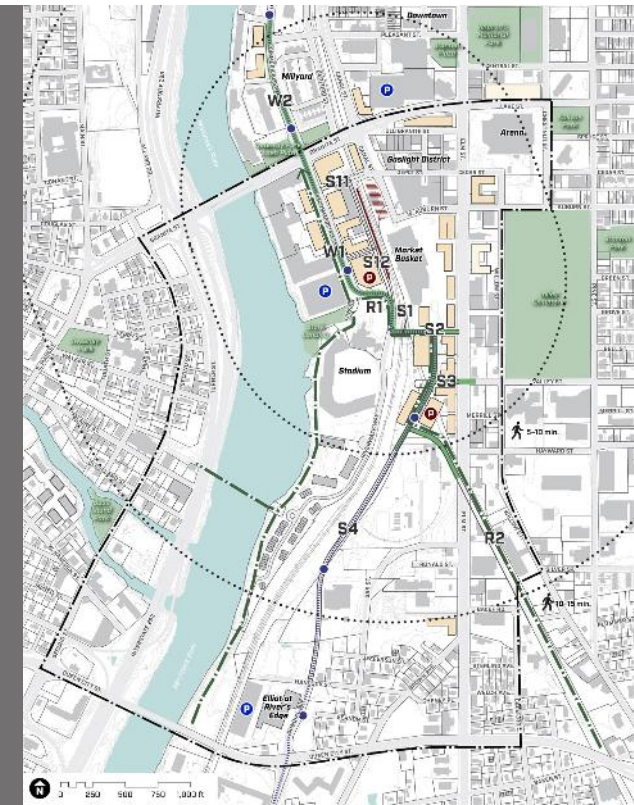
the potential for significant redevelopment in the southern portions of the TOD area in the Central and South alternatives. The consensus choice was the Central alternative, given its potential to connect downtown, spur new development, and maximize investment as proposed in the BUILD grant. All committee members chose it as their first or second choice. **The Central alternative was refined into the preferred alternative, where the:**

- Rail station location balances adding value to the existing Downtown and catalyzing large scale new development to south.
- Development potential of all planning scenarios can be realized through Millyard Shuttle infrastructure.

NORTH SCENARIO

Clusters development near a northern rail station to extend the value of Downtown and the Millyard south of Granite Street.

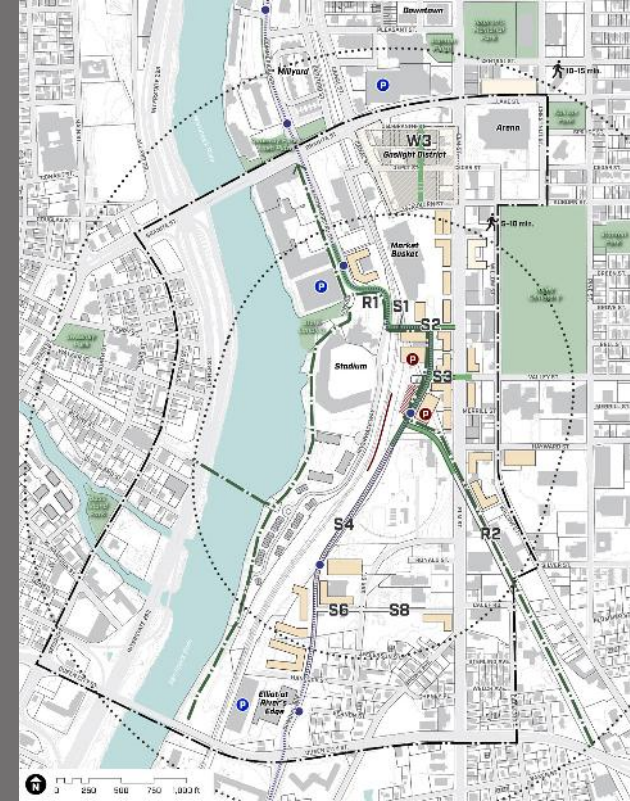
Positioning	Transportation	Placemaking	Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best for office/hospitality/entertainment with potential for residential development • Direct connection to further Millyard development • Activates gaslight district as events and entertainment district • Valley Street becomes the new border of downtown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major focus of streetscape improvements on Commercial Street, including bike lane • Immediate opportunity with shuttle service • Best opportunity for Transportation Demand Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to public space on Granite Street • Intensification of Millyard, cohesive entertainment district • Streetscape improvements to existing pedestrian passageway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 810 units residential • 150 rooms hotel • 530,000 SF office • Accessory retail/dining and intensification of current space • 1,300 shared parking spaces • Total: 1.35 million SF



CENTRAL SCENARIO | PREFERRED SCENARIO

New development extending down Elm Street to the central Switchyard area. Maximizes the value of BUILD Grant infrastructure. Additional southern focus of development given priority based on public-private partnerships with MTA and Elliot at River's Edge.

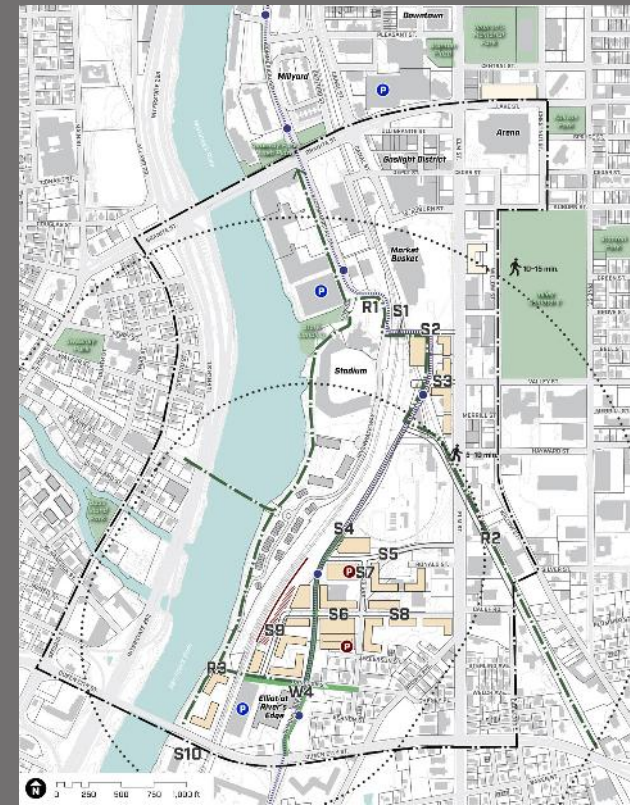
Positioning	Transportation	Placemaking	Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TOD focused on Elm St and Willow St near station and rail-trail Focus on rail trail and bike access to station – potential to reach further into neighborhoods to east Development near the hospital less directly enabled by train station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major node where BUILD grant infrastructure comes together – gateway connection at the stadium Multi-modal station: bike access, shuttle routing, bus transfers, parking all very closely linked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to create multimodal station “trailhead” and gateway Reuse historic switch tower 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,100 units residential 100 rooms hotel 300,000 SF office Accessory retail and dining 1,000 shared parking spaces Total: 1.45 million SF



SOUTH SCENARIO

A southern rail station becomes the focus of a new residential neighborhood and district supporting the Elliot at River's Edge.

Positioning	Transportation	Placemaking	Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major shift of focus: Southern area as a new district and neighborhood Possibility to connect to new development south of Queen City Ave Further infill could occur to north, but not tied to station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliant on mini-hub system for transfers, given distance from current routing More than one crossing of tracks: formalize southern crossing, possible riverfront access above-grade New street grid Shuttle service essential to linking to downtown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of riverfront system and network Complete streets approach within new district New buildings incorporate amenity spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,050 units residential No hotel 470,000 SF office Limited accessory retail/dining 900 shared parking spaces Total: 1.5 million SF



V. Three Catalytic Strategies to Implement the TOD Plan

Manchester does not have to wait for rail service. Three catalytic moves for near-term improvements can unlock immediate economic benefits:

1. CONNECT STREETS AND TRAILS

The area's long history of railroad and industrial use, much diminished today, leaves it with a primitive street network that limits parcel access and prevents the area from being perceived and used as a coherent district. Fortunately, a modest series of new street connections, coupled with a crossing of the area's active railroad track, will have a transformative effect, improving circulation within the study area and strengthening connections to adjoining areas of the city. Similarly, a modest investment in recreational path connections along these new streets will connect several existing city recreational paths into a substantial regional network linking neighborhoods across Manchester with the signature Merrimack River landscape, approximately 60,000 jobs, and Downtown's concentration of dining, cultural, and entertainment destinations.

- Make critical infrastructure improvements to build new roads and sidewalks to provide access to enable development.

- Expand the regional trail network with a new rail trail and improvements to the Riverwalk so the TOD area becomes a hub of cycling, walking, and recreating for Manchester.
- Enhance existing streets and off-street pathways
- Provide convenient parking so all can access the area's amenities and new development.
- Coordinate with shared parking efforts in the northern part of the Millyard to align strategies.

The TOD Plan contains a phased approach to installing these improvements. These phases (A-D) are explained further over pages 28-33.

2. LINK EMPLOYERS TO AN EXPANDED WORKFORCE

- Begin operating a dedicated transit shuttle to link remote parking options with the Millyard, Downtown, and other destinations, enabling denser development; connect the southern portions of the TOD area to major destinations.
- With new street connections and parking resources in place, expand the operations of the Millyard transit to further connect to major employers and parking resources.
- Upgrade transit shuttle service to highest-quality transit to form a backbone of the multi-modal network.

3. ADVANCE DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT THROUGH PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- Pursue public-private partnerships with developers and potentially through a Transportation Management Association [TMA] to provide needed infrastructure and transit.
- Work to advance development at key sites under public or mission-driven control, including at the MTA site and surplus property that can support the Elliot at River's Edge mission.
- Develop shared parking infrastructure throughout the TOD area.

This section on implementation of the TOD Plan includes simulated phasing of the development process and the link between infrastructure investment and development as well as further recommendations for zoning and urban design policies that will help yield high quality results.

Details of proposed capital improvements, including cost estimates, are included in the Implementation Memo. See Appendix.

Legend

- Rail Station Platform
- Potential New Development
- Potential Building Rehabilitation
- New Parking
- Public Green Space
- Multi-use Path
- Transit/Shuttle Route
- Transit/Shuttle Stop
- Existing Parking Structure
- New Public/District Parking
- Streets
- Walkable Streetscape
- Recreational Path

“S” represents new street connections to provide access to new development, circulation throughout the TOD area, and a connected transportation system.

“P” represents public and/or district parking that can serve multiple developments within a parking structure. These improvements help increase project feasibility; serve the broader public who may live in, work in, or visit the TOD area; and support major transportation assets like the Millyard shuttle and rail service.

“W” represents walkable streetscapes, or improvements that will help make the area a more inviting and attractive place to walk, such as improving the alleyways and paths of the Gaslight District.

“R” represent recreational paths, including new segments that tie into the Riverwalk and a future path in the right-of-way paralleling Willow Street.



1. Connect Streets and Trails

PHASE A

A first phase of infrastructure provides a meaningful backbone to improvements in the TOD area.

The pending application for a BUILD Grant; the availability of potential redevelopment sites adjacent to the Elliot at River’s Edge facility and the Manchester Transit Authority property; and additional opportunities all create near-term opportunities to catalyze TOD.

The potential Phase A BUILD Grant Capital Improvements build out critical street infrastructure in the Switchyard area. These include connections to redevelopment on South Willow Street, a new at-grade crossing of the railroad tracks, and an extension of the South Manchester Rail Trail into the TOD area. These improvements also include infrastructure to connect to the Millyard, envisioned in the TOD plan as a trail connection between South Commercial Street, Granite Street, and the Riverwalk.

Capital improvements for pedestrian, streetscape, and parking improvements not included in the current BUILD grant application that should be pursued as part of early phases include:

- Gaslight District placemaking and pilot of new stormwater strategies [see page 18]

- Surface parking in anticipation of later construction of structured parking. Public parking here could provide access to the new multi-modal trail connection and the larger TOD area. Over time, a parking structure could include public parking to access the area, in addition to shared parking supporting surrounding development and future rail station.
- Rehabilitation of the historic Manchester Switch Tower to establish a major public and multi-modal node at the center of the TOD area before rail service arrives.

Phase A MTA Capital Improvements are generally centered around the southerly portion of the study area. They provide connectivity from the Elliot at River’s Edge facility to the Commercial Street corridor and the Millyard. These improvements could occur at the same time as those clustered in the BUILD Grant area, or could move forward asynchronously. They would enable development of significant underutilized land near the Elliot at River’s Edge and as part of neighboring MTA-owned property.

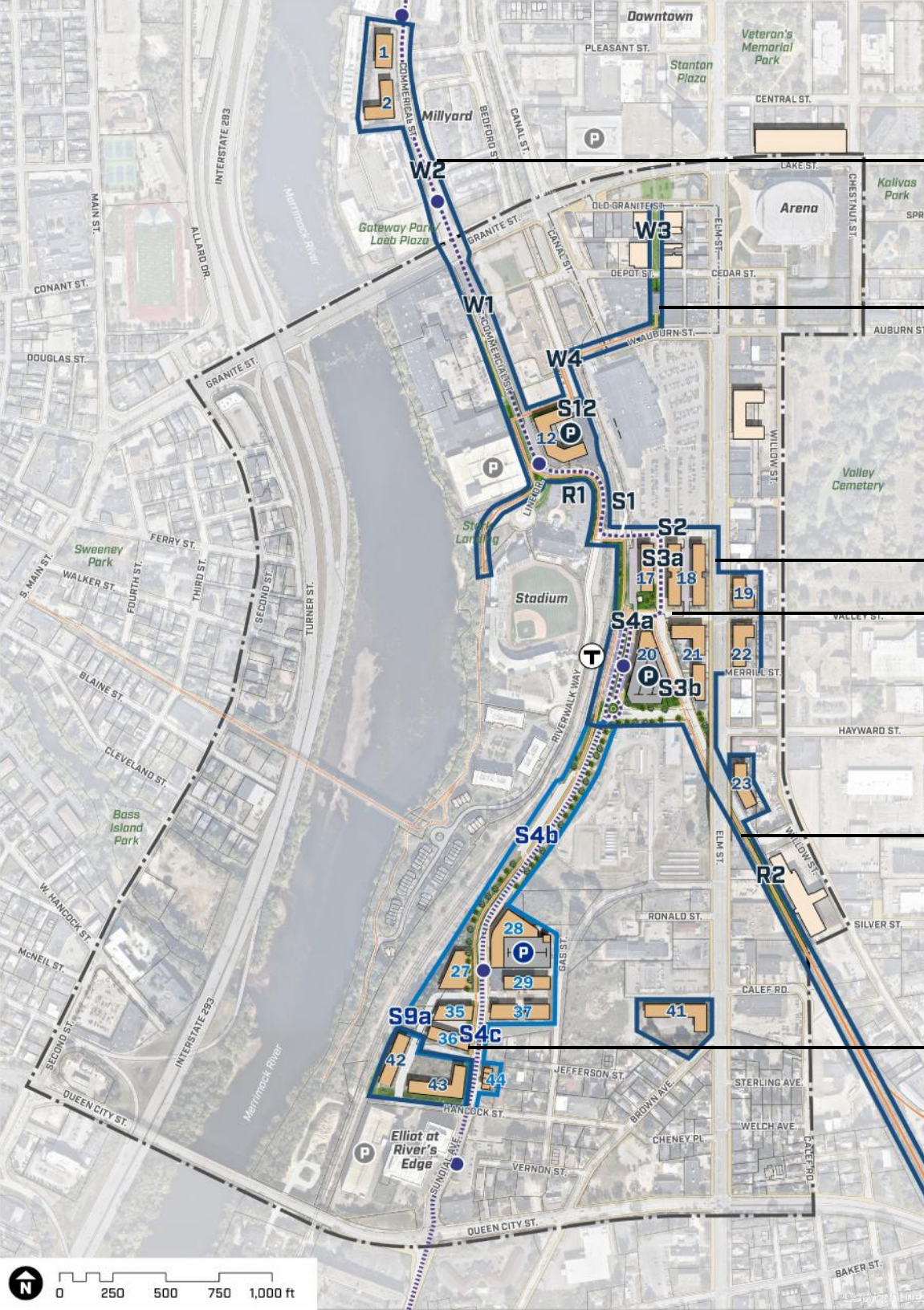
This phase would likely include some contribution towards the capital costs of constructing a new parking structure in the area, to potentially be shared by the public and new development. Excess parking at the Elliot at River’s Edge garage could be used as shared parking to serve development.



Currently abandoned, the historic Manchester Switch Tower will be at the heart of the new Switchyard District and future passenger rail station. Restoring the structure and providing public amenity space around it will make the Switch Tower a landmark of the district.



This former railroad switch tower in South Norwalk, CT, has been restored as a history museum.



Phase A BUILD: Gaslight District Placemaking and connections to Millyard. These segments connect South Commercial Street through Bedford Street and include extension of Franklin Street as a pedestrian space through to South Auburn Street. Streetscape improvements on South Commercial Street should accompany redevelopment in the Millyard.

Phase A BUILD: Provide core street connections, including a new rail crossing in the Switchyard area. These segments provide a connection between South Commercial Street and Elm Street; extend the urban grid near the Valley/Elm Street intersection; and connect underneath Elm Street to South Willow Street.

Phase A BUILD: Switch Tower placemaking and interim parking.

Phase A BUILD: Construction of South Manchester Rail Trail. Included as part of the BUILD grant, a new rail trail segment could link to the existing South Manchester Rail Trail at Beech Street, vastly expanding the trail network and access to the TOD area.

Phase A MTA A public-private partnership could advance new development and street infrastructure to provide access to the MTA site and property owned by the Elliot at River's Edge. Development could help support the mission of both organizations by providing funding for transit and supporting community health. Possible opportunity for shared parking in Elliot parking garage.

PHASES B-C

In subsequent phases, infrastructure improvements to build out the streets, trails, and sidewalk networks should move forward as adjacent redevelopment proceeds.

While allowing for a flexible, entrepreneurial approach, later phases will likely consist of new road segments and parking to support continued development surrounding catalytic projects in the TOD area; as well as several independent infrastructure improvements that complete the urban grid in the southern portion of the study area, allowing for a more complete build-out of a new transit-oriented district.

Suggested improvements complete connections between existing streets or are part of discrete development projects. Many of these projects could be completed independent of larger infrastructure projects to provide access to land for development.



Major improvements to rebuild South Commercial Street to a consistent grade and transform the pedestrian walkway could transform the experience of walking in the South Millyard and Gaslight District.



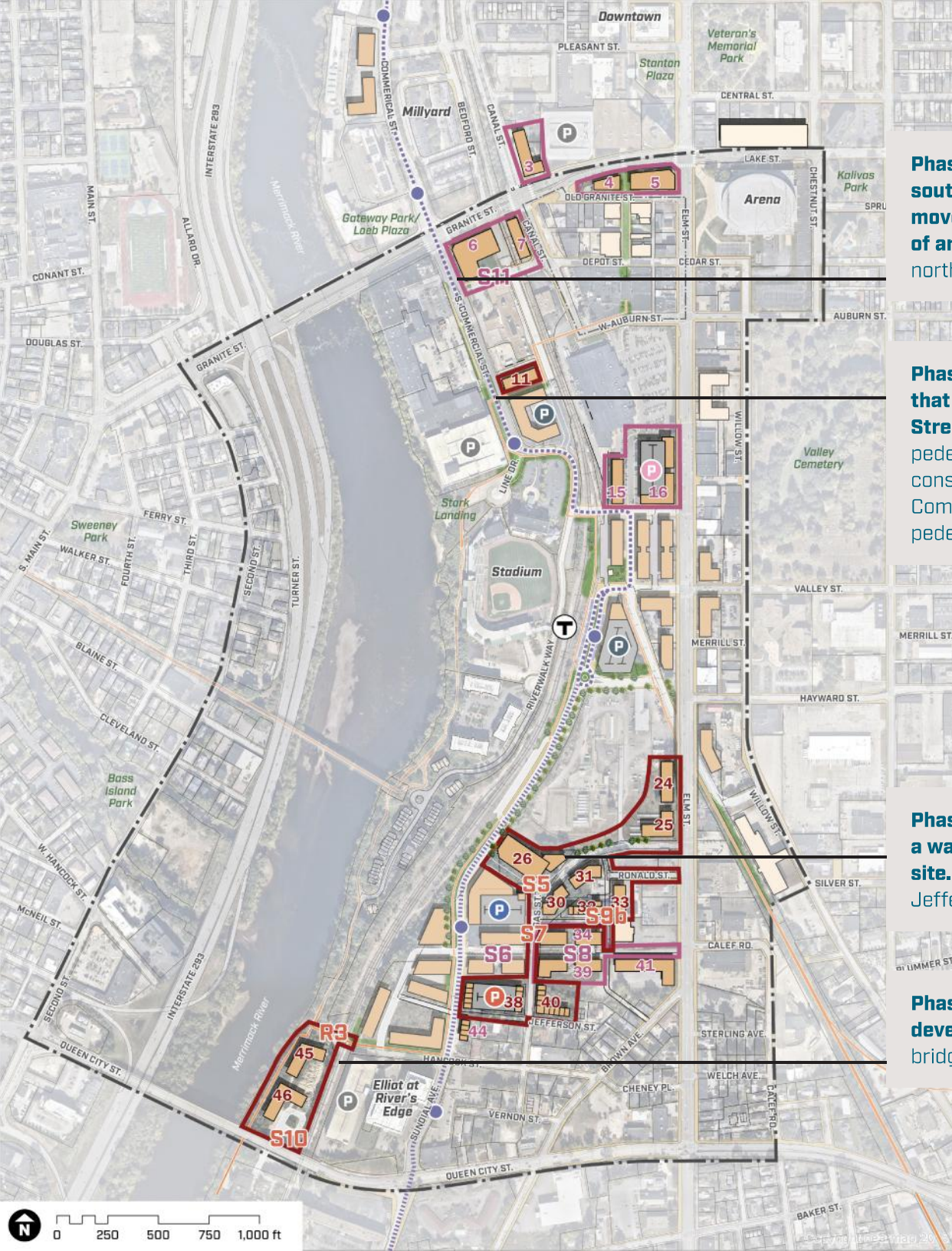
This former undesirable alley in Louisville, KY was transformed into a welcoming pedestrian way and public space with the inclusion of all-night lighting, pavement painting, music programming, and murals on the blank building walls.



Sidewalks should be at least 6-8 feet wide, with wider sidewalks in areas of high-density and high-activity uses. Streetscape improvements should include repair of existing sidewalks, street trees, and street furniture like trash cans, pedestrian-oriented lighting, and seating.



Riverfront development should be accompanied by investment in extending and improving the Riverwalk/Heritage Trail, including year-round maintenance to insure predictable access.



Phase C: Reconstruct South Commercial Street, raising the southern side to a consistent grade to improve pedestrian movement across the street and set up later redevelopment of areas fronting the street. Extend streetscape improvements north of Granite Street.

Phase B: Enhanced streetscape/pedestrian improvements that connect from Canal Street to South Commercial Street and through to the Riverwalk, improving the existing pedestrian rail crossing behind the WMUR property, and constructing an ADA accessible ramp in the median of South Commercial Street to accommodate east/west movement of pedestrians.

Phase B and C: New road segments to provide access and a walkable street grid to development parcels north of MTA site. Includes upgrades to Gas Street, new connections to Jefferson Street, and a roundabout.

Phase C: Multi-use trail connections to new riverfront development between Hancock Street and the Riverwalk via a bridge over the rail tracks.

PHASE D

When rail service arrives, it will enable a new scale and mix of development and infrastructure investment to achieve the highest-value scenario.

The prior phases (A-C) of infrastructure investment to connect streets and trails and enable development set the stage for the arrival of rail service. Manchester will benefit from this major investment in transportation infrastructure and links to the regional economy.

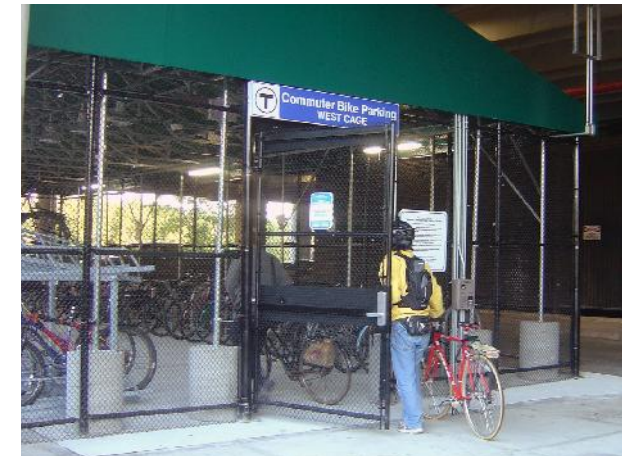
In addition to the rail station, infrastructure investment in this phase should include new pedestrian and bicyclist connections to access the rail station. Land values and scale of development will increase with access to the greater Boston market.



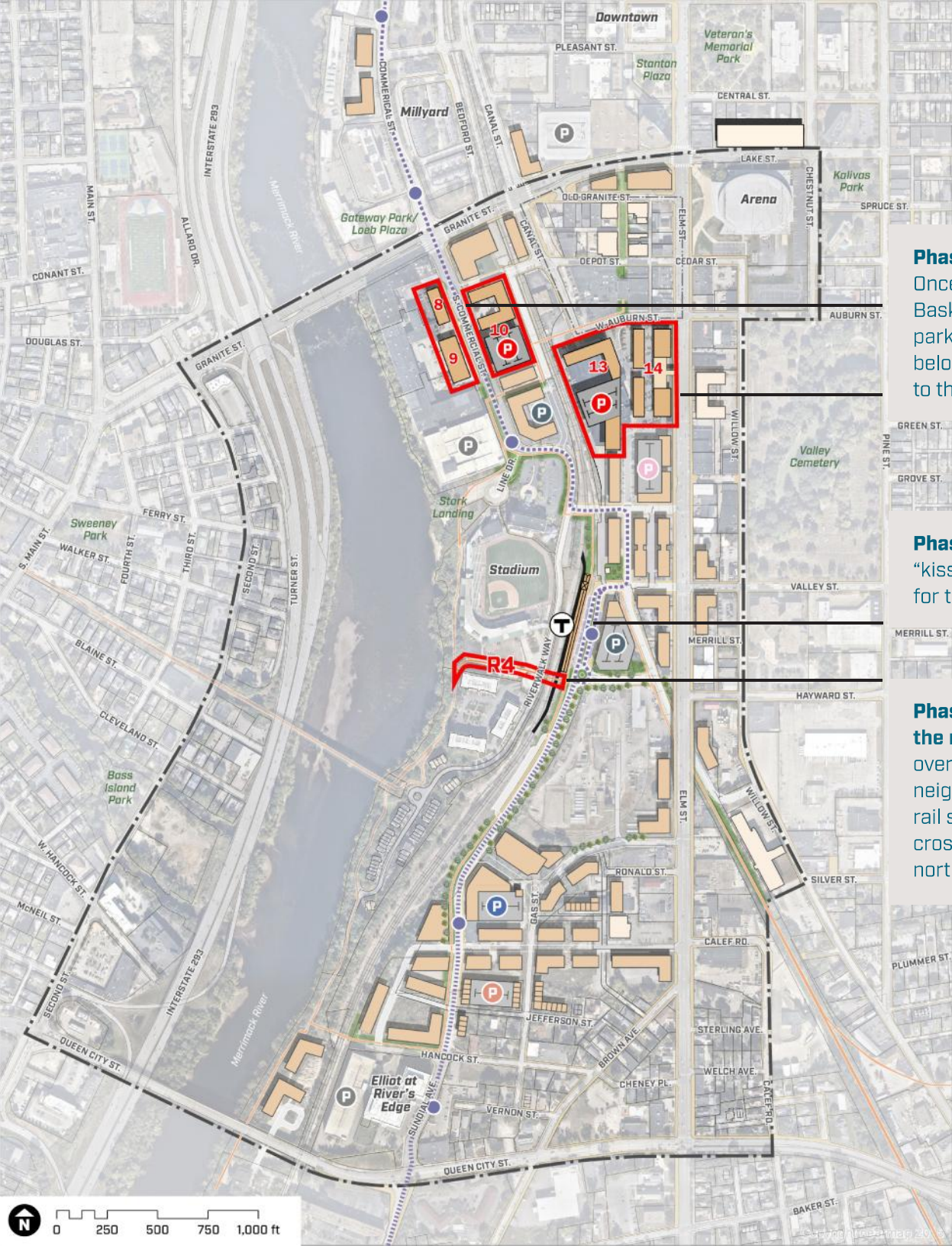
Bicycle connections to the station, including new crossing of the tracks to allow access from the west side, will help extend the reach of the TOD area.



Later phase development could include more complicated infill projects, including redevelopment of the Market Basket site and SNHU surface parking lots.



Rail station amenities should provide for multimodal access, including space for bus and shuttle transfers, a kiss-and-ride area, bicycle parking, and easy access by walking.



Phase D: Later phase redevelopment of more complex sites:

Once rail service arrives, redevelopment of sites such as Market Basket and the WMUR property will be more likely. The SNHU parking lots along Commercial Street could be redeveloped with below grade parking and the first floor building elevation equal to the height of raised Commercial Street.

Phase D: Rail station infrastructure:

includes a rail platform, a “kiss and ride” drop-off/pick-up area, and at least six bus bays for transfers to local and regional bus service.

Phase D: New pedestrian and bicyclist connection across the railroad tracks to the Riverwalk/Heritage Trail:

An overpass would tie into the regional trail network and enable the neighborhoods of Manchester’s Westside to easily access the rail station and TOD area on foot, bike, or scooter. An at-grade crossing and pathway near the stadium would connect to the north.



2. Link Employers with Expanded Workforce

As the Millyard, Downtown, and TOD area continue to attract more residents, high-tech businesses, and educational institutions, the ability to provide more surface parking spaces or construct parking structures for future residents, employees, and visitors will be limited. Even today, the lack of parking throughout the entire Millyard is a major constraint for business growth and enhanced vitality of public space. As discussed in the *Manchester Connects* and other City initiatives, parking has been an ongoing problem and bottleneck for achieving long-term goals.

The proposed shuttle route takes advantage of this imbalance, as there is available capacity at parking lots and garages more distant to the center of the Millyard. **A high frequency shuttle, also referred to as a people mover, is a feasible alternative to provide parking and commuter access to the Millyard and TOD area for those commuters who continue to drive to work, providing transportation options for a variety of employee lifestyle choices.**

The Millyard shuttle will target commuters who work or study in the Millyard and TOD area who currently do not have access to parking close to their destination, or for whom the cost of existing parking is prohibitively expensive. Further details on the costs and operation of the Millyard transit shuttle can be found in the Implementation Memo found in the Appendix.

On-time service reliability will be critical to the success of the shuttle operation. Removing as many obstacles that lead to trip delays should be prioritized. This includes bus-only lanes wherever possible to remove shuttles from general traffic, traffic signal prioritization (TSP) at key intersections (e.g. Granite Street), and low-level buses and high-level platforms to provide enhanced accessibility for those with mobility impairments.

Potential funding for a Millyard shuttle could include private funding through a Millyard/TOD area Transportation Management Association (TMA). A TMA is a membership based, public-private partnership of businesses, institutions and government that collaborate for the purpose of providing and promoting transportation options for commuters that reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality. There is a TMA currently under formation in the Millyard; it has identified addressing parking as being the top priority.

To support operation of the shuttle and secure substantial ridership for efficient operations, the following goals should be established:

1. Ensure competitive pricing at the origin parking facilities and the shuttle service itself

- Remote parking lots should cost less than parking immediately adjacent to destinations.
- Free parking at remote lots initially is recommended to encourage use.
- Pricing should only occur once lots exceed 75% capacity regularly.
- Increase parking rates at facilities directly adjacent to major employers.
- The round-trip shuttle ride itself should not cost more than the parking immediately adjacent to destinations.

2. Run buses at a frequency that allows commuters to realize travel time savings from driving and self-parking at the destination.

3. Designate multiple stops throughout the Millyard and TOD area, but not too many that they have a negative operational impact on the service.

- Slower speeds reduce the time savings
- Slower speeds may require an additional vehicle to run at the same frequency, increasing the total cost of providing service.

4. Improve pedestrian connections from proposed shuttle stops to employment destinations to make transfers as seamless as possible.

Proposed Millyard Shuttle Corridor

- Phase 1
- Phase 2 Extensions
- Shuttle stops

Stop 1a: Exit 6 Park & Ride

Stop 1b: Pennacook St. Parking

Stop 2: Eversource

Stop 3: Jefferson & Dow

Stop 4: Oracle + Dyn

Stop 5: Arms Park / Tru Hotel

Stop 6: DEKA/Mill Girl Stairs

Stop 7: Waumbec Mill

Stop 8: UNH Manchester

Stop 9: SNHU & Fishercats

Stop 10: B&M Switchyard

Stop 11: TOD & MTA Facility

Stop 12: Elliott At Rivers Edge

Stop 13: Velcro / Sundial Center

PHASE 1 will span between the parking lot on 1-97 W Pennacook Street adjacent to the National Guard Building and the Switchyard on South Commercial Street in the Gaslight district, for a total distance of 1.6 miles.

PHASE 2 will include a north extension that spans between the Exit 6 Park and Ride (once constructed), travel over the Amoskeag Street bridge, and travel south along Commercial Street. Phase 2 will then travel over a southern extension of S Commercial Street to Sundial Avenue and the Velcro/ Sundial Center to the south of Queen City Avenue – a total distance of 2.9 miles.



Photo: David L. Ryan

The Millyard shuttle/transit can move forward using bus vehicles, but in future phases may offer opportunities for innovative technology like autonomous shuttles or electric vehicles. The Little Rhody is a pilot autonomous shuttle in Providence, RI that may serve as a model.



Quality bus stop shelters with real-time bus information and frequent service have attracted many new riders to the CTfastrak service which opened in 2015 between Hartford and New Britain, CT.

3. Advance Development and Investment through Public/Private Partnerships

This plan, and companion plans like *Manchester Connects* and *Plan Manchester*, enable the private and public sector to work together in a predictable manner to achieve goals neither could accomplish alone. As noted in other sections of this report, investment in public street and parking infrastructure is a very important role the city and government partners need to play to invite private reinvestment in property and businesses. Efficient, coordinated government services like the development review and approval process can be equally important. Transportation services offer another potential area of collaboration,

whereby private sector partners may see it in their interest to share funding and/or management responsibilities for some transit services with the Manchester Transit Authority. And the MTA itself could potentially partner with a developer and/or adjoining property owners to invite development on its current service yard in the TOD area and secure a suitable alternate location for transit maintenance.

Public-private partnership is not only a good way to make efficient use of land and financial resources, but often the only way to enable

high-value investment to happen where an organized network of streets and parcels is not present. Because many TOD area parcels are fragmented remnants of industrial uses based around long-gone railroad sidings, public-private partnership will play an important role in making this land economically productive again.

This and the following page provide some examples of public-private partnerships that are successfully repositioning downtowns and former industrial areas into places that are valuable community and economic assets today.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP PRECEDENT **Biddeford's Pearl Street District**

Biddeford, Maine is an historic mill city like Manchester where vast mill buildings between downtown and the riverfront have been restored and reoccupied with office space and housing in the past twenty years. With most mill buildings in use, space for parking is limited. The City is engaging in a public-private partnership with a private developer team to create downtown's first new buildings in generations on a former industrial site. The City acquired the property, is building a 525-space public parking structure, rebuilding adjoining Pearl Street and riverfront into a walkable street and park, and reselling most of the property to the developer team. The developer plans approximately 325,000 square feet of mixed office, dining, residential, and community service space on the site. Refinements to local transit routes and new pedestrian walks will better connect the site better to downtown Biddeford and the nearby Saco/Biddeford Amtrak Downeaster rail station.

<https://www.biddefordmaine.org/DocumentCenter/View/4874/April-2-2019-Council-Meeting-Presentation>



PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP
PRECEDENT

Downtown Wichita, KS

Twenty years ago, Wichita’s downtown was full of obsolete office buildings left empty by the 1980’s oil economy downturn. Since then, downtown has been reborn as a regional center for working, living, and entertainment thanks to two waves of public-private partnership initiatives. The first effort brought jobs, housing and dining to the historic Old Town district – similar to Manchester’s Gaslight District – enabled by a tax-increment financing district that funded public parking, improved sidewalks, and two public plazas. Since 2010, more initiatives on this model have brought \$655 million in private investment in new office space, retail, and over 1,500 housing units, stimulated by \$197 million in public investment. The public investment has typically produced walkable streets, structured parking, park space, or property assemblage that the private sector would not have been willing or able to create on its own. The adjoining photos demonstrate some of the many examples of economic development enabled through public-private partnership in Wichita.

<https://downtownwichita.org/development/overview>



Public parking and street improvements made possible this Old Town mixed-use development containing dining, housing, office space, and a community arts center.



Cargill’s new \$70 million office building, opened in 2018, was supported by City investment in new sidewalks and crosswalks linking the site with other downtown blocks.



The City sold surplus riverfront land to a developer in return for reconstruction of a public park and riverwalk, and the 202-unit RiverVista housing development. The building includes a new boat storage and docks for Wichita State University rowing at river level.



The City partnered with three property owners to enable reinvestment on a vacant block in the heart of downtown. A new City parking structure enabled restoration of an historic and obsolete office building as the Ambassador Hotel, and construction of a new headquarters for the Kansas Leadership Foundation.

VI. Framing Regulations for Successful Development

After rezoning the TOD area to the high-density CBD district, which does not allow auto-oriented uses, additional regulations should be modified to encourage new buildings and site plans to support TOD-friendly urban design.

The zoning ordinance currently uses the Arena District Overlay, covering an approximately six-block area around the SNHU Arena in the TOD area, to provide additional regulation beyond the underlying CBD Central Business District zoning.

There are design requirements for projects within the Arena District Overlay that support an active pedestrian environment. **These design requirements would be appropriate through the TOD study area; the City could consider extending the Arena Overlay to cover more of the TOD area, or establishing a new TOD District Overlay to further regulate building form and urban design in the broader district.** The existing requirements include:

- Building facades along sidewalks shall include doors and windows in order to encourage pedestrian flows. No more than 20 feet of blank walls shall be allowed in these areas.
- The primary entrance shall be fronting the street sidewalk.

- Buildings should be a minimum of 20 feet in height.
- Window system should not exceed 25 feet in width without being interrupted by another building material.
- Vinyl siding products prohibited.
- Pedestrian circulation throughout the district shall be improved as development or redevelopment occurs, in accordance with general design principles and objectives of safety, comfort, ease of movement, and convenience of access to properties.

Whether as part of a TOD Overlay, more detailed site plan regulations, or form-based code regulations, these urban design strategies will help ensure the walkable and attractive environment that will support the highest value build-out of the TOD area.

Two critical urban design strategies that support TOD:

1. PROHIBIT PARKING BETWEEN THE SIDEWALK AND THE BUILDING FACADE

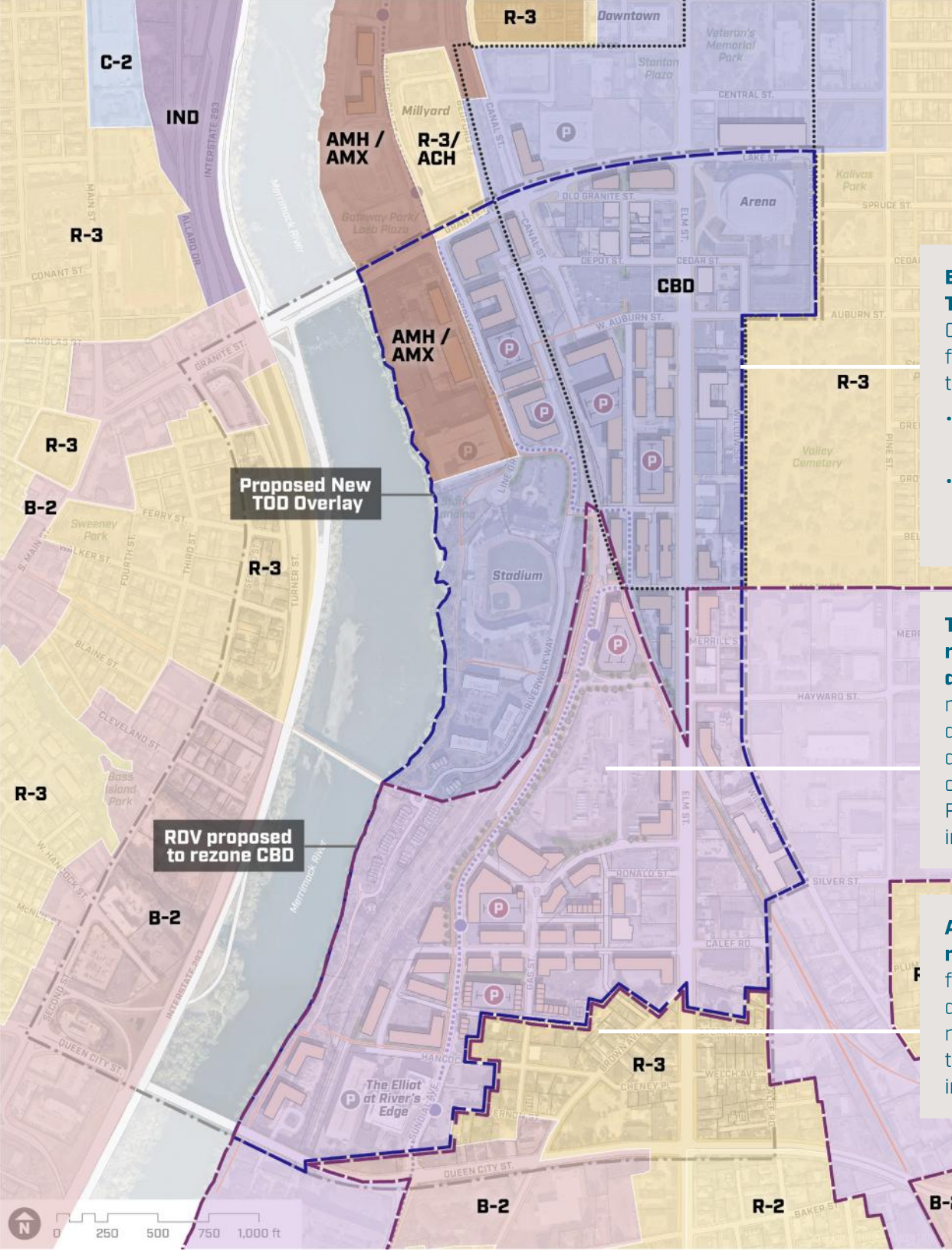
Parking should be located behind or underneath the building.



2. ESTABLISH A MAXIMUM SETBACK OF 15 FEET UNLESS AMENITY SPACES ARE PROVIDED IN THE SETBACK

Outdoor dining, seating areas, or other publicly-accessible amenity spaces may allow for a larger setback.





Ensure a transit-oriented building form through a new TOD Overlay or other form-based tools. The Arena District Overlay already includes requirements for pedestrian-friendly building form. A new TOD Overlay could expand on these requirements to:

- Prohibit parking in the front yard of a development, or between the sidewalk and building façade
- Establish a maximum building setback of 15 feet, unless the setback includes outdoor dining, seating areas, or other publicly accessible amenity space.

The first necessary land use regulation change is to rezone the RDV area within the TOD area to the CBD district. The CBD district extends from downtown to the northern part of the TOD area and is Manchester’s highest density zoning district, allowing a mix of uses. The RDV district allows motor vehicle oriented uses that will not contribute to TOD and that will negatively affect walkability. Rezoning this area will prevent development that is incompatible with the highest-value TOD vision.

Address transitions and walkability to neighboring residential areas. Through strategies like a transect, form-based requirements, or other amendments to the R-3 district, create strong, walkable connections between the neighborhoods and new development while transitioning the scale and design of new development to avoid negative impacts on adjacent residential areas.

Additional guidance focused on site plan review of new development could:

- Set clear guidance to **promote reduced and shared parking for new development** in the TOD area, including mandatory participation in the TMA
- Establish **strong standards for the screening of parking lots and areas** with landscaping, fencing, or other enclosures, and the screening of parking structures with active ground floor uses.
- Highlight the importance of **orienting the site plan towards and connecting to public sidewalks, ways, and trails** — including the proposed new rail trail — in development projects.
- Require **electrical and water hookups at all publicly accessible open space created by new development** to create flexible spaces for events, placemaking, and gatherings.



Reduced and shared parking should be promoted throughout the TOD area to maximize use of parking as an asset and support renovation of historic buildings that may not have space for parking on-site. The parking structure in the center of this photo serves residential and office buildings around it.



Parking lots should be screened by landscaping, fencing, or other enclosures, and parking structures with active ground floor uses. Access should be configured to promote pedestrian safety.



Site plans should orient towards pedestrian- and bike-friendly spaces and amenities like the Riverwalk and future rail trail. There should be clear visual and physical connections between these spaces and future development.

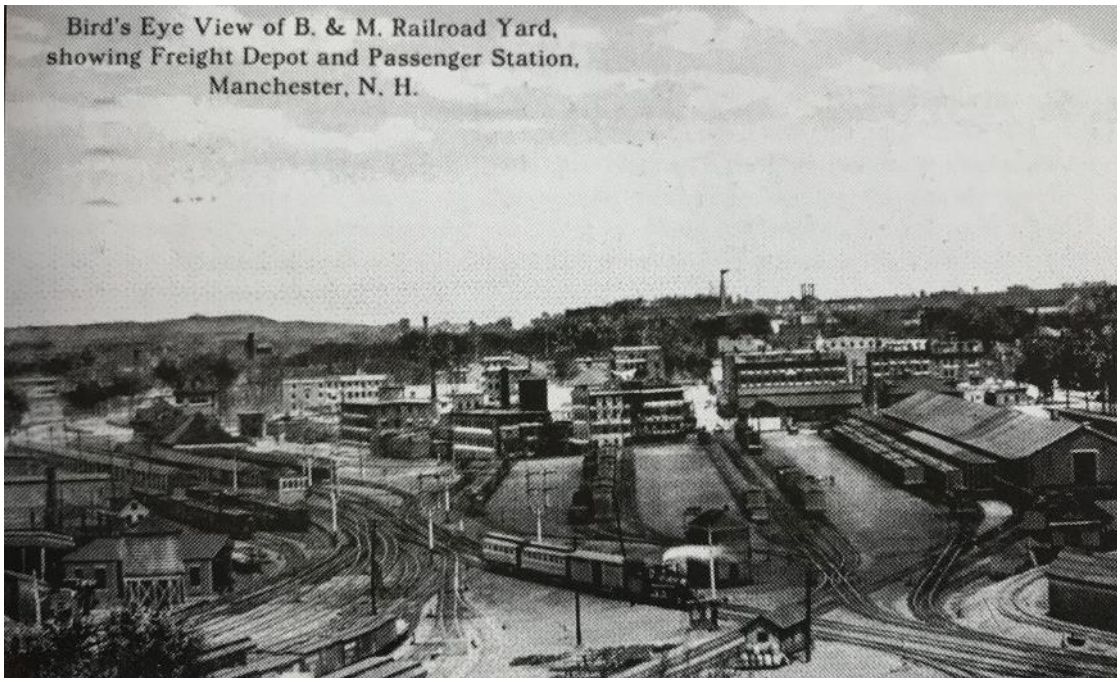


Music, art performances, and other activities need a ready availability of electrical power and sometimes water and data.



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Manchester, N. H., in the Future.



All aboard for TOD!

Manchester has many of the elements that contribute to cities with high living standards, strong economies, and vibrant civic life. The City's extraordinary network of engaged residents, public officials, business owners, and civic leaders have worked diligently for years to connect these elements in meaningful ways, identify additional needs, and craft a strategy in which "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts." Recent efforts such as Manchester Connects and Plan Manchester have built on former initiatives such as the airport and arena. This TOD Plan is another major piece in the ongoing effort to create the most value for residents and businesses; while also contributing to a sustainable financial position for the City. The TOD Plan's theme of connectivity is a fitting one for the next steps needed to keep momentum going on the progress made in revitalizing and growing the Downtown, Riverfront, and Millyard.

The TOD area is an extraordinary 250-acre opportunity to create an innovative and practical roadmap to unlock the value of this part of the city and to ensure that public policy, investments, and other initiatives support a future vision and avoid foreclosing on exciting opportunities.

The evidence is clear...

Wise public investment now will unlock much more private investment. The plan lays out clear phased steps to begin the process now, without having to wait for rail transportation improvements. These recommendations will help the City assure that investments, timing, and major policy decisions are all supporting long-term and ambitious goals for its future.