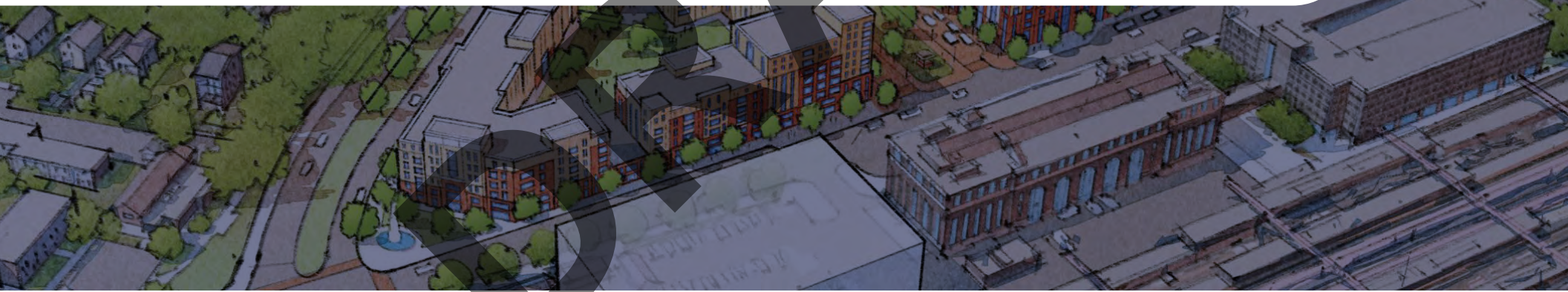




UNION SQUARE

CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS TRANSFORMATION PLAN



City of
NEW HAVEN



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A Message From the President

On behalf of The Glendower Group (Glendower), Elm City Communities / The Housing Authority of New Haven (ECC/HANH) and the City of New Haven we present the Union Square Transformation Plan. This plan reflects a bold vision to create a vibrant, inclusive community that offers modern amenities and opportunities for residents of all ages.

Union Square's transformation is the result of extensive collaboration between the City of New Haven, Glendower, ECC/HANH, residents, local organizations, businesses, and other key stakeholders. Situated in a historically rich area, the Union Square neighborhood is poised to become a model of sustainable urban revitalization.

The plan lays out a clear roadmap for positive change, prioritizing safe, high-quality housing and fostering a thriving community. Union Square's redevelopment aims to catalyze additional investments and establish the neighborhood as a place where people are proud to live, work, and grow.

To learn more about the exciting plans for Union Square, visit unionsquarechoice.com. Together, we're building a future that reflects the resilience, heritage, and potential of this remarkable neighborhood.

Sincerely,



Shenae Draughn
President
Elm City Communities / Housing Authority of New Haven
The Glendower Group
360 Management Group
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Table of Contents

1. Introduction & Executive Summary	1-7
2. Neighborhood Context & Existing Conditions	9-13
3. People Plan	15-99
4. Neighborhood Plan	101-155
5. Housing Plan	157-199
6. Implementation Plan	201-203

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1

Introduction & Executive Summary

Introduction & Executive Summary

This section of the Union Square Choice Neighborhood Plan focuses on the broader Hill neighborhood.

The Union Square Choice Neighborhood Transformation Plan represents a pivotal moment for the Union Square neighborhood (aka The Hill) in New Haven, Connecticut. This plan is a bold, collaborative vision to revitalize Union Square into a thriving, inclusive community where residents can achieve their full potential. It builds upon decades of history, leveraging the neighborhood's rich cultural fabric while addressing long-standing challenges such as economic disparity, outdated housing infrastructure, and limited access to essential services. By integrating housing, education, and employment opportunities into a cohesive strategy, this plan sets the stage for transformational change.

This transformation plan is a direct response to community engagement efforts and reflects the aspirations of Union Square's residents and stakeholders. It outlines a comprehensive roadmap for revitalizing the area, emphasizing sustainable development, enhanced educational attainment, employment opportunities, and youth development.

With this plan, Union Square will evolve into a vibrant, equitable, and resilient neighborhood, offering opportunities for all.

The Union Square Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan is a comprehensive strategy aimed at revitalizing the Union Square community. Developed through extensive community engagement, the plan focuses on **three** core goals:

- 1. Housing:** Replace the distressed Robert T Wolf Public Housing development with high quality mixed income housing that is well managed and responsive to the needs of the surrounding neighborhood.
- 2. People:** Improve educational outcomes and intergenerational mobility by providing services and support directly to residents and their families.
- 3. Neighborhood:** Create conditions necessary for public and private investment in the Union Square neighborhood. Offer amenities and assets, including enhanced safety measures, excellent schools and commercial activities, all of which are important to families' choices regarding their communities.

Figure 1: Map of the Hill Neighborhood



The Union Square neighborhood stands at a critical juncture, with numerous factors aligning to make this the ideal moment for transformative change:

- 1. Strategic Location:** The neighborhood's proximity to Union Station, downtown New Haven, and major employment hubs position it as a key site for equitable development that can bridge economic and spatial divides.
- 2. Community Readiness:** Extensive community engagement efforts have revealed a strong desire among residents for meaningful investment in housing, education, and employment opportunities. This collective commitment provides a solid foundation for success.
- 3. Policy and Funding Opportunities:** Recent shifts in federal, state, and local policy priorities, including the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, have created a supportive environment for comprehensive neighborhood transformation. Access to competitive funding and private-sector interest further strengthens the case for action.
- 4. Leveraging Existing Assets:** Union Square's cultural heritage, resilient population, and underutilized infrastructure present unique opportunities to build a neighborhood that honors its past while embracing the future.

- 5. Economic Momentum:** As New Haven experiences broader economic growth, ensuring that neighborhoods like Union Square are not left behind is essential. Targeted investments now can ensure inclusive growth that benefits all residents.

Moving Forward

The Union Square Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan builds upon this historical foundation and seizes the opportunities of the present moment.

Union Square has been the focus of numerous planning initiatives over the years, reflecting its potential as a vital gateway to New Haven's downtown and transportation hubs. These efforts have shaped the neighborhood's vision and laid the groundwork for the **Union Square Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan**, highlighting challenges, opportunities, and the need for community driven solutions.

Union Square's proximity to Union Station positions it as a focal point for transit-oriented initiatives. These plans prioritize connectivity, walkability, and access to public transit, alongside mixed-use affordable housing development.

The Union Station TOD Planning Study specifically addressed Union Square's role in a broader transit-oriented development and Union Station. It identified opportunities for housing, commercial spaces, and public infrastructure improvements, linking the neighborhood to the regional economic hubs. The study also emphasized sustainable development and equitable access, aligning closely with the priorities of the choice neighborhoods initiative.

The Hill to Downtown Community Plan sought to connect Union Square with the Hill neighborhood and downtown New Haven through a cohesive study. It proposed mixed income housing, economic development, and improved public spaces, recognizing the area's potential as a bridge between neighborhoods. Recent engagement efforts included resident surveys focus groups, and workshops, highlighting priorities such as education, health, youth, and job opportunities. These efforts underscored the need for a comprehensive community-led plan that addresses systemic inequities and fosters inclusivity.

Through a coordinated focus on **people, housing, and neighborhood**, our plan envisions a future where Union Square becomes a **vibrant, equitable community** where families can thrive. By leveraging partnerships, aligning resources, and remaining rooted in the community's vision, this transformation will create a model for sustainable urban development.

SUMMARY OF GOALS

The Union Square Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan is a visionary roadmap designed to revitalize the Union Square neighborhood in New Haven into a thriving, equitable, and resilient community. Grounded in extensive community engagement and leveraging its strategic location and cultural richness, the plan addresses long-standing challenges while embracing opportunities for transformational growth.

People

Goal 1

Enhance the quality of education for all residents in the neighborhood.

Enhance educational attainment by providing comprehensive resources and programs for early childhood learning, youth, and adults. This includes digital access, technology training, and strengthened partnerships with schools and higher education institutions to foster lifelong learning opportunities.

Goal 2

Ensure excellent healthcare for all residents in the neighborhood.

Improve the health outcomes of Union Square residents by expanding access to healthcare, promoting mental health services, and encouraging healthy lifestyles through enhanced public spaces, recreational facilities, and community health programs.

Goal 3

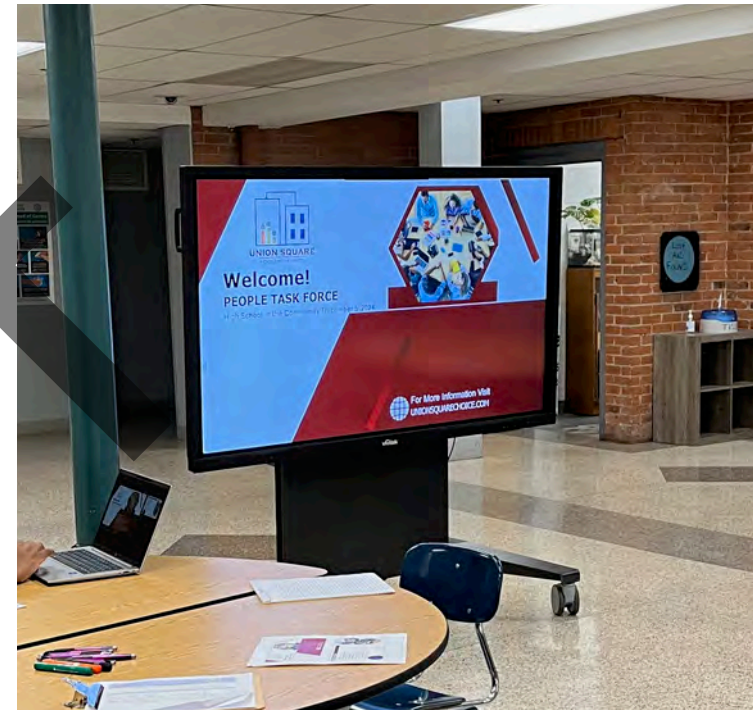
Strengthen community engagement and participation.

Foster an inclusive and transparent process where residents are active partners in shaping and implementing the neighborhood's transformation. Empower resident leadership, encourage collaboration with local organizations, and ensure accountability through ongoing feedback and transparency.

Goal 4

Promote leadership skills, social development, and mentoring for Union Square youth.

Empower young people to thrive by offering robust programs that build leadership, provide mentorship, and expand access to extracurricular activities, job training, and career pathways that prepare youth for success.



Goal 5

Foster job creation and economic development

Increase access to meaningful job opportunities by connecting residents to workforce training, career counseling, and partnerships with local employers, while promoting entrepreneurship and small business development within the community.



Community Meeting

Neighborhood

Goal 1

Calm traffic, ensure pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and improve connections within and outside Union Square.

Enhance transportation infrastructure by implementing traffic-calming measures, creating safer pedestrian crossings, and expanding bike lanes. Strengthen connectivity within the neighborhood and to surrounding areas through improved transit options and accessible pathways that promote mobility for all.

Goal 2

Ensure residents have what they need to be healthy, safe, and economically mobile.

Support a thriving community by providing access to essential resources, including healthcare, public safety initiatives, and

workforce development programs. Focus on creating pathways to economic stability through job training, financial literacy, and access to opportunities that empower residents.

Goal 3

Encourage neighborhood-serving retail, food, services, and activities that support basic needs and community life.

Promote local commerce by attracting businesses that cater to the community's needs, such as grocery stores, healthcare services, and recreational spaces. Create a dynamic environment where residents can access everyday essentials while enjoying spaces for gathering, connection, and cultural enrichment.

“This process has truly given our community a voice. For the first time, I feel like our ideas, concerns, and hopes are being heard and turned into action.”

- RESIDENT

Goal 4

Increase the supply of affordable and high-quality homes for homeowners and renters who want to stay here.

Expand housing options by prioritizing the development and preservation of affordable, high-quality homes. Ensure that long-term residents can remain in the community by supporting diverse housing types and mixed-income developments that reflect the needs of all residents.

Housing

Goal 1

Ensure the right to return for current Wolfe residents and former Church Street South residents.

Prioritize equitable development by guaranteeing that displaced residents have the opportunity to return to the community. Provide resources and support to ensure a seamless transition back to a revitalized neighborhood.

The time is now to address systemic inequities, unlock potential and build a future where EVERY resident can thrive.

Goal 2

Provide affordable, safe, and high-quality housing choices.

Develop housing options that meet the needs of diverse residents while maintaining affordability. Focus on creating safe, sustainable, and attractive living spaces that enhance the quality of life for all.

Goal 3

Deliver new infrastructure for flood resiliency, pedestrian connectivity, parking, and access to public transit.

Invest in resilient infrastructure that protects the neighborhood from flooding while improving pedestrian safety and mobility. Expand parking options and enhance access to public transit, creating a more connected and sustainable community.

Goal 4

Offer amenities for community gatherings, social support, and recreation.

Create shared spaces that foster connection and well-being, including parks, community centers, and recreational facilities. Provide opportunities for residents to engage socially and access essential support services in the heart of their community.

Goal 5

Design spaces for retail and commercial development.

Promote economic growth by incorporating retail and commercial spaces into the neighborhood design. Encourage local businesses, services, and dining options that meet the community's needs while creating jobs and attracting visitors.

Goal 5 (cont'd)

Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization.

Develop high-quality, affordable housing that meets the needs of current residents while attracting new investment. Integrate mixed-use development that enhances the neighborhood's appeal, improves infrastructure, and ensures sustainability.

Moving Forward

The Union Square neighborhood is poised for transformation, with its strategic location near Union Station and downtown New Haven, a ready and resilient community, and a convergence of public and private support.

By prioritizing education, health and wellness, youth development, and employment alongside housing revitalization, the **Union Square Choice Neighborhood Transformation Plan** lays the groundwork for a holistic and inclusive renewal. This comprehensive approach will not only honor the neighborhood's rich history but also position it as a model for sustainable urban revitalization that prioritizes the people who call Union Square home.



2

Neighborhood Context & Existing Conditions

Neighborhood Overview

VISION STATEMENT

The Union Square area will be a thriving community that fosters economic opportunity and social cohesion, with beautiful public spaces that bring people together; stable, affordable housing; opportunities to learn, grow, and stay healthy; and safe, easy connections to the city and region.

Community Context

The emergency housing crisis and historical displacement of low-income communities in New Haven have elevated concerns and fears among residents about the impacts of new development, whether residential or commercial.

New Haven's downtown is undergoing significant redevelopment, driven by both public and private investments. This transformation is expected to accelerate as new projects, such as the recent plans for mixed-use developments and infrastructure improvements, come to fruition.



We conducted a site visit tour with our residents, allowing them to experience the project area firsthand. This engagement helps to ensure residents have a

voice in the process while demonstrating our commitment to understanding the community's history, needs, and aspirations.

The Union Square of Yesterday

Union Square in New Haven has a rich history rooted in its role as a bustling urban hub during the city's industrial and mid-20th-century eras. The neighborhood once thrived as a working-class community, where residents lived in close-knit blocks of row houses and multi-family homes. Its proximity to Union Station made it a vital part of New Haven's economic and social fabric, connecting workers and goods to the city and beyond.

Industrial Backbone: The area was home to factories and warehouses that provided employment to many residents. The sounds of trains and industry were constant.

Residential Life: Union Square was a melting pot of immigrant families, particularly from Italy, Ireland, and Eastern Europe, who

brought their cultures, traditions, and entrepreneurial spirit to the neighborhood.

Local Commerce: The streets were lined with small shops, bakeries, and family-owned businesses that served the needs of the community. Corner stores and markets were neighborhood staples.



Union Station circa 1973; Picture found at: <https://unionstationnewhaven.com/union-station-today/history/>



Union Station Fire circa 1918; Picture found at: <https://www.newhavenmuseum.org/museum-collections/online-exhibitions/micro-histories/union-station/>

The Union Square of Yesterday

Architectural Charm: The neighborhood was filled with turn-of-the-century architecture, including brick row houses, Victorian-style homes, and industrial-era buildings that gave it a distinctive character.

Community Focus: Residents were deeply connected, gathering for block parties, religious services, and local events, which created a strong sense of belonging.

However, as industry waned and urban renewal projects reshaped the city in the mid-20th century, Union Square faced challenges. Factories closed, residents moved to suburban areas, and the once-thriving neighborhood saw its vibrancy dimmed by disinvestment and neglect.



Children playing; Housing Authority of New Haven Archives

By the late 20th century, Union Square faced economic downturns, urban renewal projects, and disinvestment that led to the loss of many historic structures and a decline in community cohesion. The rise of car-centric suburban development drew people and businesses away, leaving parts of the neighborhood underutilized and neglected.

A New Chapter for Union Square Today

Union Square stands on the brink of a transformative era. Fueled by redevelopment initiatives, the neighborhood is rediscovering its identity, merging its historic character with modern innovation.

Honoring the Past: Efforts are underway to preserve the architectural charm and cultural heritage of Union Square, ensuring that its history remains a cornerstone of its future.

This is the moment to restore trust – a foundation that inspires pride, ownership and belonging is essential for shaping and achieving an ambitious vision for Union Square.

Building Sustainability: New developments emphasize green building technologies and energy-efficient design, making Union Square a model for sustainable urban living.

Revitalizing Streetscapes: Investments in walkable infrastructure, public spaces, and community-oriented design are bringing life back to the streets, echoing the vibrancy of the past.

Affordable Housing: Projects like Glendower's redevelopment ensure that Union Square remains accessible to residents of all income levels, fostering a diverse and inclusive community.



New Haven Preservation Trust Website: <https://nhpt.org/nhpt-blog/2020/5/25/in-a-nutshell-union-station>
Gilbert and Olmsted's Preliminary Plan: Improvement of the City of New Haven, 1910.



3

People Plan

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People Overview

The Robert T. Wolfe Apartments in New Haven CT provides 93 units of public housing for seniors 62 and older as well as nonelderly individuals with disabilities. Residents pay no more than 30% of their income toward rent, with a minimum household income set at 30% of the area median income. Given these income restrictions a significant proportion of the residents live below the federal poverty level. The surrounding Union Square neighborhood, historically known as the Hill, faces substantial economic challenges. The median household income in census tract 1402, where Robert T. Wolfe apartments is located, is \$15,192.00 - just 21% of the county median. The area's poverty rate approaches 50%, with over 87% of the population identifying as nonwhite. The median household

income (in 2020 inflation adjusted dollars) for Union Square is \$34,886 compared to \$44,507 for the city and \$71,370 for New Haven County.

These statistics show the economic hardships faced by residents of the Robert T. Wolfe Apartments and the broader Union Square community. Addressing these challenges is crucial for improving health outcomes and overall well-being within the community.

The People Plan component of the Union Square Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan focuses on improving the quality of life and well-being of residents of Robert T. Wolfe and Union Square by addressing key social and economic challenges

through tailored goals and strategies. This component emphasizes collaboration with residents, service providers, and community stakeholders to ensure meaningful and long-term sustainable outcomes.

The target development, Robert T. Wolfe, is an elderly/disabled high-rise development providing 93 homes for residents 62 years and older, non-elderly person with disabilities, and elderly disabled residents. The building includes studio, one bedroom and two-bedroom units. Additionally, the plan focuses on addressing the needs for former Church Street families who may be returning to the revised Union Square. The Church Street South housing complex, once a 301-unit affordable housing development, faced significant challenges due to the



deteriorating conditions, including mold and structural issues. These problems led to health concerns among residents, prompting legal action. In 2015, following inspections that revealed extensive health and structural hazards, the City of New Haven, in collaboration with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and the property owner Northland investment corporation began relocating residents.

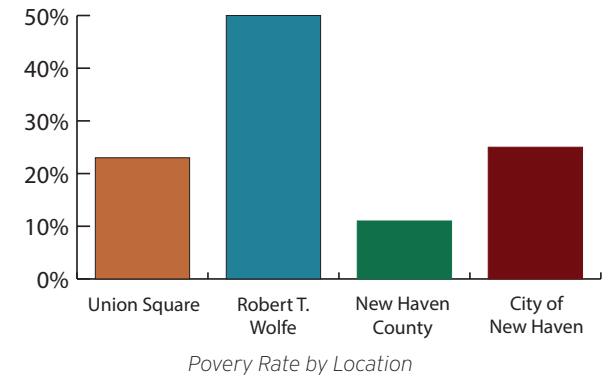
Elm City Communities was tasked with facilitating this process. In 2023, Elm City Communities purchased the 8.28-acre Church Street South property, aiming to redevelop the site into a mixed-use, mixed income community. The community engagement process has involved extensive community input, with meetings held to gather ideas from former residents, as well as other stakeholders.

Goals

The primary goals of the People Plan include enhancing educational attainment, strengthening health and wellness, ensuring resident engagement, fostering youth development and leadership, and promoting employment and job opportunities. To achieve these goals the plan emphasizes improving educational outcomes across all age groups, from early childhood to adulthood, with a particular focus on digital access and technology training. **Health and wellness play a critical role in the People Plan, with an emphasis on addressing physical and mental health disparities, improving access to healthcare services, and promoting healthy lifestyles through partnerships with healthcare providers.**

Resident and community engagement is a cornerstone of the plan, aiming to empower the Robert T. Wolfe residents and the Union Square community to take an active role in shaping and implementing initiatives through leadership development and community input sessions. **Youth development efforts** focus on providing structured opportunities for young residents, including after-school programs, leadership development, and recreational activities. Finally, **employment and economic opportunity initiatives** aim to expand job access,

provide career readiness support, and connect residents to workforce development programs.



Goals

The People Plan relies on several key strategies to ensure success. **Data-driven approaches were used to identify and prioritize needs.** Quantifiable and measurable metrics will be used to measure progress and adjust programs as necessary. Partnerships with local organizations, private sector enterprises, the City of New Haven, The State of Connecticut, Yale University, Southern Connecticut State University and Gateway Community College, and employers will enhance service delivery and maximize impact. Long-term sustainability will be a focus, ensuring that programs and resources remain accessible for the long term. Moreover, the plan will maintain a resident-centered approach, incorporating ongoing feedback and engagement from the community. By addressing these interconnected areas, the People Plan aims to create a vibrant and resilient community in Union Square, ensuring that residents have the tools, resources, and opportunities they need to thrive.

Where should resources be located to address the neighborhood's most compelling needs?

What is working for neighborhood families, and how can these successes be built upon?

How can the community be involved in the choice neighborhoods planning process?



Resident reviewing plans

The goal of the resident assessment and neighborhood assessment was to address these questions, develop the necessary strategies and identify the actions that create the biggest impact for neighborhood investment.

The planning process strives to ensure the forces of underrepresented community members were heard and were thoroughly and fairly represented.

Neighborhood Needs Assessment

The Yale team synthesized the findings into a comprehensive report, which was reviewed by the Steering Committee, Resident Advisory Committee, and task forces to ensure all stakeholder perspectives were captured. Key data points included:

Demographic Overview

- Approximately 89% of Union Square neighborhood residents are minorities, Latin X and African Americans
- 33% live below the poverty level.
- The area median income for the neighborhood is \$34,886.
- Unemployment Rate: 15%, double the city average of 7%.
- Of residents 25 years or older, 76% have a high school diploma or equivalent but only 13% have a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Life expectancy is 75.9 compared to 74.6 in West River, while the state average is 80.1.
- Rates of high blood pressure, diabetes, and coronary heart diseases are all higher in the neighborhood than the city and county.
- 52% of the surveyed respondents responded they have been told by their doctor they have hypertension; 29% responded, diabetes; 27% asthma; 21% obesity.
- 39% of the surveyed rated their overall health as excellent or good.
- 64% of the surveyed residents responded they are completely or mostly satisfied with their life.
- There were 76 fatal shootings in New Haven between 2020 and 2023 period of these 14 occurred in the Union Square neighborhood.



Resident Speaking at our Kick-Off Meeting



Reviewing Plans



Viewing a presentation by our architects

Neighborhood Needs Assessment

Housing Data

- 71% of residents are renters.
- 35% of rental units were classified as substandard, requiring significant repairs.
- 60% of renters are cost-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing.
- The neighborhood has a 7% eviction rate, reflecting severe housing insecurity.
- There is a gap of nearly 900 units of affordable housing for families whose income falls below 30% of area median income.

Employment and Economic Conditions

- 22% of the surveyed residents cited the lack of disability accommodation as the number one barrier to employment.
- 21% of the surveyed residents cited transportation as their main barrier to employment.
- 20% of the surveyed residents cited the need for training as their main barrier to employment.
- Residents are likely to be employed in lower paying fields that do not require a college degree.



Residents and architects working together



Providing Input



Our Meet & Greet

Resident Needs Assessment

The Resident Needs Assessment for the Union Square Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan, which was conducted by the Inclusive Economic Development Lab at Yale School of Management, identifies critical challenges and priorities faced by the Robert T. Wolfe residents, based on surveys focus groups, and direct engagement, the Resident Needs Assessment Questionnaire was developed by the Yale team with multiple points for community input.

An initial draft of the survey questionnaire was developed by researchers and workshopped during a combined People Task force and Resident Advisory committee meeting convened by ECC/Glendower and the CNI Union Square planning team on Thursday, February 29, 2024, held at the High School in the Community.

During April and May 2024, the Yale team worked with ECC to develop the protocols for administering the Resident Needs Assessment Survey with the residents of the Robert T. Wolfe public housing apartments (94 residents). On June 5, 2024, the Yale team with assistance from ECC kicked off the survey administration phase with an onsite meeting with the residents at Robert T. Wolfe Apartments.

Starting on June 10, the Yale team began the survey process. Each resident met with a team of two researchers, one who administered the survey and the second who tracked the resident responses and took notes. The surveys were administered face-to-face, with the researcher asking each question, and recording the answers on iPads and using the Qualtrics survey platform. The Yale team successfully administered 76 surveys with the residents of the Robert T. Wolfe Apartments, (80% of residents, exceeding the 65% target).

The Yale team developed a different strategy for recruiting the former Church Street residents. This group was more challenging to survey since they had lived at the site prior to 2015, but in 2015 the site was determined uninhabitable at which time all residents living there were relocated. ECC/Glendower set a goal of 40 residents to interview from the 117 residents listed in the database maintained by ECC. The Yale team was able to survey 59 former Church Street South residents (exceeding the target of 40 residents). Thus, the Yale team surveyed a total of 135 residents (76 Wolfe residents and 59 former Church Street South residents).

Resident Assessment Profile:

- **76 residents of Robert T. Wolfe Apartments**
- **(80% out of possible 94 residents, exceeding target of 65%)**
- **59 former residents of Church Street South Apartments (exceeding target of 40 residents)**
- **Total residents surveyed = 135**

“I’m really excited that we get to share our ideas and help plan something that works for our neighborhood. It’s great to see everyone working together to make things better for all of us!”

Resident Needs Assessment

Below is a detailed summary of the results of these surveys.

Demographics

A database providing demographic information of the 90 residents residing in the Robert T. Wolfe building as of 11/25/2024 is the foundation of the following demographic snapshot. The Wolfe building provides housing primarily for residents who are elderly and or living with a disability. Of the total residents:

- 66% are designated as “elderly” and 87% “disabled”
- 58% of the residents identify as Black/African American
- 30% identify as Hispanic or Latino
- 12% identify as White

Only 6% of the residents are categorized as “work able” with residents reporting income sources ranging from:

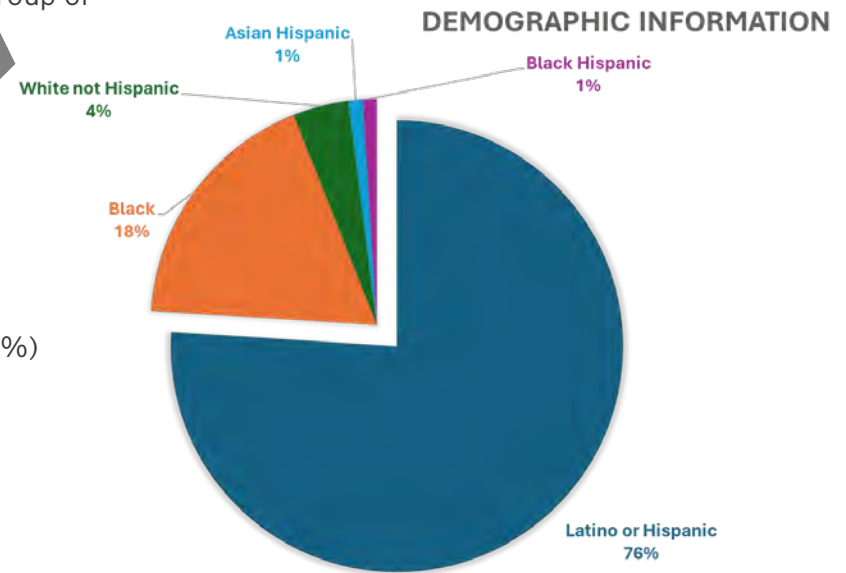
- Social Security (52%), SSI (49%)
- General Assistance (11%), Wage income (7%)
- Pension (1%), and
- Other non-wage income (1%)

There are no minors living in at Robert T. Wolfe Apartments although grandchildren are reported to visit.

A database providing demographic information of 117 former Church Street South apartment residents still in the Elm City Community Elite database is the foundation of the following demographic snapshot. Of the total 282 residents living at the former Church Street South apartments when they were deemed uninhabitable in 2015, these are 117 residents remaining in the ECC public housing system. This group of residents are:

- Primarily Latino or Hispanic (76%)
- Black Hispanic (1%)
- Asian Hispanic (1%)
- White not Hispanic (4%)
- Black (18%)

A subset of households in this group are families with children under 6 years old (13%). **The average number of residents per household is 3 family members and 47% are 1 or 2 member households. In terms of larger households, 20% are 3 member households, 17% of the group have 4 member households, 9% five person households, and 7% of the remaining.**



Resident Needs Assessment

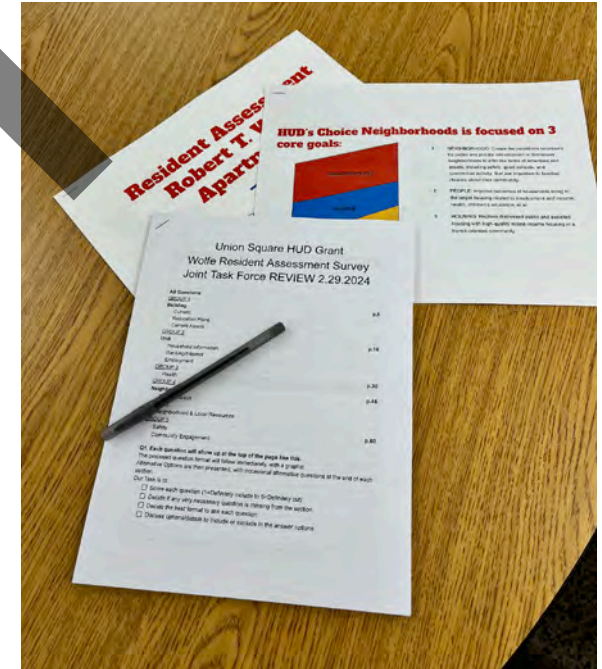
Source of Income

Table 1. Number of Wolfe Residents Receiving Each Source of Income (Many have more than one) designated as "elderly" and 87% "disabled."

Source of Income	# HH Receiving	% HH Receiving
Other Wage	54	7%
Social Security	26	52%
SSI	25	49%
General Assistance	10	11%
Other Non-Wage	14	1%
Pension	1	1%

Table 2. Number of Former Church Street South Households (HH) Receiving Each Source of Income (Many have more than one).

Source of Income	# HH Receiving	% HH Receiving
Other Wage	54	46%
Social Security	26	22%
SSI	25	9%
General Assistance	10	11%
Unemployment Benefits	6	5%
TANF (formerly AFDC)	3	3%
Federal Wage	1	1%
Pension	1	1%



Resident Assessments

A Collaborative Planning Process

Phase 1: Mobilize - Project

- This phase involves organizing the team, developing a comprehensive outreach strategy, and inviting stakeholders to serve on committees and task forces.

Phase 2: Needs Assessment & Analysis

- Phase II focuses on identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This phase also involves conducting a Needs Assessment and Market Analysis.

Phase 3: Visioning

- Once data from the Needs Assessment and Market Analysis are analyzed, the focus shifts to exploring strategies to address the issues identified in these analyses.

Phase 4: Draft Transformation Plan

- Phase IV focuses on creating a vision for the Transformation Plan based on the preferences of the community residents expressed during the Visioning Phase.

Phase 5: Final Transformation Plan

- During this phase, the task forces will revise the Plan based on feedback from the community and HUD.

Phase 6: Implementation

- The final phase of the process focuses on turning ideas outlined in the Plan into action.

Task Forces and Their Contributions

Between June 6 and August 2, 2024, The Inclusive Economic Development Lab at the Yale School of Management conducted the Resident Assessment of the Robert T. Wolfe and former Church Street South resident as part of the Choice Neighborhood Transformation Plan. Principal Investigator Kate Cooney led the survey. The Neighborhood Assessment was conducted under the auspices of the Yale Urban Design Workshop with Adrei Harell serving as the principal investigator.

The Neighborhood Needs Assessment and the Resident Needs Assessment combined with the Opportunity Assessment conducted by Torti Gallas and Partners, Inc., quantitative data analysis and qualitative community engagement, ensure that the findings reflected the realities and aspirations of the neighborhood's residents. The process also involved collaboration with several key committees and task forces to ensure inclusivity and stakeholder input.



Providing Input

ECC/Glendower with input from the Robert T. Wolfe and community stakeholders developed a collaborative, inclusive and transparent planning process that included a Union Square Transformation Committee consisting of a Steering Committee, Early Action Activities Committee, Housing Task Force, Neighborhood Task Force, People Task Force, and Resident Advisory Committee.

Focus Groups:

- Focus groups with business owners, youth, and community leaders highlighted a range of concerns, including overcrowded housing, limited youth engagement opportunities, and the need for economic development initiatives.

Steering Committee:

- A Steering Committee composed of community leaders, local government officials, and representatives from various task forces and committees provided guidance throughout the assessment process. This group ensured alignment between the assessment findings and the broader goals of the Choice Neighborhood Transformation Plan.

Resident Advisory Committee:

- A Resident Advisory Committee, consisting of Robert T. Wolfe residents, played an essential role in shaping the assessment process by ensuring that the voices of those directly affected by the transformation efforts were represented. The committee reviewed survey results and focus group insights, helping to refine priorities and action items based on real-time feedback. The Committee also helps residents to participate in outreach to residents to ensure maximum participation.

People Task Force:

- The People Task Force, which included representatives from local social service providers, healthcare organizations, educational institutions, and residents, helped identify the community's social and economic challenges. The Task Force conducted meetings December 2023 and February, March, May, June, July, and October 2024.

SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

The People Task Force, with input from the Steering Committee and the other task forces, conducted two People-oriented SWOT analyses. The results of the analysis are shown below.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD:

"Community not working together"

"Need access to affordable, fresh food"



"Want a job but can't find one that meets my needs"



"Improve school academics"

"Provide affordable daycare"



"Increase access to adult education"

"Lack of resources for early childhood education"

"Adult education for ESL"

Table 3: People Task Force SWOT Exercise Results

STRENGTHS

- Parks to gather*
- Library
- Space
- Public Transportation*
- Neighborhoodlike
- Proximity to hospitals/clinics*
- Access to highway
- Local businesses
- Community centers for youth & seniors
- Diversity/culture/arts
- Schools
- Green
- Police Department
- Train station
- Access to Downtown*
- Restaurants*

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of Lighting
- Lack of Security/Safety*
- Community not Working Together
- Walkability
- Lack of Information Centers
- Lack of Signage/Wayfinders
- Greenspace for Physical Activity
- Lack of Adult Education
- Schools Need Physical Improvement
- Lack of Access to Fresh, Affordable Foods
- Neighborhoodlike

**Items that came up more than once*

Table 3: People Task Force SWOT Exercise Results

OPPORTUNITIES

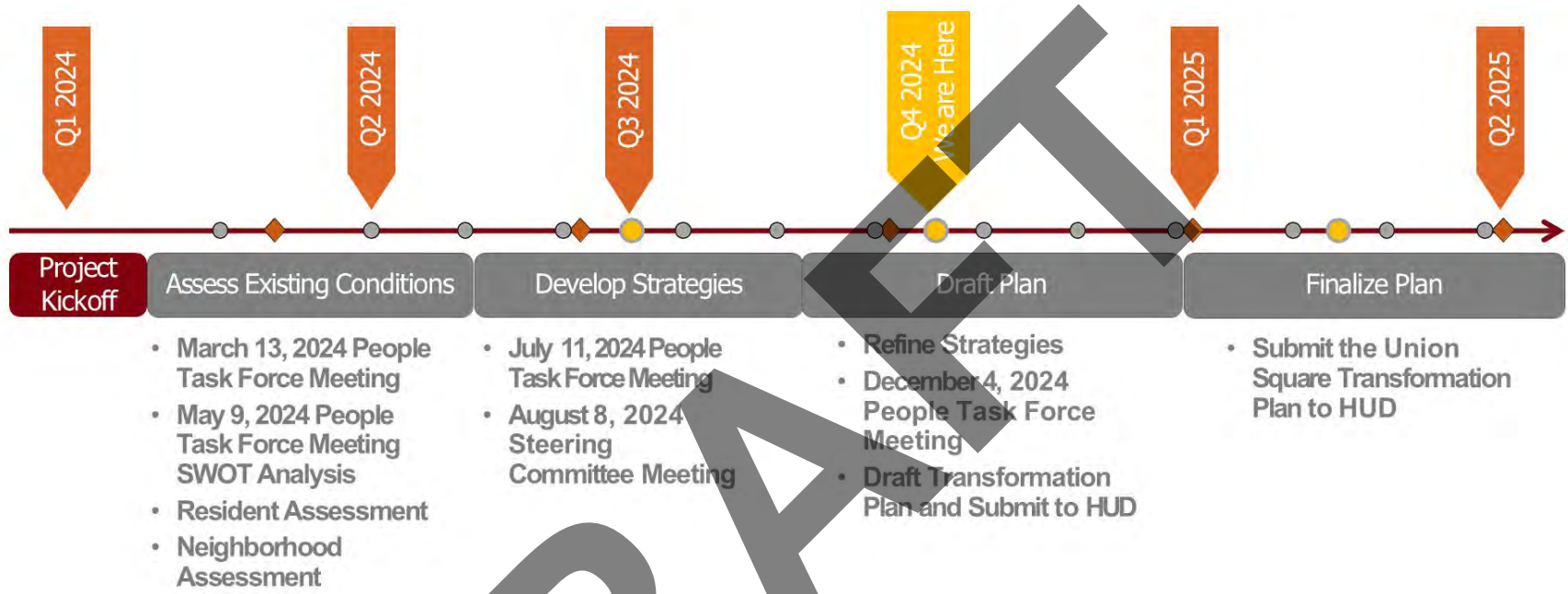
- Recreational spaces for youth and elderly; indoor and outdoor*
- Community Garden
- Development of children & adult education: children's programs, computer literacy, GED, Continuing Education, financial literacy
- Financial literacy & opportunities
- Workforce training
- Jobs & job creation
- Walk-in clinic
- Update public spaces.
- After school programs
- More funding
- Supermarket w/ fresh foods: Price Rite, Aldi
- Building sense of community and friendliness
- Senior center/community center*
- Elderly services
- School*
- Neighborhoodlike
- Police Department
- Train station
- Access to Downtown*
- Restaurants*

THREATS

- Relocation of police department
- Decrease in utilization services.
- Increase traffic.
- Affordable daycare
- Affordable housing
- Lack of community social service funding
- Speeding vehicles causing harm to residents.
- Lack of resources for early education
- Lack of Care4Kids
- Lack of qualified teachers
- Adult education for English learners (ESL)
- Cost of healthcare
- First time homebuyers funding and education
- More funding for sidewalks to accommodate walking.
- Ensure that property managers do their job and manage the property:
 - fix door
 - fix elevator
 - fix intercom
 - fix stairs
 - fix sidewalks
 - fix leaks
 - fix roof
- Neighborhoodlike

**Items that came up more than once*

PROJECT TIMELINE



DRAFT

The Consensus People Plan

Vision Statement

An engaged and thriving Hill and Union Square community with quality education, ample employment opportunities, social interactions, and excellent health care for all.



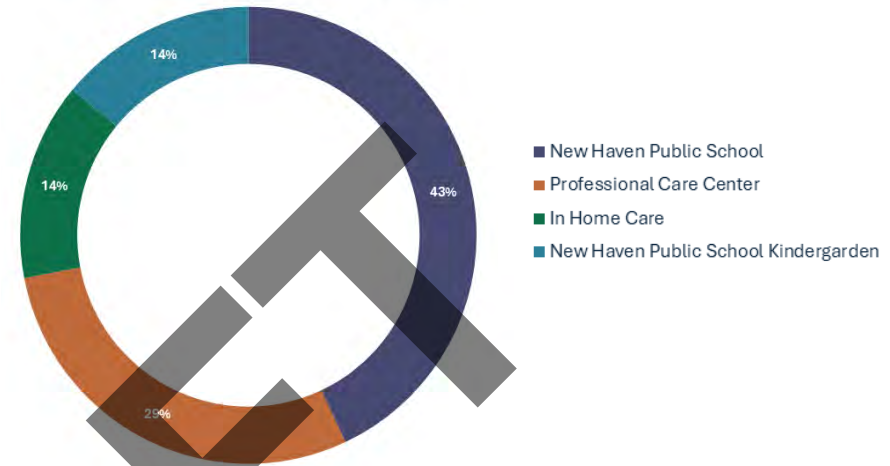
Road Trip!

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The neighborhood is approximately 12% of the City's population and 2% of the County's. Almost 20% of the Union Square Neighborhood's population is non-citizen, compared to 11% of the City's and only 6% of the County's. The Union Square Neighborhood has a much younger population than the surrounding County, with a median age of thirty-one vs. 40.5 in the County. The median age of the City and Union Square Neighborhood are similar, but the Union Square Neighborhood has a large population of those under 18 (29% of the population vs. 23%), while the City overall has a high population of college-age students. Households in the Union Square Neighborhood tend to be slightly larger (average 2.89) than those in the City and County (average ~2.5). A high percentage of Union Square neighborhood households are female householders with no spouse present (30% in Union Square compared to 22% in the city and 14% in the County).

Today, forty-three percent of the families surveyed indicated that their child attends New Haven Public School preschool, 29 percent said their child attends a professional care center, 14 percent said their child receives care in their home, and 14 percent said their child attends New Haven Public School kindergarten. Twenty-seven percent of the families surveyed

Type of Schooling Selected by Parents



indicated that they have a child between the ages of 0 and 5 living in their household.

Unemployment, poverty, and a lack of educational attainment in large households pose several challenges in the Union Square community. According to the Resident Assessment, 73 percent of residents indicated they are unemployed, while 43 percent said they are interested in being employed; 22 percent listed the lack of disability accommodations as the major challenge to getting a job at the level they would like; 21 percent listed transportation, 20 percent listed the need for more training; 16 percent listed need for better education, and 15 percent listed management of health conditions. Thirty-nine percent of these residents stated their overall health is fair or worse.

Despite the challenges, Union Square has significant assets that provide a foundation for positive change. Eighty percent of the Robert T. Wolfe residents participated in the Resident Assessment survey and feedback sessions for the Union Square Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, reflecting strong community interest in shaping the future of their neighborhood. Yale University, Gateway Community College, and the University of New Haven are within a short distance, offering potential for educational and workforce collaborations. Community-based clinics such as Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center provide critical services for low-income residents, addressing health disparities.



Task Force Meetings



Union Square is within walking distance of Union Station, which serves Amtrak and Metro-North, making it one of the most transit-accessible areas in the region. Its proximity to downtown New Haven allows residents to access jobs in the city's growing tech, healthcare, and education sectors. Union Square's history of economic transformation, cultural diversity, and resilience has shaped its current challenges and assets. By preserving its historical identity while addressing systemic inequities, Union Square has the potential to become a model for inclusive urban redevelopment. Federal investment, local partnerships, and community-led

initiatives will be critical to ensuring that future growth benefits all residents while honoring the neighborhood's rich history. Developed from community input and quantitative and qualitative data, the People Task Force rooted its vision in three overarching goals that connect to the goals of the housing and neighborhood plans: health, education, youth development, and employment. ECC/Glen-dower, the city, and all the partners have aligned their resources to achieve the overarching goals. Our People strategies will yield a sustainable community that fosters thriving residents, where people

of all ages have access to the health-related services they need, where students graduate from high school with skills that enable them to support themselves and pursue their career goals, and where all residents have access to fresh, affordable nutrition.



Vision for the Hill Community

An engaged and thriving Hill and Union Square community with quality education, ample employment opportunities, social interactions, and excellent health care for all.

People Goals

GOAL 1 ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION TO ALL RESIDENTS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

GOAL 2 ENSURE EXCELLENT HEALTH CARE FOR ALL RESIDENTS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

GOAL 3 STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

GOAL 4 SUPPORT YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

GOAL 5 FOSTER JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL 1: ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION TO ALL RESIDENTS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

- 1.1 Improve K-12 Educational Outcomes
- 1.2 Increase access to early childhood programs for children aged six months to five years old

GOAL 2: ENSURE EXCELLENT HEALTH CARE FOR ALL RESIDENTS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

- 2.1 Improve housing conditions, including lead abatement, mold and remediation
- 2.2 Increase access to healthy food
- 2.3 Address transportation barriers that prevent access to healthcare facilities and other critical services
- 2.4 Promote health literacy and positive community engagement
- 2.5 Strengthen mental health and substance abuse support
- 2.6 Incorporate health and wellness programs into local youth programs

GOAL 3: STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

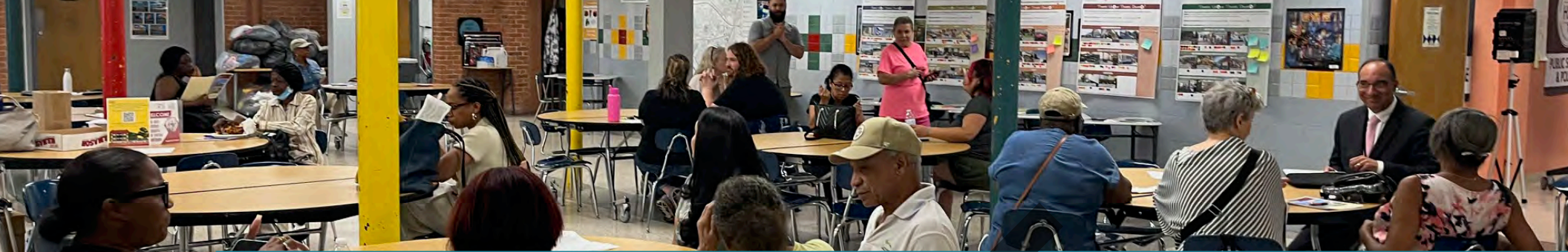
- 3.1 Enhance Community Engagement and Partnerships

GOAL 4: SUPPORT YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 Promote leadership skills, social skills, social development and mentoring for Union Square.
- 4.2 Enhance family engagement and community building.
- 4.3 Promote youth employment programs.

GOAL 5: FOSTER JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 Expand higher education and vocational training opportunities to enhance opportunities for employment
- 5.2 Expand employment opportunities for elderly individuals and persons with disabilities in Union Square



GOAL 1

Enhance the quality of education to all residents in the neighborhood

Connecticut Voices for Children (CT Voices) published a report in 2023 titled, “The 2023 State of Early Childhood: A Response to the Governor’s Blue-Ribbon Panel on Child Care and a Continuation of Spotlighting Disenfranchised Populations,” focuses on children with special needs and aligns with recommendations from the Governor’s Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Care. The report highlights several challenges in Connecticut’s early childhood education landscape:

- **Decline in Family Child Care Providers:** The number of licensed Family Child Care (FCC) providers decreased from 1,908 in 2022 to 1,817 in 2023, continuing a two-decade trend that has seen over 1,300 providers leave the industry.
- **High Child Care Costs:** Connecticut ranks among the most expensive states for childcare, with average annual costs of \$18,156 for center-based care and \$11,955 for family childcare homes. This financial burden disproportionately affects low-income families, limiting their access to quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) services.
- **Declining Availability of Child Care Slots:** Between 2022 and 2023, the number of state-funded infant and toddler care slots decreased by 3,490 (a 17% reduction), and preschool slots declined by 2,085 (a 4% reduction), reaching the lowest levels since data collection began in 2005.
- **Increasing Special Education Needs:** The number of young children requiring special education services has steadily increased over the past decade. However, access to specialized services remains limited due to low reimbursement rates and staff shortages, impacting families’ ability to find appropriate care.
- **Invest in Workforce Compensation:** Ensure early childhood educators receive dignified wages comparable to K-12 educators with similar credentials to reduce staff attrition and attract qualified professionals.

GOAL 1

Enhance the quality of education to all residents in the neighborhood

- **Develop Employment Pathways:** Create financial incentives and educational programs to diversify the Union Square neighborhood workforce, including scholarships for individuals from underrepresented communities and nontraditional certification pathways.
- **Prioritize Under-Resourced Communities:** Focus on establishing new ECE centers in areas lacking adequate services, particularly for children with special needs, to ensure equitable access across the state.

At the pre-K through eighth grade levels, students in New Haven have a neighborhood preference for the closest school geographically. In the Union Square neighborhood, where there is a relatively high density of primary schools (5 schools), students may have a school only a few blocks further away to which they receive no preference and where they would have the same odds of getting in as a student living on the other side of the city. Likely, some Union Square students

attend their closest geographic school, others attend neighborhood schools where they did not receive preference, and others attend schools elsewhere in the City of New Haven. Given the number of schools in the Union Square Neighborhood, many students who attend Union Square schools live in other parts of the city. Therefore, the Union Square schools' test scores and other data would only partially represent Union Square students.

According to data collected by the Connecticut Department of Education, of the primary schools (pre-K through 8) in the Union Square neighborhood, four out of five schools, have standardized test passing rates below the district average in math and reading. All the Union Square neighborhood primary schools have a percentage of low-income students consistent with or above the district-wide level.

On a district-wide level, a recent study by Boston Consulting Group looked at the at-risk or disconnected population (ages 14-26) across Connecticut. The study

defines at-risk as those in danger of not graduating, with disconnected meaning those who are either not employed, not in school, non-high school graduates who are employed, or incarcerated individuals.

The consulting group identified at-risk students as those who are falling behind on credit attainment, chronic absenteeism, and behavioral issues. Results from the study indicated that at-risk students have a higher likelihood of becoming disconnected over time.

The study shows significant negative economic consequences associated with disconnection, stating that "experiencing disconnection has a significant and sustained negative impact on employment and wages."

Statewide, 19% of students are considered at-risk, but in New Haven, that figure rises to 45%, the third highest rate behind Hartford and New Britain. While the specific figure is unknown for Union Square neighborhood residents or schools, the at-risk percentage at these schools is likely elevated beyond the statewide level, given relative graduation rates across the city.

1.1: Improve K-12 Educational Outcomes

Residents of the Union Square neighborhood have lower levels of educational attainment than the residents of the city and county as a whole. Of Union Square residents twenty-five or older, 76% have at least a high school diploma, GED, or equivalent, compared to 86% of all City of New Haven residents and 90% of County residents. Only 13% have a bachelor's degree or higher, while 35% of City and 36% of County residents have a bachelor's degree or higher. Of those between 18 and 24, Union Square Neighborhood residents tend to have lower levels of educational attainment: 78% of Union Square residents have at least a high school diploma, GED, or equivalent compared to 92% of City of New Haven residents and 90.4% of County residents 18-24. While some in the 18-24 age bracket are in college, to compare rates of completion, ~15% of those in the City of New Haven and County of New Haven, respectively, have received a bachelor's degree, while only 3.4% of Union Square Neighborhood residents in that age bracket.

Educational attainment among Union Square residents varies by age bracket. The oldest residents (65+) are the least likely to have graduated from high school (40%), followed by the 18-24 category (24%--although some of those residents may be in the process of receiving their high school diploma or equivalent). The 25-34 age bracket has the highest percentage with a bachelor's degree or higher, at 24%.

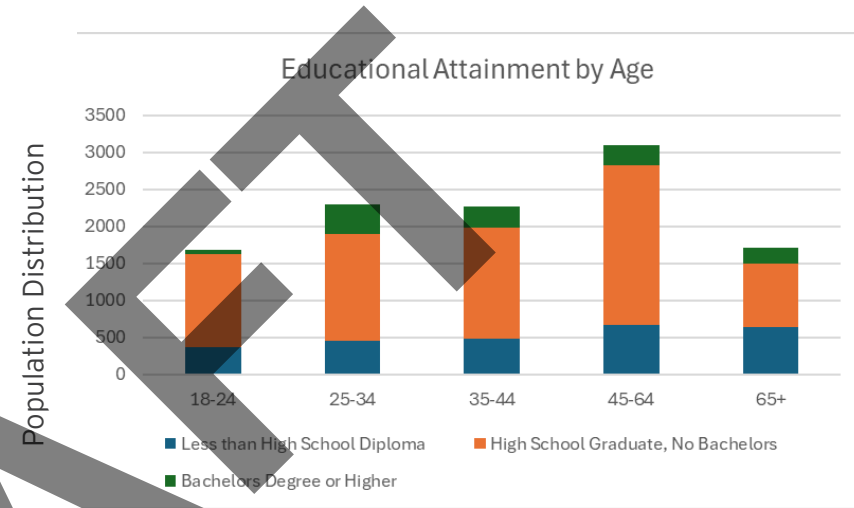


Figure 2: Population distribution by age and educational attainment by age in 2020 for the Union Square Neighborhood. (YUDW, 2024. Data: U.S. Census Bureau, 5-year American Community Survey, 2016-2020)

1.1: Improve K-12 Educational Outcomes

Educational attainment also varies by race in Union Square. The Black population has the highest levels, with 85% holding at least a high school diploma or equivalent. Of the Hispanic or Latino origin population and the white population, about 70% have at least a high school diploma or equivalent.

The lack of educational attainment for the Robert T. Wolfe residents is even more acute. According to data collected through the Resident Assessment, 28 percent of the Robert T. Wolfe residents surveyed indicated they have a high school diploma, four percent indicated they have a GED, and one percent indicated they have a college degree or higher.

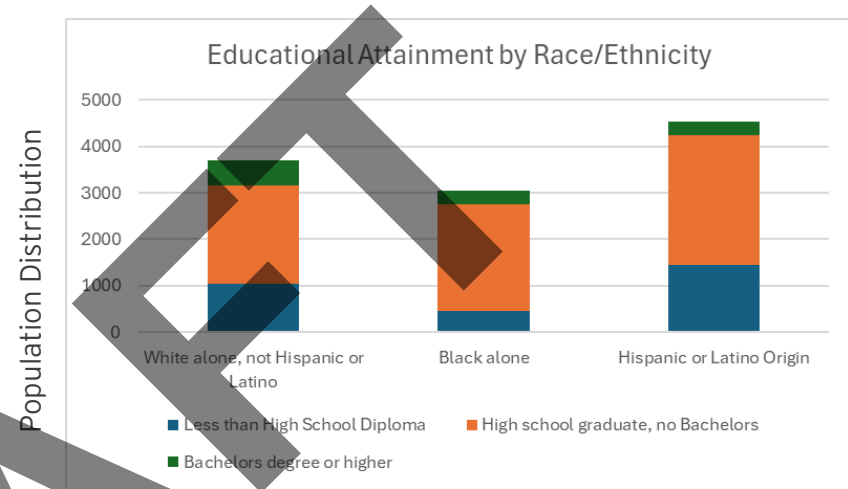


Figure 3: Educational Attainment by Race / Ethnicity in 2020 for the Union Square Neighborhood. (YUDW, 2024. Data: U.S. Census Bureau, 5- year American Community Survey, 2016-2020)



CED Events



CED Events

1.1: Improve K-12 Educational Outcomes



CED Events

The Leadership, Education, and Athletics in Partnership (LEAP) was founded in 1992 by leading educators, students, and community activists in New Haven to address a need; They saw that youth and communities of color were systematically underserved and faced barriers such as unequal educational opportunities and generational poverty. Thus, the founders established free after school and summer programs based on a multi mentorship model designed to address systemic inequalities by harnessing the power of young people to transform their communities. LEAP's mission is to develop the strengths and talents the young leaders who create and implement year-round,

neighborhood-based programs designed to achieve positive outcomes for children in neighborhoods that have historically experienced systemic disinvestment. LEAP operates two community centers and seven neighborhood-based sites. They provide children with a welcoming place to learn, explore, and grow, while offering teens and young adults a platform to find their voice and become forces for their community.

The neighborhoods served by LEAP have child poverty rates as high as 57%, more than four times the Connecticut average of 13 percent. This is why they pride themselves on employing 309 young people annually and place an emphasis on getting high school students successfully to col-

lege. Since their founding, LEAP has become a trusted community institution serving over 1,633 local youth this year. As stated above, LEAP serves six neighborhoods throughout New Haven seven different sites: Dwight-Kensington, Fairhaven, The Hill, Newhallville, and Quinnipiac Meadows. Four age groups are served by LEAP: 7- to 12-year-olds, 13- to 15-year-olds, 16- to 18-year-olds, and college-aged young students. LEAP operates its Hill South neighborhoods Program at the Roberto Clemente Leadership Academy, located at 360 Columbus Avenue. The site serves as avenue for LEAP's after-school and summer program for aged 7 to 12 residing in The Hill community.



CED Events

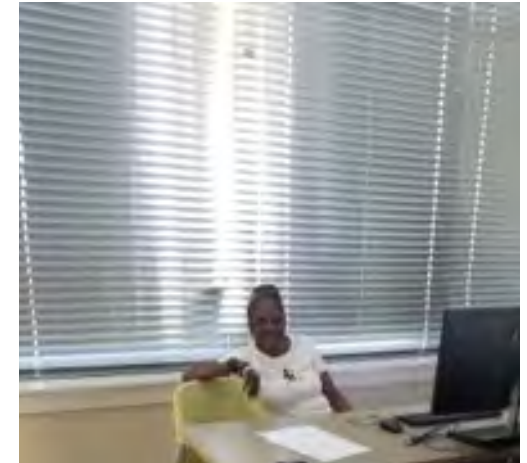
1.1: Improve K-12 Educational Outcomes

As part of the Union Square Neighborhood Transformation Plan, LEAP will foster positive youth development, academic success, and community engagement. LEAP's focus on mentorship, leadership training, and enrichment activities will help Union Square's youth reach their full potential while contributing to the broader goals of community revitalization. LEAP will provide educational support to Union Square youth, focusing on academic achievement and enrichment activities that help students build critical skills and stay on track for success.

Though LEAPers participate in a wide variety of activities, LEAP places a special emphasis on literacy. During summer mornings and school-year afternoons, LEAPers learn through a literacy curriculum designed to build reading skills and critical thinking. This past year, LEAP's dedicated curriculum staff implemented a redesigned curriculum to better engage their children by including more culturally relevant authors, activities, and themes that reflect the backgrounds and experiences of our LEAP kids. This past summer, the curriculum was organized into five units based on five different themes—“Cultural Connections”, “Music Makers”,



CED Events



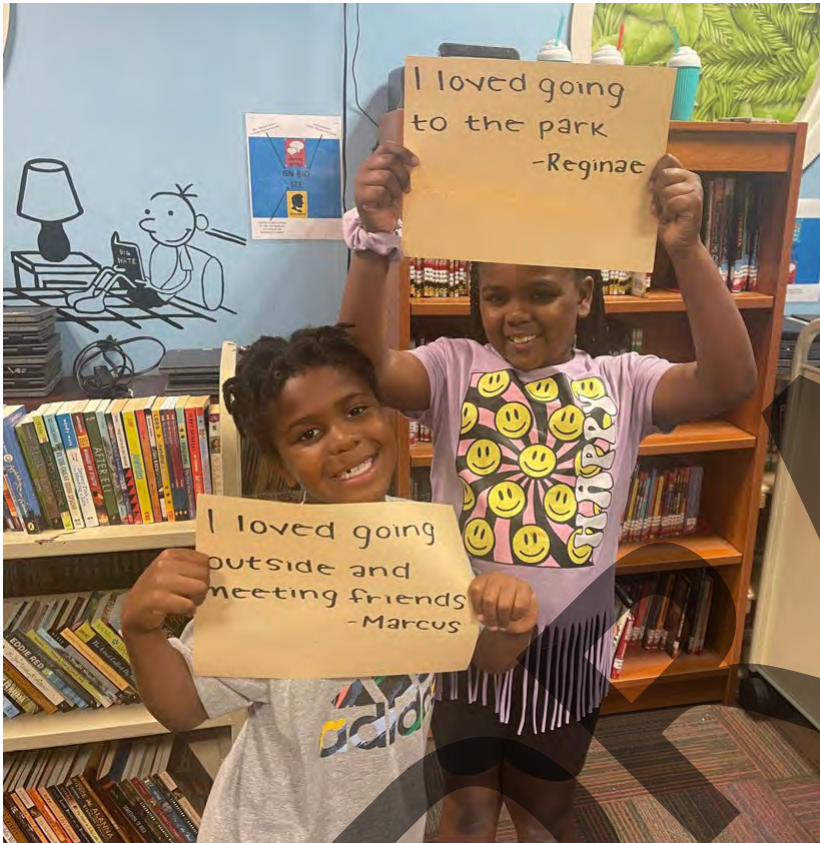
1.1: Improve K-12 Educational Outcomes

“Outdoor Activities”, “The Artist in Me”, and “I Matter, You Matter, We Matter!” Although units are the same across all age groups, the books and activities within each unit vary to be age appropriate. There are three lessons planned for each unit, of which include relevant books to be read as material for the lessons. LEAP’s literacy curriculum also addresses the different learning styles of children in our program. For example, they offer visual and hands-on learning to complement their reading. In this way, LEAP empowers young people through literacy and encourages them to build a strong sense of self.



CED Events

1.1: Improve K-12 Educational Outcomes



CED Events

ACTION PLAN

Children's Programs - Ages 7-12

- **After-School Academic Support:** LEAP will offer after-school tutoring and homework assistance to Union Square youth, particularly those in elementary and middle schools. These programs will be staffed by college students and trained volunteers who serve as mentors and academic coaches, ensuring that children receive personalized attention.
- **Literacy and Reading Programs:** LEAP's literacy programs will focus on improving reading skills and fostering a love of learning among young children. The program will include one-on-one and group reading sessions and interactive literacy games and activities designed to enhance comprehension and language skills.
- **Summer Learning:** During the summer months, LEAP will offer summer learning programs to prevent summer learning loss. These programs combine academic activities with fun, engaging experiences such as arts and crafts, science experiments, and outdoor exploration. BGCNH will also offer programs that prevent summer learning loss and provide opportunities for youth to engage in STEM activities, arts and crafts, sports, and team-building exercises.

1.1: Improve K-12 Educational Outcomes

Another major community partnership that will assist with student engagement and success is the Boys and Girls Club of Greater New Haven (BGC-GNH). For over 150 years, BGC-GNH has served thousands of New Haven children, making it the longest serving Club in the country. As part of the Union Square Neighborhood Transformation Plan, Boys & Girls Clubs of America's national evidenced-based programs support youth's academic success, good character, citizenship, and healthy lifestyles from elementary through high school. Our evidence-informed academic enrichment programs build on what young people are learning in school and help them discover topics they are passionate about. Our primary goal is to support, inspire and enable young people, especially those most in need of such support, to realize their potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens.

BGC-GNH will provide educational support to Union Square youth, focusing on academic achievement and enrichment activities that help students

develop the skills needed to be successful both in school and later as adults.

- **After-School Programs:** BGC-GNH will offer structured after-school programs that provide homework help, tutoring, and educational enrichment activities. Evidenced-based programming includes Project Learn and Power Hour, which reinforces academic enrichment through activities and games that encourages Club members of every age to become self-directed learners. LEAP will also offer after-school tutoring and homework assistance to Union Square youth, particularly those in elementary and middle schools. These programs will be staffed by college students and trained volunteers who serve as mentors and ac-



CED Events

1.1: Improve K-12 Educational Outcomes

demographic coaches, ensuring that children receive personalized attention.

- **DIY and Holistic STEM Enrichment:** BGCNH will offer an evidence-based STEM program that connects youth to science themes they encounter regularly through hands-on activities and projects. LEAP will also expand its offerings to include specialized programs in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and creative arts, ensuring that Union Square youth can access hands-on learning experiences that develop critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.
- **College and Career Readiness:** BGCNH will offer college and career readiness programs for middle and high school students, including college preparation workshops, financial aid counseling, and exposure to different career paths through internships and mentorship programs.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

Quantitative progress will be measured by the percentage of students graduating within four and five years, percentage of graduates enrolling in college or trade school within 6 months of graduation, and the percentage of students participating in after school and summer programs. Data can be collected from DataHaven, Connecticut State Department of Education, and New Haven Public School System. Data on participation in after school and summer programs can be obtained from the participating partners.

- A 5 percent increase in the number of 18-24-year-old who obtain a GED or high school diploma for Union Square students.
- A 5 percent increase in secondary enrollment for Union Square graduates.
- A 5 percent increase in grade 3 reading proficiency.



CED Events

1.2: Increase access to early childhood education programs for children ages 6 weeks to 3 years

According to the Resident Needs Assessment, none of the residents at the target development have a minor living with them. The survey does however point out that 13% of the former Church Street South have a child under aged 18. While specific figures for Union Square are not readily available, we can extrapolate using national data. Nationally, children under 5 represent about 6 percent of the total population. In Union Square, six percent of 15,675 equal 940 child under 5. Children aged six weeks to three years make up about two-thirds of the under-5 population. Thus, we can extrapolate that there are approximately 627 children aged six weeks to three years. Moreover, since this Transformation calls for up to 2,500 new units of housing at the target public housing and adjacent former Church Street South sites, using the Union Square average household size of 2.89, we can extrapolate that there will be approximately 286 children aged six weeks to 3 years living in the revitalized Union Square development.

Early childhood learning for children aged six weeks to three years is critically important because it lays the foundation

for a child's cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development. The first three years of life are a period of rapid brain growth and development, making it a crucial time for intervention that can have lifelong benefits. This is the prime time for developing key skills like language,

sensory processing, and problem solving. Missed opportunities during this can lead to gaps in development that are harder to address later. These early experiences influence a child's ability to learn, foreign relationships, and succeed later in life, while also benefitting families and the Union Square community as a whole.



CED Events

1.2: Increase access to early childhood education programs for children ages 6 weeks to 3 years



CED Events

It is important to note that the Census counted only 350 children ages 3 and 4 living in zip code 06519 and that they report a relatively high margin of error with this data. The margin of error is $\pm 17.1\%$ for the statistics for the Union Square Neighborhood, suggesting that the percentage enrolled in school may be as low as 46% and as high as 80%.

The New Haven Early Childhood Council (NHECC) is a collaborative organization that ensures every child in New Haven has access to high-quality early childhood education, health services, and family support from birth to age five. As a key partner in the Union Square Neighborhood Transformation Plan, the NHECC will be pivotal in coordinating efforts to improve early childhood outcomes, providing expertise in policy, planning, and service delivery. The council will promote school readiness, support families, and build a solid early childhood system for Union Square residents.

NHECC will serve as a central coordinating body, bringing together early childhood service providers, educators, healthcare professionals, and community organiza-

tions to ensure that Union Square families can access a comprehensive, integrated support system for young children.

LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens) Head Start will be a vital partner in the Union Square Neighborhood Transformation Plan, focusing on early childhood education and family support services. LULAC offers early childhood education programs for children eight weeks to 5 years old. Their Early Head Start Program serves infants and toddlers from eight weeks to three years old. Their Head Start Pre-School Program is designed for children aged three to five. As a trusted provider of Head Start and Early Head Start programs, LULAC Head Start promotes school readiness, improves health outcomes, and supports low-income families with young children. By ensuring that Union Square's youngest residents receive high-quality early education and comprehensive family services, LULAC Head Start will play a crucial role in breaking the cycle of poverty and setting children on a path to success.

LULAC Head Start's primary role in the transformation plan is to provide com-

1.2: Increase access to early childhood education programs for children ages 6 weeks to 3 years

prehensive early childhood education that prepares young children in Union Square for success in kindergarten and beyond. The organization will help ensure that children from low-income families are developmentally on track and have access to enriching learning experiences.

All Our Kin is another essential partner in our efforts to ensure access to quality early childhood learning experiences. The organization is a national nonprofit leader in the movement to transform our country's childcare system. Its innovative modeling for training, supporting, and sustaining family childcare educators creates opportunities for providers and high-quality care options for families. All Our Kin Family Childcare Network offers educational mentorship, professional development, advocacy and leadership opportunities, and community with other family childcare providers. The network is a high-touch program built on best practices in early childhood consultation and teacher mentoring early childhood consultant visit family childcare

to lead model lessons, demonstrate new strategies, and reflect with them on their work. All Our Kin offers financial resources, financial management, and educational and marketing and referral opportunities. All services are bilingual in Spanish and English.

In October 2023, New Haven city officials announced a \$3.5 million investment to enhance childcare and early childhood education. This funding, source from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), represents the largest municipal commitment to early childhood education in Connecticut. The allocation is divided into three key areas:

- **Program Enrichment (\$1.4 million):** Managed by the United way of greater New Haven, this portion aims to improve existing childcare programs. Eligible license family care homes, small group homes, and centers in New Haven can apply for grants to fund materials, health and safety upgrades, and translation services.



1.2: Increase access to early childhood education programs for children ages 6 weeks to 3 years

- **Workforce Development (\$1.6 million):** Overseen by CERCLE, a local early childhood education nonprofit, these funds are dedicated to supporting early childhood educators. Grants can be used for professional development, attending conferences, and developing apprenticeship programs.
- **Strategic Planning (\$500,000):** also led by the United way, this segment focuses on building a more effective childhood education system in New Haven it involves community input session to develop needs and develop a long-term plan to support parents, providers, educators.

Mayor Justin Elicker highlighted that this initiative addresses significant gaps in the current childcare system, including a shortage of approximately 2200 childcare slots for infants and toddlers in the city. The investment to create a healthier landscape for early childhood education in New Haven, bidding fitting families and the community at large.

ACTION PLAN

- **High-Quality Early Education:** LULAC Early Head Start will offer evidence-based, developmentally appropriate early learning programs for children aged birth to 3. These programs will focus on language and literacy development, social-emotional growth, cognitive skills, and physical health.
- **Bilingual Education and Cultural Competency:** Recognizing the diverse population of Union Square, LULAC Early Head Start will provide bilingual education (English and Spanish) and culturally responsive teaching practices to ensure that children from Latinx and other minority backgrounds feel supported and understood. These efforts will help bridge language gaps and promote a strong sense of cultural identity in young learners.
- **Individualized Learning Plans:** LULAC Early Head Start will create individualized learning plans for each child, tailored to their developmental needs and learning styles. These plans will



ensure that children with special needs or developmental delays receive the appropriate interventions and support services.

- **Training and Coaching:** All Our Kin provide professional development, business training, and coaching for family childcare providers. This can enhance the quality of care and education in Union Square.

1.2: Increase access to early childhood education programs for children ages 6 weeks to 3 years



- **Resource and Licensing:** The organization assists informal caregivers to become licensed providers, increasing the availability of quality, regulated childcare options.
- **Health and Safety Upgrades:** The group partners with local childcare providers to improve health and safety standards in family childcare homes.
- **Capacity Building:** Partnering with all our kin increases the supply of high-quality childcare providers, addressing shortages in specific neighborhoods, including Union Square.

- **Centralized Referral System:** The NHECC will develop a centralized referral system to connect Union Square families with the full range of early childhood services, including developmental screenings, special education, health services, and mental health support.
- **Promoting Early Childhood Best Practices:** The council will work with early childhood educators and programs to implement best practices in early childhood education, focusing on developmentally appropriate curricula, classroom quality, teacher training, and family engagement.
- **Improving Access to High-Quality Early Childhood Education:** The NHECC will advocate for expanding high-quality early childhood education options in Union Square, including full-day and year-round programs that meet the needs of working families.
- **Support for Professional Development:** The council will support the professional development of early childhood educators by providing access to training opportunities, workshops, and certifications. This support will ensure that teachers and caregivers are well-

equipped to provide high-quality care and education to young children.

- **Promoting Inclusion and Diversity:** The NHECC will work to ensure that early childhood programs in Union Square are inclusive and culturally responsive, serving children and families from diverse racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. This work includes supporting bilingual education and promoting diversity in early childhood settings.



CED Events

1.2: Increase access to early childhood education programs for children ages 6 weeks to 3 years

Performance Indicators and Metrics

Quantitative progress will be measured by the percentage of 0- to 3-year-old children enrolled in licensed childcare centers, family childcare homes, or Early Head Start programs, and the ratio of childcare care slots to children in the age group in Union Square. Data can be collected from CT Office of Early Childhood, Care4Kids, Early Head Start programs, and community-based partners.

- A 10 percent increase in enrollment in high quality infant and toddler programs Ensure 90 percent of children complete development screening before age 4.
- A 10 percent reduction in disparities in childcare access for low-income families.



CEC Events

1.3: Increase access to early childhood education programs for children ages 3 and 4 years old

According to data from the U.S. Census, of 3- and 4-year-olds living in the Union Square neighborhood, a similar percentage are enrolled in school as elsewhere in the City and County of New Haven. A higher percentage are enrolled in public such programs than in the city and, by a large margin, the County. No census data is available for childcare enrollment for children younger than 3 years old.

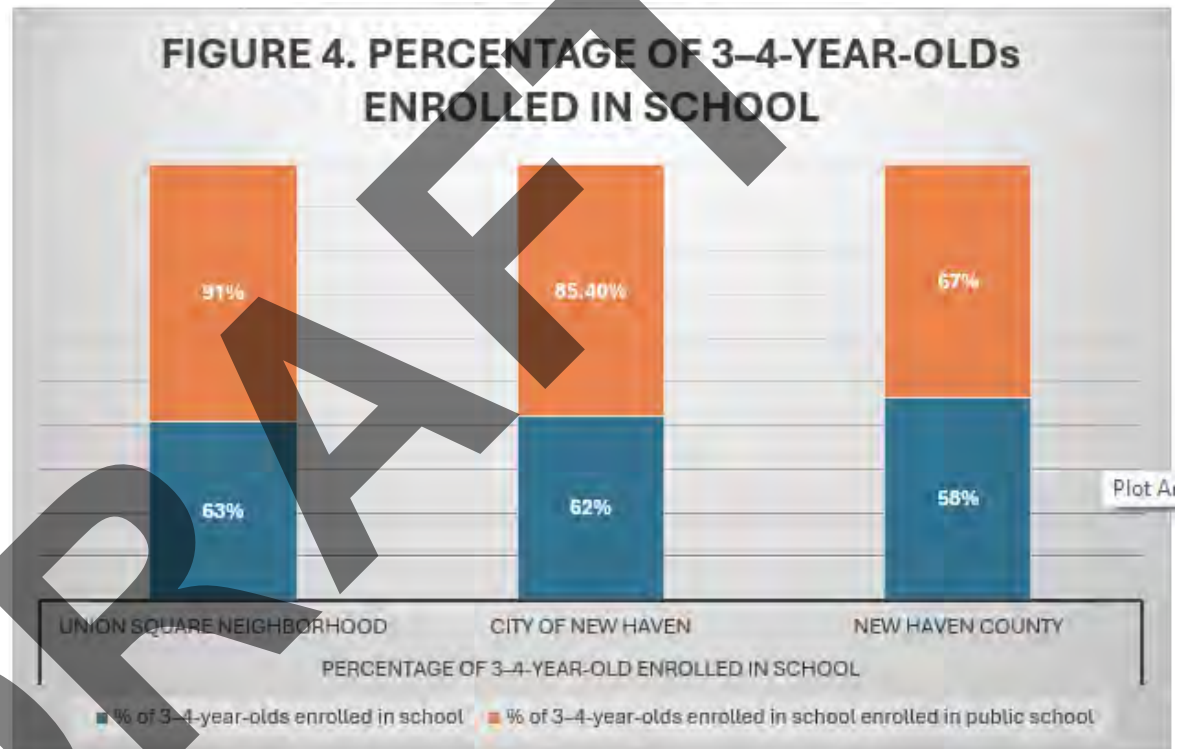


Figure 4. School Enrollment Ages 3-4 for the Union Square Neighborhood (Zip 06519), 2020. Data: U.S. Census Bureau 5-Year American Community Survey 2016-2020.

1.3: Increase access to early childhood education programs for children ages 3 and 4 years old

ACTION PLAN

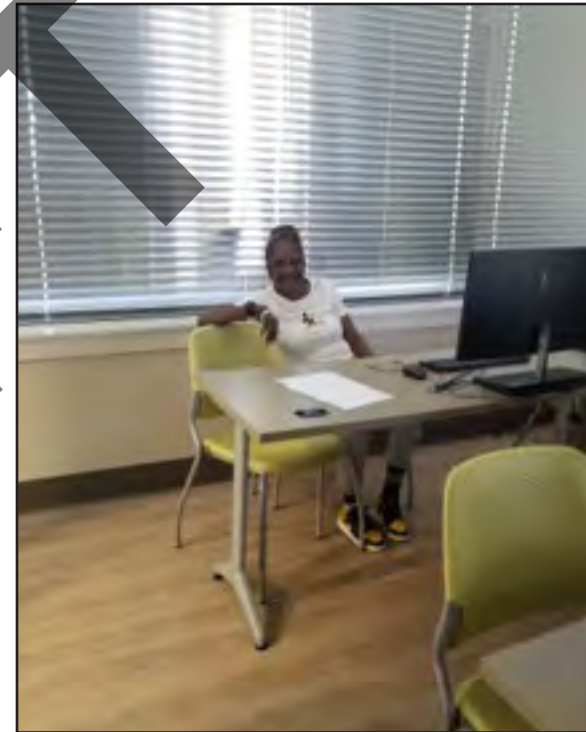
- **High-Quality Early Education:** LULAC Head Start will offer evidence-based, developmentally appropriate early learning programs for children aged 3 to 5. These programs will focus on language and literacy development, social-emotional growth, cognitive skills, and physical health.
- **Bilingual Education and Cultural Competency:** Recognizing the diverse population of Union Square, LULAC Head Start will provide bilingual education (English and Spanish) and culturally responsive teaching practices to ensure that children from Latinx and other minority backgrounds feel supported and understood. These efforts will help bridge language gaps and promote a strong sense of cultural identity in young learners.
- **Individualized Learning Plans:** LULAC Head Start will create individualized learning plans for each child, tailored to their developmental needs and learning styles. These plans will ensure that children with special needs or developmental delays receive the appropriate interventions and support services.
- **Preparation for Kindergarten:** The Head Start programs will focus on preparing children for a successful transition to kindergarten by developing foundational skills such as early reading, math, socialization, and problem-solving. LULAC will work closely with local elementary schools to ensure that children entering kindergarten are academically, socially, and emotionally prepared.
- **Mapping and Coordinating Services:** The NHECC will identify existing early childhood services in Union Square and create a coordinated system that connects families with programs that meet their needs, such as early childhood education, healthcare, and family support services.
- **Collaboration with Early Childhood Providers:** The council will work closely with early childhood education providers, such as LULAC Head Start, childcare centers, and family-based care providers, to ensure that children receive consistent, high-quality early learning experiences.



CEC Events

1.3: Increase access to early childhood education programs for children ages 3 and 4 years old

- **Centralized Referral System:** The NHECC will develop a centralized referral system to connect Union Square families with the full range of early childhood services, including developmental screenings, special education, health services, and mental health support.
- **Promoting Early Childhood Best Practices:** The council will work with early childhood educators and programs to implement best practices in early childhood education, focusing on developmentally appropriate curricula, classroom quality, teacher training, and family engagement.
- **Improving Access to High-Quality Early Childhood Education:** The NHECC will advocate for expanding high-quality early childhood education options in Union Square, including full-day and year-round programs that meet the needs of working families.
- **Support for Professional Development:** The council will support the professional development of early childhood educators by providing access to training opportunities, workshops, and certifications. This support will ensure that teachers and caregivers are well-equipped to provide high-quality care and education to young children.
- **Promoting Inclusion and Diversity:** The NHECC will work to ensure that early childhood programs in Union Square are inclusive and culturally responsive, serving children and families from diverse racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. This work includes supporting bilingual education and promoting diversity in early childhood settings.
- **Social-Emotional Skills Development:** LEAP's programs will integrate SEL into daily activities, teaching children how to manage their emotions, set goals, show empathy for others, and resolve conflicts peacefully. These skills will be vital in helping Union Square youth navigate the challenges of adolescence and beyond.
- **Building Confidence and Self-Esteem:** LEAP will focus on building self-esteem and confidence in youth by



CEC Events

1.3: Increase access to early childhood education programs for children ages 3 and 4 years old

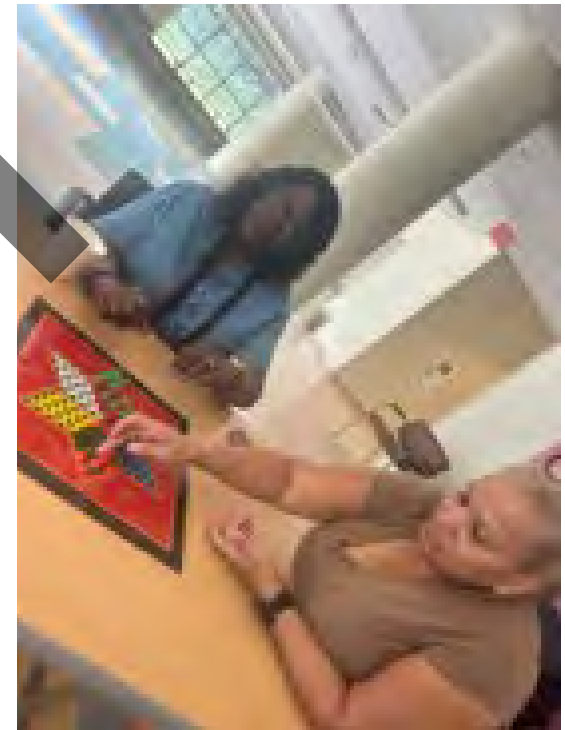
providing opportunities for success in academic and extracurricular activities. By fostering a sense of accomplishment and self-worth, LEAP will help young people develop the resilience needed to overcome challenges.

- **Counseling and Support Services:** LEAP will offer access to counseling and mental health support for youth who need additional guidance. This support may include one-on-one counseling, group therapy, or connections to local mental health services for youth facing more serious challenges such as trauma or family issues.
- **City of New Haven Initiative:** Using the aforementioned \$3.5 million ARPA grant, the city will improve existing childcare programs, support early childhood educators, and develop a long-term plan to support parents, providers, educators.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

Quantitative progress will be measured by the percentage of three- and four-year-olds enrolled in pre-programs, Early Head Start or Head Start, school readiness or private childcare centers., and the percentage of students participating in after school and summer programs. Data can be collected from NHPS, Office of Early Childhood, and local non-profit organizations.

- A 10 percent increase in pre-K enrollment.
- Ensure 90 percent of children complete development screening before age 4.
- Ensure 85 percent of 4-year-olds meet Kindergarten readiness benchmarks.



CED Events



GOAL 2

Ensure excellent health care for all residents in the neighborhood

Ensuring excellent health care in the Hill section of New Haven, a historically underserved community, requires a comprehensive plan with clear goals, objectives, and strategies. This plan should focus on improving access to quality health services, addressing social determinants of health, and promoting community engagement in health-related initiatives.

Despite the community's access to public transportation, only 22 percent of the surveyed Wolfe residents rated their overall health condition as excellent or good, compared to 54 percent for the City of New Haven.

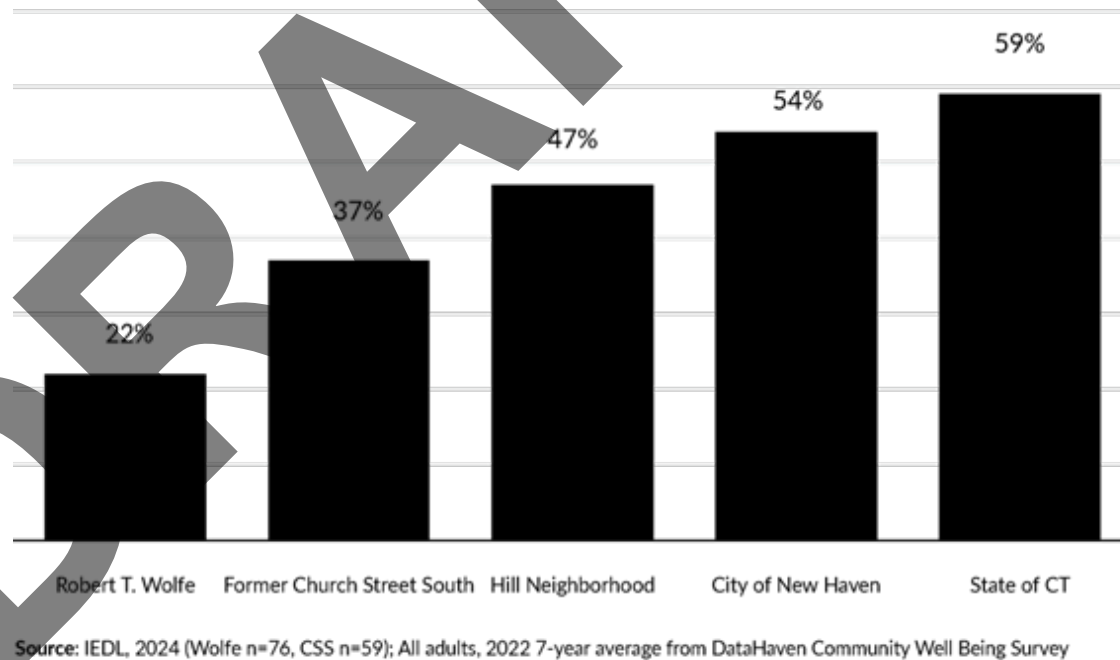


FIGURE 6: STATISTICS ON OVERALL HEALTH OF UNION SQUARE RESIDENTS

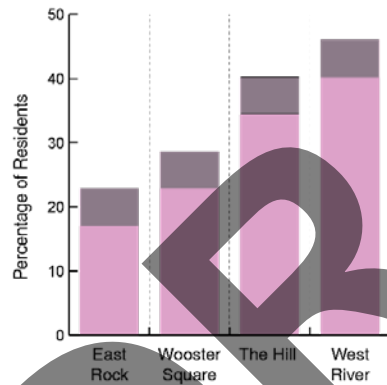
Goal 2: ENSURE EXCELLENT HEALTH CARE FOR ALL RESIDENTS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The 2023 DHCI reports that the most significant health risks in Greater New Haven are obesity and smoking, which are elevated among Black, Latinx, and low-income communities. The 2023 DHE report shows that chronic diseases such as asthma, diabetes, and hypertension were all elevated among Latinx and Black populations. As compared to

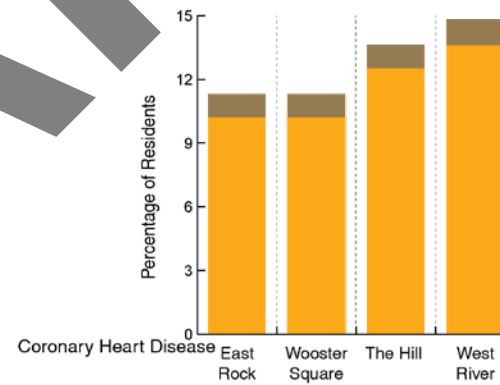
neighborhoods such as East Rock or Wooster Square, the Union Square neighborhood had a higher incidence of high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, asthma, and diabetes. The graphs below compare these health outcomes between the residents of other neighborhoods within New Haven – the darker colors in each bar indicate the

estimated upper range of the percentage of residents impacted. 2023 DHCI unsurprisingly showed in their study that the COVID-19 mortality rate was disproportionately high in low-income communities and communities of color.

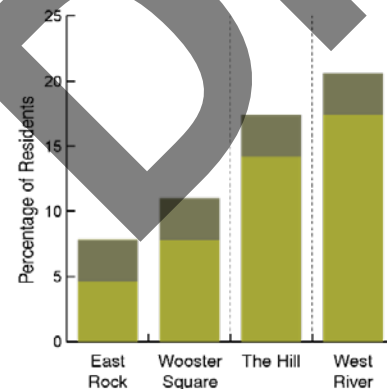
High Blood Pressure



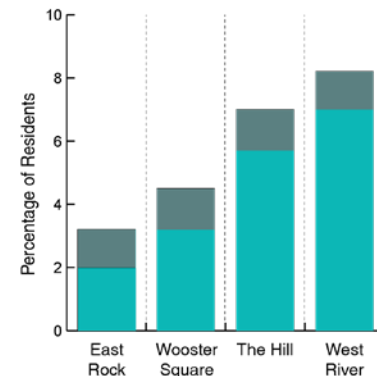
Asthma



Diabetes



Coronary Heart Disease



2.1: Improve housing conditions, including lead abatement, mold and remediation

The correlation between poor housing and healthcare outcomes is well documented, with numerous studies showing that substandard housing conditions directly contribute to poor health. Housing is considered a key social determinant of health, and inadequate housing can have immediate and long-term impacts on physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Ensuring homes are safe, clean, and well-maintained can reduce health risks.

ACTION PLAN:

- **Housing Quality Improvements:** Develop partnerships with the Elm City Communities, Livable City Initiatives (LCI), the New Haven Department of Health, the Connecticut Department of Housing, NeighborWorks New Horizon, Fair Haven Community Health, and Yale New Haven Health. These partnerships can bring resources, expertise, and community engagement to address the physical, social, and environmental factors that affect housing quality.



Lead Abatement

- **Nonprofits Focused on Housing and Community Development:** New Haven legal aid assistance can provide legal assistance to residents facing unsafe housing eviction. Partnering with this organization can help improve resident rights and ensure housing meets legal and safety standards.
- **Rebuilding Together in New Haven:** This nonprofit organization offers free home repairs for low-income homeowners, focusing on improving safety, health, and accessibility. The group can collaborate with others to enhance housing visions for public housing residents in the Union Square community.
- **Rental and Security Deposit Assistance:** Partnerships with organizations like The Community Action Agency of New Haven, Inc., can assist with rental and security deposits, landlord-tenant mediation, Budgeting, and Energy Assistance and Solutions.

2.1: Improve housing conditions, including lead abatement, mold and remediation

Performance Indicators and Metrics

Quantitative progress will be measured the percentage of Robert T. Wolfe and Union Square residents under six years old who show a reduction in blood lead levels and a reduction in the number of new cases of lead poisoning in the community. Data will be collected from sources such as Connecticut Department of Health Childhood Poisoning Prevention Program data base. Asthma-related data can be collected from Connecticut's Environmental Public Health Tracking Network.

- Reduce blood pressure levels to below 3.5 ug/dl in 75 percent of children in high-risk homes.
- Reduce asthma related ER visits by 15% within 12 months of mold abatement.



Community Room



Before



After

2.2: Increase access to healthy food

Both the residents at the Robert T. Wolfe apartments and former Church Street South residents were more likely to say that in the last 12 months, there was a time when they did not have enough money to buy food compared to residents in the Hill neighborhood, the City of New Haven and the State of Connecticut surveyed through the DataHaven Community Well Being Surveys. According to these data, the former residents of Church Street South experienced the highest rates of food insecurity among the groups of residents surveyed.

Although residents at the Robert T. Wolfe apartments had lower rates of food insecurity than former Church Street South residents, per responses to the question, “How often in the past 12 months have they not had enough money to buy the food their family needs? The Wolfe residents reported experiencing food insecurity more frequently than former residents in Church Street South apartments and residents in the State of CT. Of those experiencing food insecurity among elderly residents age 65+ surveyed through the DataHaven Community Well Being Survey, the age 65+ group also indicated experiencing food insecurity more frequently than other groups.

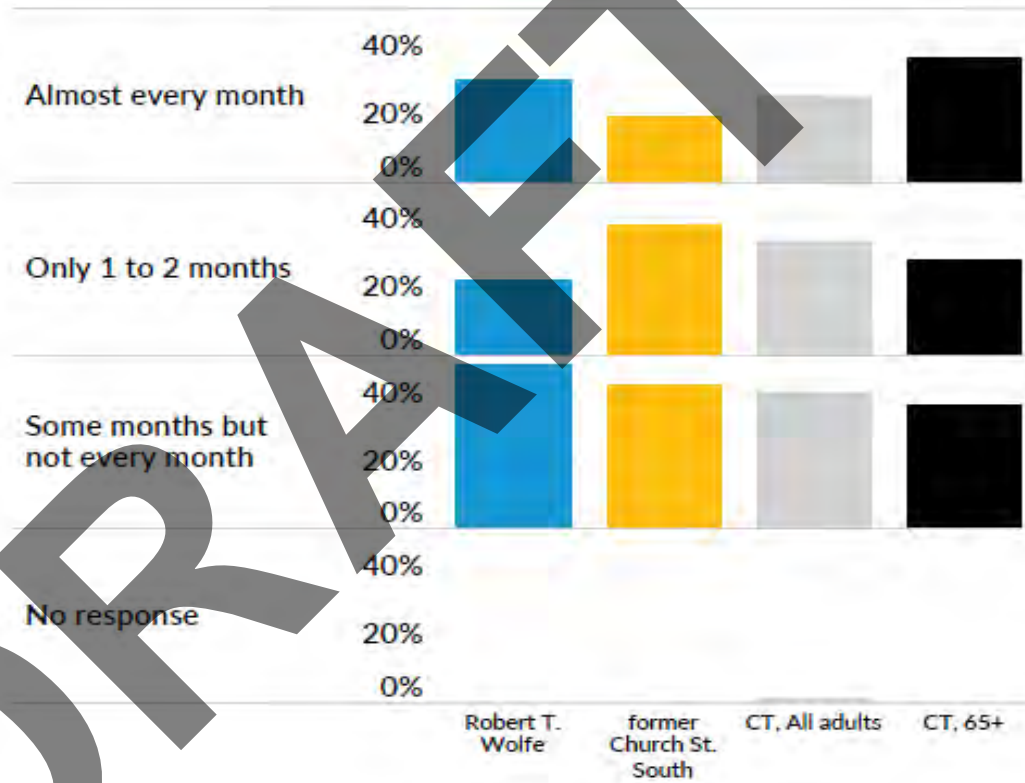


FIGURE 8: INCIDENCE OF FAMILIES NOT HAVING ENOUGH FUNDS TO BUY FOOD

2.2: Increase access to healthy food

Forty-two percent of the surveyed Wolfe residents indicated there was an availability of affordable, high-quality fruits and vegetables. Compared to 36% for the former church St. South families, 50% for the Union Square neighborhood residence, 56% for the City of New Haven, and 74% for the state of Connecticut.

Access to healthy food and healthcare are profoundly interconnected and are crucial in determining overall health outcomes.

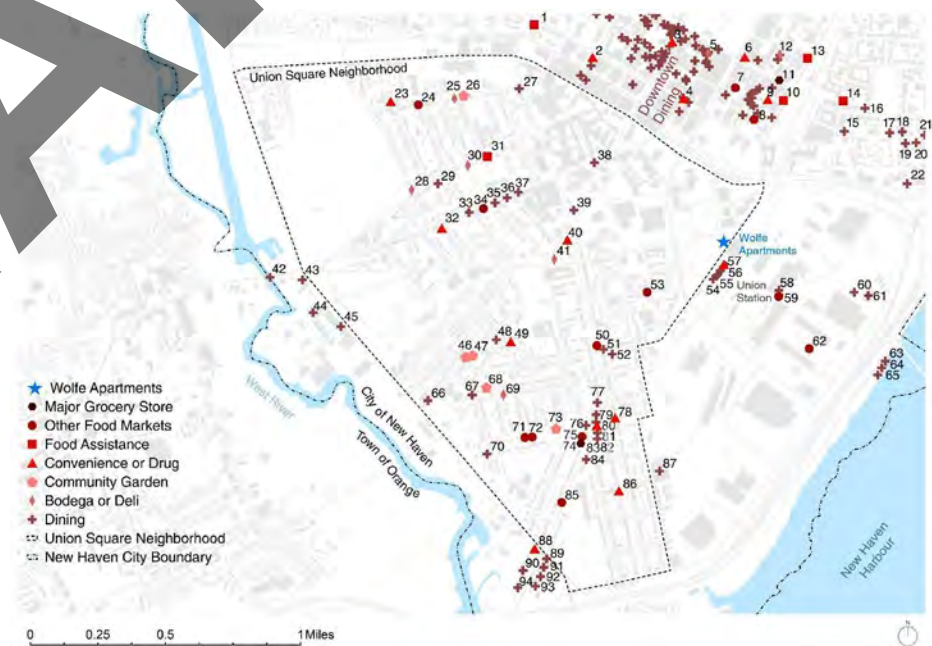
Lack of access to nutritious food, often referred to as food insecurities, coupled with limited access to healthcare services, creates an environment that contributes to poor health, particularly in underserved communities such as Union Square.

Poor diets high in processed foods and low in fruits, vegetables, and lean proteins are linked to conditions such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease. Individuals in food-insecure households often rely on inexpensive, calorie-dense, and nutritionally poor foods, which increases the risk of this disease.

Food insecurity is also associated with high levels of stress, anxiety, and depression, particularly in children and elderly populations.

The stress of not knowing where the next meal is coming from can negatively impact mental health, creating a feedback loop that worsens overall well-being.

Children who lack consistent access to healthy foods are at risk of developmental delays, cognitive impairment, and behavioral problems. Fish deficiencies during critical growth periods can impact their academic and social success.



2.2: Increase access to healthy food



CED Events

The Union Square Neighborhood has some grocery options, although access can be challenging for some residents who are elderly and disabled. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), many of the census tracts that make up the Union Square Neighborhood (except immediately around Key Food Fresh) are designated Low-Income Low Access (0.5 miles) where at least 20% of residents live below the

poverty line, and at least 1/3 or about 500 residents live at least a half mile from a grocery store. Of thirty census tracts in and around New Haven, 87% are Low Income, 67% have 1/3 of or five hundred residents at least a 1/4 mile from a grocery store (Union Square), and 17% have 1/3 of or 500 residents at least 1 mile from a grocery store, where food access is more challenged. Note that most of the low-income census tracts in New Haven County are in and around New Haven.

Key Food Fresh and Shop Smart Food Mart on Washington Avenue are the only full-service grocery stores in the neighborhood, located in Hill South. It is close to CT Transit bus stops, and the store has a small parking lot. It is a full-service grocery store with a wide range of produce, a deli, and pantry staples. It became part of a larger grocery chain network in 2023. A 2023 New Haven Independent article suggested that residents appreciated having a convenient grocery option but saw high prices. Elm Street Market downtown is near the northern portion of the Union Square Neighborhood, but that is a high-end, expensive option.

The Union Square neighborhood is a 10-minute drive from large, discount grocery options such as Walmart and ALDI. Within the neighborhood, there are several corner stores and bodega options. These are well-distributed throughout the neighborhood, although fewer are in the neighborhood's northwestern corner. Only one Food Assistance Center, Christian Community Inc., is located on the neighborhood's northern end. The organization serves as a food pantry and provides

2.2: Increase access to healthy food

other services for area residents. Convenience stores are well-dispersed throughout the neighborhood for small purchases, and there is one centrally located pharmacy, along with a few others for neighborhood residents just beyond the neighborhood boundaries in Long Wharf and the Yale New Haven Health buildings area. There are several restaurants in the Union Square neighborhood. A cluster of restaurants and dining options exist around Kimberley Square in the south of the neighborhood and along Columbus Avenue. The neighborhood remains fairly cut off from the large cluster of restaurants, cafes, and bars in downtown New Haven by the Route 34 connector. The only food or dining options within walking distance of the Robert T. Wolfe apartments are located at Union Square station.

CitySeed is a local organization that believes a just food system is foundational to a thriving community. CitySeed actively strives to remove barriers to food access, food entrepreneurship, and local farm viability. The organization has developed an action plan focused on

improving access to affordable healthy food in Union Square. The Community Action Agency of New Haven (CAANH) provides a wide range of services, including workforce development, energy assistance, financial literacy, rental assistance, and Wellness programs. Over the decades, the agency has evolved to address emergency community needs, such as digital literacy, reentry support, and HealthEquity, while maintaining its focus on empowering residents to achieve economic independence.

The CAANH has played a pivotal role in the People Plan planning process. Because of the depth and breadth of the organization's programs they are an essential component of addressing systemic barriers to opportunity within the Union Square community, including reducing the health disparities between this community and the city as well as the County of New Haven and the State of Connecticut.

“Healthcare should happen where people are!”

-RESIDENT

2.2: Increase access to healthy food

ACTION PLAN

Farmers Market

- Once weekly 4-hour market with local produce and agricultural products
- Nutrition benefits doubling to facilitate access - SNAP and FMNP (Farmers Market Nutrition Programs)
- Vouchers for residents regardless of public benefits eligibility
- Staff: Market manager to communicate with vendors and run nutrition benefit redemption \
- Equipment and materials: tables, tents, chairs, banners, flyers

Local Food Hall

- Collection of small restaurants offering counter service, with shared seating
- Restaurants run by local, City-Seed-supported BIPOC, women, and immigrant food entrepreneurs, supporting family economic stability and economic development
- Brings diverse local cuisine to the Union Square community d. Specialized food hall consultant would be engaged for feasibility, planning, and design
- Staff: Hall manager to liaise with the restaurants, coordinate leases, and support tech; Marketing

coordinator to promote the hall, local entrepreneurs, and local food

Shared-Use Commercial Kitchen with Food Entrepreneur Support and Training

- Shared-use commercial kitchen to serve early-stage food entrepreneurs at Union Square
- Business development support services including commercial kitchen access, training events and educational workshops, and 1-on-1 advising office hours
- Kitchen can also host cooking classes held by entrepreneurs (generating revenue for them) as well as training sessions
- Staff: Business development support specialist to manage kitchen access, coordinate events, and provide 1-on-1 support

Sanctuary Kitchen Culinary Career Pathways Training

- Chef Training Program for immigrant and refugee residents
- 10 participants selected for a paid program, open to those interested in a cooking career who were born outside the US
- 4 months of culinary training and job skills d. 2 months culinary/hospitality internship

- Staff: Training coordinator and instructors

- Chef Training Program for immigrant and refugee residents

- 10 participants selected for a paid program, open to those interested in a cooking career who were born outside the US

- 4 months of culinary training and job skills d. 2 months culinary/hospitality internship

- Staff: Training coordinator and instructors

Healthy, Local Food Awareness Campaign

- Community education campaign to raise awareness of healthy food options and nutrition; the climate and local economic benefits of buying and eating locally grown and locally-prepared food; and pathways to equitable access such as doubled SNAP and FMNP

- Public relations firm engaged to design campaign materials and developed a public educational campaign strategy

- Staff: Outreach educator who would use materials to provide educational programming in schools, at community events, including farmers markets.

2.2: Increase access to healthy food

Develop Community-Based Food Programs:

Collaborate with local organizations to create programs that increase access to healthy food. This can include expanding food pantries, offering fresh produce distribution programs, and supporting community gardens where residents can grow their own fruits and vegetables.

“The Jungle” Botanical Garden:

With the assistance of Solar Youth a botanical garden in honor of the Hill community will become a place of healing and a vessel to help promote health and healing. It will be dedicated to the victims of gun violence, creating a peaceful and restorative space. There is a similar garden in West Rock, and they plan to partner with the Urban Resources Initiative (URI) to support its implementation and ensure its success.

Sensory Exploration:

Gardens designed for touch, smell, and visual stimulation, supporting trauma-informed care and mindfulness, this project will be led by Solar Youth.

CAANH Healthy Start Program:

CAANH's Health Start will play a vital role in improving birth outcomes for pregnant women and mothers in Union Square. The program's mission is to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities in birth outcomes and to reduce the rate of infant/maternal morbidity and mortality in greater New Haven.

CAANH Aging with G.R.A.C.E:

This program promotes social interaction, opposed to this the threat of isolation, and depression, and potentially reduces the risk of being in vulnerable circumstances. It offers individuals 60 years of age and older assistance in building new friendships, and promoting healthy eating, with a focus on the importance of being proactive in addressing barriers to staying independent.

CAANH Health Literacy Team (HLT):

HLT assists in removing barriers to provide access to the most difficult to reach and underserved populations. Families who are facing socioeconomic barriers receive help insurance enrollment, internal and external referrals, case management, and access to transportation for medical-related activities.



CED Events

2.2: Increase access to healthy food

CAANH Community Health Care Workers (CHW):

CHW assists clients facing experiencing barriers to obtaining and maintaining housing, food insecurities, and negative financial impacts into public and private assistance programs. CAANH provides needed wrap-around services to support healthier living, such as connecting people to healthcare including the COVID-19 vaccine.

As stated above, transportation is crucial in accessing healthcare, particularly for residents of underserved communities like the union square. Reliable and affordable transportation is essential for individuals to attend medical appointments, receive preventive care, manage chronic diseases, and access emergency services. The lack of transportation often can result in missed medical appointments, late treatment, and worse health conditions. Seniors and individuals with disabilities usually have additional mobility challenges that limit their ability to use traditional public transportation. However, these populations' transportation barriers can be particularly debilitating when accessing medical care.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

Measuring progress on increasing access to healthy food in the Union Square neighborhood requires tracking changes in both availability and utilization of healthy food options. Data can be collected via resident surveys and from partnerships with organizations like CitySeed.

- A 25 percent decrease in the incidence of Robert T. Wolfe families who run out of money each month to buy food.
- A 25 percent increase in the purchases of fresh produce or healthy items from local retailers.
- A 25 percent increase in the number of grocery stores, farmers' market or mobile markets in Union Square.

"Let's grow gardens or planters to cultivate fresh herbs and vegetables."

-RESIDENT



CED Events

2.3: Address transportation barriers that prevent access to healthcare facilities and other critical services

As stated previously, transportation is crucial in accessing healthcare, particularly for residents of underserved communities like the union square. Reliable and affordable transportation is essential for individuals to attend medical appointments, receive preventive care, manage chronic diseases, and access emergency services. The lack of transportation often can result in missed medical appointments, late treatment, and worse health conditions. Seniors and individuals with disabilities usually have additional mobility challenges that limit their ability to use traditional public transportation. However, these populations' transportation barriers can be particularly debilitating when accessing medical care.

Twenty-one percent of the surveyed Wolfe residents indicated they missed a doctor's appointment or a visit to a healthcare provider because they did not have access to reliable transportation. Forty-four percent indicated they had access to a car very often when needed, while 11 percent answered fairly often.

Transportation also plays a crucial role in accessing healthcare, particularly for residents of underserved communities like Union Square. Reliable transportation is essential for individuals to attend medical appointments, receive preventive care, manage chronic diseases, and access emergency services. Lack of transportation can result in missed medical appointments, late treatment, and worse health outcomes.



CEd Events

2.3: Address transportation barriers that prevent access to healthcare facilities and other critical services.

According to the Neighborhood Needs Assessment, a higher percentage of Union Square neighborhood households do not own a vehicle, at 31%, compared to 26% in the city and 11% in the County. Vehicle ownership has important implications for accessibility to key goods and services.

The Union Square neighborhood is well served by bus routes run by CT Transit, a public transport system that is a division of the Connecticut Department of Transportation. CT Transit connects the Union Square neighborhood to other parts of New Haven and to regional destinations. Many of the lines bring residents to the New Haven Green, where there is a major interchange with other bus lines. Union Station is a significant transportation node in the city, located in the center of the neighborhood's eastern boundary. It connects the Union Square neighborhood and the New Haven region to the north and south points along the shore and further inland. The station is an

intermodal hub connecting rail service with taxis, buses, parking, shuttles, and car rentals and is accessible to pedestrians from the Union Square neighborhood. Commuters can connect to CT Transit and university shuttles like the Yale Shuttle and Southern Connecticut Shuttle Service from Union Station. Buses operated by the CT Transit New Haven division also provide a commuter shuttle that operates during PM peak hours.

“Being part of this has been such a big deal for me. At first, I didn’t think my ideas would matter, but they really do! I’ve lived in this neighborhood my whole life, and I’ve seen good things and some not-so-good things. This was my chance to share all the ideas I’ve had but never told anyone before.”

-RESIDENT

2.3: Address transportation barriers that prevent access to healthcare facilities and other critical services.

ACTION PLAN

- **Medicaid NEMT Services:** Medicaid provides non-emergency medical transportation services to eligible beneficiaries who need help getting to medical appointments. Expanding these services and making them more efficient can significantly reduce missed medical appointments for low-income individuals.
- **Partnership with Transportation Companies:** Public health systems and clinics can partner with transportation services like Uber and Lyft to provide affordable trans-

portation for patients. Some programs already exist where healthcare providers schedule patient rides to ensure they can attend appointments. The Community Action Agency of New Haven, Inc is also able to assist with ride-share transportation to assist clients being able to make their appointment

- **Dedicated Community Shuttles:** Establish community-based shuttle services that provide free or low-cost transportation to and from medical facilities. This service could benefit elderly and disabled residents with difficulty accessing regular public transit.

- **Bring healthcare to the Community:** Mobile health clinics can travel to neighborhoods like Union Square, providing health screening, vaccinations, and primary care services directly in the community.
- **Community "Health Hub":** The Health Hub emphasizes overall health and wellness as there is an inextricable connection between health and community. There is an opportunity to include the farmers market vendors from CitySeed to provide agricultural products and fresh produce at the Hub to residents. Union Square community members will receive a voucher for produce regardless of public benefits eligibility. Residents can receive basic health services like having a snapshot of their physical health to identify and address risk factors such as high cholesterol and high blood pressure. Other services include information about job procurement and having nutritious food in one centralized location on site. This action plan promotes equitable access to all residents.



CED Events

2.3: Address transportation barriers that prevent access to healthcare facilities and other critical services.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

Quantitative progress will be measured by the increase in access to accessible public transit, the availability of paratransit services, and the frequency and timelessness of buses or paratransit serving the target development. Data can be collected from surveys, the CT Transit and Greater New Haven Transit District, and from local health care clinics.

- Ensure that 80 percent of Robert T. Wolfe residents are within 1/4 of ADA transit.
- Decrease in the average transit wait time by 25 percent.
- Increase transportation subsidy enrollment by 10 percent.



CED Events

2.4: Promote health literacy and community engagement.

Promoting healthcare literacy in the Union Square neighborhood requires collaboration between various community organizations, healthcare providers, education institutions, and government agencies. These partnerships can help residents better understand how to navigate the healthcare system, make informed decisions about their health, and access necessary services. As significant healthcare providers in the area, Fairhaven Hill Health Center, Cornell Hill Health Center and Yale New Haven Hospital can play a key role in healthcare literacy programs. They can offer workshops, patient education material, and com-

munity outreach initiatives focused on care, chronic disease management, and health care system management. The Fairhaven Health Center provides underserved populations with comprehensive medical dental, and behavioral health services. They could partner with easy-to-offer education programs, especially in diabetes management, maternal health, and mental health. Cornell's Got Heal offers healthcare programs focusing on understanding insurance options, managing medication, and assessing preventive care. Their trusted presence in the neighborhood makes them a valuable partner for health education.



CED Events

DRINK

2.4: Promote health literacy and community engagement.

ACTION PLAN

- **Implement Health Literacy Campaign:** This activity aims to educate Union Square residents about preventive care, managing chronic conditions, and accessing health services. Use local schools, churches, and community centers to host workshops and seminars. The Community Action Agency of New Haven, Inc Community Health Workers, can host and participate in workshops, provide education regarding clinical trials and black maternal health in addition to providing case management and referrals.
- **Utilize Local Media and Social Media:** Use local and social media to spread awareness about available health services, educational programs, and tips for healthy living, making health information more accessible to younger residents and families.
- **Develop School-based Health Education:** These programs focus on nutrition, physical activity, mental health, and sexual health to engage youth and their families in building lifelong healthy habits.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

Quantitative progress will be measured by the percentage of residents who are aware of available health resources such as clinics, programs, or health information materials and the percentage of those who need and receive health information in their preferred language. Data can be collected from through surveys and collaboration with local health organizations and public health departments.

- A 10 percent increase in health program participation.
- A 10 percent increase in resident satisfaction.
- A 10 percent increase in residents using telehealth tools.



CED Events

2.5: Strengthen Mental Health and Substance Abuse Support

Twelve percent of the surveyed families indicated they needed mental health treatment or counseling in the past 12 months. The need for mental health treatment has become increasingly recognized as a critical public health issue, especially in underserved communities like Union Square. Periods of mental health problems affect individuals across all demographics, but they can be particularly acute in areas where poverty, housing, and stability, and limited access to health care creates additional stressors. Addressing mental health needs through accessible, culturally competent, and well-coordinated treatment options is essential for involving the overall well-being of our residents in such communities.

Coordination between various groups in the Union Square neighborhood is essential for creating a unified approach to addressing the community's needs, whether in healthcare, housing, education, or social services. Effective coordination allows organizations to improve resources, reduce duplication of efforts, and provide more comprehensive support to residents.



Mental Health Before



Mental Health After

2.5: Strengthen Mental Health and Substance Abuse Support

ACTION PLAN

- **Create And Promote Mental Health Services:**

Establish trauma-informed and culturally appropriate health care services, ensuring that Union Square's diverse population has access to counseling, support groups, and substance use recovery programs. Solar Youth will work to expand services and collaborate on literacy support, mental health services, and family programming.

- **Mental Health Outreach Clinics:**

Work with Yale New Haven Hospital and local behavioral health providers to establish mental health outreach clinics in the Hill and embed mental health professionals in community centers and schools.

- **Peer Recovery Support Network:**

Develop a peer recovery support network where individuals who have overcome substance use disorders can offer guidance and assistance to those still struggling. The Community Action Agency of New Haven, Inc can provide case management, insurance assistant and wrap around services to help clients become self sufficient.

- **Community Health Assessments:**

Promote collaboration between local universities and health systems to conduct community health assessments and research on specific health issues affecting the Hill, such as asthma, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.

- **Promote Digital Health Tools:**

Use mobile apps that help residents track their health, make appointments, and receive reminders for preventive screenings.



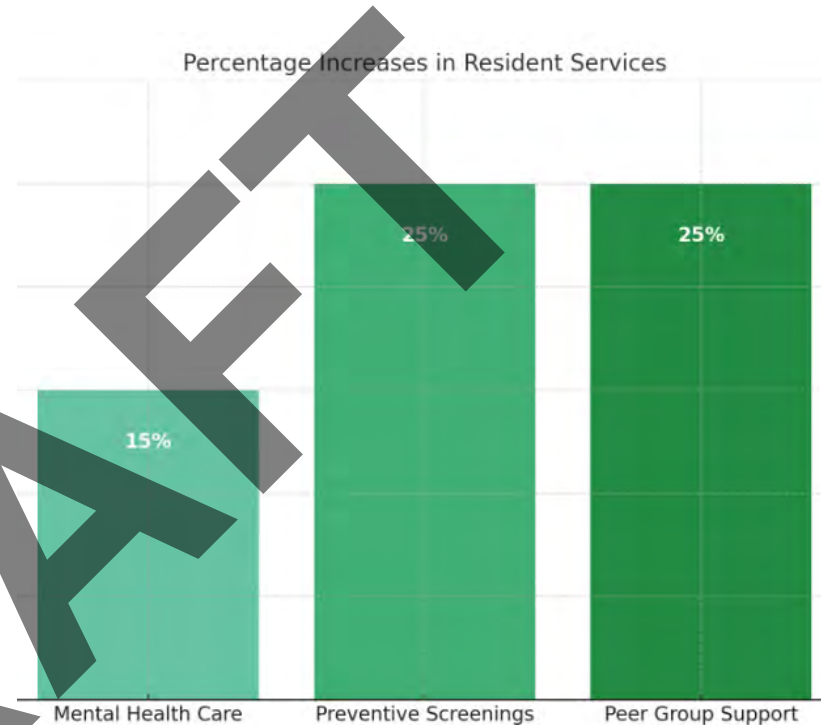
Community Meetings

2.5: Strengthen Mental Health and Substance Abuse Support

Performance Indicators and Metrics

Quantitative progress will be measured by the percentage of residents receiving mental health or substance abuse services, the number of referrals to behavioral health or substance abuse treatment providers, and the percentage of residents with insurance covering mental health and substance abuse services. Data can be collected tracking referrals, and through collaboration with Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center, State of Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, or Yale New Haven Hospital.

- A 15 percent increase in residents receiving mental health care.
- A 25 percent increase in the number of preventive screenings completed.
- A 25 percent increase in peer group support



Incorporating health and wellness programs into local and early child learning systems in Union Square is a proactive strategy for improving the overall well-being of children and families. By integrating health education, physical education, nutrition, mental

health, and preventative care into early childhood and youth programs, children can develop habits that last a lifetime. These programs can address health disparities, improve academic performance, and reduce behavioral issues.

2.6: Incorporate health and wellness programs into local youth programs

ACTION PLAN

- **Sports and Recreation:** The Boys & Girls Club will provide safe, structured sports and recreational activities, including basketball, soccer, swimming, and fitness classes. These activities promote physical health and teach valuable life skills such as teamwork and discipline.
- LEAP will provide a variety of sports and recreational activities, including basketball, soccer, swimming, and track. These programs promote physical fitness while teaching teamwork, discipline, and perseverance.
- **Health and Wellness Education:** LEAP will incorporate health and wellness education into its programs, teaching youth the importance of nutrition, mental health, and a healthy lifestyle. Workshops and activities will focus on healthy eating, stress management, and mindfulness.
- **Healthy Habits for Life Initiative:** LEAP will introduce a “Healthy Habits for Life” initiative in Union Square. This initiative will engage youth in fitness challenges, healthy cooking classes, and wellness workshops that encourage healthy living from a young age.



Source: <https://www.leapforkids.org/>

2.6: Incorporate health and wellness programs into local youth programs

- Health Screenings and Referrals:** LULAC Head Start will provide regular health screenings for children, including vision, hearing, developmental, and dental screenings. If any health concerns are identified, LULAC will refer families to appropriate healthcare providers and ensure that children receive necessary medical care.
- Nutritious Meals and Snacks:** LULAC will ensure that all children in the Head Start program receive healthy meals and snacks each day, meeting the USDA guidelines for nutrition. This initiative will help combat food insecurity and promote healthy eating habits early on.
- Physical Activity and Wellness:** LULAC Head Start will incorporate physical activity and wellness education into its curriculum, encouraging children to engage in daily physical exercise and teaching them the importance of staying active. This initiative will help children develop lifelong habits that promote physical and mental health.
- Access to Healthcare Services:** LULAC will work with healthcare partners to connect families to medical, dental, and mental health services. By helping families access preventive care and health education, LULAC will contribute to better health outcomes for children and families in Union Square.
- Health & Wellness Youth Programming:** BCGGNH will offer several Health & Wellness Youth Programming through four (4) evidenced based programs: **Healthy Habits** emphasizes good nutrition, regular physical activity and improved overall well-being; **Smart Moves** is a prevention and education program addressing problems such as drug and alcohol use and premature sexual activity; **Smart Girls** provides health, fitness, prevention/education and self-esteem enhancement for girls ages 8 to 17; and **Passport to Adulthood** teaches youth (ages 11 to 14) responsibility through highly interactive activities focused on character development and emotional well-being.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

Quantitative progress will be measured by the percentage of three- and four-year-olds enrolled in pre-programs, Early Head Start or Head Start, school readiness or private childcare centers., and the percentage of students participating in after school and summer programs. Data can be collected from NHPS, Office of Early Childhood, and local non-profit organizations.

10% Increase in Pre-K Enrollment

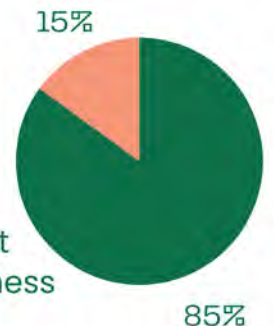


90%



Ensure 90 percent of children complete development screening before age 4.

Ensure 85 percent of 4-year-olds meet Kindergarten readiness benchmarks.



Goal 3: STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

As part of the broader Neighborhood Plan, the Boys & Girls Club of Greater New Haven will collaborate with local schools, non-profit nonprofits, businesses, and other stakeholders to enhance its programs and expand opportunities for Union Square youth. Gateway Community College will also engage directly with Union Square residents through community outreach initiatives, serving as a bridge between the college and the neighborhood to ensure that residents are aware of and able to access educational and workforce development opportunities.

Strategy 3.1: Enhance community engagement and partnerships.

ACTION PLAN

- **Community Events and Workshops:** Gateway will host informational sessions, career fairs, and community events in Union Square to engage residents and provide them with information about the available programs and services. The Community Action Agency of New Haven hosts informational sessions, wellness/career fair and outreach and home visits for services.
- **Outreach and Enrollment Support:** Gateway will work with community partners, such as the Resident Advisory Committee, to conduct outreach efforts that target residents who may not typically engage with educational institutions. This collaboration could include door-to-door outreach, targeted marketing campaigns, and partnerships with local organizations. The Community Action Agency of New Haven will also work with Community Partners for Energy Assistance, Health Literacy, Financial Literacy, outreach and case management services.
- **Mentorship and Peer Support Programs:** Gateway students and alumni from the Union Square neighborhood will be encouraged to mentor current residents, inspiring and supporting others in pursuing educational and career goals.
- **School Partnerships:** The Boys & Girls Club will collaborate with local schools to provide after-school enrichment that complements the school's academic goals. This partnership ensures that educational support is aligned with what students are learning during the school day.

3.1: Enhance community engagement and partnerships

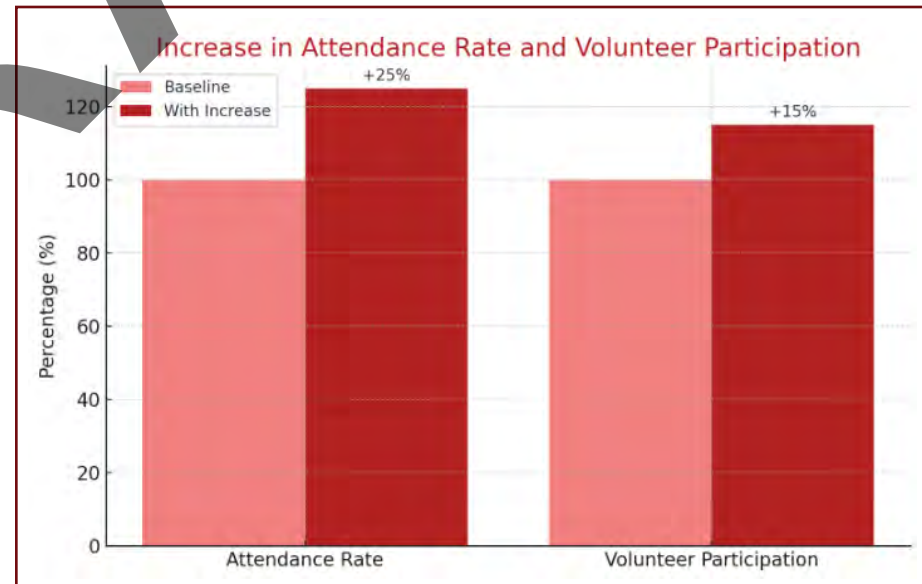
- **Nonprofit Collaboration:** The Boys & Girls Club will collaborate with other local organizations, such as Gateway Community College and local health clinics, to add additional resources and expertise to its programs. These partnerships will help expand the range of services available to youth and families.
- **Business and Employer Partnerships:** The Boys & Girls Club will partner with local businesses to provide internship opportunities, job shadowing, and sponsorships for youth development programs. This connection will also give businesses an opportunity to invest in Union Square's future workforce.
- **Youth Employment Opportunity:** Once in high school, youth can apply to become paid interns with Solar Youth. Youth can serve as Green Jobs Apprentices and learn concrete skills associated with carrying out community improvement projects that they design. They also build skills for general employability, critical prob-

lem-solving, communication and working in groups. Youth can also serve as Educators, co-leading Solar Youth's Citycology and Steward programs with adult staff in a youth-adult partnership that challenges the interns to develop new skills and be positive role models. Youth Educators serve as teachers for younger children as they lead hands-on environmental education programs, and act as environmental stewards by helping make their city a healthier and more beautiful place.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

Quantitative progress will be measured by the percentage of residents attending meetings, workshops, or community events and volunteering for community projects. Data can be collected through surveys, focus groups or registration forms.

- A 25 percent increase in attendance rate.
- A 15 percent increase in volunteer participation.



Goal 4: SUPPORT YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

4.1: Promote leadership skills, social development, and mentoring for Union Square youth

ACTION PLAN

- **College and Career Planning:** As previously stated The Boys & Girls Club of Greater New Haven will establish college and career readiness programs for middle and high school students, including college preparation workshops, financial aid counseling, and exposure to different career paths through internships and mentorship programs.
- **Safe Environment:** The Boys & Girls Club will serve as a designated safe space for youth in the Union Square neighborhood, offering an alternative to potentially unsafe or unproductive after-school environments. This safe environment will reduce youth exposure to negative influences such as gang violence or drug activity.
- **Mentorship Programs:** The Club will establish formal mentorship programs that connect Union Square youth with positive adult role models from the community. Mentors will guide, encourage, and support the youth, helping them navigate academic, social, and personal challenges.
- **Conflict Resolution and Social Skills:** Through group activities and workshops, the Boys & Girls Club will teach youth essential social and conflict resolution skills. These activities will help reduce youth involvement in neighborhood conflicts and contribute to a more peaceful community environment.
- **Keystone and Torch Clubs:** The Boys & Girls Club will offer programs such as Keystone (for teens) and Torch (for preteens), which focus on leadership, community service, and personal development. These clubs encourage youth to become actively engaged in their communities and help shape the future of Union Square.



CED Events

4.1: Promote leadership skills, social development, and mentoring for Union Square youth



CED Events

- **Youth Advisory Council:** The Boys & Girls Club will establish a Youth Advisory Council composed of Union Square teens, giving them a voice in neighborhood initiatives' planning and decision-making process. This council will work alongside the Resident Advisory Committee to ensure that youth perspectives are considered when developing programs and services.
- **Community Service Projects:** The Boys & Girls Club will organize community service projects where youth can contribute to the neighborhood's improvement, whether through park cleanups, food drives, or helping with local events. These projects instill a sense of civic responsibility and pride in the community.
- **Parenting Workshops:** The Boys and Girls Club of Greater New Haven will offer workshops for parents that cover topics such as positive discipline, academic support at home, and fostering communication with children and teens. These workshops strengthen family bonds and provide parents with tools to support their children's success.
- **Family Events:** The Boys & Girls Club will host regular family events, such as family fun nights, holiday celebrations, and parent-child activities, creating opportunities for families to bond and enjoy positive experiences.
- **Resource Referrals:** For families needing additional support, the Boys & Girls Club will work with the People Task Force and local social service agencies to provide referrals for housing assistance, healthcare, mental health services, and other resources.
- **Leadership Training:** LEAP will provide training programs for Union Square middle and high school students. These programs will focus on communication skills, decision-making, teamwork, and conflict resolution, empowering youth to take on leadership roles in their schools and communities.
- **College Student Counselors:** One of LEAP's unique approaches is the use of college students as counselors and mentors. Union Square youth will be paired with college mentors who provide academic support and serve as role models, encouraging students to aspire to higher education and personal success.

4.1: Promote leadership skills, social development, and mentoring for Union Square youth

- **Youth-Led Initiatives:** LEAP will facilitate youth-led projects in Union Square, giving young people the opportunity to take the initiative and design community service projects, fundraising events, or advocacy campaigns. This hands-on experience will help develop participants' sense of responsibility, civic engagement, and leadership.
- **Peer Mentorship:** Older LEAP participants will be able to mentor younger children, creating a positive cycle of peer-to-peer learning and support. This approach fosters a sense of community and helps youth develop leadership skills through teaching and guiding others.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

Quantitative progress will be measured by an increase in participation in after school tutoring, literacy, or STEM programs and number of youth involved in leadership roles, advisory boards, or resident-led projects. Data collection will include surveys and focus groups to evaluate improvements in participation.

- A 25 percent increase in youth participation in leadership and civic programs.



Leadership,
Education &
Athletics in
Partnership



LULAC Head Start Inc.

DRAFT

4.2: Enhance family engagement and community building.

LEAP recognizes that youth development is most effective when families are engaged, and communities are strong. As part of the Union Square Neighborhood Transformation Plan, LEAP will work closely with parents, caregivers, and the wider community to ensure holistic support for youth.

LULAC Head Start understands family engagement is key to a child's success. As part of the Union Square Neighborhood Transformation Plan, LULAC will work closely with parents and caregivers to ensure they are involved in their children's education and equipped with the resources needed to support their families.

BGCGNH strongly believes that youth succeed when the adults in their lives are supported and provided the opportunity to engage with youth. Their Clubs offer year-round family events focused on bringing the community together, while highlighting the success and progress of youth members. Planning is in place to observe cultural themed events that represent the diversity of youth members and their families. Families will be invited to celebrate traditional holiday observations with other club member families as well.

Solar Youth offers a comprehensive set of nature-oriented youth development programs designed to empower youth, foster leadership, and strengthen community bonds. By integrating these programs into Union Square, we aim to create an ecosystem where young people learn, grow, and give back to their community. Their approach is structured, seasonal, and adaptable, ensuring that youth of all ages have access to consistent, high-quality opportunities right in their neighborhood.



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF AMERICA**

4.2: Enhance family engagement and community building

Action Plan

- **Family Events:** BCGCNH will host regular family events, such as family fun nights, holiday celebrations, and parent-child activities, creating opportunities for families to bond and enjoy positive experiences.
- **Family Workshops:** LEAP will offer family workshops to strengthen parent-child relationships and provide parents with tools to support their children's academic and personal growth. These workshops will cover topics such as positive parenting, academic involvement, and fostering emotional resilience. Community Action Agency of New have offers programs and case management/wrap around services to families to foster pathways to self-sufficiency.
- **Community Events:** LEAP will host community events such as family fun days, community cleanups, and neighborhood festivals, bringing Union Square residents together to foster a sense of community and belonging. These events will allow families to connect, and youth will highlight their talents and achievements.
- **Parent-Teacher Partnerships:** LEAP will collaborate with local schools to establish strong partnerships between parents and teachers. These partnerships will ensure that parents participate in their children's education and are informed about their academic progress. These partnerships will improve educational outcomes and keep students on track.



Source: <https://www.bgca.org/>

4.2: Enhance family engagement and community building

- **School Partnerships:** LEAP will collaborate closely with local schools to align its after-school and summer programs with school curricula and priorities, ensuring that academic support is consistent and effective.
- **Partnership with Gateway Community College:** LEAP will collaborate with Gateway Community College to expose youth to higher education opportunities, college readiness programs, and mentorship from college students and faculty.
- **Coordination with the Boys & Girls Club and Other Nonprofits:** Nonprofits, such as LEAP and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater New Haven collaborate to ensure that youth in Union Square have access to a broad range of resources, from academic support to health services, leadership training, and recreation.



Source: <https://www.bgca.org/>

4.2: Enhance family engagement and community building

- **Kids Explore! Kids Do! Kids Teach!:** By integrating nature-oriented youth development programs into the heart of the neighborhood, Solar Youth aims to create a space where youth can explore, learn, and thrive. Through hands-on environmental education, leadership opportunities, and community service, Solar Youth will provide youth with the tools to build resilience, confidence, and a deep connection to the community. Our model, based on the “Kids Explore! Kids Do! Kids Teach!” framework, fosters curiosity and growth while empowering youth to make meaningful contributions to their neighborhoods. By offering trauma-informed care, literacy support, and environmental stewardship activities, Solar Youth will nurture not only individual growth but also collective well-being.
- **Community Garden:** Solar Youth will also have community gardens with teen interns and youth participants. These gardens will become centers of learning, wellness, and connection, where residents of all ages can come together to cultivate plants, share knowledge, and strengthen community bonds. Their vision is a neighborhood where youth and families experience joy, safety, and opportunity, supported by a network of programs that cultivate leadership, resilience, and a love for the natural world.
- **Community Events:** Solar Youth will plan Harvest festivals and giveaways to help address food insecurity, garden tours, and intergenerational activities to strengthen community bonds.



“[In Solar Youth] I learned that no matter how hard things get, you shouldn't give up because whatever you're going through, you don't have to do it all alone.”

- Leshae Morrison
(HS graduate &
SY Steward since 2008)

Source: <https://www.solaryouth.org/>

4.3: Promote youth employment programs

Workforce Alliance will also focus on youth employment, ensuring that young people in Union Square can access job training, career exploration, and early employment opportunities.

“I need opportunities to work in my community— accessible jobs and safe, well-lit streets that make it easy to get there, no matter the time of day”

- HILL RESIDENT

Performance Indicators and Metrics

Quantitative progress will be measured by the percentage of residents attending meetings, workshops, or community events and volunteering for community projects. Data can be collected through surveys, focus groups or registration forms.

- A 25 percent increase in attendance rate.
- A 15 percent increase in volunteer participation.

ACTION PLAN

- **Summer Youth Employment Program:** Workforce Alliance offers a summer youth employment program (for ages 14 - 24). This opportunity provides paid work experience for youth from 213 municipalities in South Central CT, offering practical career exploration. Additionally, Workforce Alliance contracts with a network of organizations to provide in-school youth and out-of-school young adults with occupational and educational skill credentials, from high school diplomas or GEDs to industry-recognized.
- **Internships and Apprenticeships for Youth:** Workforce Alliance will collaborate with **LEAP, the Boys & Girls Club, and Gateway Community College** to offer internships and apprenticeships for high school and college students in Union Square. These opportunities will focus on industries such as healthcare, IT, and advanced manufacturing, allowing youth to gain exposure to potential career paths.

4.3: Promote youth employment programs

- **Youth Programming:** This program assists young participants in acquiring valuable skills hands on experiences within the workplace. **Workforce Alliance** offers a comprehensive range of services across South Central CT aimed at supporting youth and young adults in their personal and professional growth. These include Project CEO coordinated within the American Job Center offices, which provides year-round training and employment opportunities tailored to 18- to 24-year-olds.
- **Career Exploration Workshops:** Workforce Alliance will host career exploration workshops for Union Square youth. In these workshops, professionals from various industries will share their experiences and offer guidance on entering those fields. These workshops will introduce youth to emerging job sectors and help them make informed decisions about their educational and career goals.
- **Parent Education and Involvement:** **LULAC Head Start** will offer workshops and training sessions for parents and caregivers on positive parenting, child development, nutrition,

and school readiness. Parents will also be encouraged to volunteer in the classroom and participate in decision-making processes through parent committees.

- **Family Support Services:** LULAC Head Start will provide a range of family support services, including assistance with housing, employment, financial literacy, and access to social services. Family service workers will work with parents to set goals for their family's well-being and connect them with the resources needed to achieve them.
- **Bilingual Family Engagement:** For Spanish-speaking families, LULAC will offer bilingual outreach and engagement programs, ensuring that all families can fully

participate in Head Start activities, workshops, and services. This approach will help build trust and foster a strong sense of community among Union Square's diverse families.



Source: <https://lulacheadstart.org/>

4.3: Promote youth employment programs



Source: <https://lulacheadstart.org/>

- **Subsidized Employment:** This program is offered by Workforce Alliance to older youth and adult job seekers with limited work experience through placement at a work site to learn or apply newly acquired skills. Employees earn a weekly paycheck for up to 4 months at between 20-30 hours per week. During this period, employees are mentored by their host employer and

continue to receive support and guidance from their American Job Center counselor. Some employees may be offered permanent employment with their host employer, while others will participate in supported job search assistance to identify other suitable work opportunities.

- **Support for Parents as First Teachers:** LULAC will emphasize the role of parents as their children's first and most important teachers. Through home visits and workshops, parents will learn how to create enriching learning environments at home, engage in meaningful interactions with their children, and support early literacy and numeracy development.
- **Transition to Elementary School:** LULAC will collaborate with local elementary schools to facilitate smooth transitions for children entering kindergarten. This collaboration will include sharing child development data, coordinating transition activities, and providing parents with information on supporting their child's success in kindergarten.
- **Partnership with Healthcare Providers:** LULAC will collaborate with local

healthcare providers to ensure that children in Union Square can access medical and dental services. This partnership will help address gaps in healthcare access and ensure that children receive preventive care and treatment when needed.

- **Coordination with Workforce Development Programs:** LULAC will work with organizations like Workforce Alliance to connect parents to job training and employment opportunities. By helping parents gain employment or advance in their careers, LULAC will contribute to improving the economic stability of families in Union Square.
- **Collaboration with Gateway Community College and Other Educational Institutions:** LULAC will partner with Gateway Community College and other educational institutions to offer professional development opportunities for Head Start teachers and early childhood educators in the Union Square area. This partnership will ensure that educators are equipped with the latest teaching strategies and can provide high-quality instruction.

4.3: Promote youth employment programs



Source: <https://workforcealliance.biz>

- **GET IT!:** This program is dedicated to fostering equitable learning in Information Technology by providing young individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in today's digital world. This initiative by Workforce Alliance is broken into three key components: an interactive and immersive pop-up experience, and two distinct course opportunities aimed at building a robust IT workforce pipeline. GET IT! showcasing the field as diverse, creative, engaging, and lucrative. One highlight is the Career Next Steps Day, where students connect with industry professionals, including Charles IT and hear from local universities like Gateway and Southern.
- **CFAL for Digital Inclusion and Workforce Alliance:** This program is a collaborative effort to provide a foundation for computer literacy for individuals 18-24 looking to build a career in information technology or gain skills necessary in today's job market. Participants receive a refurbished computer after completing a 6-week course.
- **Collaboration with LULAC Head Start and Childcare Providers:** The NHECC will work with early childhood programs like LULAC Head Start to align curricula, share best practices, and ensure consistent quality across programs. This collaboration will ensure that all young children in Union Square receive high-quality early learning experiences.
- **Partnership with Schools:** The NHECC will partner with local elementary schools to ensure smooth transitions for kindergarten children. This collaboration will include shared professional development opportunities for pre-school and kindergarten teachers and coordinating transition activities for children and families.
- **Engagement with Healthcare and Social Services:** The council will work with healthcare providers, social service agencies, and community organizations to ensure that families have access to a full range of services that support both children's health and family stability.
- **Better Health Outcomes:** The NHECC will improve the physical and mental health of young children in Union Square through health screenings, wellness initiatives, and partnerships with healthcare providers.
- **Stronger Family Engagement:** The NHECC will strengthen families' involvement in their children's education and promote a supportive home environment by providing resources, edu-

4.3: Promote youth employment programs

cation, and leadership opportunities to parents.

- **Enhanced Collaboration:** The NHECC's ability to coordinate early childhood services and collaborate with key partners will ensure that Union Square families receive comprehensive, integrated support that meets their diverse needs.
- **The Health Careers Advancement Program (HCAP):** This program supports career seekers looking to enter or advance in the healthcare sector. Through the Workforce Alliance's comprehensive offerings, they provide health career coaching, tuition assistance, professional development, and job placement services. Training options in a variety of in-demand healthcare professions include Pharmacy Technician, Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), EKG, Phlebotomy, Medical Billing and Coding, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Sterile Processing Technician, and specialized EEG training at the Yale School of Clinical Neurophysiology. HCAP graduates can secure employment at esteemed healthcare facilities such as Midstate Medical Center, Yale New Haven Hospital, St. Raphael's Campus, and Griffin

Workforce Alliance



Source: <https://workforcealliance.biz/>

Hospital, further cementing our program's role in filling critical workforce gaps in the healthcare sector. Career seekers will participate in a specialized assessment and two-session healthcare careers workshop providing them with a deep dive into the diverse opportunities and pathways of the healthcare industry.

- **Next Steps Re-Entry Program:** This program offers vital assistance to formerly incarcerated citizens seeking to reintegrate into the workforce.

The Next Steps Re-Entry Program in collaboration with Workforce Alliance is a comprehensive initiative aimed at assisting job seekers in securing employment by providing essential life coping skills, vocational training, support services, and workplace readiness training. With both in-person and virtual workshops and services available, the program caters to diverse needs and circumstances. Next Steps ensures a comprehensive approach to reintegration, thereby increasing the chances of success.

4.3: Promote youth employment programs

Performance Indicators and Metrics

Quantitative progress will be measured by the number of youth enrolled in employment training programs and the percentage of youth participating in job readiness training or internships. Data can be gathered by tracking youth enrollment, retention, and completion rates and by conducting pre- and post-program surveys.

- A 10 percent increase in the number of 16-21-year-old residents engaged in internships.
- A 10 percent increase in the number of summer job



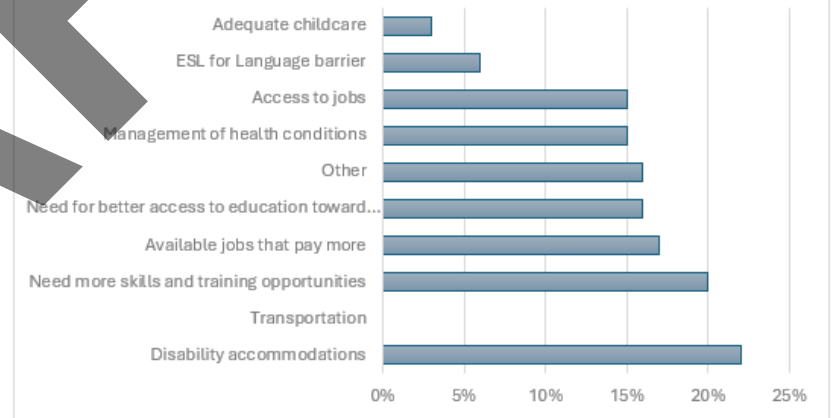
Goal 5: FOSTER JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

5.1: Promote leadership skills, social development, and mentoring for Union Square youth.

The Union Square Neighborhood has an estimated 7,024 participants in the labor force or 60.7% of the population over 16.22. This percentage is lower than that of the City and County overall, with 65.1% of residents participating in the labor market. Despite a smaller proportion of residents looking for work, a higher proportion of Union Square residents cannot find it, at 10%. Comparatively, only 8.6% of City residents and 6.4% of County residents in the labor force cannot find employment.

Union Square households are likelier to have only one adult member working in the household relative to the City and County. Of Union Square households, 11.1% have no resident working, 46.2% have one resident working, and 42.7% have two working. Comparatively, 47.2% of City and 56% of County households have two residents working, contributing to higher median household incomes. These differences are likely due to various factors, including availability and cost of childcare, number of adults present, and ability to find employment, and can result in differences in income levels. Seventy-three percent of the surveyed residents indicated they were employed,

FIGURE 9: BARRIERS TO UNION SQUARE RESIDENT OBTAINING MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT



while 43 percent said they were interested in being employed. Twenty percent of surveyed residents listed the need for more skills and training as the main challenge to finding a job at the level they are looking for. Twenty percent listed the need for better access to education toward a degree as the main impediment to getting a job at the level they are looking for.



Residents on the Norwalk Housing Authority Trip

5.1: Promote leadership skills, social development, and mentoring for Union Square youth

Gateway Community College is a minority-serving institution (MSI), a designation given to colleges and universities that serve high percentages of minority students, particularly those from African American, Hispanic, Native American, or Asian Pacific Islanders backgrounds. This status reflects Gateway's commitment to providing accessible education and support to traditionally underserved and underrepresented student populations. The institution significantly promotes diversity and inclusion while ensuring that minority students have access to high-quality education and skill development opportunities.

Gateway is committed to expanding access to higher education for Union Square residents, including adult learners seeking to further their education and high school graduates who may have yet to pursue post-secondary education.

Workforce Alliance is dedicated to building a highly skilled workforce through a community-centered approach. Their employment and training programs have helped thousands secure meaningful jobs while supporting employers expand and develop their workforce. Its mission includes alignment with local stakeholders

and strategic partnerships with the CT Department of Labor, CT Dept. Of Social Services, CT Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, and the CT Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind; plus, Literacy Volunteers, Job Corps, New Haven Adult & Continuing Education, the Center for Women and Families, and CT State Community College - Gateway Campus.

New Haven Works is a nonprofit organization established to connect New Haven residents, especially those from underserved communities like the Union Square neighborhood, to job opportuni-

ties and the local economy. Its mission is to ensure that New Haven residents benefit from the City's economic growth, particularly by facilitating access to jobs with major local employees such as Yale University, Yale New Haven Health Pillar, and other local businesses.

CAANH offers life skills training on communication skills, goal setting commas and creating action steps to achieving these goals. The organization also offers job readiness training to foster job skills and employability and informational sessions on home ownership, credit, resume building, and much more.

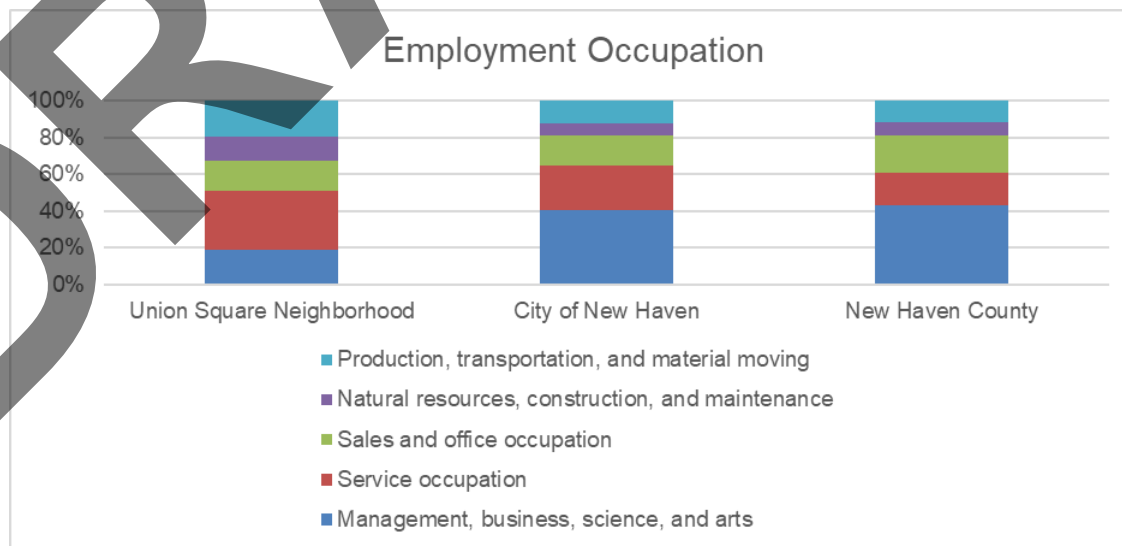


FIGURE 10: EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION FOR UNION SQUARE, CITY OF NEW HAVEN AND NEW HAVEN COUNTY

5.1: Promote leadership skills, social development, and mentoring for Union Square youth



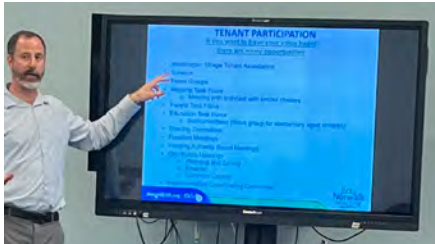
Action Plan

- **Scholarship and Financial Aid Support:** Gateway will provide financial aid counseling and scholarship opportunities for low-income residents to encourage participation in higher education. Specific scholarship programs may be created to support the transformation plan.
 - **Vocational Training Programs:** Gateway will offer targeted vocational and technical training programs designed to meet the needs of local employers, such as Yale-New Haven Hospital and other healthcare facilities, manufacturing firms, and emerging industries.
 - **Certification and Credentials:** Residents will have access to programs leading to industry-recognized certifications and credentials in fields such as nursing, information technology, HVAC, construction, and automotive technology, ensuring they have the skills needed for high-demand jobs.
 - **Apprenticeship Programs:** In partnership with local businesses, Gateway will establish apprenticeship programs that allow Union Square residents to gain hands-on experience while earning an income. These programs will focus on healthcare, green construction, and renewable energy.
 - **Job Placement Services:** Gateway will collaborate with the People Task Force and local employers to provide job placement services for residents who complete training programs. The college will also assist with resume building, interview preparation, and job search strategies. The Community Action Agency collaborates with Cornell Scott by creating a pathway to employment through programs, case management and internships.
- **Adult Education and GED Programs:** Gateway will offer adult education programs, including GED preparation and basic literacy and numeracy skills training, to help residents who may have faced barriers to traditional educational pathways.
 - **Bridge Programs for High School Students:** In partnership with local high schools, Gateway will create “bridge programs” that provide Union Square youth with a pathway to higher education. These programs will offer dual-enrollment opportunities, allowing high school students to earn college credits while completing their diplomas.



5.1: Promote leadership skills, social development, and mentoring for Union Square youth

Increase Employment Opportunities



Through workforce training programs, residents will be equipped with skills that meet the needs of local employers, helping to reduce unemployment and underemployment in the neighborhood.

Career Counseling & Coaching



New Haven Works offers personalized career counseling to help job seekers assess their skills, identify career goals, and develop action plans for securing employment. This program includes one-on-one resume-building coaching, interview preparation, and networking. Job placement assistance. The Community Action Agency of New Haven offers programs that help reacclimate participants to the work force by offering resume writing sessions, interviewing skills, budgeting and financial literacy training.

Support Local Economic Growth



By fostering entrepreneurship and small business development, Gateway will contribute to revitalizing the local economy and creating new opportunities for Union Square residents.

CAANH S.M.A.R.T Women Initiative



Singer Mothers Actively Reaching the Top (SMART) -A 120week program providing single mothers with a resource network, personal financial management training, women's health, parenting/ life skills, informational/referral services, and case management services booking thing on helping them increase their level of self-sufficiency. The program serves single mothers or grand-mothers between the ages of 18 to 55.

5.1: Promote leadership skills, social development, and mentoring for Union Square youth

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Number of training programs offered.
- Total funding dedicated to higher education and vocational training.
- Percentage of students who complete higher education or vocational training programs.
- Percentage of graduates who obtain employment within one year after completing the program.
- Reduction in unemployment rates.

Creating job opportunities for elderly individuals and persons with disabilities in the Union Square neighborhood requires a comprehensive strategy that addresses the unique challenges faced by these populations while leveraging their skills and potential. A way-around approach would include partnerships with local valuations, training programs, accessible workplaces, and advocacy for inclusive policies.

The Workforce Force Alliance offers several subsidized programs aimed at



enhancing employment opportunities for individuals with limited work history or specific barriers to employment. Their Job First Employment Services initiative pairs candidates with minimal or no work experience with employers who provide valuable work opportunities. Participants earn wages through placement at work sites for up to 20 hours per week, with paychecks issued via the American Job Center. The Health Careers Advancement Program provides low-income job

seekers with tuition assistance and job placement services, along with support to maintain training and advance their careers in the healthcare sector. The Workforce Alliance offers several training programs that are exclusive of individuals with disabilities, including equal access and support. These programs provide training for careers in manufacturing, emphasizing exclusivity. Auxiliary aids and accommodation are available upon request to support participants with disabilities.

5.2: Expand employment opportunities for elderly individuals and persons with disabilities in Union Square

Action Plan

- **Tailored Training Programs:** The Work Force Alliance has job training programs specifically designed for elderly individuals and people with personal disabilities, focusing on their strengths and abilities. They partner with organizations such as the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) and the Connecticut Department of Labor to provide comprehensive support for individuals with disabilities, including vocational rehabilitation and employment services.
- **Transportation Assistance:** and workforce alliance collaborates with the community partners to enhance transportation access for its participants. One such partner is the greater New Haven Transit District, which offers various transportation programs and services for people with disabilities, the elderly, and then the diverse workforce.
- **The Community Action New Haven, Inc. Aging with Grace program:** Provides Mature Adults computer basic training and Cognitive activities for Mature Adults that are mentally stimulating activities that can improve cognitive skills like attention, memory, and processing speed.



5.2: Expand employment opportunities for elderly individuals and persons with disabilities in Union Square

Performance Indicators and Metrics

DRAFT



UNION SQUARE | A CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD



UNION SQUARE

A CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD

5

Neighborhood Plan

DRAFT



Neighborhood Overview

This section of the Union Square Choice Neighborhood Plan focuses on the broader Hill neighborhood.

Elsewhere in this plan, you will find a much needed plan to bring lively mixed use development to the Union Square site, as well as a plan for the network of resources, supports, and services that will ensure residents of the new Union Square development succeed. But the Hill neighborhood reaches far beyond Union Square, and the larger community is also ready to harness this momentum for positive change.

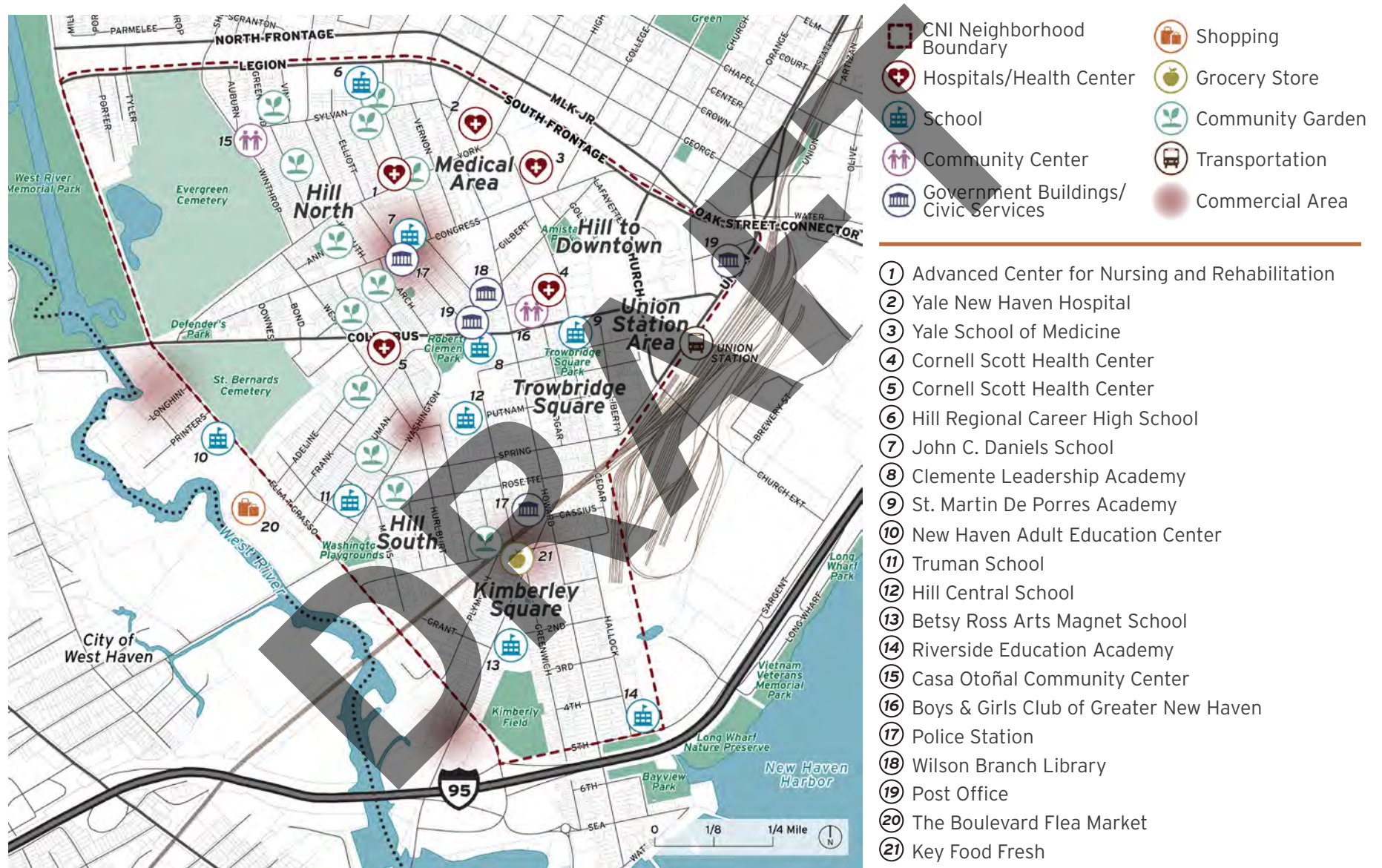
Hill residents know what makes their neighborhood great: beautiful homes, parks, and schools; friendly neighbors; proximity to Downtown; and easy access to the region. But they also know the Hill faces significant challenges. Wide, dangerous streets separate the neighborhood from the city and neighborhood destinations;

disinvestment has deprived residents of healthy choices, safe streets, and local businesses; and rising rents and real estate prices put all low-income residents at risk.

There is already significant good work in progress. The Downtown Crossing project, a new BRT, and bicycle lanes will start to knit the neighborhood together; improvements to Trowbridge Square Park, Kimberly Field, and the reopening of the Hill Cooperative Youth Center will strengthen community health; a new plaza and mixed use development at Kimberly Square will bolster businesses; and multiple affordable rental and homeownership projects will help protect the lower-income community. This is just a sample of what is happening in the Hill, and residents say they are ready for more.

This plan will bring the collective resources and attention of a wide range of high capacity partners, including the City of New Haven, the Glendower Group, Elm City Communities, the New Haven Police Department, the Boys and Girls Club, Workforce Alliance, and more. This is the time for the Hill to take a big step forward towards accomplishing the community's goals.

Figure 4: Neighborhood Destinations and Assets



Vision for the Hill Neighborhood

The time is right for the Hill community to harness the energy of committed residents, City leaders, and organizations—and to extend the momentum for change represented by the Union Square development.

The Hill will make it easy for residents to learn, grow, and stay healthy; with safe, easy connections to the City and region; and a strong community that residents can afford to stay in for years to come.

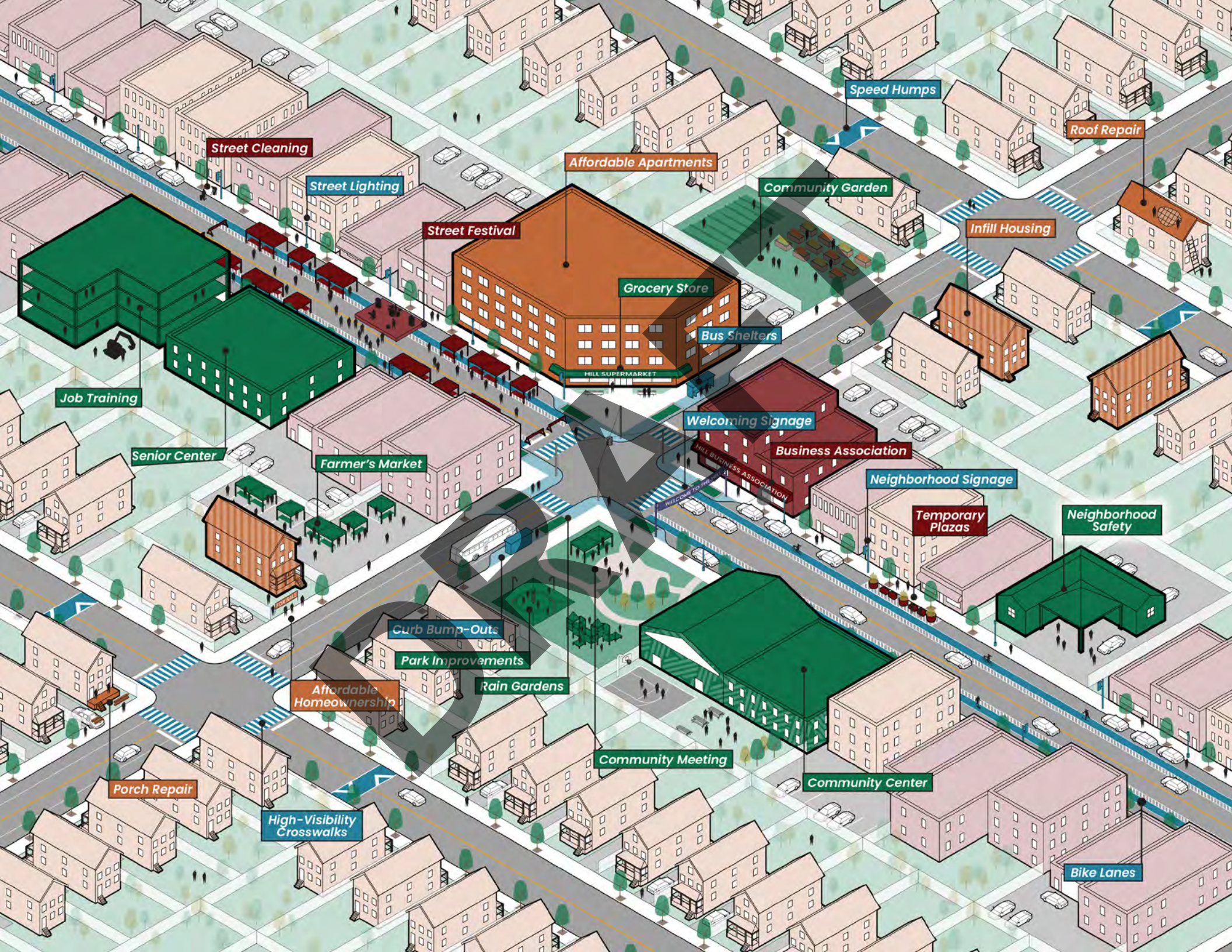
Neighborhood Goals

GOAL 1 Calm traffic, ensure pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and improve connections within and outside the Hill.

GOAL 2 Ensure residents of the Hill have what they need to be healthy, safe and economically mobile.

GOAL 3 Encourage neighborhood-serving retail, food, services, and activities that support basic needs and community life.

GOAL 4 Increase the supply of affordable and high quality homes for the homeowners and renters who want to stay here.



Street Cleaning

Street Lighting

Affordable Apartments

Speed Humps

Roof Repair

Street Festival

Community Garden

Infill Housing

Grocery Store

Bus Shelters

Job Training

Senior Center

Farmer's Market

Welcoming Signage

Business Association

Neighborhood Signage

Temporary Plazas

Neighborhood Safety

Curb Bump-Outs

Park Improvements

Rain Gardens

Affordable Homeownership

Community Meeting

Community Center

Porch Repair

High-Visibility Crosswalks

Bike Lanes

Connectivity and Mobility

GOAL 1

Calm traffic, ensure pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and improve connections within and outside the Hill.

In An Ideal Location But Isolated From The City

Union Square and the larger Hill neighborhood are ideally located to connect residents with opportunities in their city and beyond. They are just south of Downtown New Haven, located right beside I-95, and steps from Union Station, with MetroNorth and Amtrak rail access to the region.

However, residents say the Hill neighborhood is isolated and hard to navigate on foot and bicycle. This feeling has roots in the neighborhood's history: in the late 1950s, demolition of the Oak Street neighborhood and construction of the Oak Street Connector/Route 34 Expressway created a major barrier between the Hill and Downtown that still impacts mobility.

Today, the Hill's predominantly low-income residents are hemmed in by rail infrastructure, wide roads, and water.

There has been some progress towards undoing this isolation. New Haven's ambitious Downtown Crossing project has begun to reconnect the urban street grid between the Hill and Downtown with more welcoming streets, raised crosswalks, and elevated cycle lanes. Nonetheless, there is still a lot of work to do to soften the Hill's hard - and dangerous - borders.

Dangerous For Pedestrians And Cyclists

Hill residents have to navigate some of the most dangerous intersections and roadways in all of New Haven. Between 2014 and 2024, 217 pedestrians and 80

cyclists were hit by vehicles within or adjacent to the Hill neighborhood. Eighteen people died.¹ On the western edge of the neighborhood, the stretch of Ella T. Grasso Boulevard from Columbus Avenue to Adeline Street has been called "Death Boulevard".²

In this plan's public engagement, Hill residents have made it clear: many local streets are not safe to walk or bike on. Pedestrian crossings can feel unsafe, and the cycling lane network has large gaps. The community needs improvements that will connect the neighborhood to the city and keep residents safe.

¹ CT Transportation Safety Research Center, 2024.

² "Fatalities Mount On Death Blvd", New Haven Independent. www.newhavenindependent.org/article/ella_t_grasso_blvd.

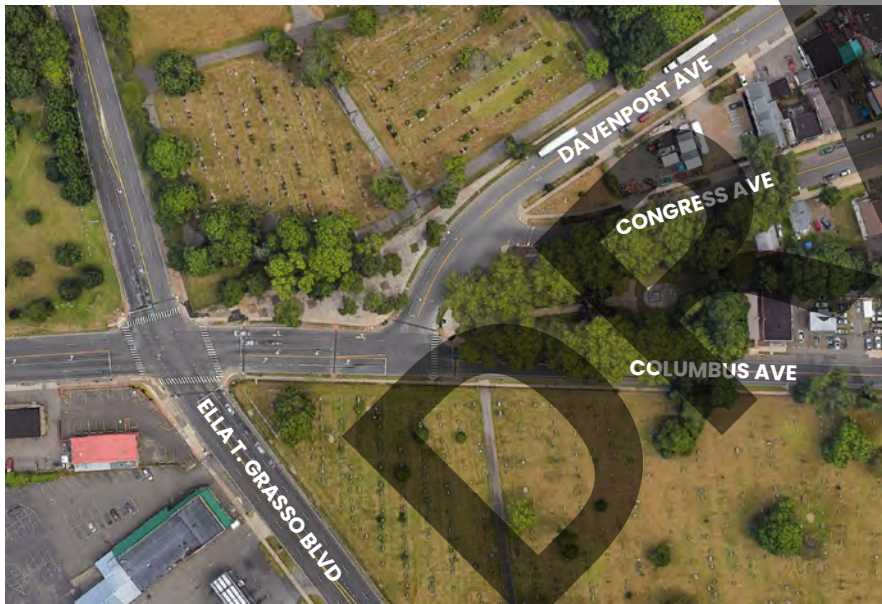
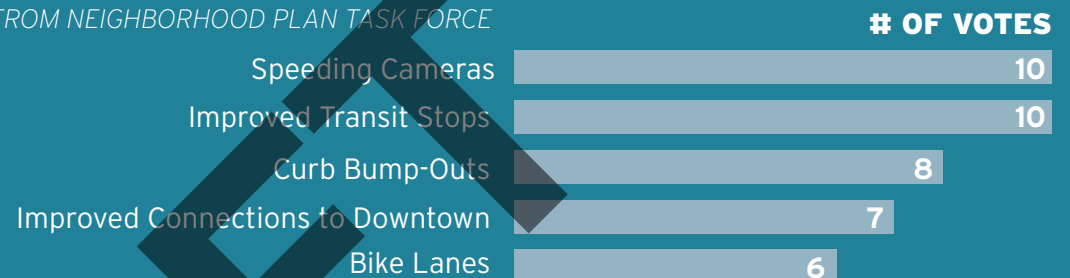
WHAT WE'VE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS

- There is a need for safer connections in the neighborhood for people of all ages and abilities through more crosswalks, bike lanes, improved lighting, and ADA accessible sidewalks.
- There is a desire to reduce speeding in the neighborhood through better enforcement and street design.
- It is important to improve connectivity to other neighborhoods, especially through public transportation and improved design.

"We need walkable safe streets, comfortable and attractive to people of all ages and abilities" - RESIDENT

MOST POPULAR IDEAS

FROM NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN TASK FORCE



The Hill has several dangerous intersections where the convergence of many different streets results in a relatively high rate of vehicular crashes. Ella T. Grasso Boulevard and Kimberley Avenue, pictured above, are two of the top crash hotspots in the neighborhood. (Image Source: Google Earth)

New Projects Will Start Making Change







The momentum for change is already here: there are several important projects in the works that will improve connectivity and safety for Hill residents.

- **Street improvements on Church Street and Union Avenue** will slow down traffic, provide dedicated space for pedestrians and cyclists, and improve access to Union Station and the future Union Square development.
- **A new citywide Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system** will run through the Hill along Church Street, Columbus Avenue, and Congress Avenue. Street improvements will accompany this new route to improve access to the BRT stops.
- **A new bicycle track is planned for Howard Avenue**, providing dedicated space for cyclists and a safer route towards Downtown from Kimberly Square.

The strategies in this plan will build on these projects to ensure residents can take full advantage of their neighborhood's ideal location and the potential of the Union Square development.

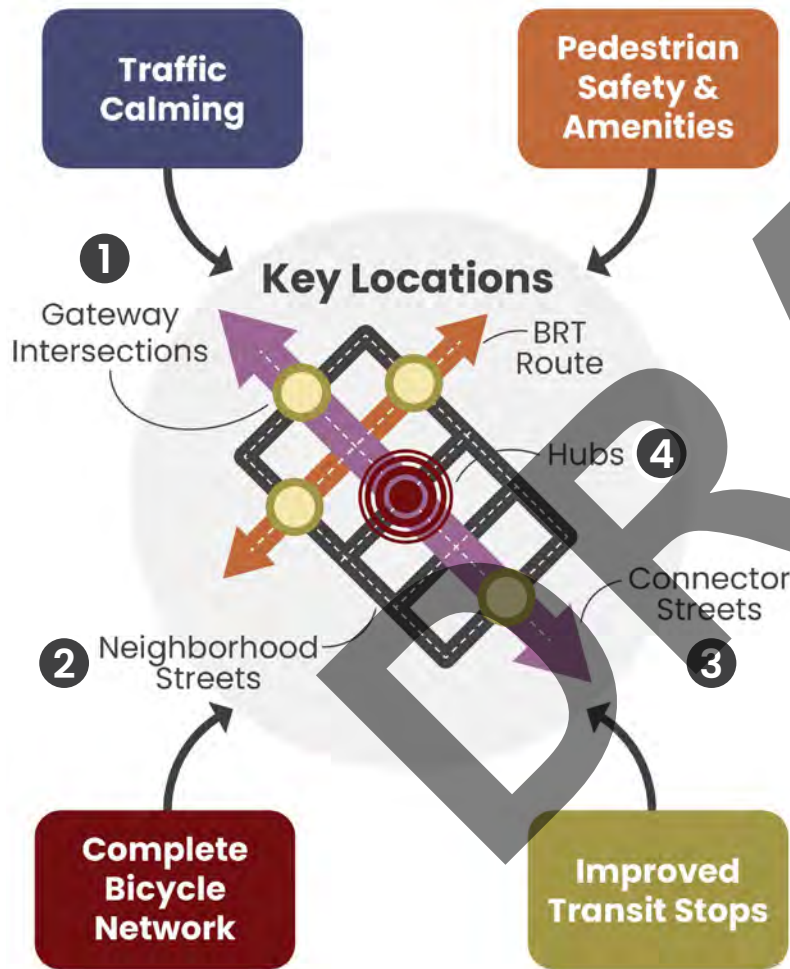


Figure 5: Connectivity and Mobility Map

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
|  Existing Bicycle Lanes |  Existing Bicycle Tracks (Separated from traffic) |  Planned Street Improvements |
|  Existing Bicycle Sharrows |  Planned Bicycle Tracks (Separated from traffic) |  Planned BRT Route |

Connectivity and Mobility Strategies

The diagram below provides a framework for the following strategies related to Connectivity and Mobility. All four types of strategies shown below should show up on each of the four types of streets outlined below.



Gateway Intersection



Cars, pedestrians and bicyclists must cross these intersections to get in and out of the neighborhood. They can be a barrier to access or a welcoming path in both directions. (Intersection of Grasso Boulevard/Washington Avenue shown above)

Neighborhood Street



Neighborhood Streets are the basic, small streets that cross the neighborhood. Cars and bicycles usually share a lane. (Rosette Street shown above)

Connector Street



Connector Streets are the face of the neighborhood. These are the major streets used to travel within and through the community, and they lead to key destinations. (Washington Avenue shown above)

Neighborhood Hub



Neighborhood Hubs are where people come together. Businesses cluster here, and there are people out and about on the street. (Kimberly Square shown above)







1.1. Coordinate action at key intersections, streets, and destinations.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven

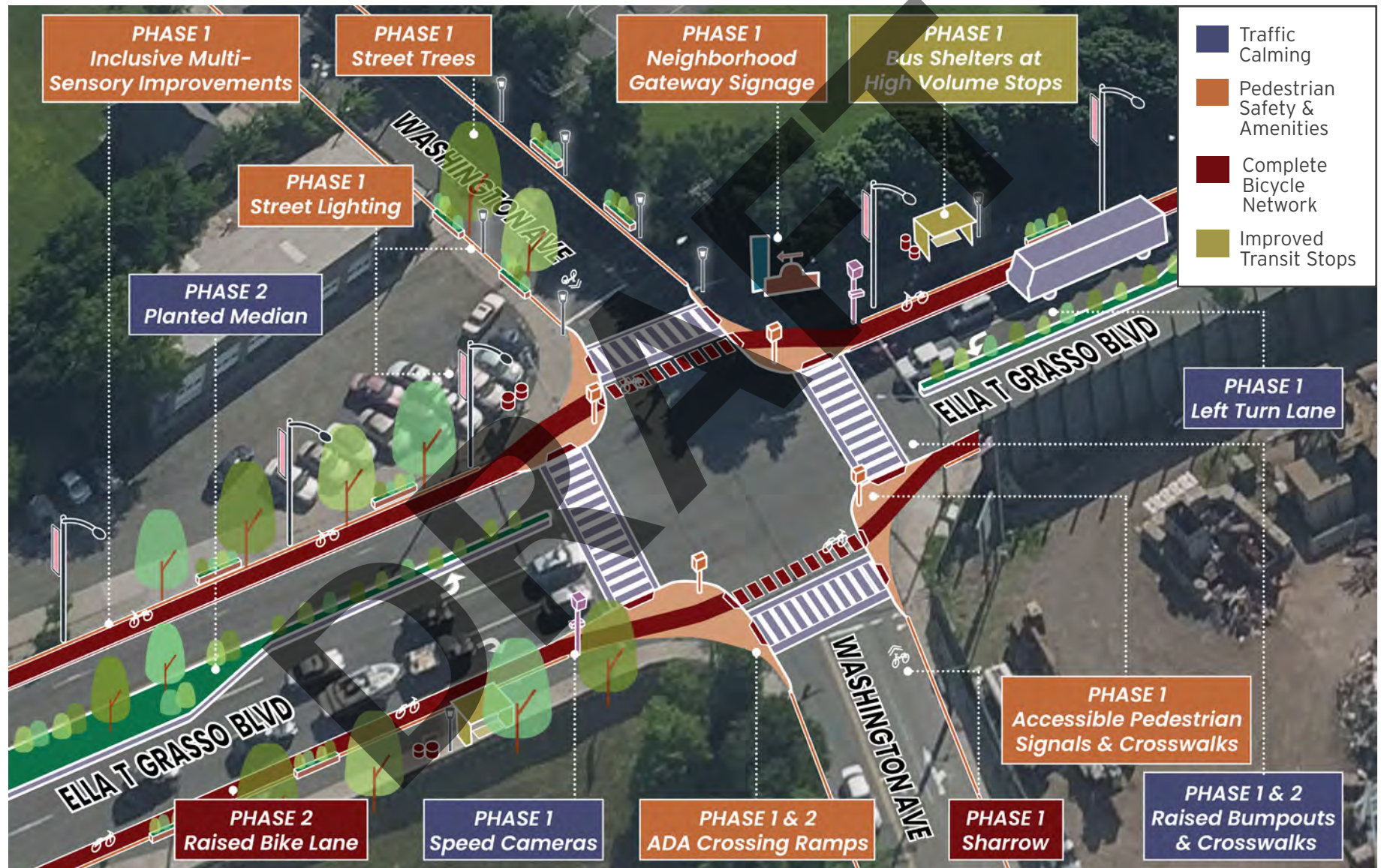
- 1.1.1. **At gateway intersections**, make it safe and welcoming for pedestrians and bikers to get in and out of the community.
- 1.1.2. **On neighborhood streets**, provide the basics for safe multi-modal travel.
- 1.1.3. **On connector streets**, ensure safe multi-modal travel and present an attractive, well-maintained face to represent the community.
- 1.1.4. **At neighborhood hubs**, create an exceptional pedestrian-focused environment at mixed-use hubs.
- 1.1.5. **Along the upcoming BRT route**, support BRT ridership with welcoming transit stops and pedestrian improvements.



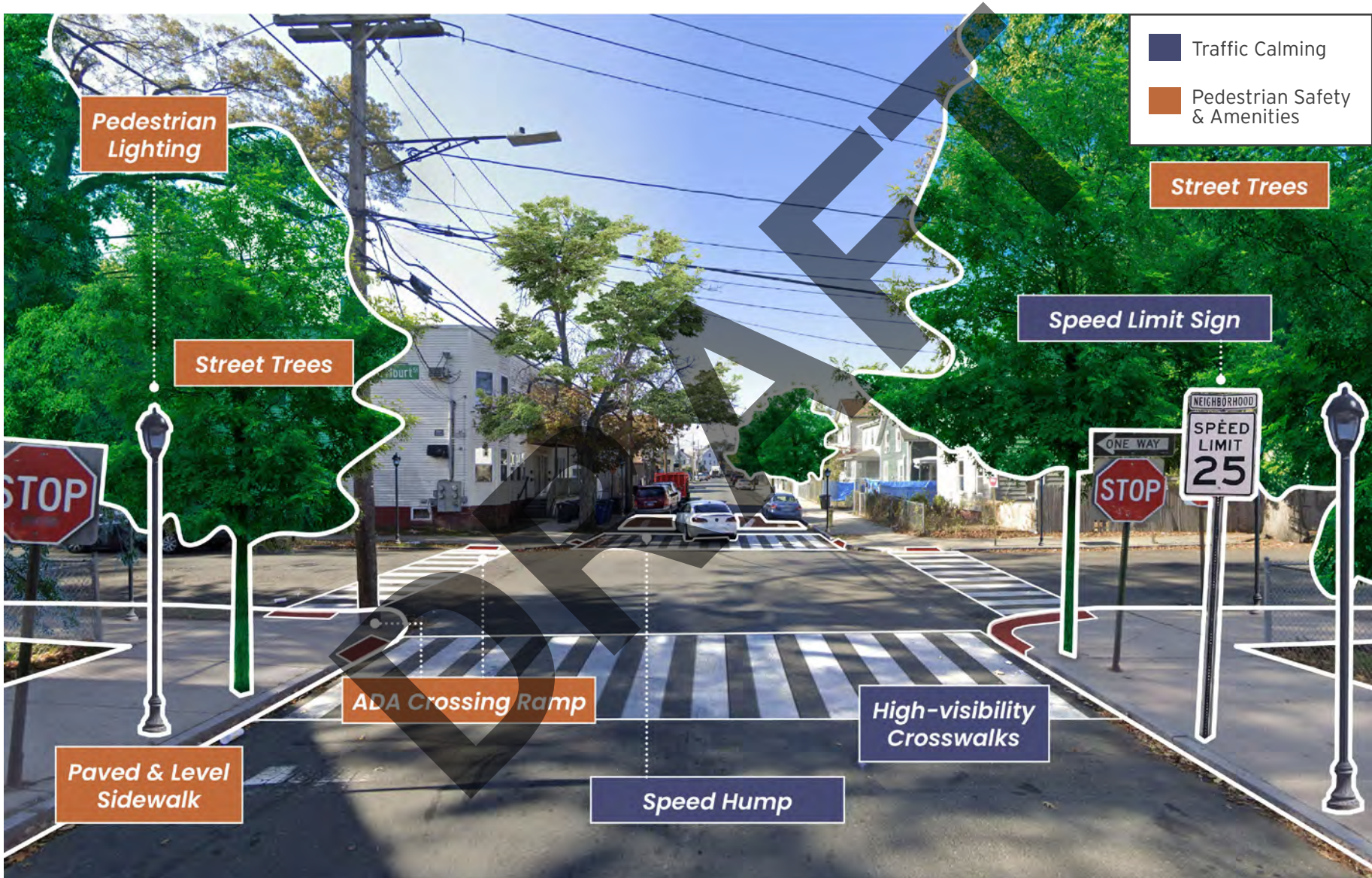
Figure 6: Connectivity Framework Map (on the right)

- | | | | |
|---|----------------------|---|------------------------|
|  | Gateway Intersection |  | Neighborhood Hub |
|  | Neighborhood Streets |  | Planned BRT Route |
|  | Connector Streets |  | New Street Connections |

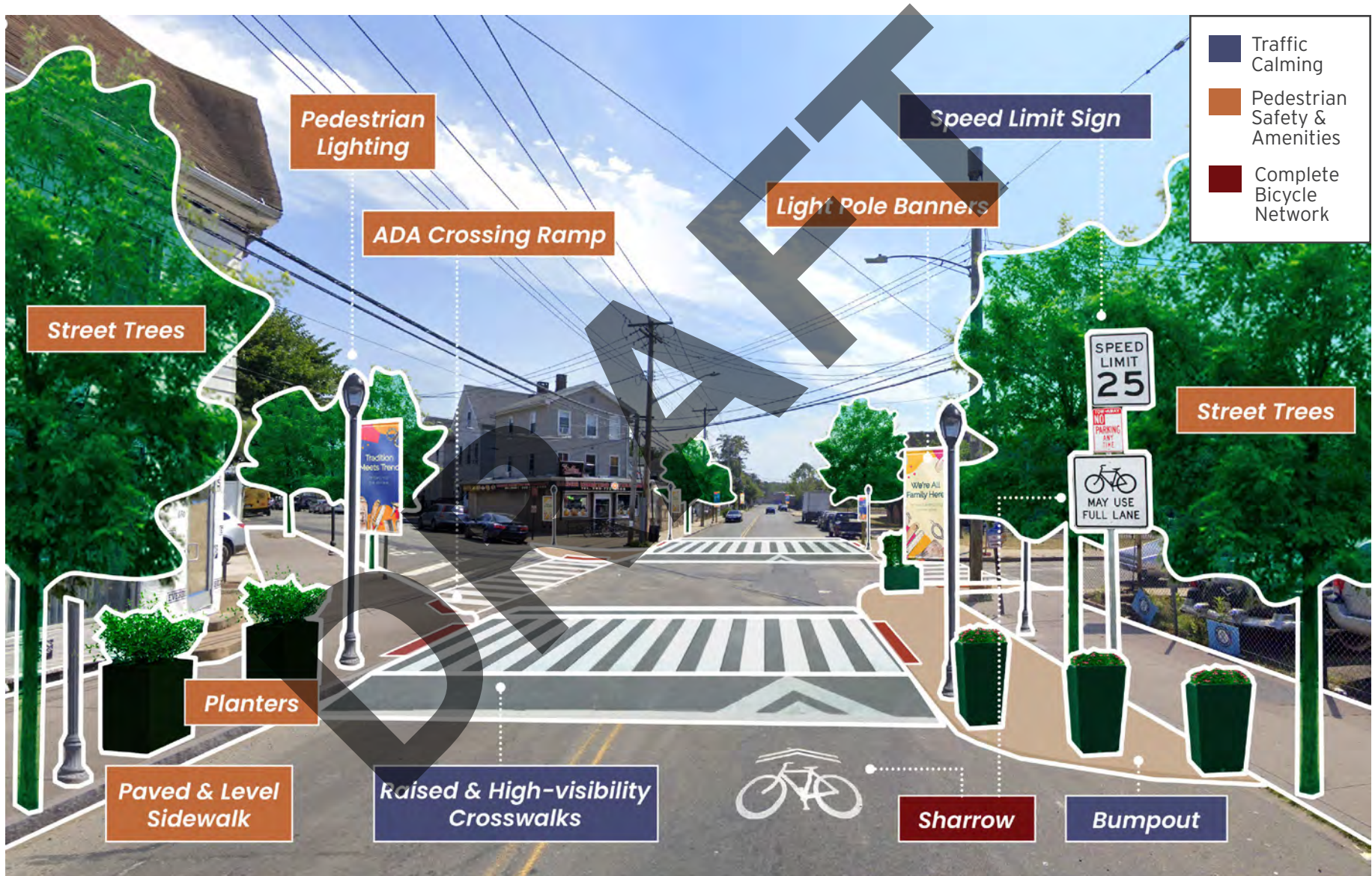
Gateway Intersection: Example of Possible Improvements



Neighborhood Street: Example of Possible Improvements



Connector Street: Example of Possible Improvements



1.2. Calm traffic through design, enforcement, and programming.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven

- 1.2.1. **Determine whether speed cameras are appropriate for high traffic corridors** such as Union Avenue.
- 1.2.2. **Narrow intersections to slow traffic** with paint, signage, planters, and other decorative elements.
- 1.2.3. **Test traffic calming measures with pilot programs** that prove strategies' effectiveness to the community before more permanent measures are installed.
- 1.2.4. **Use community action and events** such as Parking Day or Open Streets days to build momentum for change. These events can also be an opportunity to install pilot programs or complete artistic intersection painting.

1.3. Improve pedestrian amenities to make the neighborhood safer and more comfortable to cross on foot.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven

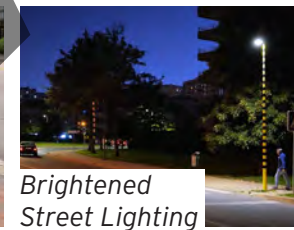
- 1.3.1. **Add signalized pedestrian crossings or, at least, crosswalk paint** at all traffic lights within the neighborhood.
- 1.3.2. **Ensure adequate pedestrian lighting** on key connector streets.
- 1.3.3. **Fill in gaps in the sidewalk network**, such as the section along Legion Avenue and North Frontage Road between Grasso Boulevard and Orchard Street.

Menu of Traffic Calming Interventions & Pedestrian Amenities

Street & Crossing Design



Sidewalk Design



Programming










1.4. Complete the bicycle lane network. Prioritize protected bicycle lanes connecting major destinations, especially along high traffic roads.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven

- 1.4.1. Prioritize bicycle gaps that lead towards Union Station and the upcoming investments at Union Square, including Church Street; Columbus Street between Church Street and Howard Avenue; and Congress Avenue between South Frontage Road and Howard Avenue.

Figure 7: Bicycle Network Map

-  Existing Bicycle Tracks (Separated from traffic)
-  Existing Bicycle Lanes
-  Existing Bicycle Sharrows
-  Planned Bicycle Tracks (Separated from traffic)
-  Planned Bicycle Lanes
-  Neighborhood Hub
-  Gaps in Bicycle Network



1.5. Improve high volume transit stops with shelters, benches, and other amenities.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven

Basic Bus Shelter



Artistic Bus Shelter



Sculptural Bus Shelter



While basic bus shelters work well anywhere, more interesting shelters can be deployed along Connector Streets to beautify the area. Local institutions or organizations could invest in sculptural shelters to create a strong sense of place.

What Can Residents Start On Today?

Many of the strategies will be led by the City and other major partners, but what can residents and community leaders start on today? This section outlines ideas step-by-step. But these aren't the only actions residents can take. In addition to advocating for implementation of the plan, residents already lead countless projects throughout the community, and there is always room for additional motivated community members to pitch in!



Perform a walk audit of streets and/or intersections and deliver specific lists of traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements to the agencies that have to implement them.

This strategy should be led or supported by local elected officials or other community representatives.

1. **Make a list of all intersections and/or blocks you want to audit.** Note whether they are located on neighborhood streets or connector streets, or whether they are gateway intersections.
2. **Create a simple form for each intersection.** You can make the form on paper, or you can build it with a free online tool like Google Forms, which will make it easy to summarize. Your form could include the following questions or others:

- Does the intersection have painted crosswalks?
If YES, are the painted crosswalks faded so that they need to be repainted?
- If there is a traffic light, is there a pedestrian crossing signal?
- Is traffic signage in good condition, or is it damaged or obscured?
- Is there too much turning space for cars, allowing them to turn at high speeds? (Turning space can be reduced with paint or planters to slow down traffic)
- Are there street lights?
- Are there cracked or uneven sidewalks that someone in a wheelchair might struggle to pass?
- Are there curb cuts and warning pads (brightly colored pads with bumps) leading from sidewalks into intersections, to make sure they are ADA compliant?
- Are there unmaintained rain gardens?

3. **Use the results of this data collection to create clear requests for the City.**

For example, create lists of:

- Every intersection that needs new or repaired crosswalks
- Connector street intersections without signalized pedestrian crossings
- Traffic signage in need of replacement, or places where traffic signage is covered by foliage
- Intersections where excess turning space should be reduced with paint, bollards, planters, or something else
- Streets that need street lights
- Sidewalks and intersection curb cuts that need to be repaired because they are not ADA accessible
- Rain gardens that need maintenance

4. **Work together to decide on priorities.**

If your lists are very long, think about which locations are most important.

For example:

- Which streets or intersections appear on the most lists?
- Refer to the traffic fatalities map in this plan: are there any needs at high fatality intersections?
- Are any streets or intersections located near major destinations like schools, commercial hubs, parks, or churches?

Health and Opportunity

GOAL 2

Ensure residents of the Hill have what they need to be healthy, safe and economically mobile.

Strong Need For Educational and Economic Opportunities

Hill residents experience higher rates of poverty and unemployment and lower rates of educational attainment than the rest of the City and County. One in three residents lives below the poverty line, and one in every four adults does not have a high school diploma. Only 13 percent of residents have a Bachelor's degree, compared to 35 percent of City residents.³

Throughout this plan's public engagement process, residents said the community needs more opportunities for economic mobility and better access to educational resources. The most significant gap is in adult education and job training. Although the New Haven Adult Education Center is currently located on Grasso Boulevard in the Hill, the organization is planning

³ 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

to relocate out of the neighborhood to Newhallville. With Hill residents' reliance on public transit and pedestrian accessibility, it is more important than ever to expand programming in the Hill for adult education and job training.

Youth programming and senior programming is constrained by insufficient indoor recreational space, according

Figure 8: Neighborhood Demographics

	The Hill/ Union Square	City of New Haven	New Haven County
Residents Living in Poverty	33%	25%	11%
Unemployment Rate of Residents in the Workforce	10%	8.6%	6.4%
Median Household Income	\$34,886	\$44,507	\$71,370
Adults with a High School Diploma/GED	76%	86%	90%
Adults with a Bachelor's Degree	13%	35%	36%

to community members and local organizations. While several schools and organizations offer youth after-school programs, they say they do not have enough space for the number of local youth. Meanwhile, seniors lack any dedicated space in the Hill. The population is aging, and many seniors have few options for fun, enrichment, and access to essential resources.

Source: 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

WHAT WE'VE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS

- A sense of safety and access to fresh food are key to making this a great place to live.
- Violent crime is a major issue, particularly in areas South of Columbus Avenue and Kimberly Square.
- There has been an uptick in the number of unhoused residents in the neighborhood, especially around Union Square.
- Residents want improved neighborhood amenities that bring people together, like better parks and recreation spaces.
- Many residents want more water recreation like a public pool or more spraygrounds.
- There is a need for more after-school programs, indoor recreation spaces, and educational resources for youth.
- There is a need for more opportunities for adult education and job training and more access to resources like money management classes and computer labs.
- Seniors need a place of their own.

“Need access to healthier foods at reasonable and affordable prices.”
- HILL RESIDENT

“Increase our ability to find out what our resources are.”
- HILL RESIDENT

“We need more programs for youth and child to keep them busy and safe.” - HILL RESIDENT

MOST POPULAR IDEAS

FROM NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN TASK FORCE

HEALTH IDEAS

OF VOTES

Grocery Stores	9
Police Cameras	9
Water Recreation	8
Improved Lighting	8
Farmer's Market	7
Places for Sports/Active Recreation	7
More Police Presence	7

OPPORTUNITY IDEAS

OF VOTES

After-School and Summer Programs	11
More Indoor Recreation Spaces	9
Senior Centers	8
Job Training Opportunities	6
Money Management Classes	5

Close to Medical Resources But Poor Health Outcomes Persist

The Union Square neighborhood is home to multiple major health assets including Yale New Haven Hospital and the Cornell Scott - Hill Health Center. However, Hill residents face persistently poor health outcomes. The Hill has higher rates of high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, asthma, and diabetes than other New Haven neighborhoods such as East Rock and Wooster Square.⁴ Life expectancy in the Hill is 71 years, compared to 85.8 years in suburban Orange just a mile away.⁵

Fresh Food Access Is A Top Priority

Access to affordable fresh food plays a big role in household diet and health, and residents say it is one of their top priorities. The Hill only has two grocery stores: Key Foods in Kimberly Square and the Shop Smart Food Mart on Washington Avenue. However, both of these stores are located in Hill South; Hill North residents must rely on convenience stores that lack fresh food, or they must travel outside of the neighborhood to buy groceries. Additionally, there are no farmer's markets in the Hill, and no known produce trucks - a lower-cost alternative that can provide fresh food access to isolated areas.

⁴ DataHaven, *New Haven 2023 Equity Profile*.

⁵ DataHaven, *Greater New Haven Community Index 2019*.

One key part of the puzzle is community gardens: there are a significant number of preserved gardens in the neighborhood. However, residents say that some of them have fallen into disrepair. Residents may not know how to get involved, or there may not be adequate resources to maintain the local food-producing sites.

Significant Safety Concerns

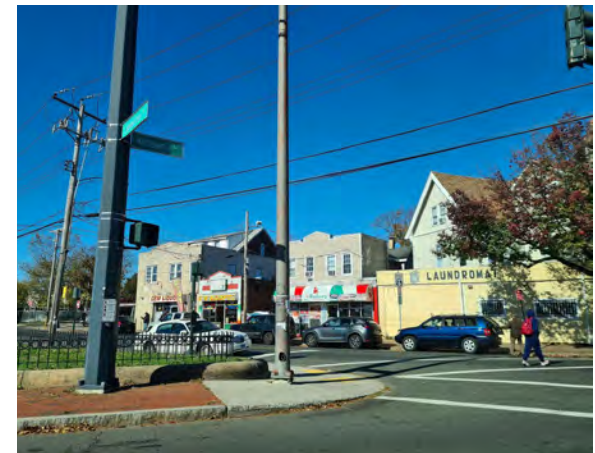
Residents' sense of safety is impacted by multiple intersecting factors: the location of methadone clinic services in the community contributes to residents' sense that there are many itinerant individuals wandering around during the day (especially near local schools); nuisance businesses in Kimberly

Square and elsewhere contribute to public drinking, urination, and rowdiness in places that should be family-friendly; and a significant unhoused population sometimes leads to conflicts around vacant structures and encampments. Additionally, residents say that inadequate sidewalk lighting can make the neighborhood feel unsafe at night.

Nonetheless, the Hill is home to two police substations and highly engaged police officers who work every day to make sure residents feel safe. Officers participate in monthly events around the community and collaborate with the City and Alderpeople to keep their finger on the pulse of the neighborhood.



APT Foundation (Source: LoopNet)



Kimberly Square (Source: New Haven Register)

Parks and Recreation Improvements Coming to Hill South

There are several exciting investments to the Hill’s parks and recreation facilities that are underway or coming soon. These will offer much needed improvements in a neighborhood that lacks adequate parkland for a community of its size. The Hill has approximately 1.4 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents - far below other New Haven neighborhoods like Westville (7.9 acres per 1,000 residents) and Annex (5.1 acres per 1,000 residents). With the increase in population planned for Union Square, parkland will be a strong contender

for a portion of the little undeveloped land left in the Hill, and park improvements will be a priority.

After sitting vacant for many years, the former Hill Cooperative Youth Services building, also known as the Barbell, (located across from Trowbridge Square Park) will reopen. The renovated building will include space for much needed youth and senior programming; though organizations and residents caution that it does not have enough square footage for the community’s full need.

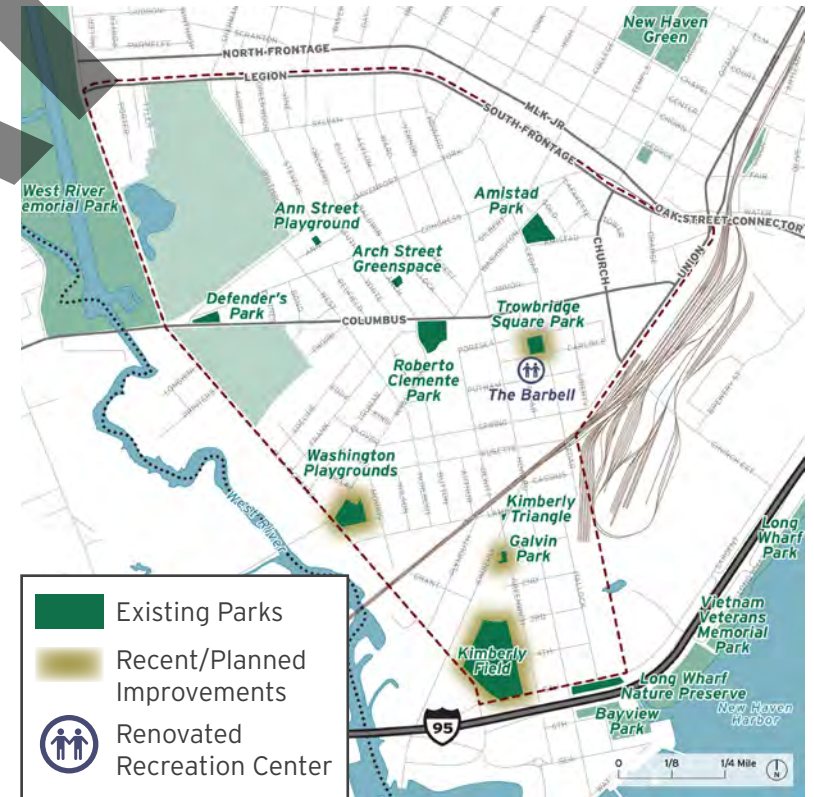
Several parks and playgrounds, including Trowbridge Square Park, Kimberly Field, Washington Playground, and Galvin Park will also see upgrades. Among these, only Trowbridge Park is located in Hill North, which features the neighborhood’s largest open space gaps. Trowbridge will receive investment through the Choice Neighborhood Initiative Early Action Plan.

Figure 9: Park Network

Figure 10: Park Acreage Analysis for Select New Haven Neighborhoods

Neighborhood	Park Acres Per 1,000 Residents	Poverty Rate	Park Acres	Population
The Hill	1.4	31%	22.2	15,818
Westville	7.9	10%	70.0	8,836
Annex	5.1	33%	32.3	6,309
East Rock	4.1	18%	43.3	10,499
Downtown	2.6	28%	15.3	5,941
Fair Haven	2.1	26%	32.9	16,001
Dixwell	1.5	32%	11.7	7,748

Note: This analysis does not include schoolyards, some of which may be open to the public outside of school hours. Due to the limited time schoolyards are public, it is important to consider dedicated park space. This is just a sample of New Haven neighborhoods. Neighborhood boundaries defined by City neighborhoods layer, total residents and poverty rate from DataHaven, park acres from New Haven parcel layer except for addition park in Hill added by Interface Studio.



Strong Advocates, But No Central Community Organization

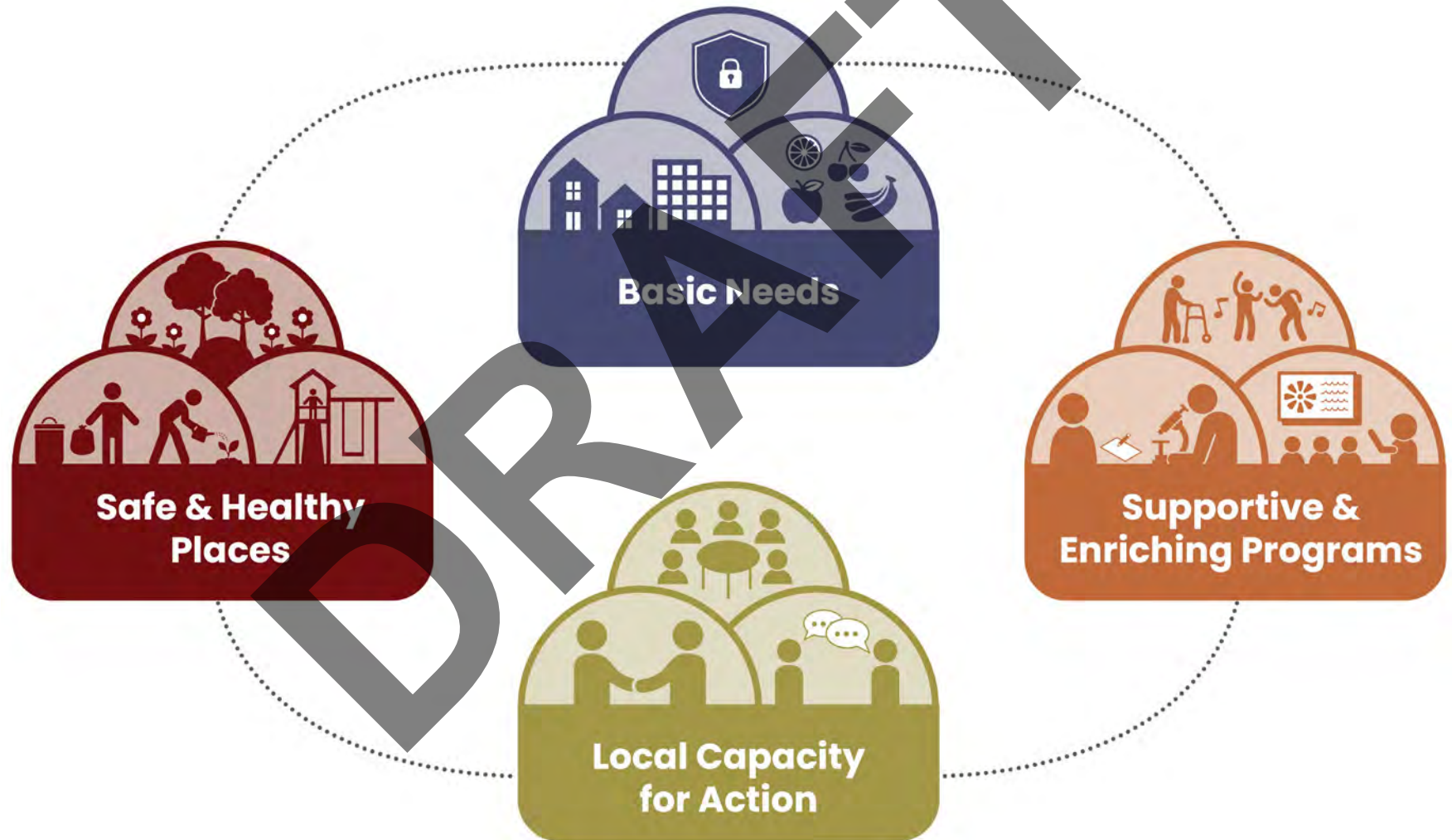
Through the many public meetings and interviews with stakeholders conducted for this plan, it is clear that many people and organizations are dedicated to making the Hill a better place to live for all residents. However, the community lacks a strong organizing entity with an interest in comprehensive neighborhood planning and advocacy. An organization like a community development corporation (CDC) or civic group can provide much needed resources and discipline to community priorities, ensuring that plans like this do not become just another book on a shelf.



A community development corporation or civic group for the Hill neighborhood could help enhance the work that organizations, like Casa Otoñal and El Centro, are already doing so that their services can reach more residents. (Source: Senator Richard Blumenthal)

Health and Opportunity Strategies

The diagram below provides a framework for the following strategies related to Health and Opportunity. There are four essential strategy areas that must be addressed to provide health and opportunity to the community. Each supports the other, and with action in all four, the community will continue to make progress.



2.1. Expand access to fresh food at affordable prices.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven, Glendower, Elm City Communities, Gather New Haven, Urban Resources Initiative, Local Alders

- 2.1.1. **Bring a new grocery store to the neighborhood.** See the Housing section of this plan for more details.
- 2.1.2. **Expand programs to increase access to healthy food**, including local farmers markets and mobile markets, food access programs, and community-based food programs. See People recommendation 2.2 for more details.
- 2.1.3. **Make sure community garden spaces serve the needs of the community.** Where gardens are viable, work to increase usership and programming, provide access to water and other resources, and connect residents to knowledge about growing. Where gardens may no longer be used for growing, explore other community-serving uses.

Farm-Based Wellness Program

Gather New Haven offers their Farm-Based Wellness program every summer to New Haven residents with certain health risk factors, such as heart disease and diabetes, and who are patients at one of their health center partners, such as Cornell Scott Hill Community Health Center and Yale New Haven Health. Focused on improving health practices and food security in underserved communities, the 16-week program provides cooking demonstrations, gardening, nutrition education, stress management, and lifestyle intervention practices. Each week, participants are given a box of fresh produce and healthy recipes to prepare at home.⁶ After completion of the program, select graduates may be invited to apply to their Community Health Ambassador program, where participants undergo leadership training and further nutrition and wellness education that they can bring back to their own communities.⁷



Source: Gather New Haven

⁶ "Farm-Based Wellness Program", Gather New Haven. www.gathernewhaven.org/our-programs/farm-based-wellness-program/.

⁷ "Community Health Ambassadors", Gather New Haven. www.gathernewhaven.org/our-programs/community-health-ambassadors/.

Community Gardens, Farms, and Greenspaces

The non-profit **Gather New Haven** provides resources and support for the city's community gardens and farm sites. The Hill is home to about a quarter of the community gardens that Gather New Haven supports. But Gather New Haven does not provide the daily labor to tend gardens. That is provided by the local community. Additionally, the Hill has three vacant lot greenspaces managed by residents and local neighborhood groups in partnership with the **Urban Resources Initiative (URI)** Community Greenspace program.

Figure 11: Map of Community Gardens, Farm Sites, and Greenspaces



Community Gardens



Field of Greens Community Garden



Redfield Street Community Garden

Farm Sites



Liberty Street Farm

Greenspaces



Arch Street Greenspace

2.2. Improve neighborhood safety by assisting vulnerable populations, managing problematic locations, and building relationships and safe places.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven, New Haven Police Department, Community Management Teams

- 2.2.1. **Relocate methadone clinic services for non-neighborhood residents** outside the Hill. (Already in progress)
- 2.2.2. **Strengthen Mental Health and Substance Abuse Support.** See People recommendation 2.5 for more details.
- 2.2.3. **Establish a record of offenses against nuisance businesses** to support community efforts to hold them accountable.
- 2.2.4. **Ensure that vacant structures are sealed** to prevent squatters from entering properties.
- 2.2.5. **Brighten up the neighborhood** with improved lighting. Options could include a program like Newhallville's Project Lighten Up, a partnership of the local Community Management Team and the New Haven Police Department.
- 2.2.6. **Make police substations welcoming neighbors** with placemaking improvements to their exterior plazas.
- 2.2.7. **Use the police department's required monthly event in the community** as an opportunity to forge partnerships with local organizations and bring more resources to those groups' programming.

Newhallville's Project Lighten Up

The Newhallville neighborhood's "Project Lighten Up" is an initiative between Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven (NHS), the Police Department, and the Newhallville Community Management Team to improve street lighting. Started as a resident-led initiative, the project focuses on installing solar-powered motion detector lights outside of residents' homes, encouraging residents to turn on their porch lights, installing lamp posts around NHS homes, and trimming back trees near street lights to better illuminate the sidewalk.⁸

⁸ "Illuminating Newhallville with Project Lighten Up", Dwight Hall at Yale. dwithghall.org/illuminating-newhallville-with-project-lighten-up/.



The existing police substations are an opportunity to incorporate public art and planters to create a more welcoming environment for neighbors. (Source: Google Street View)

2.3. Invest in parks, indoor recreational spaces, and the environment to help the community stay healthy, have fun, and gather together.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven, Glendower, Elm City Communities, Local Alders, Community Management Teams, Boys and Girls Club

- 2.3.1. **Expand the amount of well-managed indoor recreational spaces** across the neighborhood, including publicly accessible gyms, technology and arts facilities, and dedicated program spaces for youth and seniors. While this will include the **reopening Hill Cooperative Youth Center**, that space in itself is likely too small to serve the neighborhood's full needs.
- 2.3.2. **Ensure that there are adequate public, outdoor parks and amenities** for the neighborhood and its growing population, including new park space, recreational amenities, outdoor performing arts space, public plazas, and water-based recreation.
- 2.3.3. **Plant trees and add greenery along streets and in parks** to cool the neighborhood, which has one of the lowest tree canopies in the City.
- 2.3.4. **Ensure all parks, streetscapes, trees, and rain gardens are well-maintained**, with day-to-day upkeep and regularly scheduled investment to keep them in great shape.
- 2.3.5. **Highlight local culture and history in public space** with public art, monuments, banners, and informational displays.



The renovation of the former Hill Cooperative Youth Center will provide much needed recreation space for Hill residents.



An early action project for this plan will include improvements to Trowbridge Square Park.

2.4. Provide free and low cost programs for youth, adults, and seniors, to promote wellness, education, and fun.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven, Leadership, Education, and Athletics in Partnership (LEAP), New Haven Early Childhood Council (NHECC), LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens) Head Start, Boys & Girls Club, Gateway Community College, Workforce Alliance

- 2.4.1. **Enhance the quality of education for all residents** in the neighborhood. See People recommendation 1 for more details.
- 2.4.2. **Support youth development.** See People recommendation 4 for more details.
- 2.4.3. **Foster job creation and economic development.** See People recommendation 5 for more details.
- 2.4.4. **Provide senior programs** in a dedicated space to promote health, community, and fun.

2.5. Build local resident and nonprofit capacity to organize the community, care for neighborhood spaces, host programs and events, and/or provide services.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven, Local Alders, Yale New Haven Hospital, Local Nonprofits

- 2.5.1. **Cultivate community champions and leaders** among residents with programs like The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven's Neighborhood Leadership Program and the CARE Health Leaders Program.
- 2.5.2. **Build nonprofit capacity** to address both short- and long-term neighborhood planning. A CDC, civic group, or other community organization can dedicate resources to planning and implementation. Current community plans do not have a central champion whose job is to consider the Hill holistically. This may require a new group, or there may be existing organizations that could take on this role. Either way, project partners will need to invest in building this capacity.
- 2.5.3. **Explore organizational partnerships** to improve health and community cohesion through programming, events, public space improvements, resident services, and more. Possible partners include **Yale New Haven Hospital, Cornell Scott Health Center, and others.**

Leadership Programs

The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven's Neighborhood Leadership Program is an eight-month training and grant program that takes participants through leadership training and helps them develop their own community projects. After program completion, participants can apply for a grant of up to \$3,000 to implement their projects.⁹



Source: The Community Foundation of Greater New Haven

***CARE**, a health organization whose mission is to improve health in New Haven communities that experience health disparities,¹⁰ hosts a nine-month **Health Leaders program** that educates participants about health equity, community-level health interventions, leadership development, and community organizing. Health Leaders then work together to develop a community project that addresses a health issue. Past projects include community gardens, health fairs, and exercise programs.¹¹*

⁹ "Neighborhood Leadership", The Community Foundation of Greater New Haven. www.cfgnh.org/leading-on-issues/neighborhood-leadership.

¹⁰ "About CARE", CARE. www.carenhv.org/about

¹¹ "New Haven Health Leadership Program", CARE.

www.carenhv.org/new-haven-health-leadership-program.

Nonprofit Capacity

The Greater Dwight Development Corporation is a nonprofit CDC located in New Haven's Dwight neighborhood. They lead implementation of the neighborhood plan and focus on residential and commercial development, job training, neighborhood beautification, and more. They are dedicated to accomplishing the community's goals, and they have secured significant funding to do so.

Past accomplishments include: creation and two ten-year updates of a neighborhood plan, attracting two grocery stores to the neighborhood, a new addition to an existing elementary school, renovation of deteriorated properties, affordable homeownership opportunities, and creation of job training programs.¹²

¹² "Accomplishments", Greater Dwight Development Corporation. www.gddcnh.org/accomplishments/

What Can Residents Start On Today?

Many of the strategies will be led by the City and other major partners, but what can residents and community leaders start on today? This section outlines ideas step-by-step. But these aren't the only actions residents can take. In addition to advocating for implementation of the plan, residents already lead countless projects throughout the community, and there is always room for additional motivated community members to pitch in!



Survey the neighborhood's green spaces, and determine their needs.

This strategy should be led or supported by local elected officials or other community representatives.

1. **Make a list of the topics and locations you want to survey.** Use the maps in this plan to create a list of all of the parks, community gardens, or sections of street you want to survey.
2. **Create a simple form for each location.** For each type of location, your form could include the following questions or others: →

Parks

- What **amenities** are located at this park? (Playgrounds, basketball courts, etc.)
- What **condition** are the park's amenities in? (Poor/Fair/Good)
- Is there a **Park Friends group** or other way that community members contribute to the park? If so, who is the **primary contact**?

Community Gardens & Greenspaces

- Is the garden/greenspace **currently managed or maintained**? Who is the **primary contact or manager**?
- Does the garden/greenspace have the **resources** it needs, such as water, electricity, soil, tools, etc.?
- Does the garden/greenspace have **active volunteers/members**?
- Is there **underutilized space**, and is there a possibility of creating new publicly-accessible areas?

Streets & Blocks

- Are there **rain gardens** located on the block? Do they need **maintenance**?
- Are there **dead or dying street trees**?
- Are there sections of street that could **accommodate new street trees**?

EXTRA!

Create a flyer to leave at gardens that informs community members you were here and you are interested in helping them.

3. Use the results of this survey to identify priority investments. For instance, create lists of:

- The **total number of each type of park amenity** in the neighborhood. Are there any types of amenities missing from the neighborhood?
- The **worst condition amenities** in local parks. Which park amenities need rehabilitation or replacement?
- Parks or gardens that **do not have any community members taking care of them** (or that have too few community members involved). How can residents spread the word and get new people involved?
- **Primary contacts** for parks and gardens. Would it be helpful to gather this group together to strategize?
- Individual gardens' **resource needs**. Some of these can be solved by the local community, and some will need coordination with others.
- **Underutilized** gardens or open spaces. Where can publicly accessible space be expanded?
- **Rain gardens** in need of **maintenance**
- **Dead or dying trees** in need of care or removal
- Addresses that have **space for new street trees** in front of them. Could the community engage residents around planting new trees to cool down the neighborhood in the summer?

4. Work together to decide on priorities.

- Where is the **greatest need** in the neighborhood? Are there areas or locations that appear on multiple lists?
- Are there opportunities to **access funding or other resources** for specific topics?

Business and Neighborhood Hubs

GOAL 3

Encourage neighborhood-serving retail, food, services, and activities that support basic needs and community life.

Small Hubs of Commercial Activity

Today, there are relatively few businesses in the Hill that offer neighborhood services or retail; though the urban fabric shows evidence of a much more active past. Many of the businesses operating today are automobile-related, as well as convenience stores and offices clustered at and around Yale New Haven Hospital. Residents have said that there are not enough stores with retail or neighborhood services, so they often have to go outside the neighborhood to find businesses that meet their needs.

The businesses that do exist are mostly scattered around the neighborhood. There is no real “commercial corridor”—a stretch of street longer than a block with an intact

row of businesses. However, there are a small number of commercial “hubs” at major intersections. The strongest of these are Kimberly Square in the south, Congress Avenue between Arch and Daggett in the north, and the intersection of Washington Avenue, Hurlburt, Putnam, and West Streets in the west.

This plan will also bring one new major commercial hub in the east: at Union Square.

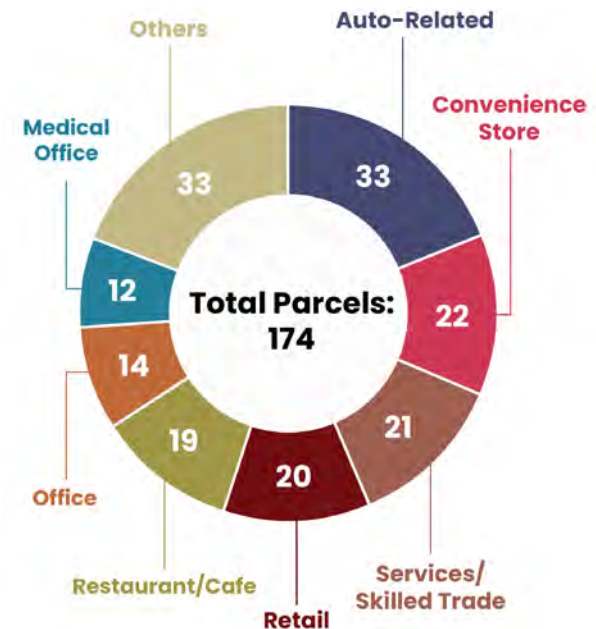


Figure 12: Commercial Types by Number of Parcels

WHAT WE'VE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS

- There are not many stores with retail or neighborhood services that serve local residents.
- People would like more cultural activities and reasons for the community to gather.
- It would be nice to be able to shop without driving or taking the bus somewhere else.
- Trash and dumping are major issues that affect commercial areas.
- Loitering is a problem in Kimberly Square because of the liquor store.
- There are no special service districts in the neighborhood, as the businesses cannot afford the additional levy.

"Key Foods Supermarket is not enough."

- HILL RESIDENT

MOST POPULAR IDEAS

FROM NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN TASK FORCE

OF VOTES



Businesses at Kimberly Square



Sandra's Next Generation Soul Food Restaurant on Congress Avenue (Source: The Table Underground/Maza Rey Photography)



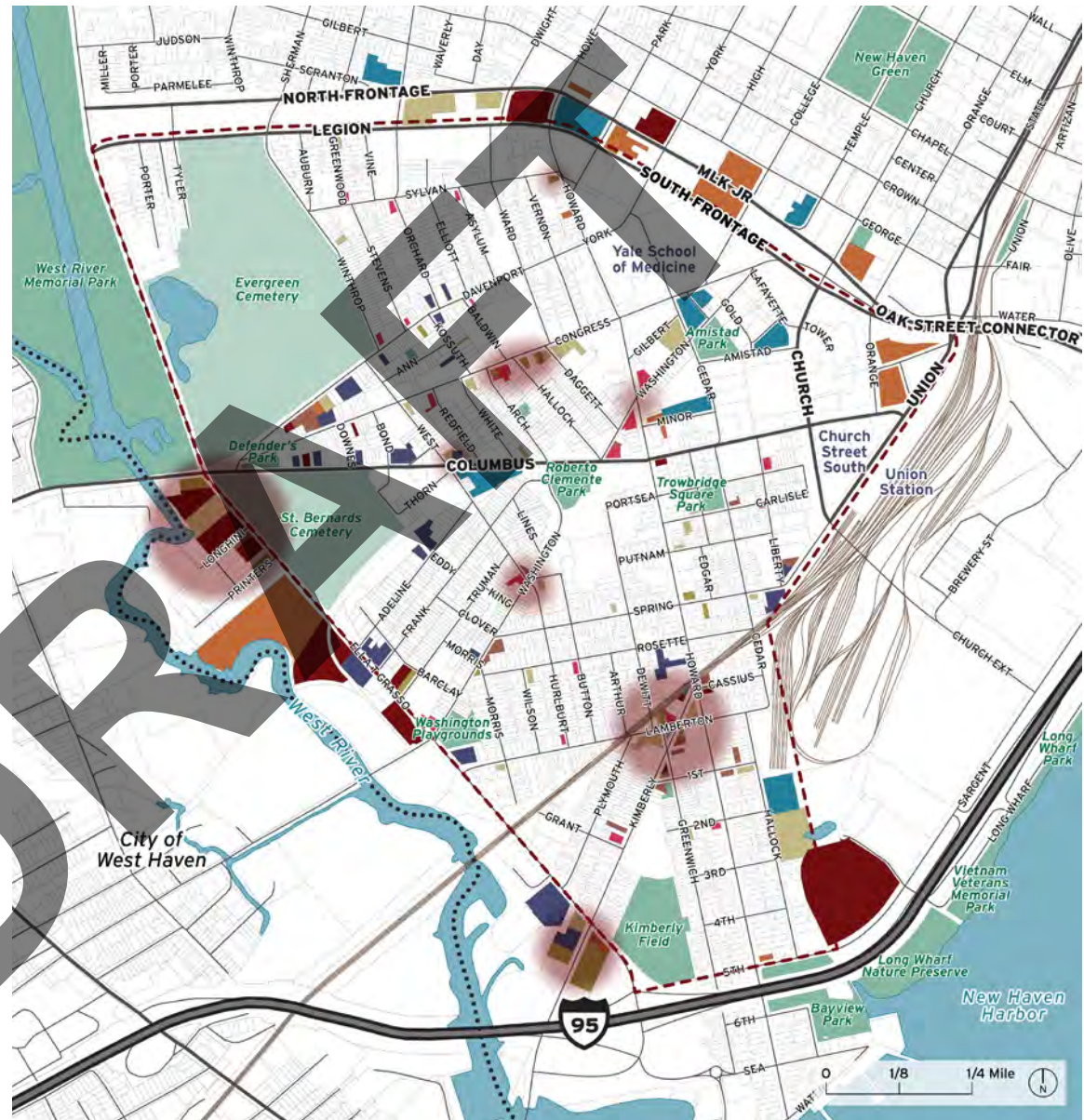
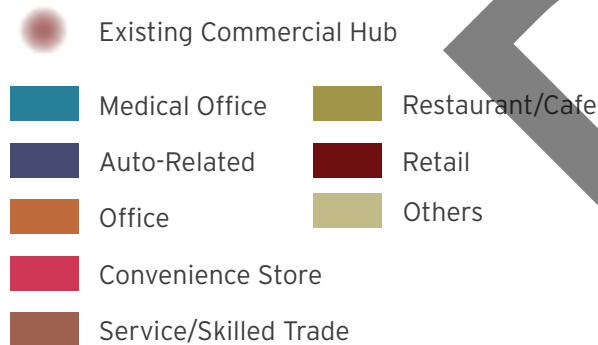
Madeline's Empanaderia (Source: Madeline's Empanaderia)

Lack of Management for Commercial Hubs

None of the Hill's commercial hubs currently has an entity that oversees general management, maintenance, or promotion—services that community members say are needed to preserve and grow local businesses. Trash, dumping, and nuisance businesses continue to be a major issue, and there is little to no promotion, events, business services, or business attraction tailored to community's priorities.

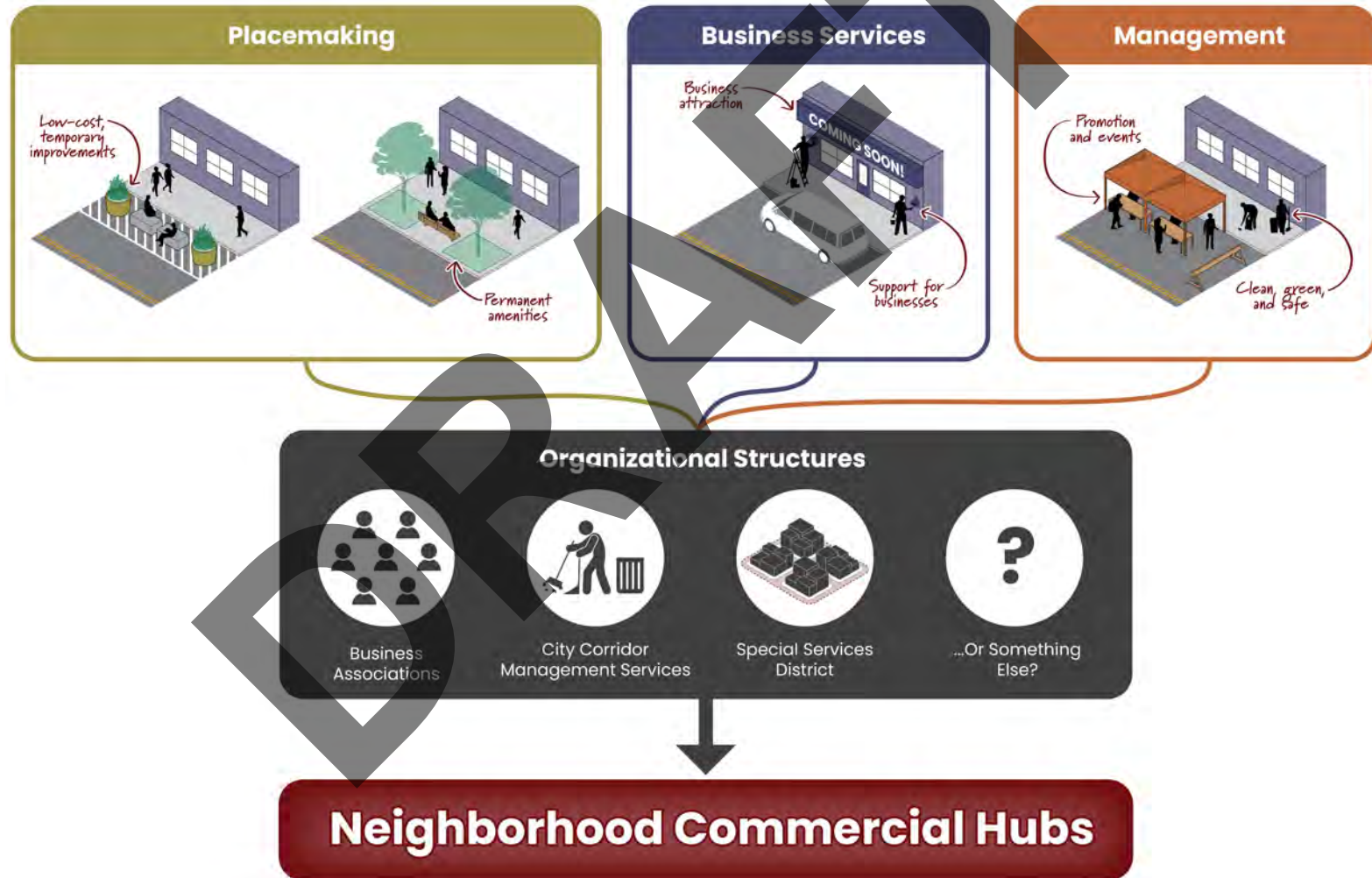
While other commercial areas in New Haven have business-funded Special Service Districts (SSDs) that provide services like street cleaning, businesses in the Hill cannot afford to fund their own SSD. During the pandemic, the City provided commercial corridor cleaning for Kimberly Square and Congress Avenue through funding from the federal American Rescue Plan Act, but that funding has since run out.

Figure 13: Businesses and Commercial Hubs



Business and Neighborhood Hubs Strategies

The diagram below provides a framework for the following strategies related to Business and Neighborhood Hubs. The Hill's business corridors need action in all three of the key areas below: placemaking investments, business services, and day-to-day management. But none of it will work if there are not sustainable, effective organizational structures to carry out those actions.



3.1. Focus on key neighborhood commercial hubs in both Hill South and Hill North to establish them as central community gathering places and mixed-use destinations. Especially focus at Kimberley Square, along Congress Avenue, and at the intersection of Washington, West, Button and Hurlburt.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven

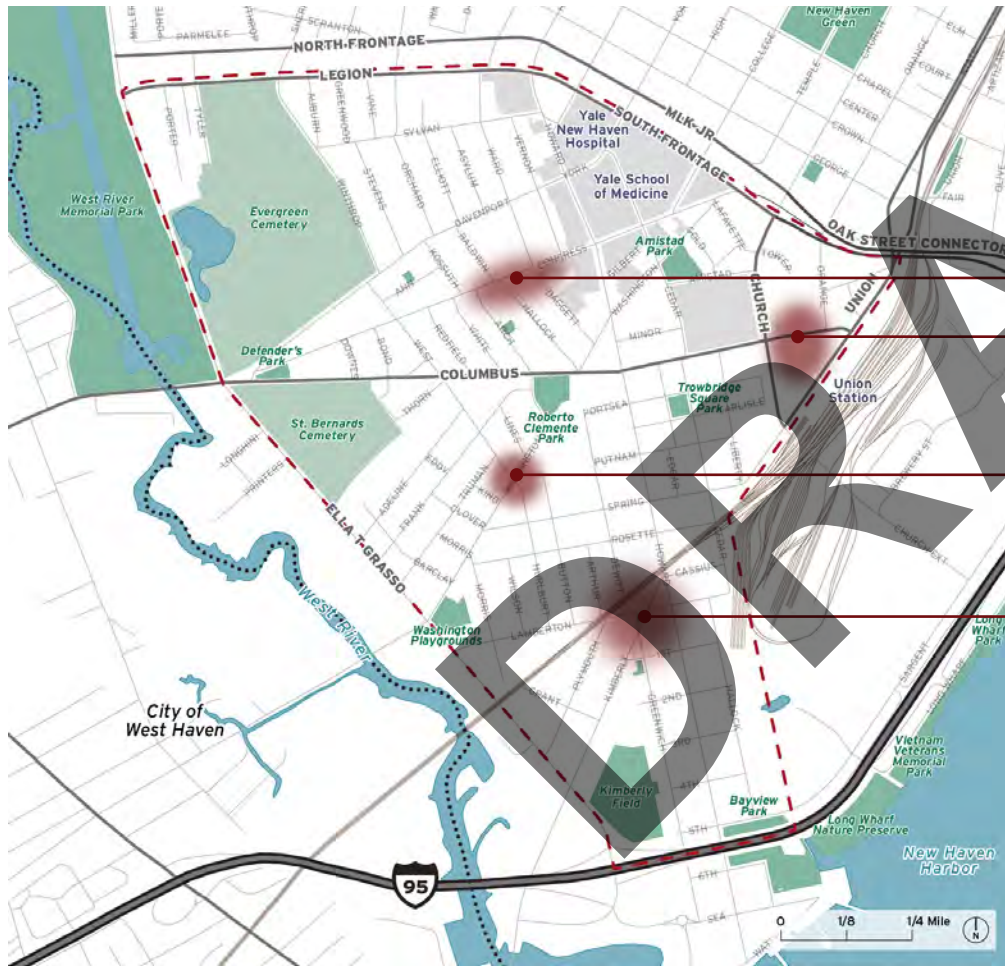


Figure 14: Key Neighborhood Commercial Hubs

Neighborhood Hub

Congress Avenue Commercial Hub

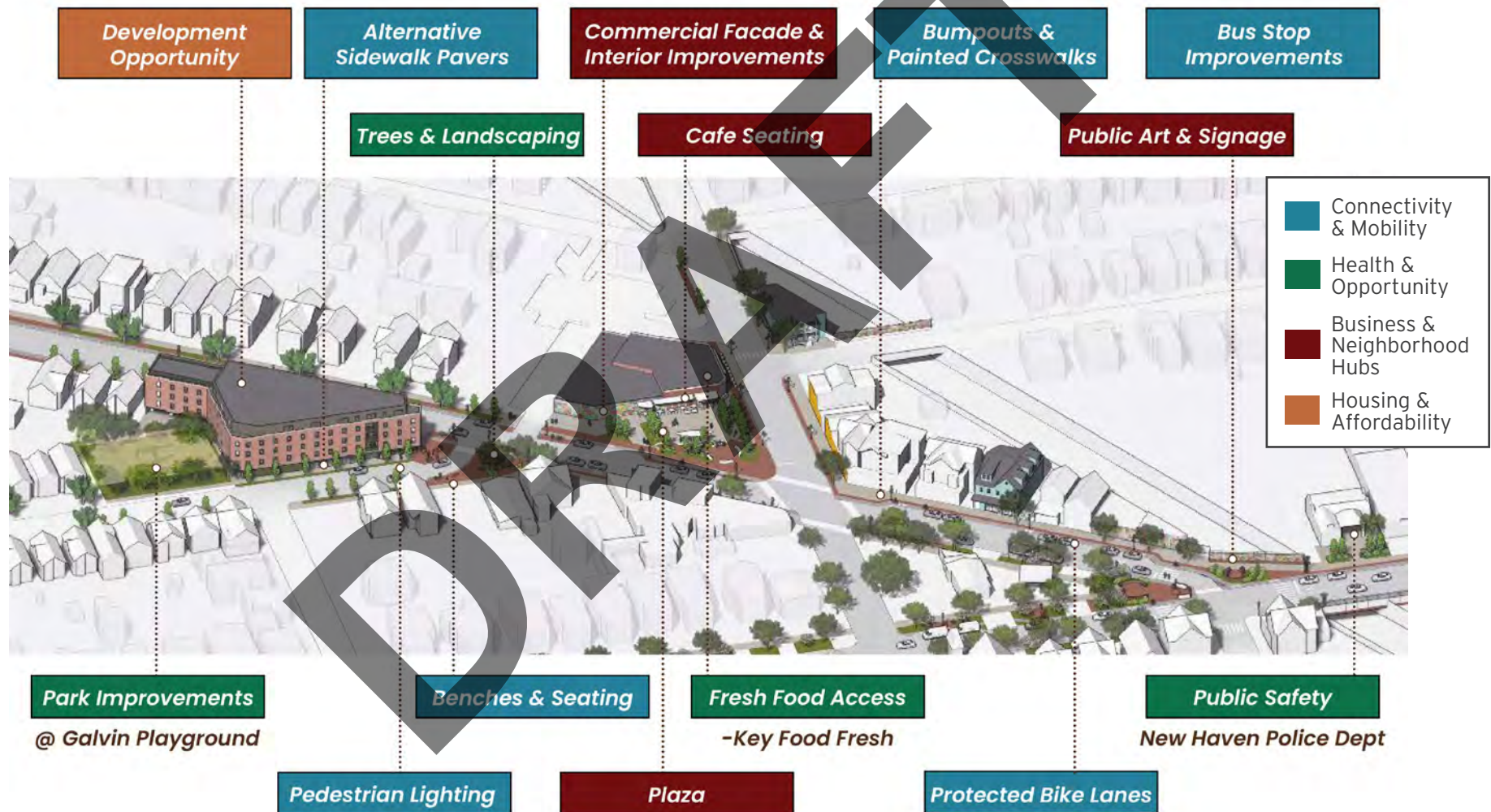
Union Square Development Site (Planned)

Washington Avenue Commercial Hub

Kimberly Square Commercial Hub

Vision for Kimberly Square Hub

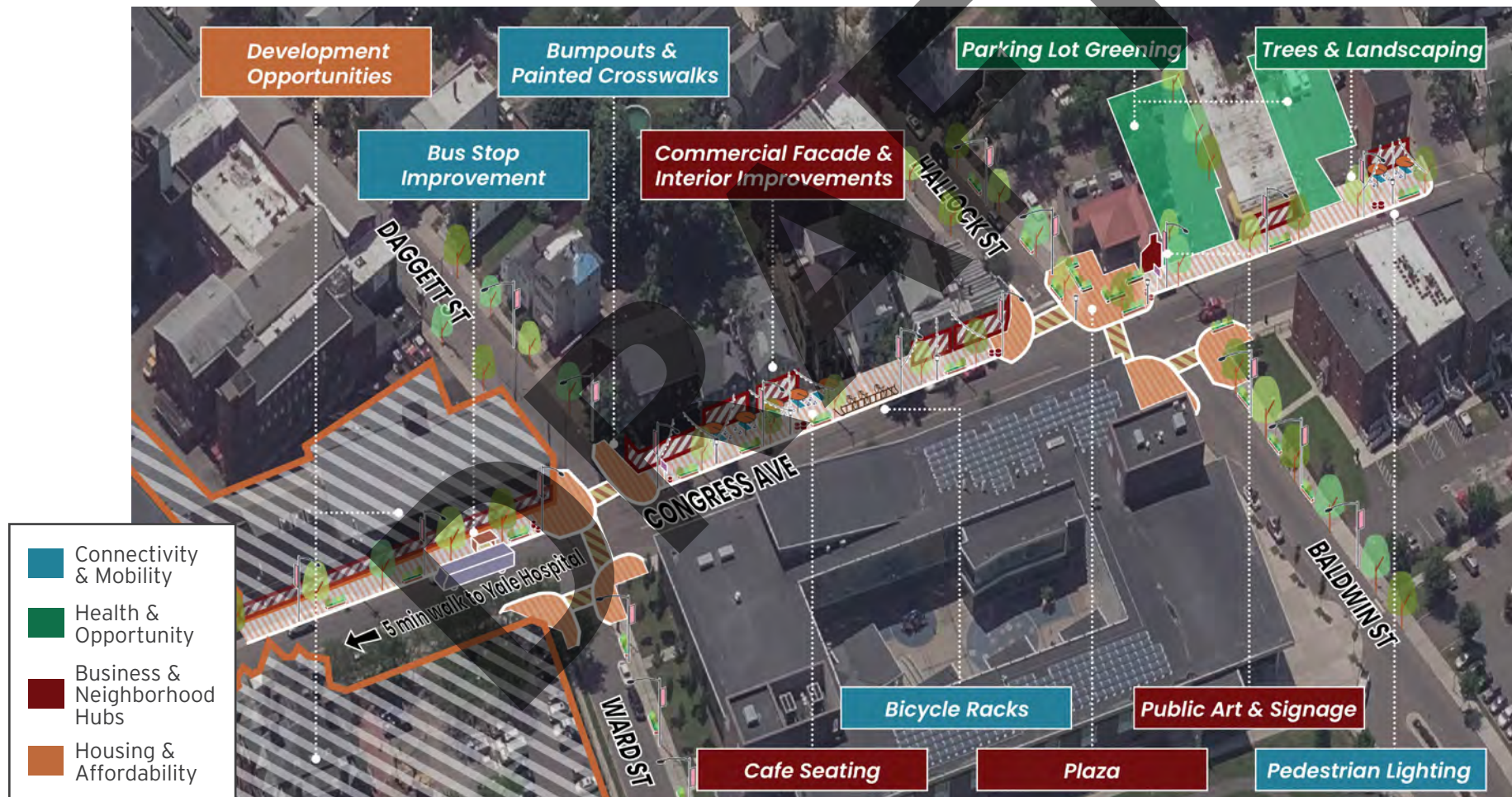
The City of New Haven Economic Development Administration is committed to improving commercial corridors across the city. As a part of that work, the City has produced conceptual plans for Kimberly Square that would accomplish all the goals set forth in this plan. The improvements will include traffic calming, pedestrian amenities, and bicycle lanes; a new civic space; new housing development; public art; and more. The image below was created prior to this neighborhood plan to envision what is possible at Kimberly Square.



Source: Pirie Associates/City of New Haven

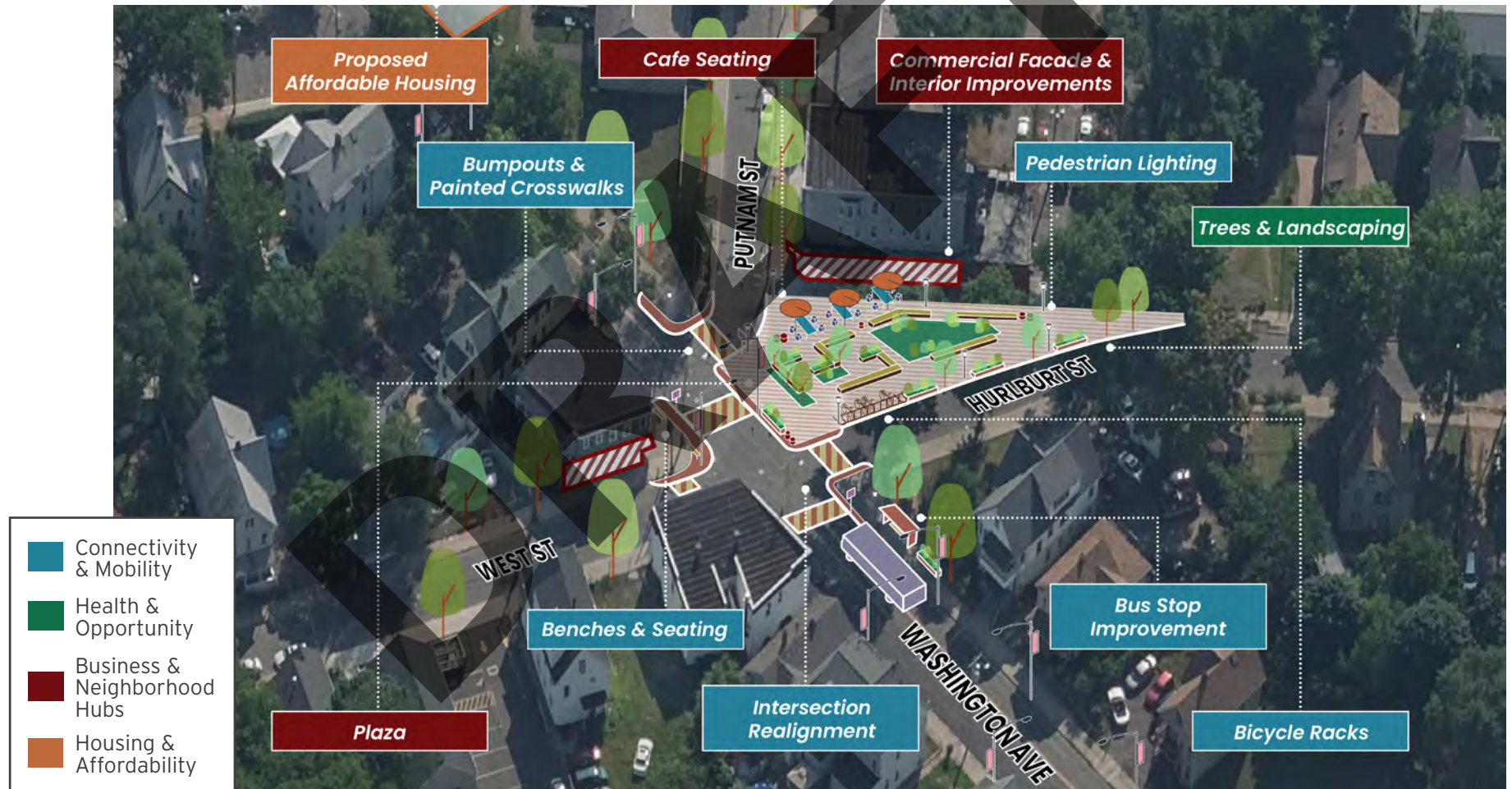
Vision for Congress Avenue Hub

The stretch of businesses along Congress Avenue is the most significant commercial corridor in Hill North, the closest to Yale New Haven Hospital, across the street from the John C. Daniels Middle School, and it includes restaurants and a food market that attract residents from across the neighborhood. Soon, the City's new BRT will pass right down this stretch. There are significant development opportunities here, too: at Ward and Congress, the Apt Foundation will be moving out of its current building, and at Daggett and Congress, there is an underutilized structure with major potential. Streetscape improvements, traffic calming, new civic space, and targeted engagement with property owners and businesses could fill a needed gap in the community and elevate this corridor to a major neighborhood asset.



Vision for Washington Avenue Hub

This five-point intersection is home to one of the neighborhood's two major food markets and several other stores. Additionally, it is along a bus route and located directly beside the "Hill Central Revitalization", a major residential project that will take place over two phases in the coming years. However, this hub is also home to excessive street space and a confusing intersection that puts drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists in danger. But excessive street space can be an opportunity: narrowing the street will not create more traffic or reduce parking, but it could create new easy-to-maintain park space where the community can gather. Along with targeted business assistance and other improvements, this could help fill a gap in this section of the Hill and provide residents with a walkable, welcoming community center.



3.2. Make public space and commercial corridor improvements so these spaces are more inviting to residents.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven

- 3.2.1. **Install low cost and temporary improvements** to give hubs a quick facelift. These could include: murals; street, sidewalk, or crosswalk painting; movable seating; trash cans; light pole banners; local youth art installations; hanging lights across sidewalks or streets; landscaping, planters, and large rocks; artistic bicycle racks; or nature play elements.
- 3.2.2. **Invest in permanent capital improvements that invite the community in.** These could include: monuments, sculptures, and other public art; benches or stone seating; shade structures; pedestrian-scale street lamps; plazas; trees; alternative pavers; and spaces for performances and events.

Philadelphia Baltimore Avenue & 48th Street Improvements

The University City District in Philadelphia transformed a previously dangerous five-point intersection into a safer refuge for pedestrians through curb-bumpouts, planters, boulders, and high-visibility crosswalks. These improvements reduced crossing distances by 40% and created a better waiting experience for trolley riders.¹³



Source: University City District (left); Plan Philly (right)

¹³ "Pedestrian Plazas", University City District. www.universitycity.org/pedestrianplazas.

Kimberly Square Capital Improvements



Existing Kimberly Triangle and Greenwich Avenue
(Source: Street View)



Proposed Kimberly Square Public Space Improvements
(Rendering: Pirie Associates/City of New Haven)

Putnam Triangle

In 2011, the New York City Department of Transportation closed off a section of Putnam Avenue in Brooklyn to create a temporary triangular pedestrian plaza with tables, chairs, umbrellas, and planters. The street closure eliminated an unsignalized crossing with long wait times to merge onto the Fulton Street thoroughfare, resulting in a reduction in total vehicular crashes and pedestrian injuries. The success of the plaza as a space for daily gathering and community events led to a permanent plaza redesign with new geometric paving, lighting, benches, and landscaping, promoting increased foot traffic to support nearby businesses.¹⁴



Source: City of New York

¹⁴ "Putnam Triangle Plaza Presentation", Brooklyn CB2 Transportation Committee, 2015. www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/2015-03-putnam-plaza-cb2.pdf

3.3. Strengthen business services and attraction to sustain businesses residents love and attract new ones they want.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven

- 3.3.1. **Provide business attraction services and technical assistance for entrepreneurs** to bring in new businesses that residents want and elevate local entrepreneurs. Continue networking with commercial property owners and the local business community. This could include sit-down restaurants, arts and culture organizations, and businesses that serve residents' daily needs.
- 3.3.2. **Ensure that businesses and property owners know about**, such as the facade improvement program and the interior repair program.
- 3.3.3. **Pursue enforcement against nuisance businesses** that bring unwelcoming and unlawful behavior to the community.

Nuisance Businesses

In 2022, the Whalley/Edgewood/Beaver Hills (WEB) Community Management Team and local residents worked together to shut down a local liquor store on Whalley Avenue that contributed to loitering, public intoxication, littering, and public safety concerns adjacent to the business. After reviewing documentation of the long-term issues and listening to testimonies from neighbors, the State Liquor Control Commission permanently revoked the store's liquor permit.¹⁵



¹⁵ "Shuttered Package Store's Owner Persists", New Haven Independent. www.newhavenindependent.org/article/paramount_package_store.

Source: New Haven Independent, Maya McFadden

3.4. Ensure that hubs have an appropriate level of day-to-day management for their needs.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven

- 3.4.1. **Provide basic clean, green, and safe services**, which could include some or all of the following: regular street, sidewalk, and trash can cleaning; tree and landscape maintenance and watering; and security, police, or homeless services presence.
- 3.4.2. **Program and promote commercial streets** with seasonal decorations and events, advertising, and promotions coordinated with local businesses.



*Clean and Green Services
(Source: Downtown New Haven/Town Green District)*



*CitySeed's Edgewood Park Farmer's Market
(Source: Visit New Haven)*



*Business Promotion
(Source: Downtown New Haven/Town Green District)*

3.5. Establish management structures to support business corridor functions and make sure these strategies do not fall by the wayside.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven

- 3.5.1. **Establish business associations** to pursue business owners priorities.
- 3.5.2. **Explore ways to provide overarching corridor management and cleaning services to these areas**, which are unable to afford a special services district that would otherwise fund management. Options could include funding from large institutional partners, City-provided services, or a City-chartered and -funded organization.

Institutional Partnerships

University City District (UCD) in Philadelphia provides all the functions of a Business Improvement District (BID), including maintenance and cleaning, safety services, small business support, and public space improvements. University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University, Penn Medicine, and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, amongst other local institutions, are some of UCD's major funders.



Source: University City District

Commercial Corridor Management Structures From Other Cities

Hartford, CT

Hartford's Neighborhood Ambassador Program was launched in 2022 and led by The Open Hearth, Open Hearth Works, and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. The program gives formerly-incarcerated residents a part-time employment opportunity contributing to their community, through work such as litter removal, weed removal, cleanup of high-traffic areas, graffiti identification, and other special projects on twelve commercial corridors throughout the City. Funding was provided through the American Rescue Plan Act and the Hartford Foundation.¹⁶

¹⁶ "Hartford 'Neighborhood Ambassador' Program at 12 Commercial Corridors", City of Hartford. www.hartfordct.gov/Government/Departments/MayorLukeBronin/Mayor-News/NEIGHBORHOOD-AMBASSADOR.

San Francisco, CA

San Francisco's Public Works Department has two commercial corridor cleaning programs: (1) **Community Corridors Partnership**, which uses its Community Ambassadors program to put underemployed and unemployed people to work sweeping litter from the sidewalk, cleaning tree basins and helping troubleshoot graffiti vandalism, broken sidewalks,¹⁷ and (2) **CleanCorridorsSF**, which deploys Public Works street cleaners to a different neighborhood commercial district every Thursday to power wash and sweep the sidewalks, flush down the roadway and wipe out graffiti.¹⁸

¹⁷ "Community Corridors Partnership", City of San Francisco Public Works. www.sfpublishworks.org/services/community-corridors-partnership.

¹⁸ "Community Corridors Partnership", City of San Francisco Public Works. www.sfpublishworks.org/cleancorridorssf.

Philadelphia, PA

Philadelphia's Taking Care of Business Clean Corridors Program funds community-based nonprofits to sweep sidewalks and remove litter within neighborhood commercial corridors. Nonprofits are chosen to clean commercial districts through a competitive process and subsequently hire cleaning ambassadors or subcontract with a cleaning firm.¹⁹

¹⁹ "PHL Taking Care of Business Clean Corridors Program", City of Philadelphia. www.phila.gov/programs/phl-taking-care-of-business/.

Providence, RI

Providence's Litter Pilot Program, launched in April 2024 by the Department of Public Works, is a citywide initiative aimed at reducing litter in high-volume commercial corridors. The City provided \$150,000 in funding for grants of up to \$25,000 to local organizations to oversee spearhead cleaning efforts in commercial corridors.²⁰

²⁰ "Mayor Smiley and the Department of Public Works Launch Litter Pilot Program", City of Providence. www.providenceri.gov/mayor-smiley-and-the-department-of-public-works-launch-litter-pilot-program/

What Can Residents Start On Today?

Many of the strategies will be led by the City and other major partners, but what can residents and community leaders start on today? This section outlines ideas step-by-step. But these aren't the only actions residents can take. In addition to advocating for implementation of the plan, residents already lead countless projects throughout the community, and there is always room for additional motivated community members to pitch in!



Build lines of communication to support planning and management of business corridors.

1. **Convene the Neighborhood & Community Development staff at the New Haven Economic Development Administration, local elected officials, and community representatives.**

The Economic Development Administration has done more business-owner organizing in the Hill than any other entity. Establish next steps to support the neighborhood's corridors.

2. **Share information with businesses about existing City programs** to improve business facades and renovate interiors. →

The **Property Tax Assessment Deferral Program** offers commercial property owners the ability to freeze their property taxes at a rate prior to investing in major renovations that would raise their property taxes. It is intended to encourage improvements to business properties throughout the city.

The **Facade Improvement Grant Program** helps property owners to fix old or weathered frontages with matching grants. Business owners that rent will need the participation of their property owner to access these funds.

The **Leasehold Improvement Program for Small Businesses** targets businesses on commercial corridors with up to \$15,000 in reimbursements for interior repairs and improvements. The program is available to both leaseholders and property owners.

The **Office of Business Development (OBD)** offers **technical assistance** to tackle specific issues. They can help businesses find space, renovate their existing space, and access state and local incentive programs.

The **Small Business Resource Center** offers free multi-week workshops for current business owners/entrepreneurs, covering both basic skills and advanced issues related to business planning, marketing, budgeting, financing, and more.

Find out more from the **New Haven Economic Development Administration**.



Create a record of offenses against nuisance businesses.

Enforcing agencies cannot act against nuisance businesses unless they have a clear record of problems. Residents are essential to creating this record. Encourage residents to:

1. Strategize in coordination with residents, the police department, and elected officials. Decide:

- What locations are most **problematic**?
- What **behaviours** are the biggest issue?

2. Communicate with business owners.

- Clearly state in a single voice **what behaviors are unacceptable and that they must end.**
- If owners are open to it, **start a dialog and offer support.** Small business owners can lose control of the clientele that visits their business, and they may not feel safe stopping nuisance behavior on their own.

3. Create a clear record of issues.

- **Establish communication with representatives or law enforcement.** Even if a reporting issues does not end them immediately, it can help to build a record over time.
- **Document dates, times, and issues.** A clear list of nuisance behavior and when it happened can also be a useful tool.

4. Coordinate with enforcing bodies.

- Ask what the police or other agencies need to **effectively enforce the law.**
- Provide **documentation** to them **regularly.**
- Strategize together on **how to keep up the pressure,** and support one another through an experience that may wear residents down.

Housing and Affordability

GOAL 4

Increase the supply of affordable and high quality homes for the homeowners and renters who want to stay here.

Affordability As A Top Concern

Housing affordability is a top priority for both owners and renters in the Hill, who say there are few other local places they can afford to live. The majority of housing stock consists of small two to four-unit multifamily buildings and single family homes. Most are over 100 years old—built between 1900 and 1929.²¹ These older buildings often require expensive upkeep that low-income homeowners (especially seniors on fixed incomes) struggle to afford.

Renters make up 71 percent of households in the neighborhood, and many say they are worried about their ability to afford

rising rents. About two-thirds of renter households are considered cost-burdened, meaning they spend at least 30 percent of their income on housing costs.²²

There is limited open land remaining in the Hill for development, and the community is already one of the most densely populated in New Haven. Residents say it is important to balance new development with a need for open space—and to invest in housing development that will allow community members to stay in the neighborhood long term.

Figure 15: Housing Statistics

	The Hill/ Union Square
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	29%
Renter-Occupied Housing Units	71%
Cost-Burdened Owners	32%
Cost-Burdened Renters	64%
Percentage of Housing Units That Are Vacant	17%

Source: 2020 American Community Survey
5-Year Estimates

21 City of New Haven Assessor's Office, Parcel Data, 2020.

22 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD FROM RESIDENTS

- It is important to protect affordability for current residents, especially for families and young people.
- It is important to increase the supply of affordable housing - especially affordable homeownership.
- The aging housing stock needs to be maintained so families can stay. Many homes are over 100 years old.
- Some people feel the neighborhood is already densely packed. It is important to consider strategies that will give residents more "room to breathe."

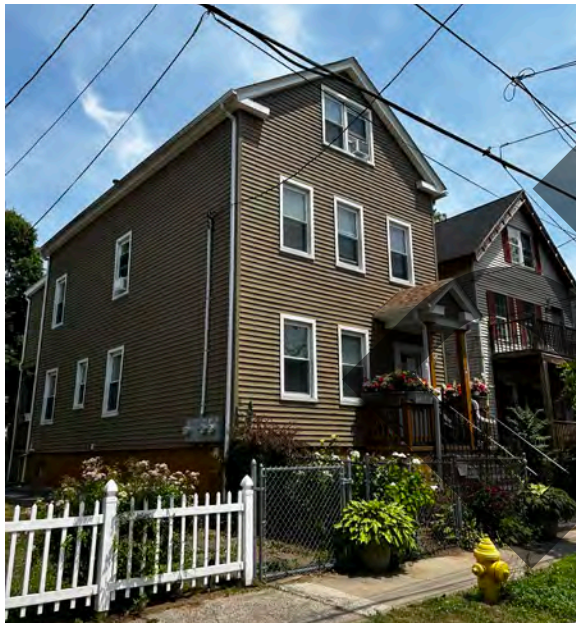
"Protect affordability of people that are currently here" - HILL RESIDENT

MOST POPULAR IDEAS

FROM NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN TASK FORCE

OF VOTES

Affordable Homeownership Opportunities	13
Emergency Shelters	7
Supportive Housing	6
Help Fixing Your Home	5
Help to Make Your Home Energy Efficient	5
Tenants' Rights Education/Resources	5



The Hill neighborhood has a range of housing conditions, including well-maintained homes, houses in need of repair, and vacant, boarded-up structures.

New Developments for High-Income and Low-Income Households

In the past five years, several high-end residential buildings have gone up in the northeast corner of the Hill, close to downtown, Yale School of Medicine, and Union Station. The units in these buildings contribute to a mixed income community, but many current neighborhood residents cannot afford them. Moreover, many new units are studios and one bedroom apartments, typologies that do not serve multi-generational families.

Fortunately, there are several other projects under construction or in planning that will provide much needed affordable units throughout the Hill, including:

- **Curtis Cofield II Estates:** 56 townhome-style rental apartments, including 44 affordable units, currently under construction between Legion Avenue, N Frontage Road, and Ella T. Grasso Boulevard.²³
- **Hill Central Redevelopment:** 114 units currently under construction, consisting of apartments and townhouses and a mix of market-rate, affordable, supportive, and elderly housing units.²⁴
- **10 Liberty Street:** 150 affordable apartment units on a former industrial site, currently in the planning and design phase.²⁵

In addition, this plan will lead directly to the construction of a substantial number of both affordable and market rate units at Union Square, and it will catalyze and guide additional development throughout the neighborhood.



Figure 16: Recent and Upcoming Development Projects



²³ "Construction Begins on Curtis Cofield II Estates," *New Haven Independent*. www.newhavenindependent.org/article/cofield_estates.

²⁴ "Hill Central Revitalization," Newman Architects. www.newmanarchitects.com/projects/hill-central-revitalization.

²⁵ "150 Apts Eyed for Liberty Street," *New Haven Independent*. www.newhavenindependent.org/article/150_apts_eyed_for_liberty_street.

Housing and Affordability Strategies

The diagram below provides a framework for the following strategies related to Housing and Affordability. To keep the Hill affordable for current residents, there are two essential types of strategies below: strategies to help owners and renters stay in their homes and strategies to produce new development, which should include housing of multiple types and price points.



4.1. Connect low income homeowners and renters with resources to lower their housing costs and keep their homes in good condition.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven

4.1.1. See People recommendation 2.1 for more details.

4.2. Promote new housing development for all ages and family types, especially on underutilized land and at neighborhood hubs.

PARTNERS | City of New Haven

- 4.2.1. Encourage new homeownership with scattered **affordable homeownership** development on City-owned lots.
- 4.2.2. Encourage **new affordable rental property development**, especially developments that serve residents making **less than 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI)**.
- 4.2.3. Pursue **permanent supportive housing** development to decrease the number of unhoused residents in the community.
- 4.2.4. Work with partners such as the school district, Yale New Haven Hospital, Yale University, and others to **assemble adjacent parcels for larger developments**.
- 4.2.5. **Encourage mixed use development at neighborhood hubs** to expand local housing options and create a market for the businesses residents want while protecting lower-density areas.



Figure 17: Map of Publicly-Owned Vacant Land

Orange rectangle: Potential Opportunity Sites
Black rectangle: Publicly-Owned Vacant Parcels



*Homeownership Opportunities
(Source: New Haven Habitat for Humanity)*



*Affordable Rental Properties - Casa Familia
(Source: Google Street View)*



*Permanent Supportive Housing
(Source: Columbus House)*



*Develop Underutilized Properties - Former Strong Elementary School
(Source: Google Street View)*



*Mixed-Use Development at Neighborhood Hubs - Kimberly Square
(Source: Pirie Associates/City of New Haven)*

What Can Residents Start On Today?

Many of the strategies will be led by the City and other major partners, but what can residents and community leaders start on today? This section outlines ideas step-by-step. But these aren't the only actions residents can take. In addition to advocating for implementation of the plan, residents already lead countless projects throughout the community, and there is always room for additional motivated community members to pitch in!



Create flyers and handouts for homeowners and renters to spread awareness of support programs.

1. **Share information with homeowners about homeowner support programs**, to help with home repairs, especially for elderly, disabled, and low-income residents.
2. **Share information with all residents about first-time homebuyer programs** to help low-income residents stay in the community and build wealth through homeownership.
3. **Share information about the Fair Rent Commission** and the services it offers renters in New Haven. **See next page.**

Homeowner Support Programs

The City's **Housing Administration and Development Department** offers different repair and rehabilitation programs for homeowners. The **Emergency Elderly/Disabled Repair Program** provides a 0% interest loan up to \$20,000 to elderly and/or disabled homeowners (120% AMI or below) to be used for emergency improvements or ADA permanent modifications, including roof replacement, electrical and plumbing repairs, and egress ramps. The **Energy Efficiency Rehabilitation Assistance Program** provides deferred loans up to \$40,000 for home improvements related to energy efficiency, including roof repair, attic and wall insulation, window and door repairs, and preventative maintenance.²⁶

The City's **Health Department** offers funding assistance for **abatement of lead paint** and other hazardous conditions within homes. The program prioritizes homes built before 1978 in which children up to the age of six and/or pregnant women reside or visit often. Federal funding is available up to \$15,000 per unit.²⁷

²⁶ "Emergency Elderly/Disabled Repair Program", City of New Haven Housing Administration and Development Department. www.newhavenct.gov/government/departments-divisions/economic-development-administration/housing-administration-and-development/homeowners

²⁷ "Lead Poisoning Prevention", City of New Haven Health Department. nhvhealth.org/lead-poisoning-prevention/

Fair Rent Commission

Enacted in 1970, the **City of New Haven Fair Rent Commission** aims to eliminate excessive rental charges for residential housing.²⁸ Tenants may file a complaint with the Commission if:

- Their landlord has proposed an excessive rent increase;
- Their landlord wants to charge for utilities and/or other services that used to be included in their rent;
- They believe their present rent is unfair due to unsafe living conditions that they have asked the landlord to correct.

After a complaint has been filed, the Fair Rent staff will investigate the complaint and conduct an informal preliminary hearing. If the complaint is not successfully mediated, a public hearing will be conducted before the Fair Rent Commission Board of Commissioner, which will determine if the rental charge or proposed rental increase is excessive, as to be “harsh and unconscionable”. Remedies can include rent limits or suspension of rent payments until the landlord has made necessary repairs.²⁹

28 “Fair Rent Commission”, City of New Haven Fair Rent Commission. www.newhavenct.gov/government/departments-divisions/fair-rent-commission.

29 “Filing a Complaint”, City of New Haven Fair Rent Commission. www.newhavenct.gov/government/departments-divisions/fair-rent-commission/filing-a-complaint.

Tenants’ Unions

In 2022, the Fair Rent Commission Municipal Code was amended to recognize **Tenants’ Unions**. The new ordinance allows the Fair Rent Commission to:

- Register a Tenants’ Union;
- Receive Tenants’ Union requests for investigations;
- Provide workshops between Tenants’ Union representatives and the landlord;
- Protect Tenants’ Union members against retaliation by a landlord for being a member of a Tenants’ Union³⁰

Recently, the Board of Alders approved an amendment to the ordinance, lowering the threshold to form a Tenants’ Union from buildings with ten or more dwelling units to five or more dwelling units, allowing thousands of additional apartments to become eligible to form a Tenants’ Union.³¹

30 “Tenants’ Unions” City of New Haven Fair Rent Commission. www.newhavenct.gov/government/departments-divisions/fair-rent-commission/tenants-unions

31 “Tenants Unions Cleared To Grow”, New Haven Independent. www.newhavenindependent.org/article/fair_rent_update

BUILDING

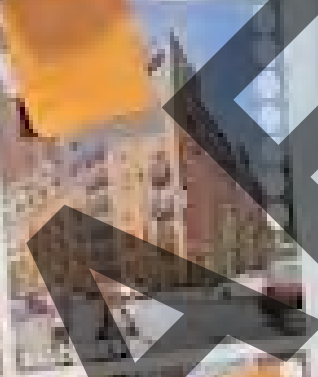
DESIGN

- Right to Return for current Residents and former Church Street South Residents
- Provide Affordable, Safe and High Quality Housing choices

Provide new retail space for Food, Retail, Services, Connectivity, Parking, and improved access to Public Transportation



MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING



LANDSCAPED COURTYARDS



PUBLIC SQUARE



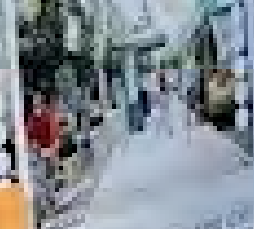
MIXING BUILDING HEIGHTS AND STYLES



REINTEGRATING HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE



REINTEGRATING HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE



IMPROVED ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

DRAFT

6

Housing Plan

DRAFT

1. The Housing Plan

The Union Square Housing Plan aims to transform the Robert T Wolfe Apartments, the former Church Street South Housing Project, and surrounding “Union Square” community into high quality mixed-income housing that is well-managed and meets the needs of the current residents and surrounding neighborhood. This Plan serves as a vision that asks how each component can support the success of this place and its people. How can the streets, parks, and buildings of a new design contribute to a thriving neighborhood? How can this plan not only rebuild the current public housing but also create and preserve more affordable housing choices?

Vision Statement:

“A thriving and supportive community where quality affordable and mixed-income housing is a foundation for security and growth for a diverse and vibrant community.”

Figure 18: Illustrative Aerial Perspective of the Union Square Masterplan



2. Target Site Conditions

Background:

The target site for the Union Square CNI is Robert T. Wolfe apartments, located at 49 Union Avenue across the street from New Haven's Union Station. Robert T. Wolfe (Wolfe) is an 8-story, Section 9 Public Housing building that houses primarily adults with disabilities and seniors. All 93 units at Wolfe need to be replaced due to several factors which render the building Functionally Obsolete. This housing plan assumes a 100% replacement of the units at Robert T. Wolfe and the eventual demolition of the building.

Figure 19: Wolfe residents outside the Robert T. Wolfe Apartments



Why Wolfe Apartments and Why Now?

When compared to the cost of rehabilitation, the significant deficiencies of the Wolfe building indicate that demolition of the existing structure is necessary. Design choices that were appropriate in 1970 when the building was constructed create challenges for the continued operation of the building.

Outdated Systems and Standards

Wolfe is an all-electric building with a resistance heat system in radiators in each unit. There is no central air conditioning for the warmer months, no fresh air exchange systems, and the windows are very poorly insulated. Several interior building materials have been found to contain asbestos.

Building Deterioration

The building's roof is in poor condition and leaks when it rains. The 50-year-old electrical system contains wiring that is no long code compliant and is wearing down. The elevators also break down frequently, which poses a significant problem for the large number of disabled residents in the 8-story building. The building is located within the 100 Year FEMA floodplain and the ground floor floods frequently during heavy rainstorms.

Limited Unit Design & Accessibility

Most units in Wolfe are efficiency studios and are significantly undersized for modern apartments. There are few accessible bathrooms throughout the units, despite the building's designation as primarily for disabled adults. Additionally, unreliability of the elevators is difficult to navigate for residents with mobility devices.

Figure 20: Church Street South Housing Project, 2014



Figure 21: Garden Apartments



Figure 22: Pedestrian inner court



The Church Street South Housing Project

History

CSS was a 301-unit family housing project located directly across from the Union Station Train Station. Comprised of mostly low-rise garden-style apartments, the complex was designed by Charles Moore and opened in 1969. Following a long period of disinvestment, the site was condemned by HUD in 2015 and demolished in 2018. At the time of demolition, the site was owned and operated by a private entity and residents were relocated largely through housing vouchers offered by Elm City Communities.

An Opportunity for Reunion

In 2023, Elm City Communities purchased the CSS site from the previous owner, Northland. With the purchase of the site, Elm City Communities owns approximately 8.28 acres of developable area. The Union Square Transformation Plan will provide for approximately 200 replacement family units, which will be earmarked for former CSS residents.

Why This Site?

Neighborhood Distress

The site proposed for the majority of the housing in this plan is situated within the Hill (The Hill) Neighborhood in Union Square CNI Neighborhood Boundary. As a neighborhood, residents of Union Square are more likely to be low-income, minority, and non-citizens than residents of New Haven City or New Haven County at large. Moreover, based on the Resident Survey, residents of the target populations (Robert T. Wolfe and the former Church Street South Housing Project) reported worse health, more difficulty in accessing healthcare and food, more difficulty in obtaining suitable employment, and less access to public recreational facilities than the Hill Neighborhood, City of New Haven, and the State of Connecticut broadly.

Location, Location, Location

Robert T Wolfe and the former Church Street South Housing Complex, which comprise the main project site, are situated directly across the street from New Haven's Union Station. Serving Amtrak and Metro North Trains along the Northeast Corridor, Union Station is the busiest train station in Connecticut and the 10th busiest across the country. The building itself was designed by architect Cass Gilbert and opened in 1920; it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Since Church Street South's demolition in 2018, the plot of land directly adjacent to Union Station has sat vacant and fenced off, leaving the Wolfe building the only remaining structure on the block. The Union Square Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan has the opportunity to deliver high-quality and affordable

housing to the residents currently living in Wolfe Apartments; bring back and reunite Church Street South families, and connect Union Station, the Hill Neighborhood, and Downtown New Haven through improved infrastructure.

Figure 23: Union Square Neighborhood Boundary in the context of the City of New Haven



3. Target Site Analysis

The CNI team collected and conducted extensive analysis focusing on the physical conditions of the target site immediate context and synthesized the information to understand key opportunities and constraints for planning the new development.

Figure 24: Union Station



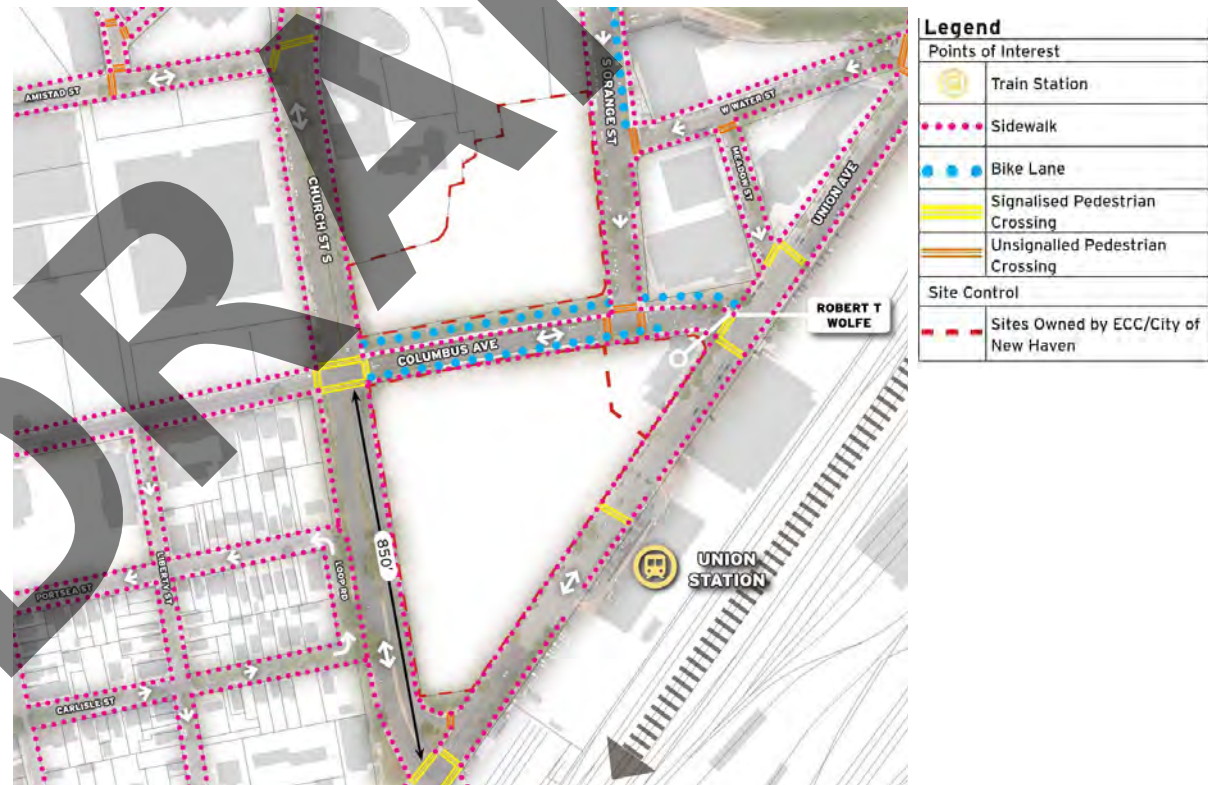
Figure 25: Portsea St from Church St S



Connectivity

Church Street South forms the western boundary of the site. It is a large, wide road with minimal pedestrian crossings. The distance between the pedestrian crossing at Union Avenue and the crossing at Columbus Avenue is approximately 850'. Many residents of Wolfe reported that they never cross Church St S into the Hill neighborhood and had never been to Trowbridge Park, which is less than a 1/2 mile away. The bike lanes on Columbus Avenue are excellent, but do not continue beyond Church Street South. The cycling experience would be improved if they could connect the bike lanes to a larger network.

Figure 26: Connectivity Analysis

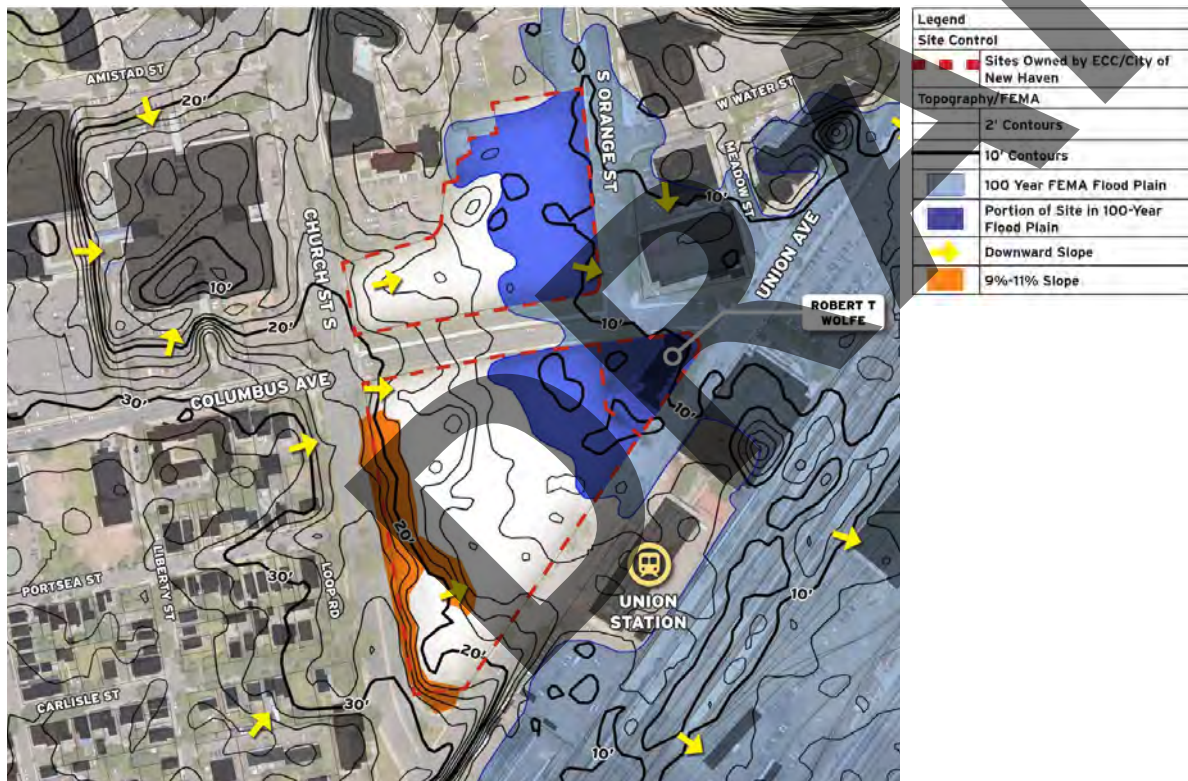


Topography & Flooding

Wolfe currently sits within the 100-year FEMA floodplain at approximately 10' above sea level. Residents at Wolfe report that the ground floor of the building floods frequently and they experience sewage backup during heavy rains.

The building is also situated at a choke point within the watershed of Downtown New Haven, meaning that much of the water that falls north and west of the site flows downwards towards Wolfe. The water

Figure 27: Topography Analysis



is then carried out into New Haven Harbor through a stormwater pipe.

The City of New Haven has identified the need for infrastructure improvements in this area and in 2022 received a \$25 million federal grant to increase the drainage capacity of the stormwater pipe and strengthen the sea wall along Long Wharf to prevent storm surge from future major weather events.

Figure 28: Diagrams representing future infrastructure improvements near the site, courtesy of the City of New Haven



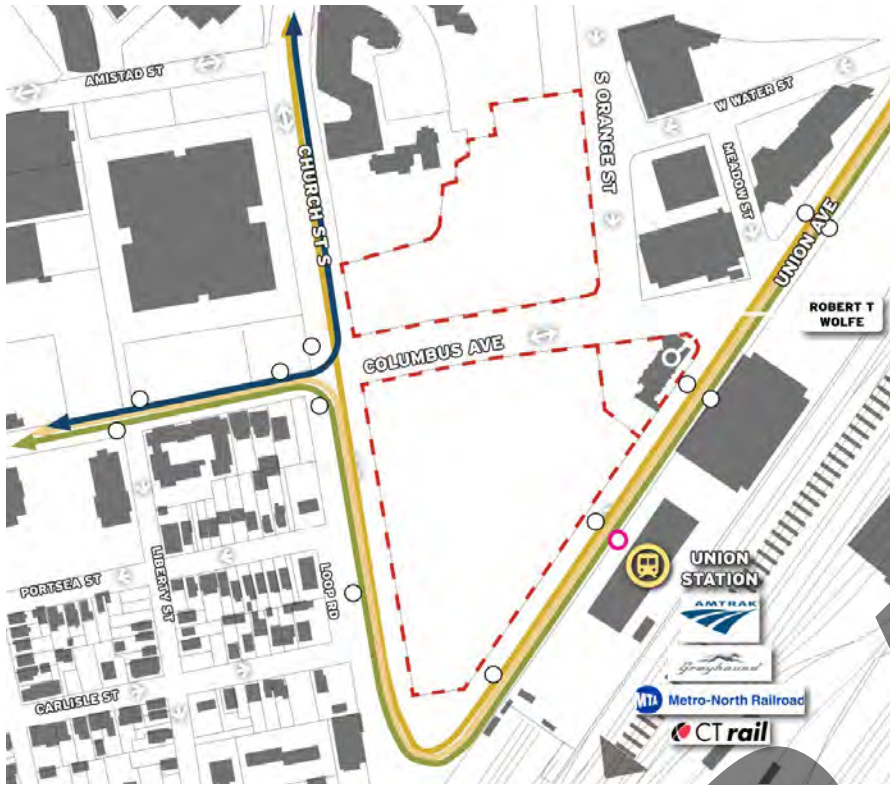


Figure 29: Transportation Analysis

Transportation Access

With its proximity to Union Station, the site is well served by local and regional transit. Four New Haven CT Transit bus lines directly pass the site and there are numerous bus stops within a 1/2 mile of Wolfe. Union Station offers regional transportation options with Amtrak, Metro-North, CT Rail, and Greyhound buses. Most bus stops are a simple signpost, additional bus shelters could be added to the area.

Legend	
Points of Interest	
	Train Station
	Bus Stop
	Bus Shelter
	Union Ave Bus Line
	Connector Downtown Loop Bus Line
	Kimberly Ave Bus Line
	Washington Ave Bus Route
Site Control	
	Sites Owned by ECC/City of New Haven

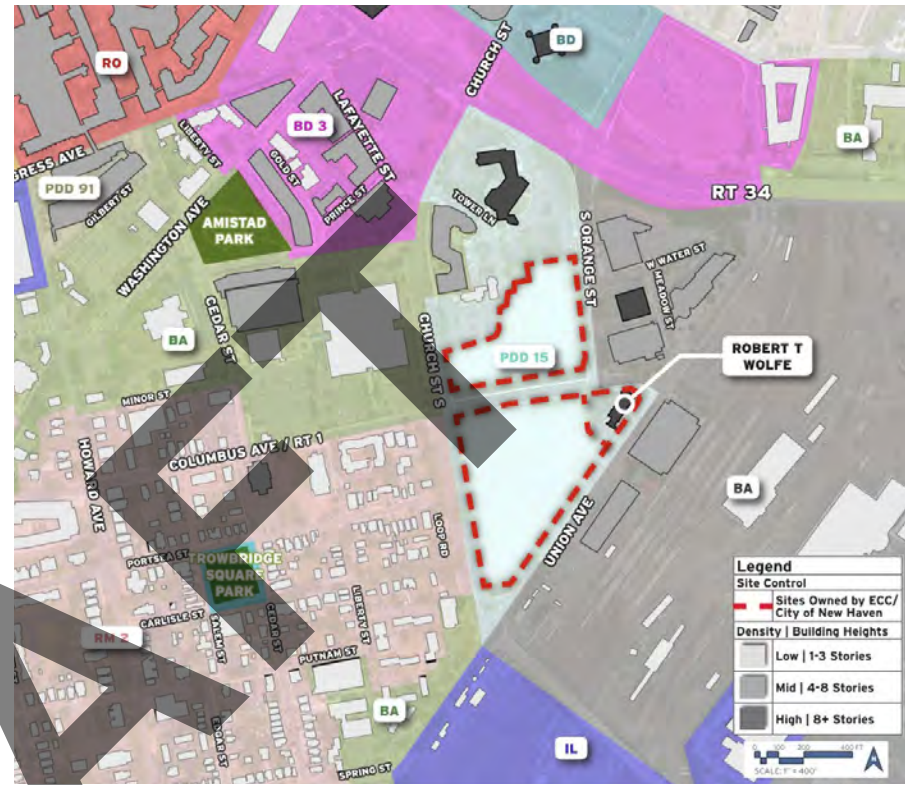


Figure 30: Zoning Map

Zoning

The current zoning of the site is "Planned Development District 15" or "PDD 15." PDD 15 is an adjustment that was made to the underlying zone RM-2 in the 1960s, when Church Street South was constructed. The site will need to be amended with a new PDD or rezoned all together.

PDD 15 - Planned Development District 15

RM 2 - Residential High-Middle Density

RO - Residence Office

BA - General Business

BD - Central Business

BD 3 - Central Business/Mixed-Use

BE - Wholesale and Distribution

Site Ownership

As mentioned, Elm City Communities purchased the Church Street South Housing Project property from Northland, Inc. in 2023. This was a major step in getting the Union Square development off the ground. When it was still standing, the roads within the site were owned and operated by the City of New Haven. The City still has ownership of those inner-block parcels, as seen in the diagram. Elm City and the City of New Haven are in the process of transferring ownership of those parcels to Elm City so that the proposed plan can be implemented and the site re-subdivided.



Figure 31: Site plan of the Church Street South Housing Project

Legend	
	Parcels within the Former Church Street South Housing Project Owned by the City of New Haven
	Proposed Encroachment into Columbus Avenue ROW

This drawing is not a survey and is for graphic representation only. The graphics are based on a 2011 Land Survey of the Former Church Street South Housing Project commissioned by Northland, Inc.

Safety

The Wolfe building's security and entry systems are faulty, resulting in non-residents entering the building. Residents also reported people entering the backyard patio space behind the building, despite the area being fenced off. The former Church Street South apartments created indefensible spaces by turning the face of the buildings away from the street and lacked delineation between public and private space.

Building on Prior Planning

In the discovery and analysis process at the beginning of planning, the Team met with City of New Haven Officials from the Office of Planning, Office of Economic Development, Livable City Initiative, the Engineering Department, the Police Department, and others. Their expertise was invaluable to the Planning Team to understand the development landscape and history in the City of New Haven. The Union Square Site in particular has been the subject of many planning efforts throughout the years, with a mix of public and private developer-led processes. This CNI planning process will build upon the momentum of existing and ongoing efforts while seeking to center the current approach around the needs and desires of the residents and community.



Hill to Downtown Plan: 2012-2013

The Hill-to-Downtown Community Plan is the result of a 12-month collaborative effort between community stakeholders and the City of New Haven to understand the challenges and opportunities facing this key city district. The purpose was to study the area that bridges the Hill Neighborhood, south of the site, and Downtown New Haven, north of the site. The resulting plan replaced the then-existing Church Street South site with approximately 750 mixed-income units. The Hill to Downtown Plan addressed the redevelopment of Church Street South, but did not address Robert T. Wolfe



Northland Planning: 2022

The owner of Church Street South endeavored again to create a master plan to redevelop Church Street South. The plan revisits previous redevelopment masterplans of Church Street South and incorporates planning efforts from 2013-2022, including the Hill to Downtown Plan. It included approximately 1030 units and 300,000 square feet of research and lab space.



Church St. S Connection Planning: 2024

In the process of developing a plan and design for the road Church Street South, the City of New Haven also commissioned a planning team to study the creation of a connection between Church Street and Union Station. In the future, Church Street and Church Street South will receive a "road diet" and incorporate a multi-modal promenade that will bring pedestrians and cyclists into Downtown.

Development Pipeline

The Union Square Transformation Plan comes at a time of huge development momentum in the City of New Haven, with projects such as:

- **Downtown Crossing** transforms a portion of Route 34 from expressway into urban boulevards
- **Long Wharf Responsible Growth Plan** supports the development of the Long Wharf District through focus on coastal resiliency, progressive economic strategies and community engagement
- **Union Station Transit Oriented Development** will renovate the historic station and introduce more parking and a mixed use building
- **Electric Bus Rapid Transit**, which will be added to the current public transit system in the city
- **Square 10** sits on the site of the former New Haven Coliseum and will include market rate apartments and a life science research building.



4. Identifying Housing Needs

The Resident Needs Assessment

Process

The Yale School of Management conducted a Resident Needs Assessment during the Spring and Summer of 2024 - the responses from residents provide valuable insights into what they would like to see in the new development and what their most pressing housing needs currently are.

Desire to Return

First and foremost, when asked if they would like to return to the new development, the vast majority of residents surveyed expressed interest in coming back to Union Square. Notably, 78% of Former Church Street South residents responded that they would like to come back to the new development, despite being away from the site for 5-10 years. Yale did note that this survey response may be biased as the pool of respondents are those who agreed to take the survey after many outreach touchpoints and are therefore more engaged in this process than those who did not take the survey.

Building Condition

When asked about physical improvements to new buildings, over 75% of residents

responded that central air conditioning and larger unit sizes were their chief concerns. The majority of respondents also mentioned: in-unit amenities such as dishwashers, microwaves, and washer/dryers; more parking; private yards and outdoor space; better accessibility; more community space; and more in-unit storage.

Mobility

Wolfe Residents were more likely to rely on public transit compared to former Church Street South Residents and had less overall access to a vehicle than the population of New Haven and Connecticut.

Access

Compared to the Hill Neighborhood, the City of New Haven, and Connecticut, residents of the target population were far less likely to have local access to low-cost recreational facilities such as parks, playgrounds, and swimming pools. For the parks that were accessible, residents were less likely to respond positively about their condition and upkeep. Access to affordable fruits and vegetables was also reportedly lower. Many residents reported that they do not have stores or shops nearby their home to easily access food and convenience items, meaning they rely on a car or other means of transportation to reach grocery stores, pharmacies, etc.

Want a "better quality of life, especially for the elders."

-RESIDENT RESPONSE

Neighborhood Needs Assessment Data:

Income and Poverty

According to the 2020 US Census, the Union Square Neighborhood had a median household income of \$34,886, which was lower than that of New Haven households overall (\$44,507) and was less than half of that of New Haven County overall (\$71,370).

Lack of Affordable Housing

The housing units in the Union Square Neighborhood are predominantly rented (71%) and a very high percentage of renters are cost-burdened, with 64% paying at least 30% of their income towards housing.

A Collaborative Design & Planning Process

The Housing Planning Process timeline was divided into these segments: Project Kickoff, Assess Existing Conditions, Develop Strategies, Draft Plan, and Finalize Plan. Through the entire process, resident and community input gathered at numerous engagement touchpoints led the direction of the plan.

Figure 32: Union Square Transformation Plan Phases



Housing Task Force Meetings

Once a Housing Task Force was formed, the Housing Team and Elm City ran Task Force meetings to listen to the community's hopes and concerns for the project. The Housing Team conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) exercise with Wolfe residents and community stakeholders.



Creating Housing Goals Together

From the feedback the team received over several months, they generated housing goals and divided them into 4 categories:

- **Building**
- **Site**
- **Social**
- **Economic**

The housing goals reflect that the Choice Neighborhoods Housing component is not only about delivering a certain number of units, but also considers how housing can be integrated into developments to improve the public realm, create shared public space, and catalyze economic opportunities for residents.

Building:

- Right to Return for current Robert T Wolfe residents and former Church Street South Residents
- Provide affordable, safe, and high quality housing choices

Site:

- Provide new infrastructure for flood resiliency, pedestrian connectivity, parking, and access to public transit

Social:

- Provide amenities including spaces for community gathering, social support, and recreation

Economic:

- Include areas for Retail and Commercial Development
- Create job training and employment opportunities

5. Creating the Plan

Charrette: Planning in Real Time

In September 2024, the project team gathered in New Haven to hold a 4-day Charrette. Over the four days, the team held open-house working sessions, stakeholder meetings and actively implemented input from residents into the plans.



Figure 33: Flyer Advertising the Charrette. Flyers were distributed to residents and around the community

What is a Charrette?

It's an interactive workshop where architects and urban planners work with the community (you!) to design a neighborhood together through sketches, meetings, and your feedback.



Figure 34: Residents and community members at the kickoff meeting on September 9th

Designing Plan Options

After spending the day meeting with residents and stakeholders, the Housing Team presented several concept schemes on Day 2 and through receiving feedback, the team worked on developing a consensus plan.

Several key design elements were identified as priorities:

- A **Pedestrian-Oriented connection** between Union Station and the corner of Church Street South and Columbus Avenue
- Diversity of **housing options** that incorporate neighborhood-scale townhouse-style units with front doors and stoops
- Connections through the site that extend surrounding streets to provide **better walkability throughout the neighborhood**
- Taller **density closer to Downtown**
- **Parking** lined with Retail/Amenity/Units
- **Wayfinding elements**, such as a Gateway to direct people towards Downtown/Union Station



Figure 35: Residents give input at Robert T Wolfe



Figure 38: Options presented on September 10th

Putting it Together

The Charrette concluded with a final evening presentation on September 12th at the El Centro Youth Enrichment Center after a full day of designing and drawing. The Team presented a consensus plan that offers diversity of housing types, building heights, and amenity spaces. The final presentation included perspective renderings along with site plans, building sections, and elevations, giving current residents and neighbors an idea of what the future of Union Square could look like.

During the meeting, the Planning Team received valuable feedback from residents about their concerns and discussed what the plan hopes to achieve. Following the presentation, attendees were free to walk around and engage with the Planning Team and the drawings for questions and comments.



Figure 37: Charrette conclusion presentation on September 12th

MONDAY SEPT. 09	TUESDAY SEPT. 10	WEDNESDAY SEPT. 11	THURSDAY SEPT. 12
<p>KICKOFF MEETING 5:30pm - 7:30pm Robert T. Wolfe Apartments 49 Union Avenue (Tent Outdoors)</p>	<p>OPEN HOUSE WORK SESSIONS 9:00am - 3:30pm Robert T. Wolfe Apartments 49 Union Avenue (Community Room)</p> <p>TASK FORCE & RESIDENT ADVISORY WORK SESSIONS Robert T. Wolfe Apartments 49 Union Avenue (Tent Outdoors)</p> <p>PROGRESS MEETING 5:30pm - 7:30pm Robert T. Wolfe Apartments 49 Union Avenue (Tent Outdoors)</p>	<p>OPEN HOUSE WORK SESSIONS 9:00am - 3:30pm El Centro Youth Enrichment Program 148 Sylvan Avenue</p>	<p>OPEN HOUSE WORK SESSIONS 9:00am - 12:00pm El Centro Youth Enrichment Program 148 Sylvan Avenue</p> <p>HOUSING MASTER PLAN PRESENTATION 5:30pm - 7:30pm El Centro Youth Enrichment Program 148 Sylvan Avenue</p>

Figure 36: Schedule of events

6. The Union Square Consensus Plan



“A thriving and supportive community where quality affordable and mixed-income housing is a foundation for security and growth for a diverse and vibrant community.”

Vision

One of the greatest assets of the Robert T. Wolfe and the former Church Street South sites are the **communities** that residents built over decades of living there. Wolfe residents have said that they feel safe as a community because they **keep each other safe**. In good weather, residents sit outside Wolfe to people watch as the commuters stream in and out of the train station; sometimes they run into old friends and acquaintances. Residents that once lived at Church Street South have **reunited** with friends at engagement meetings during the planning process after years of not seeing each other.

Community is at the heart of the Union Square Housing Plan. The plan will not only deliver beautiful, modern, affordable units that residents can return to live in, but it will also deliver much needed **space** for them to **come together and thrive**.



Figure 39: Illustrative Roof Plan



Figure 40: Illustrative Ground Floor Plan

7. Goals & Strategies

Overview

Six Housing Plan goals were developed in collaboration with the residents, stakeholders, and the larger Union Square Neighborhood. The following pages present potential strategies to achieve each goal while also explaining the design elements of the site plan.



Building:

1. Right to Return for Current Wolfe residents and former Church Street South Residents

- 1.1 Maintain a Transparent Process
- 1.2 Incorporate resident feedback into the Housing Plan
- 1.3 Create a viable phasing and transition plan

2. Provide affordable, safe, and high-quality housing choices

- 2.1 Provide diverse housing options: townhouse-style homes and tall apartment buildings
- 2.2 Offer private, secure outdoor space for residents with elevated courtyards in the apartment buildings
- 2.3 The new development will be up to date with modern amenities including central air, increased accessibility, new security systems, etc.
- 2.4 Use Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) best practices in design
- 2.5 Use a variety of public and private funding sources to maintain housing affordability for current residents and add affordable housing stock to the neighborhood

Site:

3. Provide New Infrastructure for flood resiliency, pedestrian connectivity, parking, and access to public transit

- 3.1 Design buildings above Base Flood Elevation and use green infrastructure to absorb stormwater and runoff
- 3.2 Connect the site back to the Hill Neighborhood and Downtown with new pedestrian crossings and bike lanes
- 3.3 Provide attractive and ample lighting in public open spaces to increase nighttime safety
- 3.4 Plant street trees to shade sidewalks and plazas for a better pedestrian experience
- 3.5 Provide parking in the lower levels of each building and shield parking with liner retail, amenity, and housing
- 3.6 Coordinate with the new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route
- 3.7 Use traffic calming measures such as raised crosswalks, bump outs, and alternative paving



Social:

4. Provide amenities for community gathering, social support, and recreation

- 4.1 Create a Central Public Open Space for the community to use day-to-day and for events
- 4.2 Offer a variety of open spaces to give people options between lively public space and quiet areas
- 4.3 Design play areas for kids of all ages where caregivers can oversee play
- 4.4 Allocate space in the ground floor of residential buildings for community rooms and community services, such as daycare
- 4.5 Create community programs to organize farmers markets, festivals, etc.

Economic:

5. Design space for retail and commercial development

- 5.1 Surround the Central Green with retail and amenity
- 5.2 Bring a grocery store to Union Square
- 5.3 Design incubator retail spaces for local small businesses

6. Create job training opportunities

- 6.1 Work with retail tenants to hire and train local residents

Building-Scale Strategies

Goal 1: Give the Right to Return to current Wolfe residents and former Church Street South Residents

1.1 Maintain a Transparent Process

Implementing Transformation Plans such as this will undoubtedly require a significant amount of time. As these projects span multiple years, it is crucial to keep residents continuously informed about the progress and ensure they have opportunities to collaborate on the evolving vision.



Continued Dialogue

Communication is key in this process and the planning team has implemented the following actions to build trust with residents:

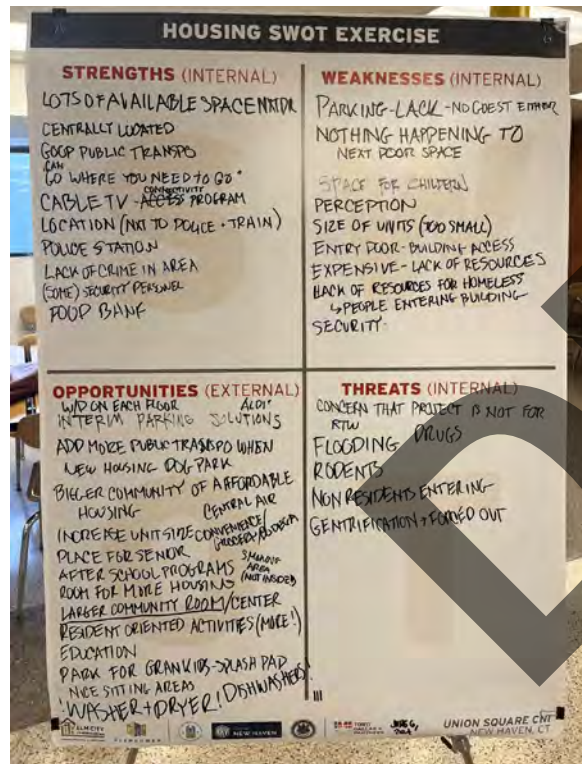
- Inviting and welcoming residents to every single Task Force, Steering Committee, and Early Action Committee Meeting.
- Holding frequent, routine meetings to discuss progress and hear resident feedback. Since the beginning of the project, Glendower has held multiple meetings each month to move the process forward.
- Holding meetings at Robert T Wolfe to make it as easy and comfortable as possible for residents to attend
- Communicating Transparency about the timeline of the project
- Designating a representative on the Planning Team to address current concerns the residents face in their living conditions

1.2 Incorporate resident feedback into the Housing Plan

Residents know their needs and their neighborhood best and their advice and input is integral to putting together the Transformation Plan. The housing team led a series of exercises during Housing Task Force and Steering Committee meetings during the spring and summer of 2024 to listen to, digest, and synthesize resident feedback.

Pre-Charrette

The team conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) exercise and recorded resident and stakeholder input in real time. They then organized and categorized the data and presented the key issues back to stakeholders in a follow-up meeting.



During the Charrette

The first two days of the charrette were held at Robert T Wolfe where residents could stop by and give input on the drawings throughout the day. Residents voiced their concerns and gave constructive feedback during the kickoff meeting on September 9th and Progress meeting on September 10th. Key comments were that they wanted townhouses to be incorporated into the plan - citing their desire for a more homey, community focused neighborhood, and that they wanted a variety of open spaces.

Post Charrette

The Planning team hosted a follow up meeting after the charrette to get feedback on the strategies contained in the Transformation Plan. Through dot exercises, post-its, and verbal feedback, the planning team received valuable notes on priorities and resident wishes.



1.3 Create a viable Phasing and Transition Plan

Many entities throughout the years have created plans and attempted to redevelop this site, but ultimately those plans did not come to fruition. In order to achieve the desired redevelopment of Union Square, a robust and financially viable phasing and transition plan must be created. Complex Transformation Plans such as this should continually evaluate how development components like zoning entitlement, infrastructure, phasing, and financing can affect the success of a project's viability to be completed.

Zoning & Entitlement

The current zoning for the site dates back to the 60s when the Church Street South Housing Project was being planned. The site will need to be amended with a new PDD or completely rezoned. The Housing Team is working with the City Planning Department to evaluate the best steps forward. (IN PROCESS)

Because the site still contains some city-owned parcels from when Church Street South was still standing, Elm City and Glendower are actively working with the City of New Haven to transfer ownership of those parcels to ECC.

Infrastructure

Considerations

The housing plan should acknowledge the substantial costs infrastructure and regrading earth can add to a revitalization project. The site will need to be regraded in order to bring Northeast areas of the site out of the floodplain through a CLOMR. The housing plan utilizes existing infrastructure, such as the recently paved Columbus Avenue and proposes that the grade change across the site be used to bury parking without needing to significantly dig for parking structures.

Advantages

The fact that the Church Street South buildings have already been demolished and the residents moved out is a significant asset to the project's success. A Phase II Environmental Assessment is underway to assess the condition of the empty site.

Financing

The Union Square Transformation will deliver approximately 2000-2500 new housing units to the city of New Haven. (IN PROCESS)

UNION SQUARE CNI		DEVELOPMENT TOTAL
UNITS	APARTMENT UNITS	1,994
	INTEGRAL TOWNHOUSES	50
	TOTAL UNITS	2,044
NON-RES	RETAIL SF	44,500
	COMMUNITY AMENITY SF	30,500
	TOTAL NON-RES SF	75,000
PARKING	PARKING SPACES	1,027
	RETAIL SPACES PROVIDED	178
	SPACES/UNIT	0.42

UNION SQUARE CNI		DEVELOPMENT TOTAL
UNITS	APARTMENT UNITS	2,449
	INTEGRAL TOWNHOUSES	41
	TOTAL UNITS	2,490
NON-RES	RETAIL SF	48,500
	COMMUNITY AMENITY SF	37,000
	TOTAL NON-RES SF	85,500
PARKING	PARKING SPACES	991
	RETAIL SPACES PROVIDED	194
	SPACES/UNIT	0.32

Phasing

With a project this size, Glendower and Elm City will need to oversee several phases of development and construction. When creating a phasing plan, the housing team is working with Glendower to consider how early stages can build momentum towards the completion of the project.



Figure 41: Phase 1 Phase 2

Strategy

Broadly, the parcels south of Columbus Avenue will be considered Phase 1 and the parcels north of Columbus Avenue will be considered Phase 2. There were several reasons for this approach:

- Momentum is extremely important in projects of this size. Successful early phases are necessary to see the project to completion and the phasing plan is designed to create “early wins.”
- Phase 1 will be lower density than Phase 2 and will contain most of the integral Townhouse unit typology across the site. These townhouse units will be larger for families and are better suited to house returning families. The lower density also makes use of less expensive construction types possible
- Many of the project’s affordable units will be funded through Low Income Housing Tax Credits. LIHTC deals are more financially feasible if larger projects are broken up into smaller pieces, which will be easier to manage in the lower density Phase 1.
- Most of Phase 1 is out of the floodplain - development can begin without needing to wait for regrading and the CLOMR approval.
- The defining feature of the whole development is the Central Green and the connection from Union Station to Church Street South. Developing this portion early on will deliver a fantastic public space for the neighborhood and the City of New Haven as a whole. The interest and excitement the Central Green will generate is necessary to create the demand to develop the higher-density Phase 2 and build critical mass to attract a grocery store.

UNION SQUARE CNI		SOUTH OF COLUMBUS AVE				NORTH OF COLUMBUS AVE				DEVELOPMENT TOTAL
		BLOCK 1	BLOCK 2	BLOCK 3	SUBTOTAL	BLOCK 4	BLOCK 5	BLOCK 6	SUBTOTAL	
UNITS	APARTMENT UNITS	270	314	144	728	396	609	262	1,266	1,994
	INTEGRAL TOWNHOUSES	36	11	3	50	-	-	-	-	50
	TOTAL UNITS	306	325	147	778	396	609	262	1,266	2,044
NON-RES	RETAIL SF	7,000	16,500	6,000	29,500	-	15,000	-	15,000	44,500
	COMMUNITY AMENITY SF	3,000	14,000	1,500	18,500	4,500	4,500	3,000	12,000	30,500
	TOTAL NON-RES SF	10,000	30,500	7,500	48,000	4,500	19,500	3,000	27,000	75,000
PARKING	PARKING SPACES	348	135	214	698	144	136	49	330	1,027
	RETAIL SPACES PROVIDED	28	66	24	118	-	60	-	60	178
	SPACES/UNIT	1.05	0.21	1.30	0.75	0.36	0.12	0.19	0.68	0.42

Average GSF/Unit: 975sf (Includes circulation and BoH)

Average GSF/Unit: 975sf (Includes circulation and BoH)

Goal 2: Provide affordable, safe, and high-quality housing choices

2.1 Provide diverse housing options: townhouse-style homes and tall apartment buildings

Contextual Design

Union Square sits at an inflection point where the building typologies and densities change drastically in the city of New Haven. To the south is the Hill neighborhood, filled with 2- and 3-story single-family and duplex detached houses. To the west is Yale New Haven Health, the massive medical complex that services much of the city of New Haven. To the north is Downtown New Haven, which has 20-story office and residential towers.

To respond to the surrounding context and give the site flexibility, the plan proposes increasing density across the site so that the tallest buildings are closest to



Figure 42: By focusing the taller development to the north, it also allows flexibility in how dense the development will be, provided those sites are developed in later phases. The sites identified with hatching and asterisks are opportunities for future off-site development beyond this planning process. The sites are currently being under-utilized in their current state.



INCREASING DENSITY

Downtown New Haven.

Low Density Options

Three-story townhouses are integrated into larger multifamily apartment buildings and respond to the lower density Hill neighborhood across Church St. S. A pedestrian-only “mews” cuts through the block and features townhouses with small front gardens facing each other.

Additional integrated townhouses are present throughout the ground floor of the plan. Incorporating townhouses into the ground plane activates the street with front stoops and porches, breaks down the massing of large apartment buildings, and



Figure 43: Illustration representing integral townhouses facing onto Church Street South.

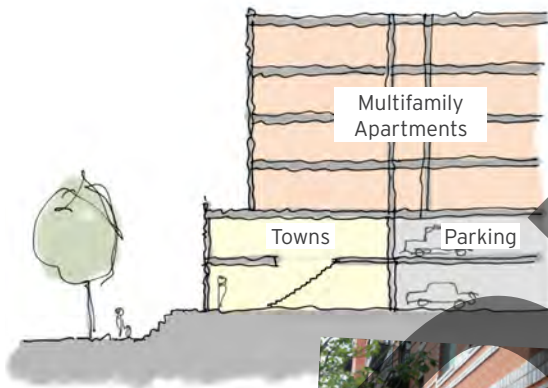


Figure 45: Townhouses will front onto the street, providing “eyes on the street”



Figure 44: Example of a pedestrian-only mews

Resident Feedback

Throughout the engagement process, residents expressed repeatedly that they did not all want to return to an apartment tower and some would strongly prefer to live in a townhouse or a house “with their own front door.” By using integral townhouses, we are able to maintain a high density of housing across the entirety of the site while providing homes residents are asking for.



Figure 47: Buildings north of Columbus Avenue consist primarily of 20+ story apartment towers

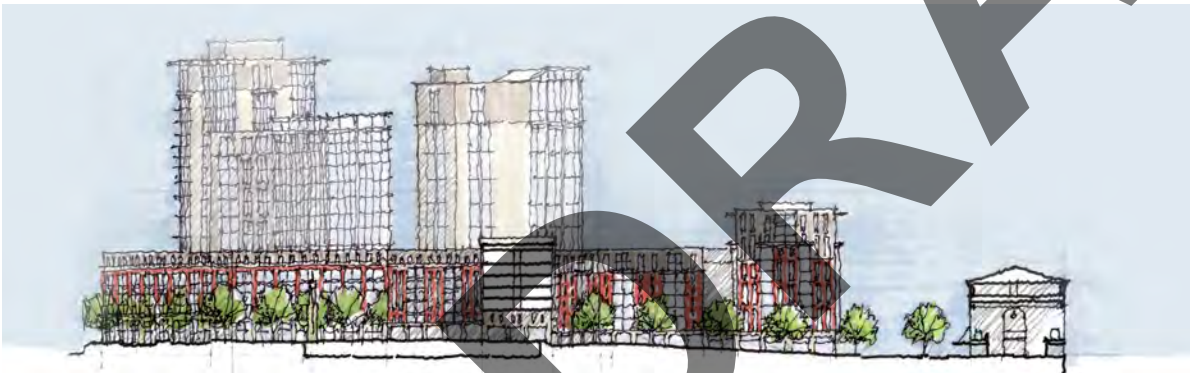


Figure 46: Section through the site, looking north

offers residents a housing alternative to an apartment “flat.”

Higher Density Options

The portion of the site directly across from Union Station maintains a mid-level density, capping out around 10-12 stories. Taller apartment towers are proposed for the parcel north of Columbus Avenue - these are contextually appropriate and as market needs change, the height of the towers can flex up or down.

IN PROCESS

2000 Units



2500 Units



2.2 Offer private, secure outdoor space for residents with elevated courtyards in the apartment buildings

Nearly every building on the site is designed to have a concrete podium on the 1st and 2nd floor in which retail, amenity, and residential units will “wrap” two floors of parking.



Figure 50: Private Residential Courtyards

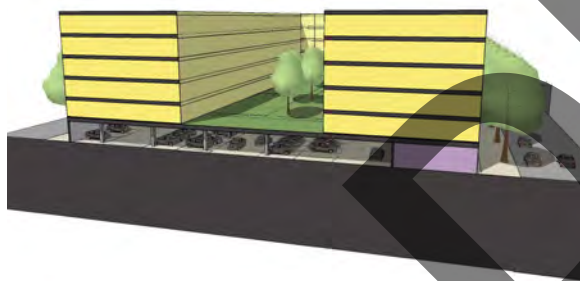


Figure 48: Example of a courtyard over a parking podium



Figure 49: A landscaped residential courtyard

Safety & Security

This creates an outdoor, elevated courtyard space in the building on the 3rd floor that only residents of that building can access. Residents will have access to private and safe outdoor space where they can relax on their own or engage with other residents in the building.

The current Robert T Wolfe residents face recurring issues of non-residents entering the building and the rear yard. The former Church St S site contained large areas of indefensible space - areas where no party

has a sense of ownership or care over the space. By elevating recreational areas, residents are given outdoor space that is truly owned by the community of the building.

These residential courtyards can be programmed in a number of ways - they can include community gardens, grilling and eating areas, outdoor lawn games, and pet washing stations.

2.3 The new development will be up to date with modern amenities including central air, increased accessibility, new security systems, etc.

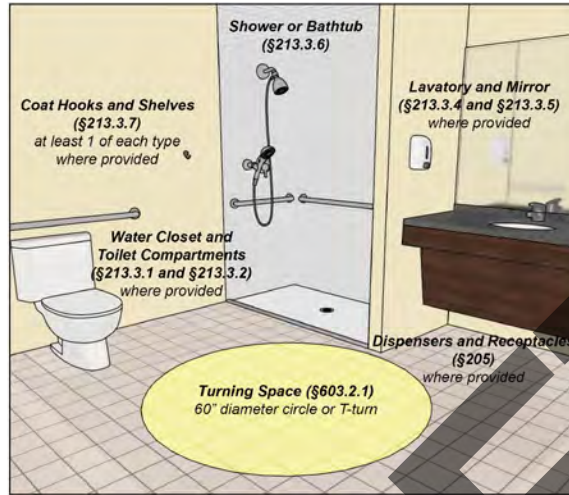
Having been constructed in the 60s, the Robert T Wolfe building is woefully outdated in terms of accessibility standards, insulation and HVAC systems, safe and healthy building materials, and electrical systems. The new buildings will be designed and constructed so that they meet at minimum the 2021 International Building Code, 2017 ANSI Standards, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Security

Modern electric fob systems coupled with smart building layouts will improve building security.

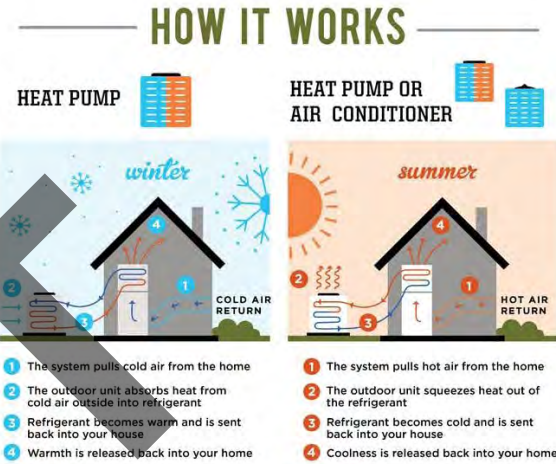


Figure 51: A unit at William T. Rowe Apartments, an affordable building recently developed by Glendower and Elm City



Accessibility

There will be additional fully accessible units in the new development, especially in any buildings that are oriented to seniors and those with disabilities. New fully accessible units will have all the necessary grab bars in bathrooms, accessible height kitchen counters and appliances, and additional space to maneuver a mobility device. All new units, including those not specifically designed to be fully accessible, will be designed implementing Universal Design best practices. Universal Design (UD) is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.



Sustainability

The new buildings will achieve a sustainability rating from a recognized governing body, such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver, Enterprise Green Communities Certification, EarthCraft Certification, or others. Central heating and cooling will be provided in the new buildings, powered by energy efficient systems. Compared to Wolfe, the new buildings will have much better insulation in the walls, windows, and floors, ensuring that units retain their heat in the winter and keep out the heat in the summer.

Geothermal
IN PROCESS

2.4 Use Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) best practices in design

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary approach to reducing crime by designing and managing the built environment in ways that deter criminal behavior and promote safety.



Key CPTED Principles:

- **Natural Surveillance:** Designing spaces to increase visibility, making it easier for people to observe their surroundings and spot suspicious activities.
- **Territorial Reinforcement:** Using physical designs like fences, signage, and landscaping to express ownership and delineate private spaces from public ones.
- **Access Control:** Guiding the flow of people and vehicles to minimize opportunities for crime, such as using gates, locks, and barriers.
- **Maintenance:** Keeping areas well-maintained to signal that a space is cared for and monitored, which can deter vandalism and other crimes.
- **Activity Support:** Encouraging legitimate activities in public spaces to increase the presence of people, which can naturally deter criminal behavior

2.5 Use a variety of public and private funding sources to maintain housing affordability for current residents and add affordable housing stock to the neighborhood

With Elm City Communities owning both the Church Street South and Robert T Wolfe sites, they are committed to delivering affordable housing in the new development. They have a successful track record managing and developing HOPE VI projects, RAD conversions, and LIHTC properties and are knowledgeable on leveraging numerous funding sources to deliver high quality housing.

UNION SQUARE 2500 UNIT PROGRAM

A 60% Market Unrestricted	2500 Unit Program, 60% Market										DEVELOPMENT TOTAL		
	0BR		1BR		2BR		3BR		4BR		#	%	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%			
Replacement Units + LIHTC	-	0%	275	55%	150	30%	50	10%	25	5%	500	20.0%	40.0%
Workforce 80% - 120% AMI	-	0%	275	55%	150	30%	50	10%	25	5%	500	20.0%	
Market unrestricted	75	5%	900	60%	450	30%	75	5%	-	0%	1500	60.0%	60.0%
TOTAL	75	3%	1,450	58%	750	30%	175	7%	50	2%	2500	100%	

Figure 52: Proposed Union Square Income Mix Program

Site-Scale Strategies

Goal 3: Provide New Infrastructure for flood resiliency, pedestrian connectivity, parking, and access to public transit

3.1 Design buildings above Base Flood Elevation and use green infrastructure to absorb stormwater and runoff

Regrading

The Planning team is working with the Department of Engineering in the City of New Haven to chart a path towards applying for a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) from FEMA, which would remove the site from the floodplain. This will require regrading of the site in the areas that are currently within the 100-year floodplain, the planning team and Glendower will work with a civil engineering team to design a regraded site.

Green Infrastructure

The plan recommends that green roofs are planted on all buildings in the project. Additionally, ground treatments such as rain gardens and permeable surfaces can reduce stormwater runoff. Plantings across the site should be native and non-invasive to the New Haven area.

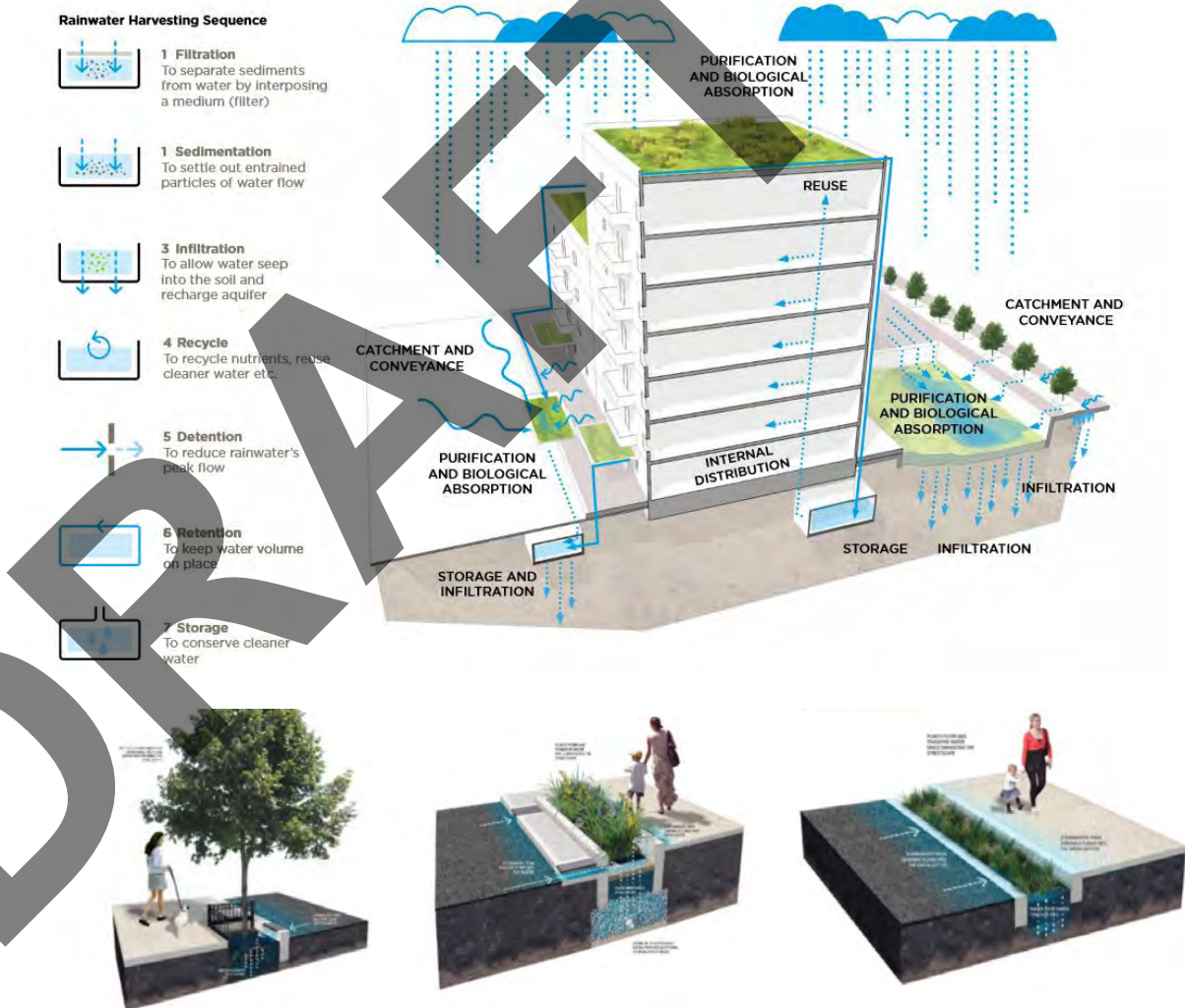


Figure 53: Examples of Green Infrastructure to absorb stormwater

3.2 Connect the site back to the Hill Neighborhood and Downtown with new pedestrian crossings and bike lanes

Reconnecting to The Hill

Church St. S has long cut off easy pedestrian access between Robert T Wolfe and the Hill neighborhood. When meeting with residents, many remarked that they had never been to Trowbridge Square Park, which is about 0.5 miles from the site within the Hill. To reconnect back to the Hill, the plan proposes introducing an additional pedestrian crossing across Church St S near Portsea Street. The current bike lanes on Columbus Avenue should be extended westward to connect to a larger bike path network so that there is a safe cycling route throughout the entire neighborhood.

A Gateway to Downtown

The Central Green will direct pedestrians from Union Station through the site towards the intersection of Church Street and Columbus Avenue, where the new Church Street Promenade will lead to Downtown New Haven. The new site plan has been coordinated with the City's ongoing efforts to improve Church St S with a road diet and the proposed promenade. The Gateway element will define the character of the Central Green and act as a wayfinding tool.

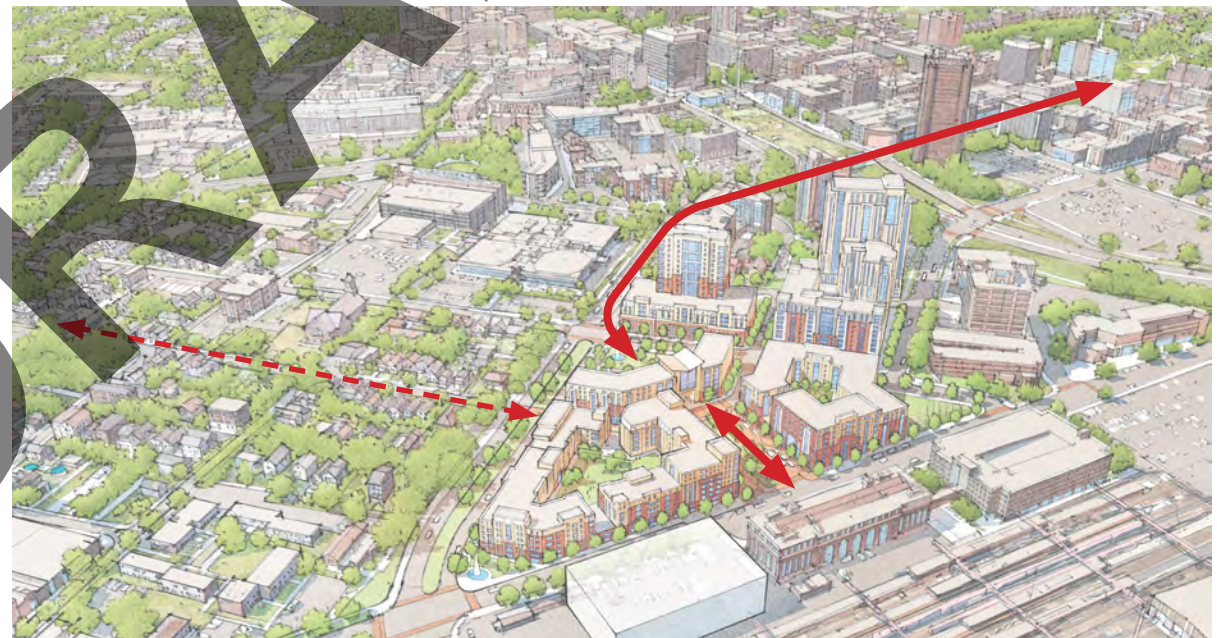
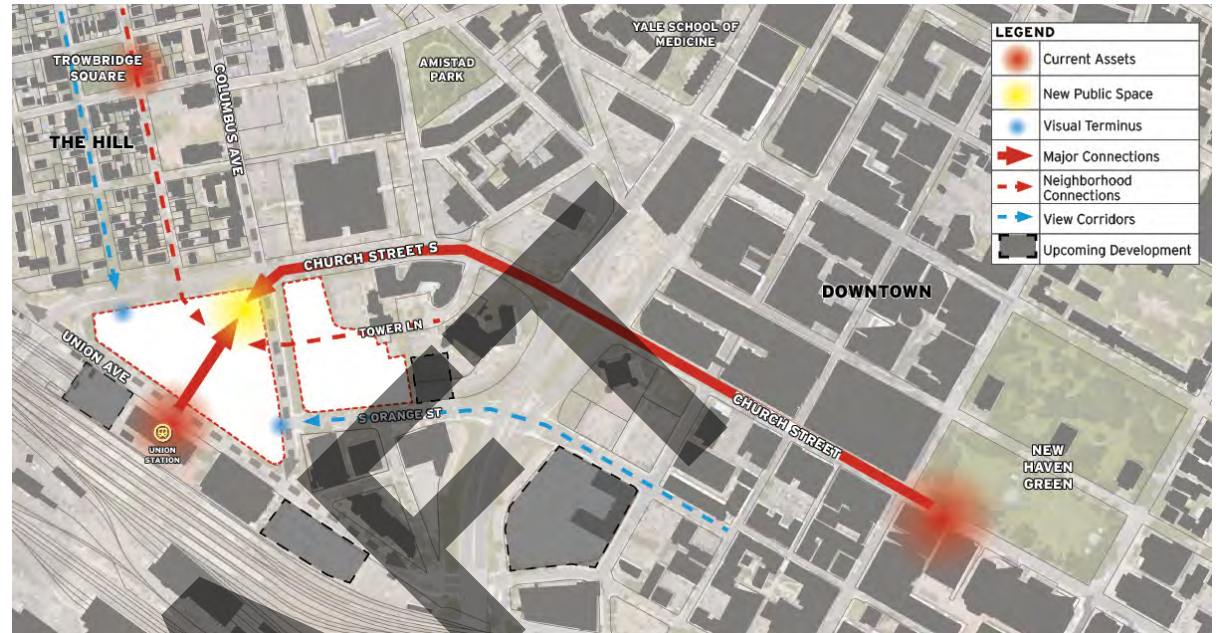


Figure 54: Connectivity Diagrams

3.3 Provide attractive and ample lighting in public open spaces to increase nighttime safety

Ample lighting is crucial to provide a sense of safety in public spaces at night. The plan proposes street lighting with decorative lamp posts on every public street across the site. The city currently has an initiative to revamp the street lighting for each neighborhood by adding decorative iron medallions with designs emblematic of each neighborhood.

The team proposes that a design for the Union Square neighborhood be created and implemented in the street lighting across the site. Additionally, the featured public spaces should have additional well-designed decorative and functional lighting to illuminate those areas at night. The building entrances should be well lit with attractive light fixtures. Lighting across the site should be dark-sky friendly to reduce light pollution.



Figure 55: Well-lit public space

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3.4 Plant street trees to shade sidewalks and plazas for a better pedestrian experience

Street trees should be incorporated on every public street around the site. Street trees greatly enhance the pedestrian experience by providing shade, adding greenery, and reducing the urban heat island effect. Shade Provision: Trees provide shade, which helps to cool surfaces like roads, buildings, and sidewalks. This reduces the amount of heat these surfaces absorb and re-radiate, lowering overall temperatures

Additional Benefits:

- **Evapotranspiration:** Trees absorb water through their roots and release it through their leaves in a process called evapotranspiration. This process cools the air by using heat from the air to evaporate water, effectively acting like a natural air conditioner
- **Air Quality Improvement:** Trees can improve air quality by filtering pollutants and providing a cooling effect that reduces the need for air conditioning, which in turn lowers emissions from power plants
- **Reduction of Energy Use:** By shading buildings, trees can reduce the need for air conditioning, leading to lower energy consumption and reduced greenhouse gas emissions



Figure 56: Street trees along The Promenade will enhance the pedestrian and cyclist experience

New Haven Public Transit

3.6 Coordinate with the new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route

A new citywide Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system will run through the Hill along Church Street, Columbus Avenue, and Congress Avenue. Street improvements will accompany this new route to improve access to the BRT stops.



3.5 Provide safe and attractive parking options to satisfy the needs of residents and public visitors

Resident Parking

Locating resident parking within each building gives residents a secure location and enclosed location to park their cars. Lining the parking with active uses is critical to foster active street life. Exposed parking garages create large expanses of wall with no interaction with the pedestrian realm. Given the access to public transit and based on comparable buildings in the area, the proposed residential parking ratio is approximately 0.5.



Figure 57: Ground Floor Plan showing parking lined with retail (red) and amenity (blue). The parking along Church Street S is buried underground and is not visible from the street



Public Parking

The plan proposes to provide metered on-street parking throughout the site, which will be intended to primarily serve the retail and amenity spaces. Limited time on-street parking creates a constant flow of activity throughout the site and ensures that the space does not become stagnant. On-street parking will also be beneficial in attracting retailers to the project, as they want customers to be able to park nearby to shop.

3.6 Use traffic calming measures such as raised crosswalks, bump outs, and alternative paving

To increase pedestrian safety and improve the pedestrian experience, the plan recommends implementing the following traffic calming measures where appropriate:



Speed Humps and Speed Tables: These are raised sections of the road designed to slow down vehicles. Speed humps are shorter and more abrupt, while speed tables are longer with a flat top, often used at pedestrian crossings

Narrow Lanes and Pinchpoints: Reducing the width of traffic lanes or creating pinchpoints at mid-block locations can slow down traffic. The extra space can be used for pedestrian paths, bike lanes, or green infrastructure

Pavement Materials and Appearance: Using different colors, textures, or patterns on the road surface can alert drivers to slow down and pay attention to their surroundings

Shared Streets: Removing the distinction between pedestrian and vehicle spaces can encourage drivers to slow down and be more aware of pedestrians and cyclists

Raised Crosswalks and Pedestrian Refuge Islands: These features make pedestrian crossings more visible and safer by slowing down vehicles and providing a safe space for pedestrians in the middle of the road

Gateway Treatments: These include signage, entry portals, and road surface changes at the entrance to a neighborhood or commercial area to signal drivers to slow down

Social Strategies

Goal 4: Provide amenities for community gathering, social support, and recreation

4.1 Create a Central Public Open Space for the community to use day-to-day and for events

Through this process, it became evident that the Hill and Robert T Wolfe are lacking central gathering spaces where the community can come together. The Hill has less park space than similarly dense neighborhoods in New Haven and lacks a neighborhood farmers market.

The Central Green is a key component of the master plan and will deliver a much-needed gathering space for the neighborhood and an asset for the City of New Haven as a whole.

The design of the Green is intended to allow for maximum flexibility of uses. On a typical day, it will be a park lined with retail where residents and visitors can people watch, shop, and eat. The space could also transform into a farmers market, outdoor movie theater, festival location, outdoor concert, and ice skating rink - with smart programming, the space can be a fantastic asset to the community.



Woonerf:

A woonerf is a type of street designed to prioritize pedestrians and cyclists over cars. The term is Dutch and translates to “living street.” In a woonerf, cars must drive very slowly, and the street often includes features like benches, trees, and play areas to create a more community-friendly environment.



4.2 Offer a variety of open spaces to give people options between lively public space and quiet areas

The plan recognizes, however, that a bustling town square is not for everyone all the time and that some would prefer quieter outdoor areas for relaxation. In addition to the Central Green, there is an additional 60,400 square feet of public outdoor space proposed in the plan. As discussed earlier in this document, the buildings themselves will also have private

courtyards, providing over 60,000 square feet of private outdoor space.



4.3 Design play areas for kids of all ages where caregivers can oversee play

The public outdoor space in the plan will incorporate play spaces for children with seating areas adjacent so that caregivers can watch. Additionally, residents throughout the process commented on the need for space for teenagers in the community. Coupled with programming within the buildings and proposed improvements in the Neighborhood Plan, Union Square will offer areas and programs for children of all ages.



Figure 58: Private Residential Courtyards Public Open Space

4.4 Allocate space in the ground floor of residential buildings for community rooms and community services, such as daycare

The proposed plan for Union Square contains over 30,000 square feet of “community amenity” designated space. During the planning process, it became evident that the Neighborhood was severely lacking a central indoor gathering space to host community events.

Every building in the plan is mixed-use in some capacity and has a certain amount of community amenity space. The plan is designed to be flexible to shift amenity space around as programming and uses become more solidified. In coordination with the People Plan, some form of daycare facility is recommended as one of the uses. Additionally, any shared-use community space should be robust enough to accommodate a wide range of uses from hosting youth and senior programs to acting as a performing arts space.



Figure 59: Community Amenity

Economic Strategies

Goal 5: Design space for retail and commercial development

5.1 Surround the Central Green with retail and amenity

The aim for the Central Green is for it to be a lively mixed use public square with retail and commercial space that offers convenient shopping and dining for residents. Lining the public space with retail ensures that the area is surrounded with “active uses” which provides “eyes on the street” to increase a sense of safety in the public realm. Combined with the development and remodeling of Union Station, Union Avenue will become a retail hub for the neighborhood.



Figure 60: Retail ■



5.2 Bring a Grocery Store to Union Square

In the Resident Assessment, Wolfe and Church Street South Residents reported that they have less access to affordable, high-quality fruits and vegetables than residents of the City of New Haven and the State of Connecticut as a whole. The lack of a convenient grocery store was consistently brought up by residents during the planning process, and was identified as a key priority for the plan.

A mid-sized urban retailer is proposed for one of the blocks north of Columbus Avenue. The reasoning for the location was two-fold:

- Locating the grocer off of Union Avenue preserves the window storefront in that highly visible location for local and more active retail uses. The location off on Orange St also facilitates easier movement of delivery and service vehicles.
- In the phasing plan, the area south of Columbus will be developed first, followed by the area North of Columbus. Locating the grocer in the second major phase will allow the critical mass of residents to develop in phase 1 so that they can support the store.





5.3 Design incubator retail spaces for local small businesses

In addition to attracting “anchor” retail establishments, such as a grocery store, retail space within Union Square should be designated as incubators for local establishments. Supporting local retailers will not only provide opportunities for entrepreneurs in the community, but it will also lend authenticity and individuality to the new public spaces.

Goal 6: Create job training opportunities

6.1 Work with retail tenants to hire and train local residents

In Process

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Implementation Plan

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Figure 61: Map of the Hill Neighborhood



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