

# North Main Economic Development Strategy



Prepared for:  
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# Foreword

October 24, 2008

Dear North Main Economic Development Strategy Reader:

The following comprehensive study is the result of the efforts of many partners, the culmination of nearly two years of data collection and analysis, and an essential tool in charting the future course of an area in transition. This prodigious task was guided by members of the project Steering Committee, which included representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance, the City of Worcester Department of Public Works and Parks, and the City of Worcester Executive Office of Economic and Neighborhood Development. Their guidance, combined with the technical capacity of the consultant team, led by Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB), set the direction for the study.

Of course, the success of this project derives greatly from the active, prolific participation of the public. From the initial meetings with the Priority Parcel owners to the widely attended public charrette, the North Main Economic Development Strategy project team sought, listened to, and built on public input to create the vision for this area that is critical to the success of Worcester. The Worcester City Council provided unwavering support for this initiative as well. The outreach conducted for this project is nearly unmatched and is a testament to its scope and importance.

Finally, this endeavor was made possible only through the financial support of the Jerome Wheelock Trust, Gateway Park, LLC, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Through their support, and the efforts described above, a vision and strategy for the future of North Main has been achieved.

Sincerely,

Michael V. O'Brien  
City Manager



Lincoln Square



# One

## Executive Summary

~ The goal of the North Main Economic Development Strategy is to identify new opportunities for development that will be integrated with the various existing projects and plans in the area into a market-driven, financially responsible, and sustainable redevelopment strategy. Simply put, the City's goal is to make this area a destination for people to live, work, and spend time. ~

### Overview

The North Main Economic Development Strategy Area is an area in transition. For decades, Lincoln Square has been viewed as one of the City's grand public places, boasting some of the City's most significant civic buildings and transportation corridors. The area is a center for cultural activities, law and order, medical and academic institutions, and commercial business. Located just north of Downtown Worcester, the North Main Street Study Area has excellent access to the region via Interstates 90, 190, 290 and Routes 9 and 146 and is connected locally to many of Worcester's residential neighborhoods. Other recent studies have defined areas in Worcester into "Districts" such as Downtown, Canal, and the Arts Districts; it is only appropriate that this area be similarly defined with a coherent set of planning principles.

As neighbors to the study area, the varied institutions and businesses such as Plumley Village, Gateway Park, Worcester Polytechnic University (WPI), and the East Highland Area Neighborhood Association (EHANA) provide a potential client base for future development. Landmark buildings including the Boys Club, the War Memorial Auditorium (the "Auditorium") and the Worcester County Courthouse (the "Courthouse") offer varied reuse potential and have each contributed historically to Lincoln Square. As the future reuse potential of these prominent buildings is understood, it will also be important to fulfill the promise that Lincoln Square holds and reconnect it to the downtown.

Development strategies for the Priority Parcels—identified by the City—are discussed herein. Each is located along or

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proximate to Main Street and is either underutilized or attractive for future redevelopment. In total, these Parcels represent 32 acres of land area, 1.3 million square feet of building area and \$53,000,000 of assessed value. Several of the Priority Parcels are currently under public ownership. All are considered prime sites for infill development and some are suitable for adaptive reuse. As the area continues to evolve, the City of Worcester looks to explore the opportunities for reuse of existing buildings and parcels as well as the infrastructure changes necessary to prepare the area for the expanding economy.

## Community Process

In its Request for Proposals for the North Main Economic Development Strategy Plan, the City of Worcester specified a thorough and intensive community process to guide the strategic development of the North Main area. Beginning in January 2007, the process included interviews with landowners; focus group meetings covering a broad range of interest areas; a one-day public charrette; creation of a website; and a branding and advertising campaign to promote the planning process. The website enabled the consultant team and the City to share information with the community, assist with advertising the Strategic Plan, announce meetings, and update project scheduling.

In January 2007, the consultants met with landowners and business people for the privately held Priority Parcels within the Study Area. The interviewees provided a snapshot of the daily experiences in the area, the existing conditions, and suggestions for revitalization strategies. Building on these interviews, the consultant team held fourteen focus groups with over 100 attendees; each focus group represented a particular group of stakeholders. The focus groups identified general comments about the Study Area including strengths, weaknesses, future land uses, transportation needs, and potential building reuse scenarios. Additionally, the focus groups began to formulate development themes and generated hundreds of ideas for the Study Area that were refined during the planning process.

On September 29, 2007, the City held a day-long public charrette to advance the discussion and establish priorities for the North Main Study Area. Organized around two “break-out” sessions, the approximately 75 participants worked in small groups to respond to a series of questions. After an introductory presentation by the consultant, the participants

broke into groups to identify major issues and develop a vision for the project area. The second break-out session focused on developing solutions for the issues raised in the first break-out session, including suggestions for near-term projects that might serve as catalysts for long-term development in the Study Area. All break-out group findings were shared with other participants; summaries of the results were posted to the website. At the conclusion of the day, the participants were given three votes to rate their personal priorities items for the Study Area.

A draft of this report was presented to Economic Development Subcommittee on June 25th 2008 and was made available for public review on the project website for a 30-day period. The comments letters that were received on the draft report are included in Appendix G: Comment Letters on the Draft Report.

## Development Strategies

The vision for the redevelopment of the North Main Priority Parcels represents a multifaceted approach that integrates the community process, key market findings, and an understanding of each site’s capacity for development and parking. To support the growth of these sites, long-term goals for transit were explored to improve bus service and add the potential for trolley service. The development program is organized according to three themes that arose out of the planning process:

- Urban Village/Downtown Corridor
- Cultural/Academic District
- “Idea Central” / Gateway to the New Economy

The development strategy is further organized according to three phases: near-term (0-5 years), interim (5-15 years) and long-term (15+ years).

The long-term or “full build” development program that the Strategic Plan envisions in the 15+ year time frame represents more than 1.6 million SF of development of approximately the following composition:

- 860,000 SF office
- 400,000 SF flex/R&D
- 250,000 SF retail
- 45,000 SF convention/meeting space

- 300 residential units
- 50,000 SF cultural
- 220-room hotel

Market conditions help to define the character and intensity of near-term and interim development that can occur in the North Main Study Area. This development program is based on an in-depth market analysis that evaluated the current and anticipated future supply and demand for office, flex/R&D, residential and retail development in the Greater Worcester region.

The development program is supported by parking and transit improvements that include shared parking opportunities, roadway enhancements, streetscape improvements, and considerations for a dedicated track trolley that would link the North Main Study Area to the downtown and beyond.

Near-term development/redevelopment projects are vital in creating a positive image and momentum to jump start revitalization of the North Main Study Area. The near-term phasing strategy comprises development on five concentrated sites that are highly visible and could have an immediate positive impact on the area's economic growth and improvement. These five catalyst sites are:

- **AT&T Site (Site 3):** New retail development added on to the existing building could provide valuable neighborhood retail space “activating” this portion of the North Main Study Area.
- **Old Courthouse (Site 5):** High-quality office space, including the potential for creative industry space, could be added to the renovated historic section of the Old Courthouse complex to accommodate businesses that want a central, urban location with amenities not found in a business park setting.
- **Salisbury Mansion & Parking (Site 8):** Redevelopment could involve enhancement and development of green space, providing an aesthetic complement to the Auditorium and buildings in the area. Reconfigured parking could be sufficient for existing uses and additional creative industries to be located in the Worcester Memorial Auditorium.
- **Worcester Memorial Auditorium (Site 9):** Renovations to this historic building could accommodate new or relocated creative industries and could prepare the building for additional, private, revenue-generating uses, such as office, flex, or R&D space.
- **Boys Club (Site 10):** Could provide 24 units of much-needed housing in a central location and a health club. Frontage on Lincoln Square will provide an appealing living location for college students, workers and other new or relocating residents within the area.

## General Actions

Recommended actions to implement the Strategic Plan include the following:

### High-Priority/Immediate Actions

- City Council adopts the North Main Economic Development Strategy.
- Allocate funds for public sector development and improvements.
- Create organizational structure to manage implementation of the Strategic Plan.
- Put financial tools in place to fund projects.

### Pre-Development/Organizational & Promotional Actions

- Promote the overall Strategic Plan and market individual projects.
- Initiate area-wide business development plan for merchants and potential office tenants (e.g. start-up business support/incubators).
- Organize events to promote new drinking and eating establishments.
- Form coalition of North Main businesses (possibly combined with downtown) and provide discounts, coordinated marketing efforts, distributor networks.

### Funding and Implementation Actions

- Identify financing/funding tools (Historic Tax Credits, New Markets Tax Credits, Tax Incentive Financing, Development Grants, Credit Enhancement, Public/Private Partnerships).
- Provide TIF to support North Main (re)development (creation of TIF district[s]; alternative financing).
- Initiate Main Street Programs (National Trust for Historic Preservation and/or Main Street-supported organization or district) for aid with historic rehab and streetscape improvements.
- Formulate the Gateway Park partnership (WPI/WBDC) to create funding mechanisms, institutional support and corporate support for large-scale R&D development to occur within the Study Area.

- 
- Work with developers to structure deals and execute projects.
  - Review zoning to identify required changes for the priority parcels

## Site-Specific Actions

### Site 3 – AT&T Site

- Evaluate the site
- Work with existing building owner
- Formulate design and construction strategies
- Allocate incentives for retail development

### Site 5 – Old Courthouse

- Transfer control of state property to the City of Worcester
- Prepare detailed redevelopment concept and preliminary cost estimate
- Identify additional public funds to support signature project
- Formulate implementation/funding/developer solicitation strategies

### Site 8 – Salisbury Mansion

- Conduct structural analysis to evaluate building relocation within the site
- Work with building owners to identify funding for building relocation
- Perform public improvements including realignment of parking
- Formulate implementation/funding/developer solicitation strategies for open space improvements

### Site 9 – War Memorial Auditorium

- Perform basic renovations/maintenance to prepare for future use(s)
- Have broad discussions between the City and local museums, veterans groups, and developers
- Study reuse options in Little Theatre to maintain active use
- Redesign area at base of steps and other public realm improvements
- Light building, add signage and event programming
- Formulate implementation/funding/developer solicitation strategies

### Site 10 – Boys Club

- Identify market-rate housing creation incentives
- Explore potential public improvements
- Formulate implementation/funding/developer solicitation strategies

# two

## Introduction

~ Over the past several years, the City of Worcester has taken a series of important steps toward advancing planning and economic initiatives for its downtown that will set the stage for the next series of development opportunities in the City. ~

Nationally, cities of Worcester's size have recognized a trend of people and businesses choosing to move back into urban settings. With plans and projects now in place, including the Blackstone Canal Feasibility Study, Central Business District Parking Study, Downtown Economic Development Action Agenda, Master Plan for the Arts District, the Washington Square Redevelopment Strategy, a city-wide housing market study and numerous neighborhood development plans, the City of Worcester is well positioned to shape the next generation of development in the North Main Street area. To realize this potential and maximize the benefits of this renewed interest in downtown development, it is critical that planning efforts for the North Main Economic Development Strategy Area consider these opportunities from a holistic approach; i.e. from an economic, design, infrastructure and strategic development perspective.

Things are happening in Worcester. The extension of Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) commuter rail service and the Massachusetts Turnpike/Route 146 project improve access and thereby enhance opportunities. An increasing number of investors have discovered the Worcester real estate market and its investment opportunities. The recent opening and ongoing redevelopment of Gateway Park north of Lincoln Square provides a stable anchor. In addition, significant office and high-end residential investment is planned at CitySquare. Worcester is also home to eleven colleges and universities. These investments and opportunities have led to concerns, not only about the status of the various projects, but also about the need to create an integrated approach to the ways in which they can be connected for the overall benefit of the community. With these issues and

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concerns in mind, the City developed the Worcester Economic Development Action Agenda in 2004. A portion of the North Main Economic Development Strategy Area was included in the Action Agenda’s “North Main District” and this Agenda served as an impetus for the study herein.

This next stage of planning and economic development will enable the city to grow the underutilized areas within the North Main Street area in a planned and coordinated way so that its broader community of residents, businesses, local leaders, and stakeholders will be the benefactors of additional city and private investments.

## Report Outline

This report summarizes the process, analysis, findings and outcome of the North Main Economic Development Strategy and includes the following:

- A discussion of the significance of the **Study Area** and the eleven sites identified as the **Priority Parcels** with the greatest impact.
- A summary of **existing conditions** of the twelve priority parcels including uses, zoning, parking, access, ownership and general condition.
- A description of the **community process** undertaken to facilitate the broad sharing of information among the community, including landowners, businesses, institutes, abutters, City staff, and the consultants.
- A **market analysis** that informs the allocation of uses in the Development Program
  - ◆ **The Plan** that provides a general overview of the consultants’ recommendations and a **vision** for the area as a whole and the specific priority parcels. This vision and the ensuing Plan is based on the community process described above.
  - ◆ The Plan contains a discussion of the **development themes** that were devised to create a sense of cohesion around these distinct sites.
  - ◆ The Plan describes the project **phasing**, which is presented in near-term, mid-term and long-term opportunities.
  - ◆ The Plan summarizes the future build-out expectations for the priority parcels in terms of use (or reuse), size and parking in the **development program**.
- ◆ **Parking, circulation and transit** needs, which are highly dependent on the build out of each parcel, are described within the Strategic Plan.
- The final section, **development strategies**, describes the near-term development opportunities and recommends a strategy for how to implement development of these sites with potential funding sources and responsible parties.

## Project Goals

The goal of the North Main Economic Development Strategy (the “Strategic Plan”) is to identify new opportunities for development that will be integrated with the various existing projects and plans in the area into a market-driven, financially responsible, and sustainable redevelopment strategy. The Strategic Plan will both support the City’s Action Agenda and be consistent with Smart Growth and transit-oriented development principles. The ultimate goal is to make the North Main Street area a better place to live, work, and spend time.

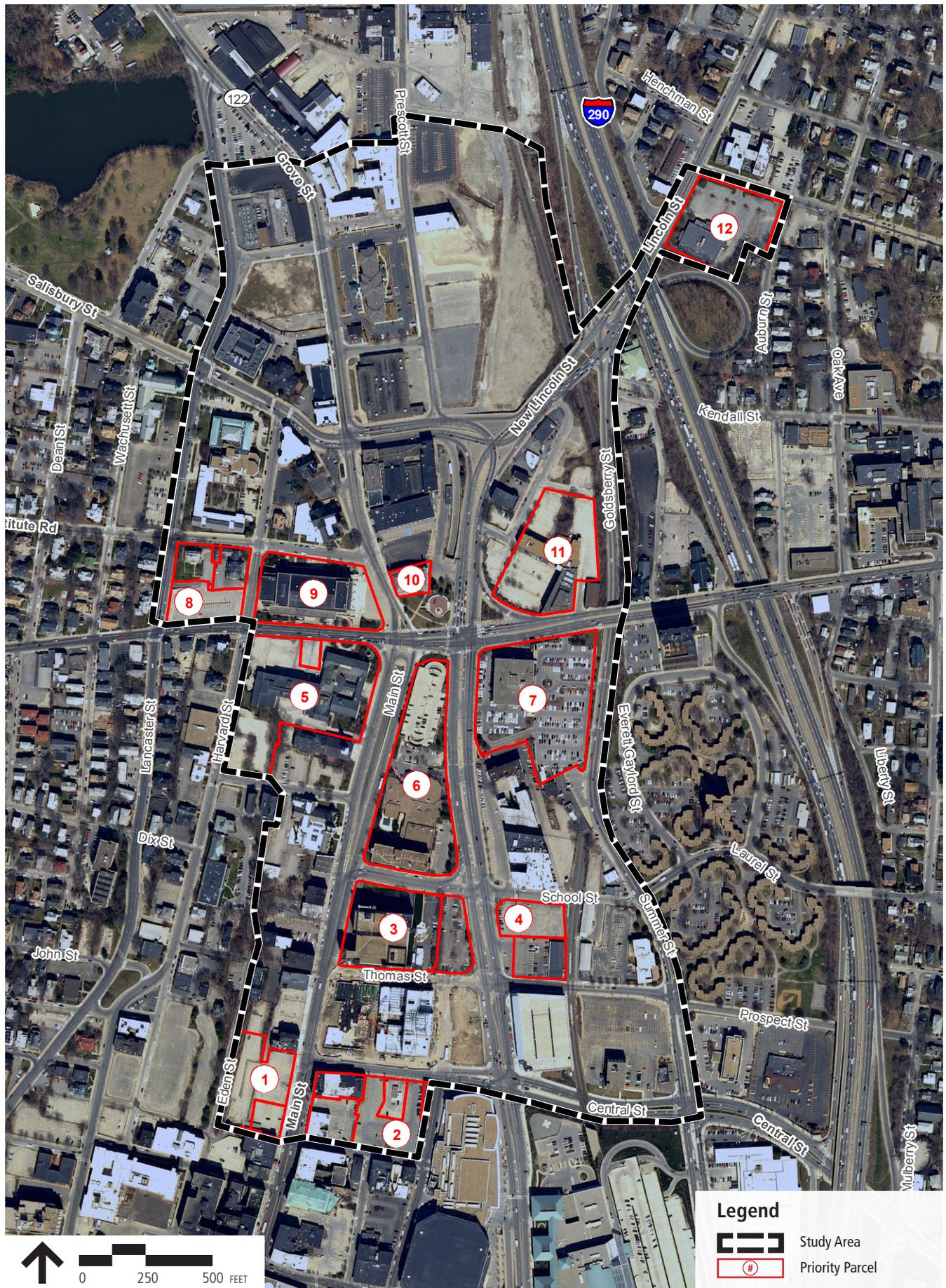
The North Main Street area is a densely developed urban environment. An essential component of the Strategic Plan is an assessment of the current demand and supply of parking, the incremental increase in parking demand that will result from the recommended strategies, and how best to accommodate that demand by both the public and private sectors. As the area continues to evolve, the City of Worcester looks to explore the opportunities for reuse of existing buildings and parcels and the infrastructure changes necessary to prepare the area for the expanding economy.

## Study Area and Project Sites

The North Main Economic Development Strategy Area is an area in transition. **Figure 1** depicts the Study Area and identifies the specific parcels studied. The recent relocation of the Worcester Technical High School to its new home near Green Hill Park; the underutilized Municipal Auditorium; the recent relocation of court functions from the Worcester County Courthouse to the new Regional Justice Center; and the development of the new Gateway Park, all speak to changes occurring in this project area.

For decades, Lincoln Square has been viewed as one of the City’s grand public places, boasting some of the City’s most significant buildings and transportation corridors. The area is a center for cultural activities (Worcester Art Museum,

FIGURE 1: Study Area



- Legend**
-  Study Area
  -  Priority Parcel



FIGURE 3: Regional Context

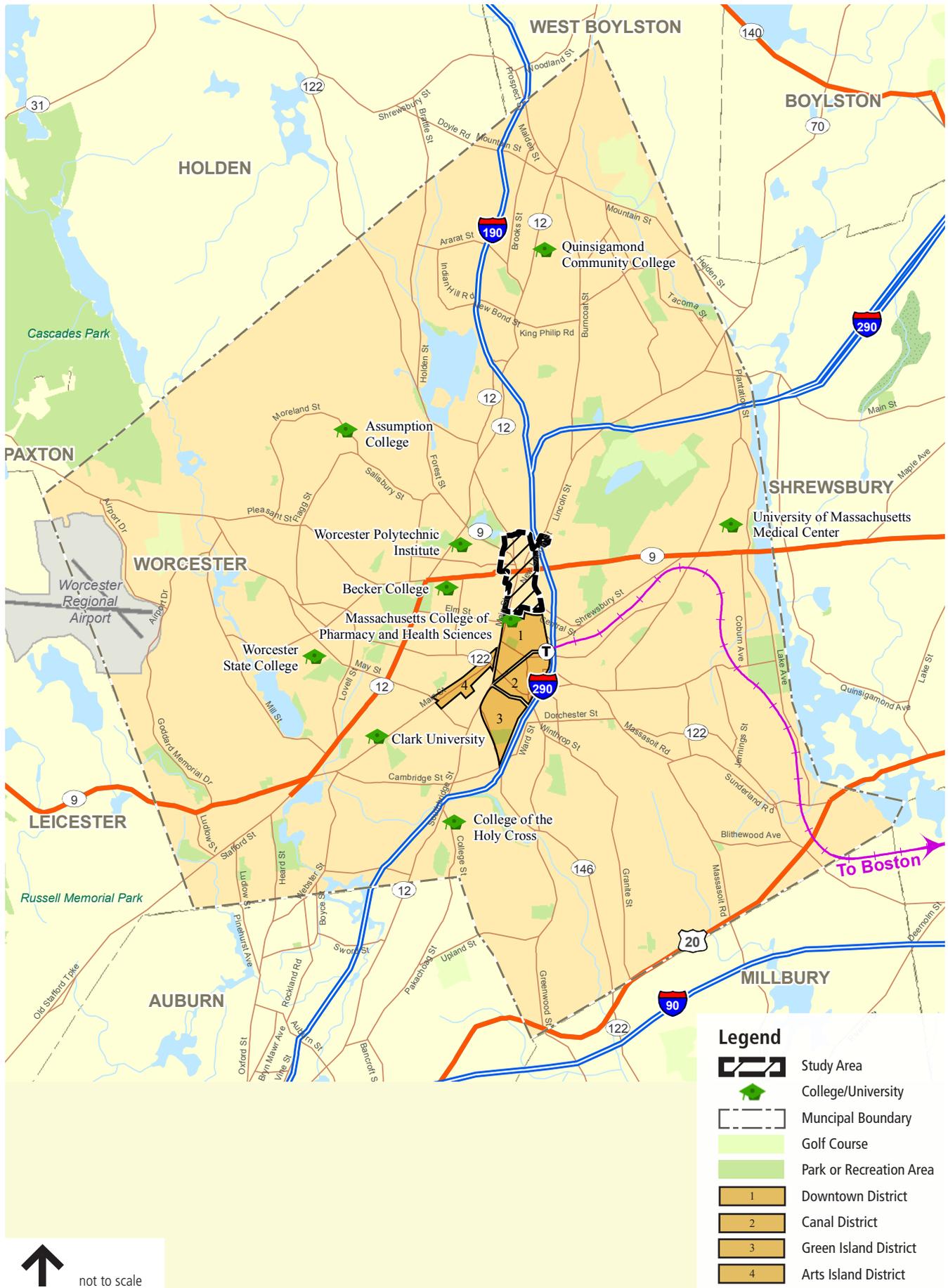
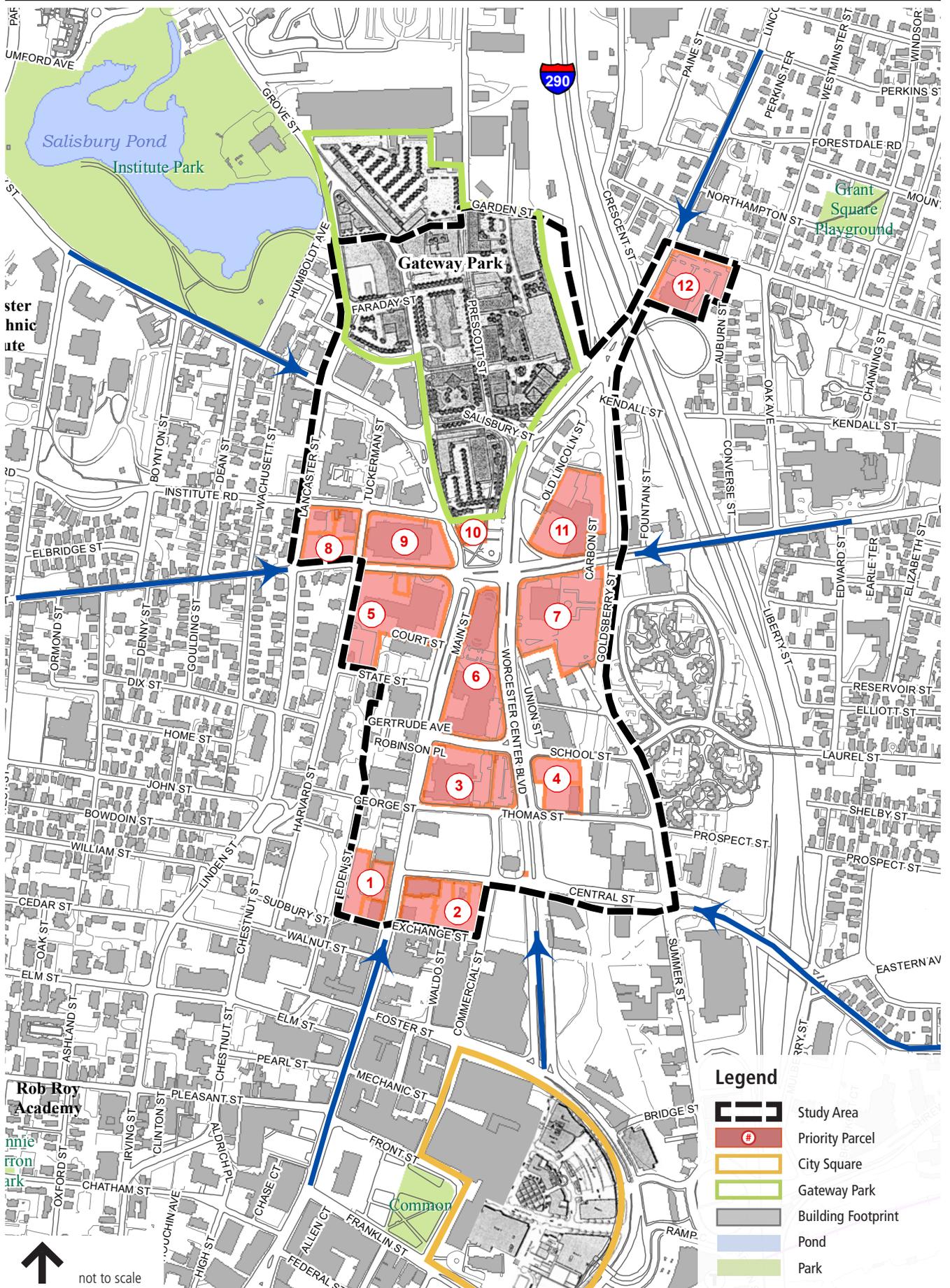


FIGURE 4: Local Context and Access



Salisbury Mansion, Tuckerman Hall), academics (Worcester Polytechnic Institute, the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Services and Becker College), law and order (Worcester County Courthouse, Worcester Police Department headquarters), and commercial business (Gateway Park). Other significant institutions include Saint Vincent's Hospital/Worcester Medical Center, UMass Memorial Medical Center, and numerous churches that are each "monuments" to their architectural styles and history. **Figure 2** depicts the historic resources within and adjacent to the study area, including various churches and a range of commercial and industrial buildings. Four of the specific parcels studied in the Strategic Plan are located within the historic Institutional District.

Located just north of Downtown Worcester, the Study Area has excellent access to the region via Interstates 90, 190, 290 and Routes 9 and 146, as shown on **Figure 3**. The City of Worcester—and North Main Street in particular—has access to numerous colleges and universities with which to explore partnerships and draw from its population. Numerous other studies have defined areas in Worcester into "Districts" such as Downtown, Canal, Green Island, and the Arts Districts; it is only appropriate that this area be similarly defined with a coherent set of planning principles.

The immediate adjacencies to the North Main Street Study Area provide significant resources as well as unique challenges. The area is an important connection between downtown to the south and Gateway Park to the north. **Figure 4** shows the connections to the Study Area from Worcester's residential neighborhoods. The Study Area is bisected by Belmont Street/Highland Street (also Route 9), which provides excellent access but constrains pedestrian access. Other major roadways through the Area include North Main Street and Major Taylor Boulevard on the south side and Lincoln Street on the north side. To some degree, the study area is also separated from neighborhoods to the east by Interstate 290.

As neighbors to the study area, the institutions discussed above all provide a potential client base for future development. Landmark buildings like the Boys Club, the Auditorium and Worcester County Court House offer varied reuse potential and have each contributed historically to Lincoln Square. As the future reuse potential of these prominent buildings is understood, it will also be important to fulfill the promise that Lincoln Square holds as a key

gateway to the downtown.

Twelve Priority Parcels were originally identified by the City of Worcester. As the Strategic Plan evolved and the results of the public process were incorporated, the focus shifted to eleven sites deemed to have the most significant impact. The consensus from the charrette was that the twelfth site, known as Catharine Street, was disconnected from the rest of the study area and already fulfilling its current highest and best use as an office/commercial node. Therefore, the eleven Priority Parcels studied are located along or proximate to Main Street and possess the greatest redevelopment potential. Many of the Priority Parcels are currently under public ownership. All are considered prime sites for infill development and some are suitable for adaptive reuse.

## Existing Conditions

**Table 1** (see next page) summarizes the physical, economic, and regulatory characteristics of the identified Priority Parcels, introduced above. The Priority Parcels today include 32 acres of land, nearly 1.3 million square feet (SF) of floor area and more than \$52,000,000 of assessed value.<sup>1</sup> Following this Table, data sheets provide more detail on these Priority Parcels.

<sup>1</sup> Calculation excludes Site 12, Catharine Street.

TABLE 1: Priority Parcels Existing Conditions

Parcel No.	Parcel Name	Address	Ownership	Zoning	Current Use	Approx. Total Land Area	Assessed Value
#1	Main Street (West Parking Lot)	252 & 288 Main St	Private	BG-6.0	Surface Parking Lots	78,929 SF (1.8 acres)	\$1,320,000
#2	Main Street (East Block at Exchange Street)	90 Commercial St, 20 Exchange St, 255 & 269 Main St, & 35 Central St	Private	BG-6.0	Restaurants, Surface Parking Lots, Theater, Bank Buildings, Office Building	114,222 SF (2.62 acres)	\$3,244,100
#3	AT&T Site	0 Major Taylor Blvd & 175 Main St	Private	BG-6.0	Surface Parking Lot, Telephone Station	137,555 SF (3.16 acres)	\$5,376,000
#4	Honey Farms Site	0 School St & 90 Thomas St	Private	BG-6.0	Surface Parking Lots, Retail Stores	62,218 SF (1.43 acres)	\$1,317,400
#5	Old Court House†	2 Main St & 5 Highland St	Public	BO-1.0 & BG-6.0	Court, Parking	193,841 SF (4.45 acres)	\$4,081,800
#6	Crowne Plaza	10 Lincoln Sq	Private	BG-6.0	Hotel, Parking	173,116 SF (3.97 acres)	\$15,400,000
#7	Worcester Police Station	9 Summer St	Public	BG-6.0	Worcester Police Station	198,198 SF (4.55 acres)	\$8,283,700
#8	Salisbury Mansion & Parking‡	30 & 40 Highland St, 15 Institute Rd & 61 Harvard St	Private, Public, Worcester Historical Museum	BO-1.0	Surface Parking Lot, Offices, Museum	78,743 SF (1.81 acres)	\$2,684,100
#9	Worcester Memorial Auditorium†	1 Lincoln Sq	Public	BG-6.0	Parking, Storage	108,503 SF (2.5 acres)	\$4,713,000
#10	Former Worcester Boys' Club†	16 Salisbury Street	Public	BG-6.0	Vacant	14,490 SF (0.34 acres)	\$3,063,400
#11	Morgan Construction Site	15 Belmont St	Private	BG-6.0	Office Building, Parking	123,696 SF (2.84 acres)	\$3,090,400
#12	Catharine Street Site	95 Lincoln St	Private	BG-1.0	Medical Offices	98,892 SF (2.27 acres)	\$1,656,400

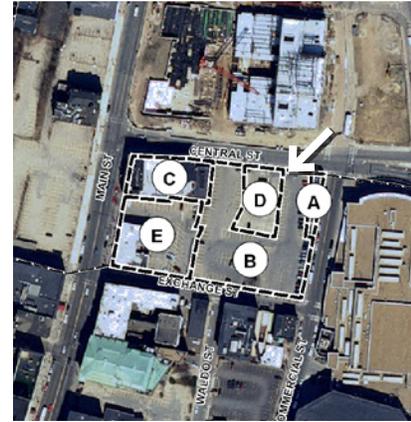
Notes: † Buildings on Parcel #5, Parcel #9, and Parcel #10 are contributing buildings to the Institutional District (also known as the Lincoln and Armory Squares Historic District). The Old Court House was built in 1898-99 and the addition in 1950's. The Worcester Memorial Auditorium was built in 1932. The Boys' Club was built in 1930.  
 ‡ On Parcel #8, the Salisbury Mansion and store are listed as a district in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP); Salisbury House is individually listed in the NRHP. The mansion building was built in 1792, the Salisbury House in 1837, and the Salisbury Store in 1970.

# priority parcels

## Priority Parcel 1 Main Street (West parking Lot)



## Priority Parcel 2 Main Street (East Block at Exchange St)



### Parcel Information

address	252 and 288 Main Street	90 Commercial St, 20 Exchange St, 255 & 269 Main St, & 35 Central St
no. of properties	2 (shown as A and B)	5 (shown as A, B, C, D and E)
ownership	Private	Private
zoning	BG-6.0	BG-6.0
current use	Surface Parking Lots	Restaurants, Surface Parking Lots, Theater, Bank Buildings, Office Building
approximate land area	78,929 S.F. (1.8 acres)	114,222 S.F. (2.62 acres)
assessed value	\$1,320,000	\$3,244,100
vehicle access	Main Street and Sudbury Street	Main Street, Central Street, Exchange Street, Commercial Street
comments	The existing surface parking lot fronts Main Street. The Site has a steep slope on the western edge, and includes a large retaining wall. Vehicular access to the site is off of Main Street and Sudbury Street. To the north and south of the site are existing buildings that are 3-5 stories tall and have a mix of uses. The site is across the street from the Palladium Theater, small retail and office space and the new Regional Justice Center.	Priority Parcel #2 contains five separate lots that have various land uses on them. Existing uses include the Palladium Theater that has several levels of vacant office space above the theater, the Voodoo Lounge, and, a two-story mixed use building that fronts Main Street. This area also includes a small bank that has access off of Central Street. Much of the interior of the block is surface parking. The DCU Center is located across Commercial Street to the east. The New Regional Justice Center and Hilton Garden Inn are located across Central Street to the north.

Left  
View of Priority Parcel 1  
from Main Street



Right  
View of Priority Parcel 2  
from Central Street



### Priority Parcel 3 AT & T Site



### Priority Parcel 4 Honey Farms Site



#### Parcel Information

address	0 Major Taylor Blvd & 175 Main St	0 School St. & 90 Thomas St
no. of properties	2 (shown as A and B)	2 (shown as A and B)
ownership	Private	Private
zoning	BG-6.0	BG-6.0
current use	Surface Parking Lot and Telephone Station	Surface Parking Lots, Retail Stores
approx. land area	137,555 S.F. (3.16 acres)	62,218 S.F. (1.43 acres)
assessed value	\$5,376,000	\$1,317,400
historical	Not applicable	Not applicable
vehicle access	School Street, Major Taylor Boulevard, Thomas Street	Major Taylor Boulevard, Thomas Street, School Street
comments	Priority Parcel 3 consists of two properties. Property A is currently being used for parking. Property B is the existing AT&T building. The combined properties constitute one city block and are bound by four streets. The new Regional Justice Center is located to the south, the Crowne Plaza Hotel is to the north and there are surface parking lots located to the east. Several 3-4 story mixed use buildings are located across Main Street to the west.	The two properties that make up Priority Parcel #4 contain surface parking and a one story retail building. The Major Taylor Boulevard parking garage is located to the south and the existing rail line bounds the parcel to the east. The parcel has excellent visibility from Major Taylor Boulevard. The existing buildings to the north are approximately 5 stories tall.

Left

View of Priority Parcel 3  
from School Street



Right

View of Priority Parcel 4  
from Major Taylor Blvd.



### Priority Parcel 5 Old Court House



### Priority Parcel 6 Crowne Plaza



#### Parcel Information

address	2 Main St & 5 Highland St	10 Lincoln Sq
no. of properties	2 (shown as A and B)	1
ownership	Public	Private
zoning	BO-1.0 & BG-6.0	BG-6.0
current use	Court and parking	Hotel and parking
approx. land area	193,841 S.F. (4.45 acres)	173,116 S.F. (3.97 acres)
assessed value	\$4,081,800	\$15,400,000
historical	Contributing building to the Institutional District (also known as Lincoln and Armory Squares Historic District)	Not applicable
vehicle access	Main Street, Harvard Street and Highland Street	Main Street and Major Taylor Boulevard
year built	Main Building (1898-99), Addition (1950s)	
comments	Priority Parcel 5 contains the former Worcester County Court House and its surrounding surface parking lots. There is a 1950s addition to the main building that faces Harvard Street. The transition into the new courthouse occurred in September/October 2007. This property is owned by the state and there is a disposition process underway for this property. The site has a slope from Main Street to Harvard Street. The “up ramp” from the Lincoln Square tunnel is located in front of Old Court House. The Worcester Memorial Auditorium and Salisbury Museum are located to the north, the Crowne Plaza Hotel to the east and the Worcester Unitarian Universalist Church to the south.	The Crown Plaza Hotel and parking garage are located between Main Street and Major Taylor Boulevard. The existing parking garage fronts the southern edge of Lincoln Square. The old Court House and the Lincoln Square tunnel are located to the west, the Police Station to the east and the AT&T facilities to the south.

Left

View of Priority Parcel 5



Right

View of Priority Parcel 6



## Priority Parcel 7 Worcester Police Station



## Priority Parcel 8 Salisbury Mansion & Parking



### Parcel Information

address	9 Summer St	30 & 40 Highland St, 15 Institute Rd, & 61 Harvard St
no. of properties	1	4 (shown as A, B, C and D)
ownership	Public	Private (A, C), Worcester Historical Museum (B), Public (D)
zoning	BG-6.0	BO-1.0
current use	Worcester Police Station	Surface parking lot, offices and museum
approx. land area	198,198 S.E. (4.55 acres)	78,743 S.E. (1.81 acres)
assessed value	\$8,283,700	\$2,684,100
historical		Salisbury Mansion and Store listed in NRHP as a district; Salisbury House individually listed in NRHP
vehicle access	Major Taylor Boulevard, Belmont Street and Goldsberry Street	Highland Street
year built		Salisbury Mansion (1792), Salisbury House (1837), Salisbury Store (1790)
comments	Priority Parcel #7 includes the Worcester Police Headquarters and its parking facilities. The four story building is located at the corner of Belmont and Major Taylor Boulevard. Police and service vehicles generally access the site from Major Taylor Boulevard and the public entrance is from the Goldsberry and Belmont Streets. The site slopes up from Major Taylor Boulevard toward Goldsberry Street.	Priority Parcel #8 consists of four properties that contain public and private parking lots and several historic buildings. The buildings were moved to this site from the Lincoln Square area in the late 1920s. The three buildings include the Salisbury Mansion, Salisbury House, and the Salisbury Store.

Left

View of Priority Parcel 7



Right

View of Priority Parcel 8



### Priority Parcel 9 Worcester Memorial Auditorium



### Priority Parcel 10 Former Worcester Boys Club

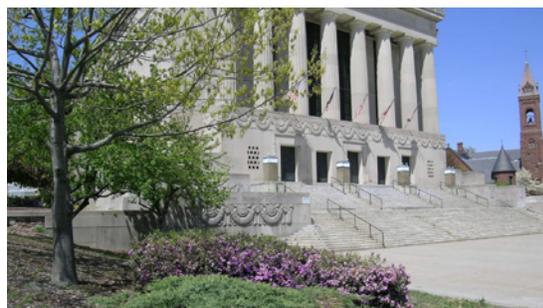


#### Parcel Information

address	1 Lincoln Sq	Lincoln Square
no. of properties	1	1
ownership	Public	Public
zoning	BO-1.0	BG-6.0
current use	Parking, Storage	Vacant
approx. land area	108,503 S.F. (2.5 acres)	14,490 S.F. (.34 acres)
assessed value	\$4,713,000	\$3,063,400
historical	Contributing building to the Institutional District (also known as Lincoln and Armory Squares Historic District)	Contributing building to the Institutional District (also known as Lincoln and Armory Squares Historic District)
vehicle access	Institute Road	Prescott St
year built	1932	1930
comments	The Worcester Memorial Auditorium occupies Priority Parcel #9. Today, the upper level is used for storage and the lower level is leased by the state for accessory judicial uses. The Auditorium fronts the western edge of Lincoln Square and is bound by 4 streets. The site slopes up from Salisbury to Harvard Street.	Priority Parcel #10 is the former Worcester Boys' Club building. The building fronts the northern portion of Lincoln Square. Directly adjacent to the building is the relocated Lincoln Square Plaza that was once located in the center of the square before it was moved to its current location. The 4-story building was previously used as an vocational school and is currently vacant.

**Left**

View of Priority Parcel 9  
Photo courtesy of Lamoureux  
Pagano Associates, Architects



**Right**

View of Priority Parcel 10



## Priority Parcel 11 Morgan Construction Site



### Parcel Information

address	15 Belmont St
no. of properties	1
ownership	Private
zoning	BG-6.0
current use	Office Building, Parking
approx. land area	123,696 S.F. (2.84 acres)
assessed value	\$3,090,400
historical	Not applicable
vehicle access	Belmont Street and Lincoln Street
comments	Priority Parcel #11 currently has a building and surface parking. A portion of the building is being used for medical uses, while the other is occupied by Morgan Construction Company. The site fronts Lincoln Square to the southwest, Belmont Street to the south, and is bound by rail lines to the east.



Left

View of Priority Parcel 11

# three

## Community Process

~ The successful outcome of the Strategic Plan is highly dependent on the level of community involvement during the process. From the issuance of the RFP, there was a clear mandate for a complete and intensive community process. ~

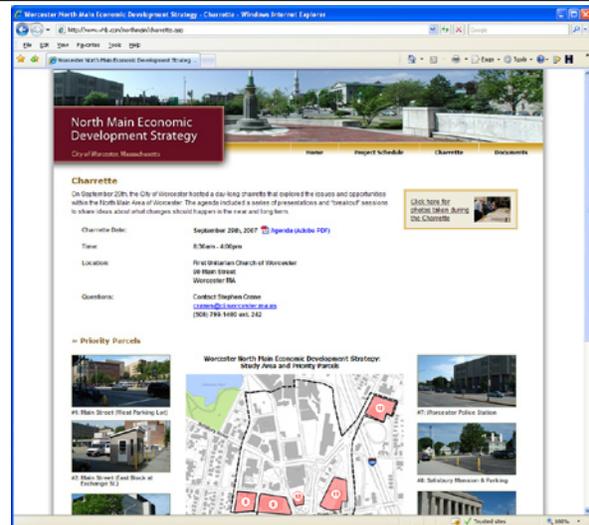
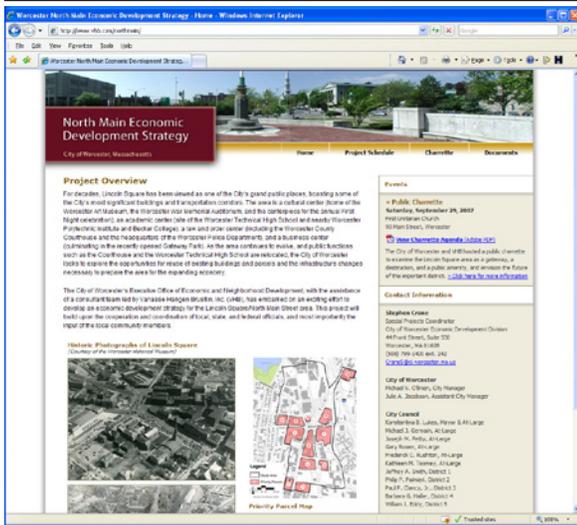
Staff at the City of Worcester Office of Economic and Neighborhood Development, through the Special Projects Coordinator, directed the overall work effort and worked closely with the consultant team and the Steering Committee during the process. The Steering Committee consisting of City and State staff met throughout the process to review the consultant's work, advise on scheduling, and provide direction for the Strategic Plan. A website was established to share information with the community, assist with advertising the Strategic Plan, and announce meetings and update project scheduling. With graphic assistance from the consulting team, a branding or graphic identity was created for the process, including name badges for charrette participants (shown at left) and the website design.

In January 2007, representatives of the City of Worcester and the consultant team participated in a series of interviews with land owners and business people for the privately-held Priority Parcels within the Worcester North Main Economic Development Strategy Area. Interviews were conducted with the following key owners:



Name Badge

- VooDoo Lounge
- J. Fisher Law Offices
- Bowditch & Dewey
- Morgan Construction
- Worcester Historical Society
- Commerce Associates
- Erksine & Erksine
- Worcester Crowne Plaza Hotel



Screenshots from the North Main website.

The meetings with landowners were followed by a series of focus group meetings in May 2007 to advance the discussion and establish priorities for the Strategic Plan. A total of fourteen focus group meetings were held with approximately 100 attendees over the two day period. The focus groups were comprised of individuals representing a broad spectrum of interests in the area, including the following:

- Retail and small businesses
- City staff
- Social service agencies
- Cultural institutions
- Community organizations
- College students
- Area residents
- Retailers, bankers, attorneys and developers
- Major employers
- The medical and bio-tech community
- Churches and religious organizations
- Educational institutions
- Youth and youth workers
- Elected officials

The focus groups identified the strengths, weaknesses, aspirations, land uses, transportation needs and potential building reuse scenarios. A summary of the meetings are provided in Appendix A. Additionally, the focus groups began to formulate the Development Themes which are described in more detail in Chapter 5, The Plan. The focus groups in turn informed the public charrette that was held in September 2007.

On September 29, 2007 at the Unitarian Church, the City held a day-long public charrette to advance the discussion and establish priorities for the North Main Study Area. The charrette was advertised on the website, in press releases, in newspapers, through door-to-door outreach, on the radio, and with a banner hung in Lincoln Square leading up to the event.

Organized around two “break-out” sessions, the approximately 75 participants were able to work in small groups to respond to a series of questions. After an introductory presentation by the consultant, the participants broke into groups to identify major issues and develop a vision for the project area. The second break-out session provided solutions for the issues raised in the first break-out session, including suggestions for projects that might be best accomplished in the near-term to serve as catalysts for future development. During lunch, a noted local historian provided an historical overview of the North Main Street area. All break-out group findings were summarized on large sheets of paper and shared with the other participants. At the conclusion to the day, the participants were given three votes to cast on the responses that came from the five break-out groups. Those with more votes indicated higher priorities for the community. Some of the largest vote-getters from the charrette included:

- Small business incubator;
- Reuse of the Auditorium as a near-term priority, and as a college consortium or a Faneuil Hall style marketplace;
- Reuse of the Boys Club as a near-term priority;
- Urban Pedestrian Village: Closing the road between the Auditorium and the Boys’ Club for green space and a farmer’s market;

- A common plan for Parcels 5, 8, 9 and 10; and
- Trolley service linking Lincoln Square to Downtown.

A draft of the final report was presented to the City Council Standing Committee on Economic Development at a public hearing on June 25, 2008. It was also made available for public review until July 31, 2008. Many comments were received and interest in the Study was generated by the favorable coverage in several local media outlets. The comment letters received are included in [Appendix J: Comment Letters on Draft Report](#)

## Overview of Process

During the focus groups and charrette, the community identified strengths and weaknesses which are summarized on the following page in **Table 2** (see following page).

Numerous issues and concerns were discussed at the charrette and they are detailed in Appendix A. The most poignant issues raised at the charrette include (but are not limited to) the following:

### Transportation/Access

- Parking
- Vehicle access (east-west traffic)
- Public transportation
- Pedestrian access (walkability)

### Market

- College presence in downtown
- Uses: retail, grocery, residential, cultural/ entertainment, college consortium, business/ legal

### Urban Design/Aesthetics

- Image and visibility
- Vacant public buildings
- Signage
- Building aesthetics

### Resources

- Open space and recreation
- Historic assets

The community process highlighted the following suggested land uses for the priority parcels:

- Residential (market rate, affordable, senior, student, family)
- Life science (R&D, biotechnology)
- Office
- Cultural (music, events, museums, arts)
- College/ University (consortium, law school)
- Retail/ restaurants
- Hotel
- Municipal/ Government (police, courthouse, city government)
- Special events/ festivals
- Open Space
- Parking

From the various levels of public process, the project team was able to devise a set of themes to guide the development strategy and to prepare specific development strategies for the priority parcels. The various ideas were consolidated into three development themes: the Urban Village/Downtown Connector; the Cultural/Academic District; and the “Idea Central”/Gateway to the New Economy. Initially, the project team considered studying each of the Priority Parcels in the context of all three themes. However, it became clear that the study area, and the Parcels themselves, could be cleanly divided into three subareas that captured the essence of each theme. Focus quickly shifted to a deeper analysis of how certain parcels fit into these thematic subareas.



Breakout sessions during the charrette.

TABLE 2: North Main Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Concentration of civic buildings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Poor image and identity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Rich history</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lack of public investment (sidewalk maintenance, street sweeping, signage, police presence)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Great architecture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lack of green space</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Gateway location</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Little to no college/youth population visible downtown</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Strong institutional presence and commitment to downtown (WPI, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Eye sore buildings (AT&amp;T, Police Station)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Strong cultural presence downtown (DCU, Music Halls, Museums)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lack of pedestrian activity- “no eyes on the street”</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Commuter rail station</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lincoln Square tunnel creates a divide</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ North Main area is now part of downtown (zoning)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Poor walkability</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Significant public and private investments underway (Courthouse, Gateway Park, CitySquare)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Pedestrian crossings along Main Street and at Lincoln Square are difficult</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Numerous infill development sites</li> </ul>	



Reporting back after breakout sessions.



Voting exercise

# four

## Market Overview

~ Market conditions help to define the character and intensity of near-term and interim development that can occur in the North Main Area. ~

The consultants completed an in-depth market analysis that evaluated the current and anticipated supply and future demand for office, flex/R&D, residential, retail and lodging development in both the greater Worcester and Boston regions as well as the development types were the most relevant to the development/redevelopment opportunities within the North Main Area.

Below is summary of the market analysis. This summary identifies the most relevant trends in the office, flex/R&D, residential, retail and lodging markets in the near-term (0-5 years) and interim term (5-15 years). The summary provides information on the level and character, demand and development opportunities occurring across the different types, in order to provide a context for the formulation of the proposed area development programs.

To capitalize on market strengths, the analysis considered the unique market features already prevalent in Worcester and the development themes identified for this study area. The unique market features are summarized below.

- Relative affordability vs. Boston;
- Creative and/or funky historic living options;
- Exciting revitalizations underway nearby (e.g. CitySquare, Gateway Park);
- Walk to movies, restaurants, institutions, services, etc.;
- Stress free commute by foot, bus, or train to local and regional places of employment; and
- Access to cultural and entertainment offerings.

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## Near-Term

### Office Market

- Initial office tenants will most likely demand general office uses (as opposed to R&D/lab-related uses) and require spaces of 5,000 SF or less.
- There is currently a general preference among office tenants to occupy smaller buildings or building segments (50,000 SF or less).
- Initial floor plates should be 20,000 to 25,000 SF, and office buildings or building segments should initially be limited to about 2 to 3 floors.
- Initial office space development should involve renovation or redevelopment of existing Class B space, which is currently the most common type in the Worcester office market.
- Office development planned for the near-term should take into consideration the approximately 225,000 SF of office space planned to come on line in downtown at CitySquare.

### Flex/R&D Market

- Initially, there should be rehabilitation of old, small industrial or office space as flex/R&D space to provide the smaller research spaces (5,000 – 25,000 SF) currently in demand in the Metro Boston region.

### Residential Market

- New residential development should be geared toward untapped or growing market segments, such as young professionals and empty nesters. The following residential characteristics/amenities should be incorporated for each group, respectively:
  - ◆ **Young professionals** – affordability; access to public transportation; funky characteristics/atmosphere; proximity to nightlife
  - ◆ **Empty Nesters** – relative affordability; high-end features; proximity to cultural amenities; good highway/public transportation access
- Residential development planned for the near-term should take into consideration the 1,500 units currently under construction or planned in Worcester, particularly the 650 units planned for downtown at CitySquare.

### Retail Market

- Initially, retail should be developed modestly, due to high general retail vacancy rates.

- Near-term retail development should begin to focus on serving future North Main and downtown residents soon to be populating new residential development in the area.
- In the near-term, the types of retail targeted should be specialty/niche retail, eating and drinking establishments, and food stores.
- Near-term retail development should differentiate itself from mainstream/chain retail currently available just outside of downtown and at nearby shopping centers and malls.

## Interim

### Flex/R&D Market

- As the biotech/life sciences industry expands, larger new spaces may be more in demand. This could warrant new, large-scale construction offering flex space usable by both research tenants and biotech/life sciences related office tenants.
- Development of mixed-use projects with ground floor retail and upper-level laboratories offers diverse space that may also garner more demand in the interim, as well as developments that combine historic rehab elements with new, state-of-the-art lab space
- The types of developments mentioned above should be initiated later in the interim period, transitioning into the long-term period. This is because larger, mixed-use projects require a critical mass of residents, businesses and employees, as well as a larger market area that extends outside of the Study Area.

### Office Market

- As biotech/life science industry begins to grow, a market for more (and potentially larger) general office space should develop as a result of spinoff demand.
- Demand for larger buildings (greater than 50,000 SF) and larger individual spaces (greater than 5,000 SF) may begin to develop. Office buildings or buildings over three floors can be considered.
- As office demand grows in the interim period, there could be a greater appeal for new Class A space (or lower classes updated/improved to Class A).

### Residential Market

- Interim residential development should build upon success garnered from near-term residential development (namely young professionals and empty

nesters), and should take the biotech/life science industry more into consideration over time.

- With greater economic activity and a potentially surging biotech/life science industry, higher-end residential, particularly around Lincoln Square, can become more of a focus. This would start to include industry employees and executives looking for appealing, amenity-rich living options close to their workplace.
- Relatively affordable residential to serve young professionals should be the focus of residential development in the southern segment of the Study Area.

### **Retail Market**

- Interim retail development should focus more on the growing North Main and Downtown populations. Retail space can expand in conjunction with new residents and employees in and around the North Main Area.
- Interim retail development should still maintain a focus on specialty/niche retail, but as a critical mass of residents, businesses and employees materializes, general retail development can be developed to serve the growing population.

### **Lodging Market**

- Depending on the nature of the developing economy and real estate market in the North Main Area and the City (biotech and life science/cultural and academic/urban village), hotel rooms and convention/meeting space could be expanded and/or upgraded to meet the needs of the prevailing market.
- Specific features related to this expanded lodging development could include new hotel rooms serving diverse markets (business, convention/meeting, tourism) and price points (budget, value, extended stay, corporate, boutique, luxury).



# five

## The Plan

~ The vision for the redevelopment of the North Main Priority Parcels represents a multifaceted approach that integrates aspects of the community process, key market findings, and an understanding of each site's capacity for development and parking. ~

### Vision

To support the growth of these sites, long-term goals for transit were explored to improve bus service and add the potential introduction of a trolley service. This chapter describes the vision from each of these perspectives and identifies the development opportunities, goals, and actions in the near, interim and long-terms.

It is not surprising that many ideas and themes were generated from the various stakeholder interviews, focus group meetings and the day-long charrette. With cultural activities like the Worcester Art Museum and Salisbury Mansion; new research facilities like those being built in Gateway Park; the proximity of the downtown; and prospects of CitySquare, the North Main area is poised to respond to these various initiatives and city resources. At the core of this vision are themes that emerged during the process and were refined through subsequent analysis. The development program has three major overarching themes that guide the development recommendations and set the vision for the future uses in the North Main Study Area. These themes include:

- Urban Village/Downtown Connector
- Cultural/Academic District
- Idea Central" / Gateway to the New Economy

---

The long-term or “full build” vision that it envisions in the 15+ year time frame represents more than 1.6 million SF of development of approximately the following composition:

- 860,000 SF office
- 400,000 SF flex/R&D
- 250,000 SF retail
- 45,000 SF convention/meeting space
- 300 residential units
- 50,000 SF cultural
- 220-room hotel

This development program is supported by parking and transit improvements that include shared parking opportunities, roadway enhancements, streetscape improvements, and considerations for a dedicated track trolley that would link the North Main Study Area to the downtown and beyond.

The Illustrative Concept Plan Full Build (see **Figure 5** and **Figure 6**) illustrates the long-term, or “full build” program for the Priority Parcels.

## Development Themes

As introduced above, the Strategic Plan has three major overarching themes that guide the development recommendations. These themes were developed through the technical analyses, public input and deliberation with the consultant team. These themes sculpt out “activity nodes” within the Study Area and inform the specific uses within these nodes.

### Theme 1: “Urban Village/Downtown Connector”

The main focus of development in the southern portion of the Study Area (Sites 1, 2, 3 and 4) is to create a distinct neighborhood that provides a connection between the North Main area, Downtown Worcester, CitySquare and Union Station. This area should be mainly mixed-use and high-density, in order to create a “twenty-four hour” neighborhood with high street activity and vibrancy. However, the area is envisioned to have a young, “funky” feel to it. The retail base should include space with independent shops, cafes, bars and ethnic restaurants that are demanded by the young professionals and new retirees expected to be prominent in Worcester’s future population.

This location provides an opportunity for more affordable, moderately-priced apartment and condominium development in contrast to the higher-end residential development planned as part of the CitySquare project. With greater affordability, the area will be accessible to recent college graduates and “empty nesters” who will add the needed vibrancy to this area, but often have limited budgets. Although not a dedicated entertainment district, the neighborhood night life can be enhanced by the presence of live music venues and performing arts theaters, which can be anchored by a renovated and expanded Palladium Theatre. The expected increased residential density and foot traffic resulting from the new development will also provide a market for an urban supermarket, which will be an interim or long-term development, as sufficient population and demand will come over time as the North Main Area is revitalized.

### Theme 2: “Cultural/Academic District”

Development in the northwestern portion of the North Main Area (Sites 5, 8, 9 and 10) aims to reinvigorate and expand on this civic and cultural center, as well as link it both physically and thematically to nearby academic institutions like Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), Institute Park, and to create a focal point for these interconnected areas in Lincoln Square.

Opportunities could include the high-end condominiums, high-end office and specialty retail programmed for the Old Courthouse site, a museum or other creative industry reuse for the Memorial Auditorium, a health club/recreation center in the former Boys Club building, additional park and green space on the Salisbury Mansion site and potential relocation of the buildings on this site. These uses would provide living, shopping, cultural and working opportunities for this academic/“College Town” population and create stronger connections between the Institute, Park and North Main.

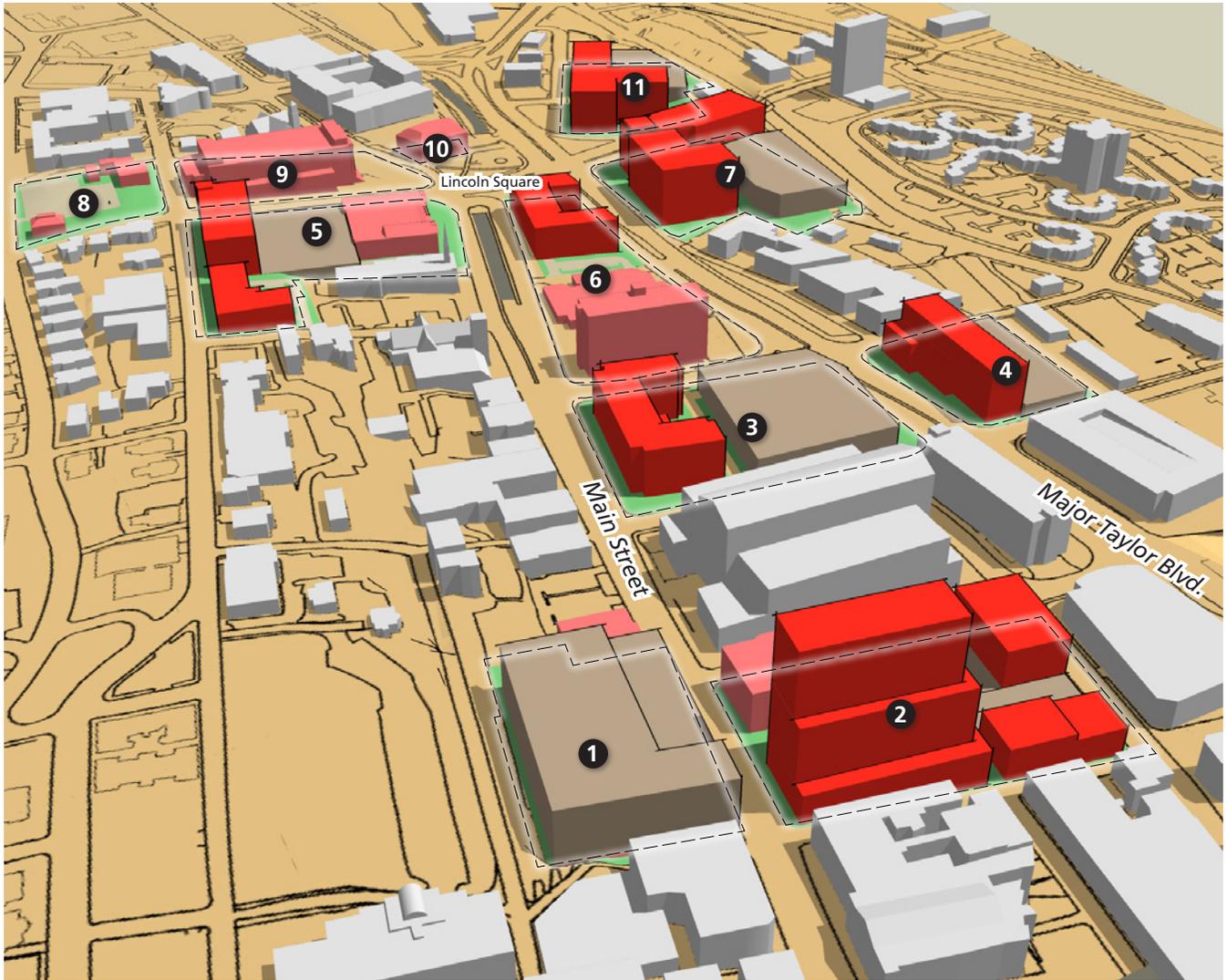
### **Theme 3: “‘Idea Central’ / Gateway to the New Economy”**

The northern part of the Study Area (Sites 6, 7, and 11) may possess the most catalytic potential of any part of North Main. There is also the opportunity to synergize uses with those on Sites 5, 9 and 10 to create a civic and economic focal point for the North Main area. With proximity to Gateway Park and the potential for the expanding life sciences and biotech industries at University of Massachusetts Medical School, the City can use the power of its future economy to drive the overall revitalization of the North Main Area. The development of Gateway Park has laid the foundation for a critical mass of biotech/life science R&D/office space that can draw more related investment to the North Main Area. The area could serve as the nexus between UMass Medical School, WPI, the private biotech/life science industry, and the City of Worcester.

This potential is magnified when considering Site 11 (Morgan Construction) and Site 7 (Worcester Police Headquarters), two large parcels that are adjacent to Lincoln Square and very close to Gateway Park. Although these sites presently have other active uses, there exists the long-term potential to redevelop and reuse these sites for large projects that incorporate biotech/life science R&D uses with office space and residential units. Also, the opportunity for expanded hotel and convention space on Site 6 could complement this technology, innovation, and academic center. The combination of high-end residential/retail/office space (Site 5), a life science-related museum/academic center (Site 9), significant biotech R&D/office space (Sites 7 & 11) and expanded hotel/convention space (Site 6) could create a unique center of science, innovation, academia, culture and civic activities.

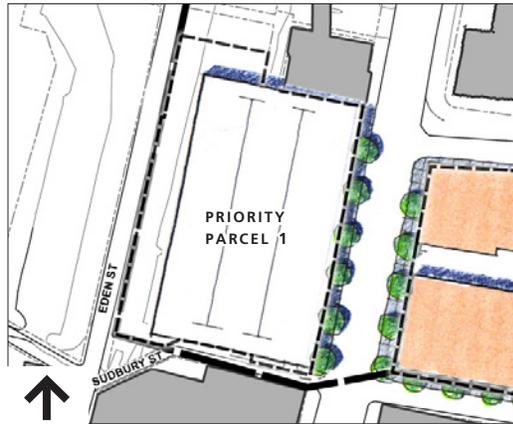


Priority parcels 1-11 are denoted in massing view below.



# build out

## Priority Parcel 1 Main Street (West parking Lot)

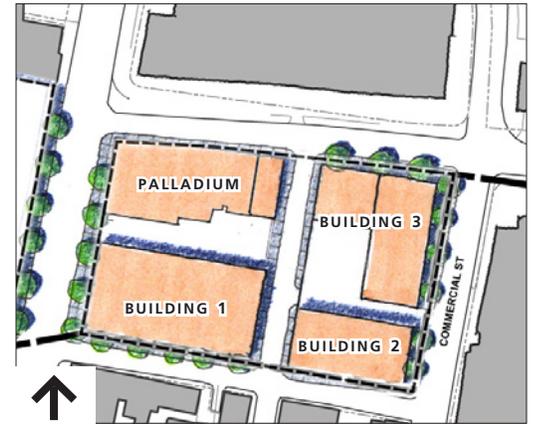


Note  
The adjacent concept site plans are not to scale.

Development Program	
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Interim</b>
Retail: (Grocery Store) (Floor 1)	55,000 SF
Parking Structure (Floors 1-8)	950 Spaces
Total Program: Parking:	55,000 SF 950 Spaces
<b>Number of stories:</b>	
Buildings:	Ground level of parking structure
Parking Structure:	Grade + 7 Levels



## Priority Parcel 2 Main Street (East Block at Exchange St)



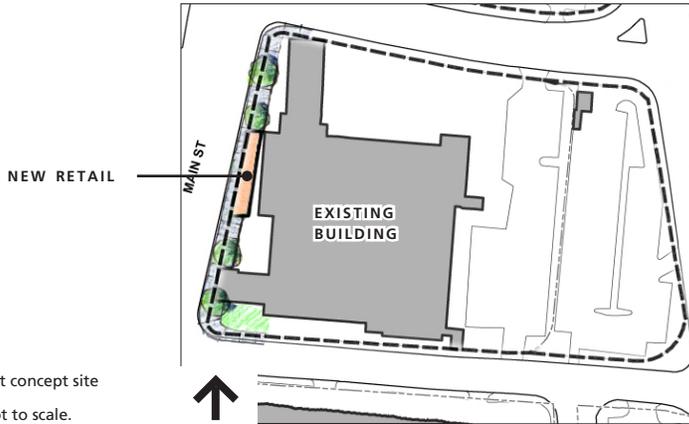
Development Program	
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Interim</b>
<b>Building 1</b> (18 stories) Retail (Floor 1) Office (Floors 1-18) Parking (3 below grade)	14,500 SF 302,000 SF 151 Spaces
<b>Building 2</b> (5 stories) Retail (Floor 1) Residential (Floors 1-5) Parking (Floor 1)	8,600 SF 27 Units 27 Spaces
<b>Building 3</b> (7 stories) Retail (Floor 1) Residential (Floors 1-7) Parking (Floor 1)	1,500 SF 49 Units 49 Spaces
Total Program: Parking:	326,600 SF +76 Units 950 Spaces
<b>Number of stories:</b>	
Buildings:	5-18 Levels
Parking Structure:	Below grade to Grade +1 Level



Right  
Massing Views

# build out

## Priority Parcel 3 AT&T Site (Near Term)



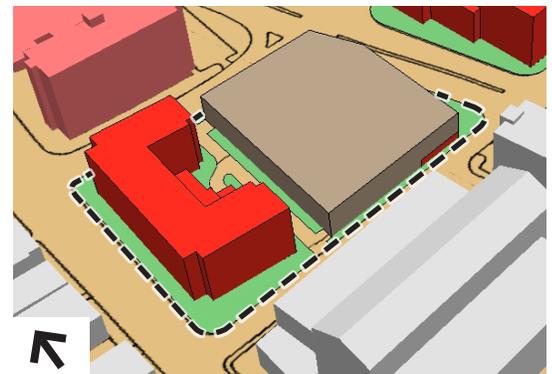
Note  
The adjacent concept site plans are not to scale.

Development Program	
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Near Term</b>
Retail:	1,800 SF
Total Program:	1,800 SF
Parking:	Existing on Street
<b>Number of stories:</b>	
Buildings:	1
<i>Potential Development Costs (Near term): \$730,000</i>	

## Priority Parcel 3 AT&T Site (Long Term)



Development Program	
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Long Term</b>
Retail:	45,500 SF
Conference:	45,000 SF
Hotel:	(220 Rooms)
Total Program:	90,500 SF +220 room hotel
Parking:	981 Spaces
<b>Number of stories:</b>	
Buildings:	7 Levels
Parking Structure:	Grade +4 Levels



Right  
Massing Views

# build out

## Priority Parcel 4 Honey Farms Site



Note  
The adjacent concept site plans are not to scale.

Development Program	
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Long Term</b>
Retail:	20,000 SF
Office:	60,000 SF
Residential:	48 Units
<b>Total Program:</b>	80,000 SF +48 Units
Parking:	387 Spaces
<b>Number of stories:</b>	
Building:	7 Levels
Parking:	Grade +2.5 Levels



## Priority Parcel 5 Old Court House (Worcester County Courthouse)



Development Program	
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Near Term</b>
<b>Building 1</b>	
Office	87,500 SF
Retail	12,500 SF
Parking	400 Spaces
<i>Potential Development Costs (Near Term): \$48,000,000</i>	
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Interim</b>
<b>Building 2A</b>	
Office	90,000 SF
Retail	22,500 SF
<b>Building 2B</b>	
Residential	60 Units
Parking	312 Spaces
<b>Total Program (Near and Interim):</b>	211,500 SF 60 Units
Parking:	712 Spaces
<b>Number of stories:</b>	
Buildings:	3-5 Levels
Parking:	Grade +3 Levels



Right  
Massing Views

# build out

## Priority Parcel 5 Old Court House (Worcester County Courthouse)



An exterior view of the Worcester County Courthouse.

### Observations

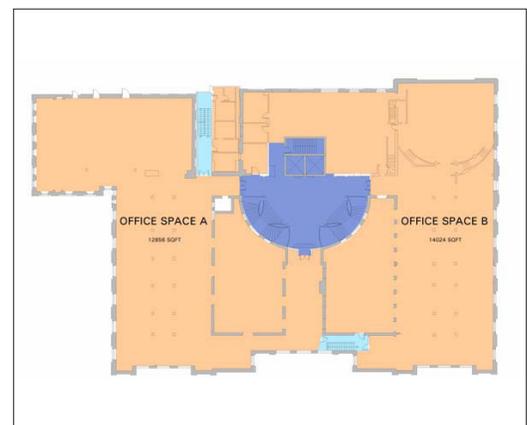
- Key element in revitalization of Lincoln Square
- Original building historically significant; strong presence on North Main Street
- Original building has generous floor-to-floor heights; can accommodate contemporary MEP/FP systems
- 1954 addition is architecturally undistinguished; demolition will allow parking and new construction along Harvard Street
- Costs for adaptive reuse will be high—core and shell in the \$225/sqft range
- Federal and State Historic Tax Credits available to offset 40% of development costs

### Approximate Net Area

Ground	
Office:	25,980 SF
Kitchen:	1,000 SF
1st Floor	
Retail:	12,390 SF
Office:	13,183 SF
2nd Floor	
Office:	26,981 SF
3rd Floor	
Office:	14,308 SF



First Floor Conceptual Plan



Second Floor Conceptual Plan

# build out

## Priority Parcel 6 Crowne Plaza



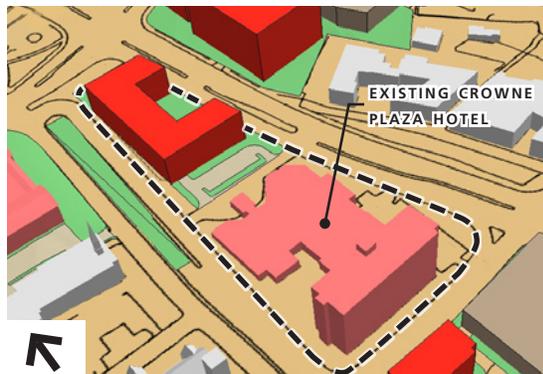
Note  
The adjacent concept site plans are not to scale.

## Priority Parcel 7 Worcester Police Station (Option A)



Development Program	
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Long Term</b>
Retail:	5,000 SF
Residential:	92 Units
<b>Total Program:</b>	5,000 SF +92 Units
Parking:	340 Spaces
<b>Number of stories:</b>	
Buildings:	6 Levels
Parking Structure:	Grade + 2 below grade

Development Program	
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Long Term</b>
Retail	32,500 SF
Office	200,000 SF
R&D	220,000 SF
<b>Total Program:</b>	457,500 SF
Parking:	1044 Spaces
<b>Number of stories:</b>	
Buildings:	7-8 Levels
Parking:	Grade +5 Levels



Right  
Massing Views

# build out

## Priority Parcel 7 Worcester Police Station (Option B)



Note  
The adjacent concept site plan is not to scale.

Development Program	
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Long Term</b>
Retail	16,000 SF
Office	214,900 SF
R&D	147,000 SF
<b>Total Program:</b>	<b>377,900 SF</b>
<b>Parking:</b>	<b>875 Spaces</b>
<b>Number of stories:</b>	
Buildings:	4-7 Levels
Parking:	Grade + 6 levels



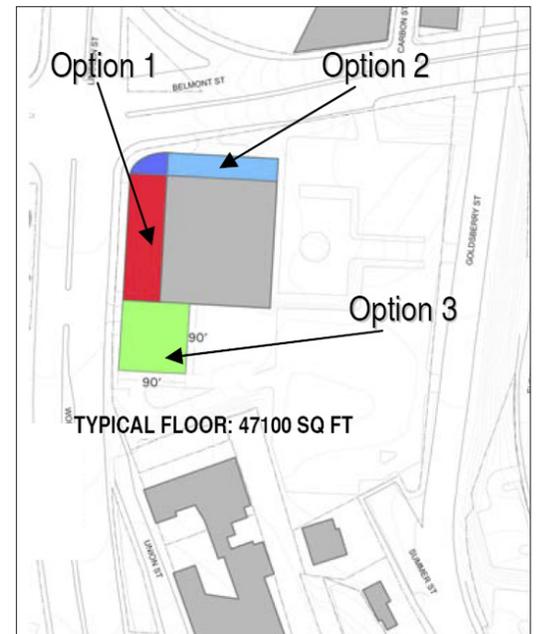
Right  
Massing View

## Priority Parcel 7 Worcester Police Station



Observations
■ Modernist concrete structure
■ Rear facade faces Lincoln Square
■ Well maintained and functionally active
■ Reuse requires relocation of police department
■ Potential to re-orient the active face of the building to Lincoln Square as shown in plan, or to clear site for new development
■ Major addition of 8,100SF to create reasonable office space
■ May work for light industrial, R+D, or expensive laboratory space

### Conceptual Plan



# build out

## Priority Parcel 8 Salisbury Mansion & Parking



Note  
The adjacent concept site plans are not to scale.

Development Program	
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Near Term</b>
Existing uses to remain:	
Parking	75 Spaces
<b>Number of stories:</b>	
Buildings:	Existing
Parking:	75 at grade

## Priority Parcel 9 Worcester Memorial Auditorium



Development Program	
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Near Term</b>
Reuse of existing building: Institutional/Office/Flex:	75,000 SF 50,000 SF
Total Program:	125,000 SF
Parking:	0 Spaces
<b>Number of stories:</b>	
Buildings:	Existing
Parking Structure:	N/A

SALISBURY MANSION  
(moved)



Right  
Massing Views



# build out

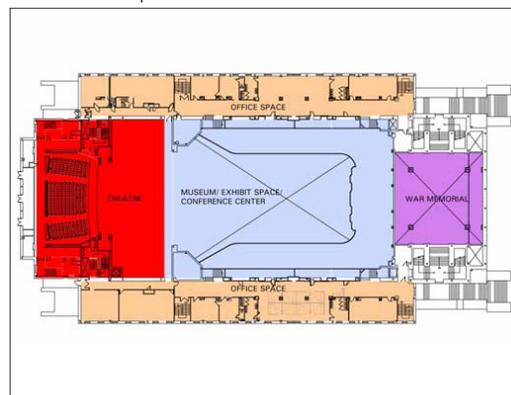
## Priority Parcel 9 Worcester Memorial Auditorium



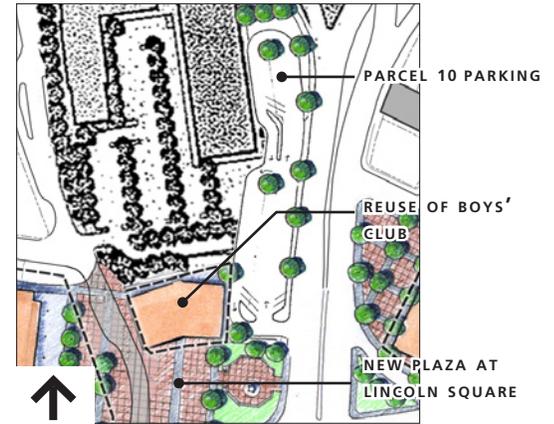
An exterior view of the Worcester County Courthouse.

Observations
■ Monumental presence
■ Historically significant
■ Dedicated War Memorial
■ Monumental example of art deco interior
■ Most dramatic building facing Lincoln Square
■ Limited ADA access (Harvard Street)
■ Reuse potential to capitalize on large volume of interior; controlled natural light
■ Parking, loading and accessibility will be major challenges
■ Reuse for other than a public venue, such as museum or conference center, will require new window openings, new floor levels and extensive modifications to the building itself
■ Costs for adaptive reuse will be high in range of \$250/SF—core and shell
■ Combined 40% historic tax credits available for commercial/profit making reuse

Main Floor Conceptual Plan



## Priority Parcel 10 Former Worcester Boys' Club



Concept site plan (not to scale)

Development Program	
<b>Phase</b>	<b>Near Term</b>
Reuse of existing building:	
Health Club:	24,000 SF
Residential:	24 Units
<b>Total Program:</b>	24,000 SF +24 Units
<b>Parking:</b>	93 Spaces
<b>Number of stories:</b>	
Buildings:	4 Levels
Parking:	Grade
<i>Potential Development Costs (Near Term): \$8,000,000</i>	

Massing View



# build out

## Priority Parcel 10 Former Worcester Boys' Club



An exterior view of the former Worcester Boys' Club.

### Observations

- Building is a handsome, distinguished architectural backdrop for Lincoln Square
- Building is landlocked by roadways and a parking lot under separate ownership
- Double loaded central corridors can accommodate contemporary MEP/FP systems
- Steel, concrete and brick veneer structure lends itself to adaptive reuse in the \$180–\$200 per SF cost range for residential construction
- Range of apartments from Lofts to 2 Bedroom can be accommodated, also possible health club mixed use
- 40% Federal and State Historic Tax Credits available for apartment or commercial reuse

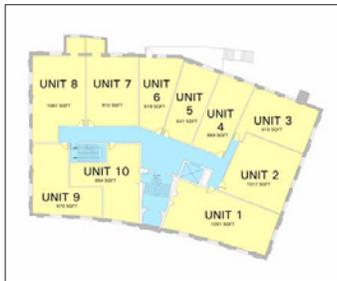
### As Shown

Smallest Unit—619SF

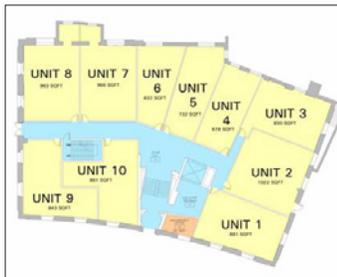
Largest Unit—1,261SF

Office—123SF

First Floor  
Conceptual Plan



Second Floor  
Conceptual Plan



## Priority Parcel 11 Morgan Construction Site



Concept site plan (not to scale)

### Development Program

#### Phase

Retail  
Office  
R&D

#### Interim

20,000 SF  
90,000 SF  
180,000 SF

Total Program:

290,000 SF

Parking:

625 Spaces

#### Number of stories:

Buildings:  
Parking:

5-7 Levels  
Grade + 4 levels

### Massing View



## Phasing

The market demand analyses and development program formulation allows for the identification of the potential phasing of area development. The anticipated build-out for the entire Strategic Plan extends beyond 15 years. Development activities that are achievable within the first five years are categorized as Near-Term and are either small-scale or can serve as catalyst projects. Activities that might occur between five and fifteen years from now are categorized as Interim. The Long-Term build-out refers to any development occurring beyond 15 years.

### Near-Term Phase (0-5 Years)

Near-term development includes projects that can be started and completed within five years (e.g. Boys Club renovation/reuse), as well as projects that provide the foundation for some longer term development plans (e.g. Old Courthouse Building renovation/reuse). **Figure 7** provides an Illustrative Concept Plan of the near-term build-out.

Overall, the near-term focus of development is on establishing the infrastructure for long-term improvements and completing small-scale projects that lay the groundwork for larger-scale projects or provide interim uses for priority sites.

Near-term development both addresses the immediate needs of the North Main area and sets the stage for future development. In terms of the immediate needs of the North Main area, the focus is on Lincoln Square:

- The Worcester War Memorial Auditorium (Site 9)
- The Former Boys Club (Site 10)
- Salisbury Mansion (Site 8)
- AT&T (Site 3)
- The Old Court House (Site 5)

Sites 5, 9, and 10 surround Lincoln Square and serve as a focal point for Downtown Worcester. In addition, their proximity to I-290 and other major routes afford them very good access to other parts of the City and the region. Therefore, their redevelopment can provide critical momentum for the economic and physical revitalization of the North Main Area. In addition to the three projects above, the Salisbury Mansion site will be reused for the continuation of existing uses, parking and open space in the near-term.

The Boys Club, Old Courthouse and Worcester Auditorium projects will have significant effects on the North Main revitalization in the near future. These projects would put three significant structures central to the North Main area back on-line and provide a catalyst for longer-term future development in the area.

### Interim Phase (5-15 Years)

Interim, or midterm, phase projects generally bridge the gap between long-term and short-term projects. This time period runs roughly from Year 5 to Year 15 of the North Main area redevelopment. The goal of development and related actions taken during this period is to flexibly respond to market demand over time, consistent with the long-term vision.

Two of the projects designated for the interim phase, the Old Courthouse (Site 2) (which includes adding more commercial, housing and parking on this site) and the Main & Exchange property (Site 2) redevelopment expand on work initiated in the Near-Term Phase. The other two interim phase projects, the Morgan Construction (Site 11) redevelopment and the Main Street parking lot (Site 1) redevelopment, set the stage for larger-scale, long-term projects.

These interim projects begin to redefine the respective sections of the North Main area. There is expected to be greater flexibility with these projects than the near-term projects.

### Long-Term Phase (15+ Years)

Long-term development takes into account the build-out potential for the eleven sites, looking 15 years after project initiation and beyond. Understanding that economic and market conditions could greatly vary from their current state 15 years in the future, the long-term phase of development demands maximum flexibility and responsiveness.

The long-term phase is envisioned to include several large-scale development/ redevelopment projects that reshape the North Main Study Area and the immediate Lincoln Square section in particular. These projects represent the balance of the build-out included in the Strategic Plan. These ambitious projects will have major transformational effects on the North Main area, the City of Worcester and the greater region. See **Figure 5** which depicts the full build-out. Additional full-build details are provided in the data sheets that follow.



## Build-Out

Table 3 summarizes the development potential for the priority parcels. These recommended build-outs for each parcel represent the confluence of the community process, the market analysis and the consideration of a variety of other conditions regarding this area. This summary is accompanied by more detailed synopses, plans and images for the eleven parcels (see **Figures 5, 6**, and build out sheets).

TABLE 3: Priority Parcels Development Potential

Parcel No.	Parcel Name	Address	Building Reuse	Proposed Uses						Building Program
				Retail	Office	R & D	Residential	Cultural	Parking	
#1	Main Street (West Parking Lot)	252 & 288 Main St		55,000 SF (Grocery Store)	-	-	-	-	950 spaces	55,000 SF 950 spaces
#2	Main Street (East Block at Exchange Street)	90 Commercial St, 20 Exchange St, 255 & 269 Main St, & 35 Central St		24,600 SF	302,000 SF	-	76 units	-	227 spaces	326,600 SF 76 units 227 Spaces
#3	AT&T Site	0 Major Taylor Blvd & 175 Main St		45,500 SF	45,000 SF (Conference)		220 rooms (Hotel)		981 spaces	90,500 SF 220 rooms 981 spaces
#4	Honey Farms Site	0 School St & 90 Thomas St		20,000 SF	60,000 SF	-	48 units	-	387 spaces	80,000 SF 48 units 387 spaces
#5	Old Courthouse	2 Main St & 5 Highland St	Reuse	22,500 SF (inc. restaurant)	184,000 SF		60 units		712 spaces	206,500 SF 60 units 712 spaces
#6	Crowne Plaza	10 Lincoln Sq		5,000 SF	-	-	92 units	-	340 spaces	5,000 SF 92 units 340 spaces
#7	Worcester Police Station	9 Summer St								
	Opt. A			32,000 SF	200,000 SF	225,000 SF	-	-	1,044 spaces	457,500 SF 1,044 spaces
	Opt. B		Reuse	16,000 SF	215,000 SF	147,000 SF	-	-	875 spaces	378,000 SF 875 spaces
#8	Salisbury Mansion & Parking‡	30 & 40 Highland St, 15 Institute Rd & 61 Harvard St	Reuse	-	-	-	-	-	75 spaces (reduced to)	75 spaces
#9	Worcester Memorial Auditorium	1 Lincoln Sq	Reuse	-	25,000 SF	-	-	50,000 SF (memorial, museum, theater)		65,000 SF 0 spaces
#10	Former Worcester Boys' Club	16 Salisbury Street	Reuse	24,000 SF (Health Club)	-	-	24 units	-	93 spaces	24,000 SF 24 units 93 spaces
#11	Morgan Construction Site	15 Belmont St		20,000 SF	90,000 SF	180,000 SF	-	-	625 spaces	290,000 SF 625 spaces
				250,000 SF	Convention 45,000 SF Office 860,000 SF	400,000 SF	Hotel 220-room housing 300 units	50,000 SF	Total Development Program:	1,600,000 SF 5,400 spaces

Notes: ‡ Existing Uses will remain.

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## Parking, Circulation and Transit

This section describes the parking demand for the Priority Parcels, as well as access and circulation issues associated with the build-out of the study area. While general automobile access is adequate, parking, transit, and pedestrian accommodations need to be enhanced to support the redevelopment projects. In addition to estimating the number of parking spaces required to accommodate reuse of these buildings, this section suggests improvements to the local transit system and improved pedestrian facilities.

### Parking

The parking demand for each of the Priority Parcels is based on the potential build out development program presented earlier in this chapter. The parking program associated with the Priority Parcels minimizes the physical and environmental footprint of parking in the study area and assumes an aggressive shared-parking analysis and increased reliance on non automobile travel. Parking structures, rather than parking lots, are used to promote more intensive building developments and to enhance the character of the street experience.

The proposed parking for the Priority Parcels consists of over 5,400 spaces, of which 1,000 spaces are replacement parking for existing uses that remain in the study area but whose current parking location is displaced by the redevelopment of a Priority Parcel. The 1,000 replacement spaces include 280 spaces at the Crowne Plaza that are displaced as part of that site is redeveloped. Appendix E (Table 2) lists the proposed parking supply for each Priority Parcel.

There are several stand-alone sites that are self-contained with regard to parking, sites without sufficient on-site parking, and sites with excess on-site parking. For almost every Priority Parcel development, the site's parking demand can be accommodated on-site or in a suitable nearby parking location.

The exception is Site 9, The Worcester Memorial Auditorium, which would make use of on-street parking as well as the Highland Street municipal lot, and the proposed parking garage on Parcel 5.

### Transit Access

The North Main study area is located three blocks north of the City's downtown transit hub – the block surrounding

City Hall. All 31 of the Worcester Regional Transit Authority's routes serve that transit hub. Nine of the WRTA routes travel along North Main Street through the study area (see **Figure 8**). Another three WRTA routes travel along Harvard Street, one block west of the study area. Although there are many routes through the study area, and the opportunity to connect at City Hall to all other routes serving Worcester and surrounding communities, the transit system has several operational constraints that would hinder the ability of the transit system to help lessen the reliance on automobile use for the Priority Parcel developments, including:

- The buses operate at a relatively poor service frequency. Most buses operate on headways of either 35 minutes or 60 minutes.
- The buses provide only limited Saturday service and very little Sunday service.
- The weekday hours of service are limited. Most service operates between 6AM and 8PM, but several routes do not start until 7AM and end by 6PM.
- Although there is a bus hub, the buses do not pulse from that hub. With a pulse system, buses all depart from the hub at the same time and this provides for quick transfers between bus routes. The current route schedule is inconsistent with regard to how long there is for transfers between routes. Some are very short and others are 30 minutes or more.

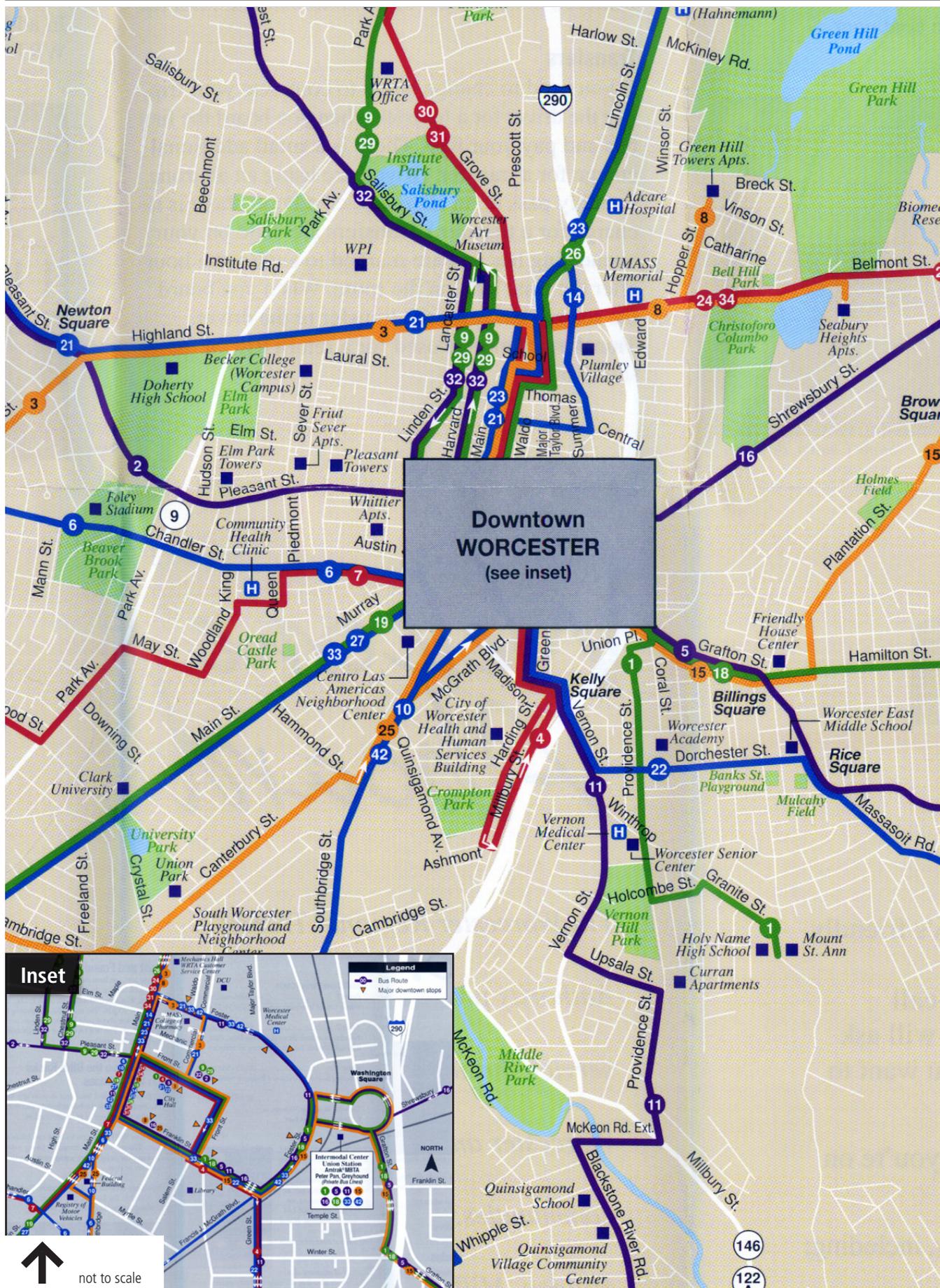
Overall, the transit system seems to prioritize extensive coverage over frequent service. Trips must be planned in advance and many trips can take a long time. The transit system currently provides a valuable service for transit-dependent ridership, but would have to be enhanced in order to dissuade automobile owners from driving or to persuade potential North Main tenants, employees and customers that they do not need to rely on an automobile to access the area.

### Traffic Access

The North Main study area is well-served by the regional highway system, with access to I-290 at both the north and south ends of the study area that offers connections to the MassPike and to I-495. North Main Street itself is designated as Route 122 and provides access to communities to the north. Route 9 travels east-west through the Study Area.

The only significant traffic constraint is in the Lincoln Square area. There are often peak-period traffic backups. In part,

FIGURE 8: WRTA System Map



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these delays are related to the close proximity of intersections and problems associated with signal timing and drivers needing to frequently change lanes. In part, the congestion is related simply to the volumes of traffic accessing I-290 and Route 9.

North Main Street and Major Taylor Boulevard provide the north-south connection through the Study Area. Both streets appear to have excess capacity, particularly Major Taylor Boulevard. Even with the redevelopment of the Priority Parcels there should be many opportunities to narrow roadways and enhance the pedestrian and transit infrastructure along these roadways. A streetscape study, separate from this North Main Economic Development Strategy herein, is currently underway.

Vehicle access to the Priority Parcels is generally very good, since most front on North Main Street or Major Taylor Boulevard. Specific comments for the Priority Parcels are included in Appendix E.

### Recommended Actions

The successful development of the Priority Parcels with less reliance on automobiles requires that the transit access to the North Main area be improved. There are also several opportunities to make roadway changes that both mitigate current traffic problems and create opportunities for a better pedestrian environment.

### Transit Access

Three components of the transit system and how they would support the proposed development were considered; these are described in more detail in [Appendix G](#). These potential solutions include:

- Enhance frequency of service of the existing WRTA transit service to the North Main area;
- Expand frequency and routes with direct service to the Worcester rail line or relocate the WRTA transit hub to the train station; and
- Considering the physical, financial and political constraints described in the Appendix, provide streetcar service connecting the North Main area development with other areas of the downtown. **Figure 9** depicts a potential streetcar layout.

### Traffic Access

**Figure 10** depicts a series of potential traffic improvement projects for the North Main study area. These improvements range from simple traffic signal modifications to major reconfigurations of intersections. The major improvements entail simplifying the geometry of some key intersections, and a variety of improvements associated with encouraging most traffic to use Major Taylor Boulevard to travel through the North Main area. No detailed traffic volumes were available in order to test the specifics of the intersection design options, but based on observations of and experience with those intersections, the options merit further study.

### Conclusions

The parking components of the development concepts for the Priority Parcels provide for a well-balanced parking system throughout the study area. Sufficient parking is provided in the appropriate locations and of the appropriate size to support the residents, employees and customers of the new developments. Existing parkers are accommodated as well.

There is sufficient roadway infrastructure to accommodate the access needs for each of the development parcels. In fact, much of the study area has excess roadway capacity and there are opportunities to reduce the physical footprint of the roadways without constraining redevelopment opportunities.

The transportation component for the North Main area most lacking is transit access. The operating hours and schedule frequencies of the service provided by the WRTA will need to be improved if the goals of reduced reliance on automobile use by North Main residents and employees are to be achieved.

FIGURE 9: Streetcar Concept

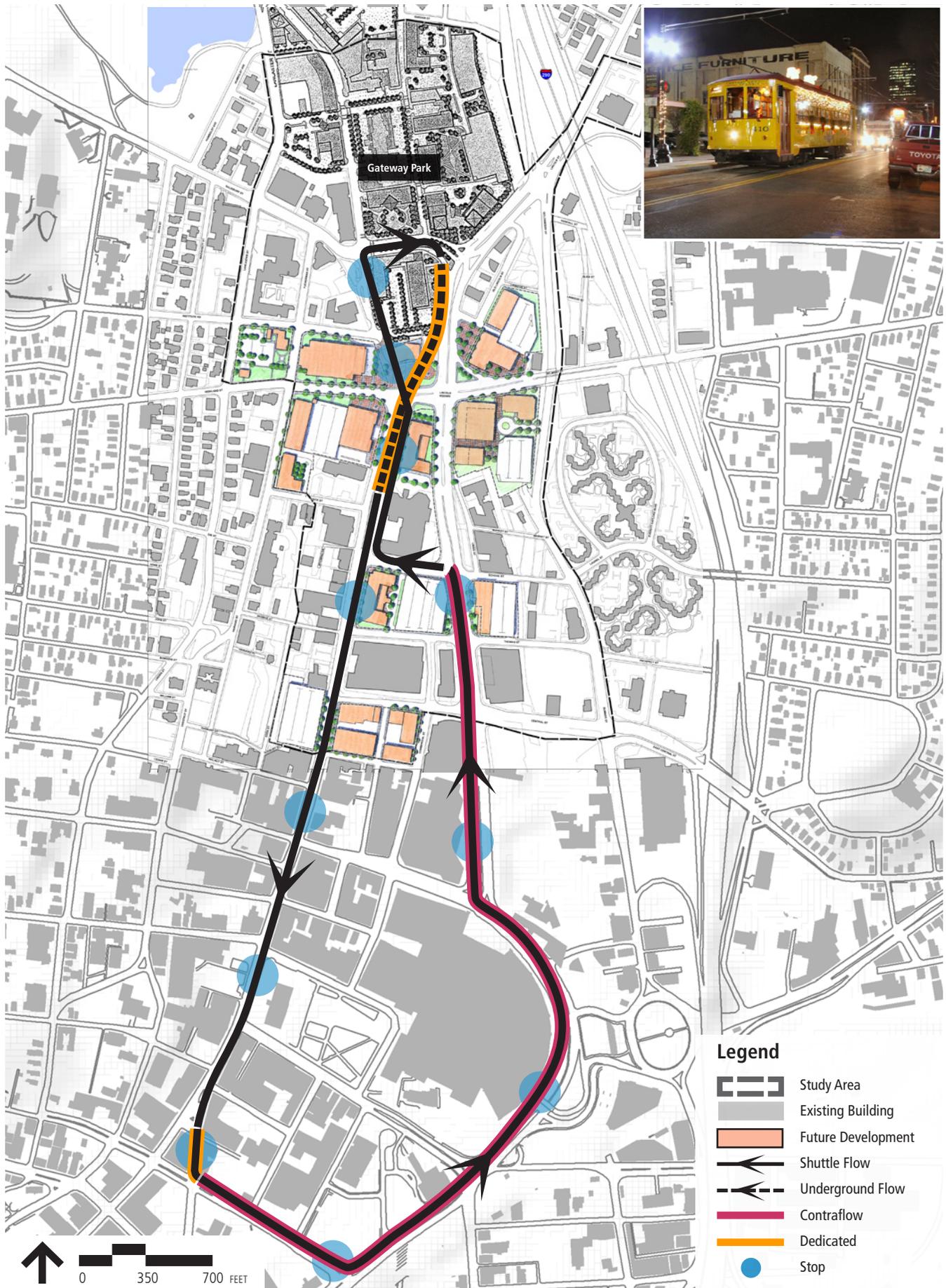
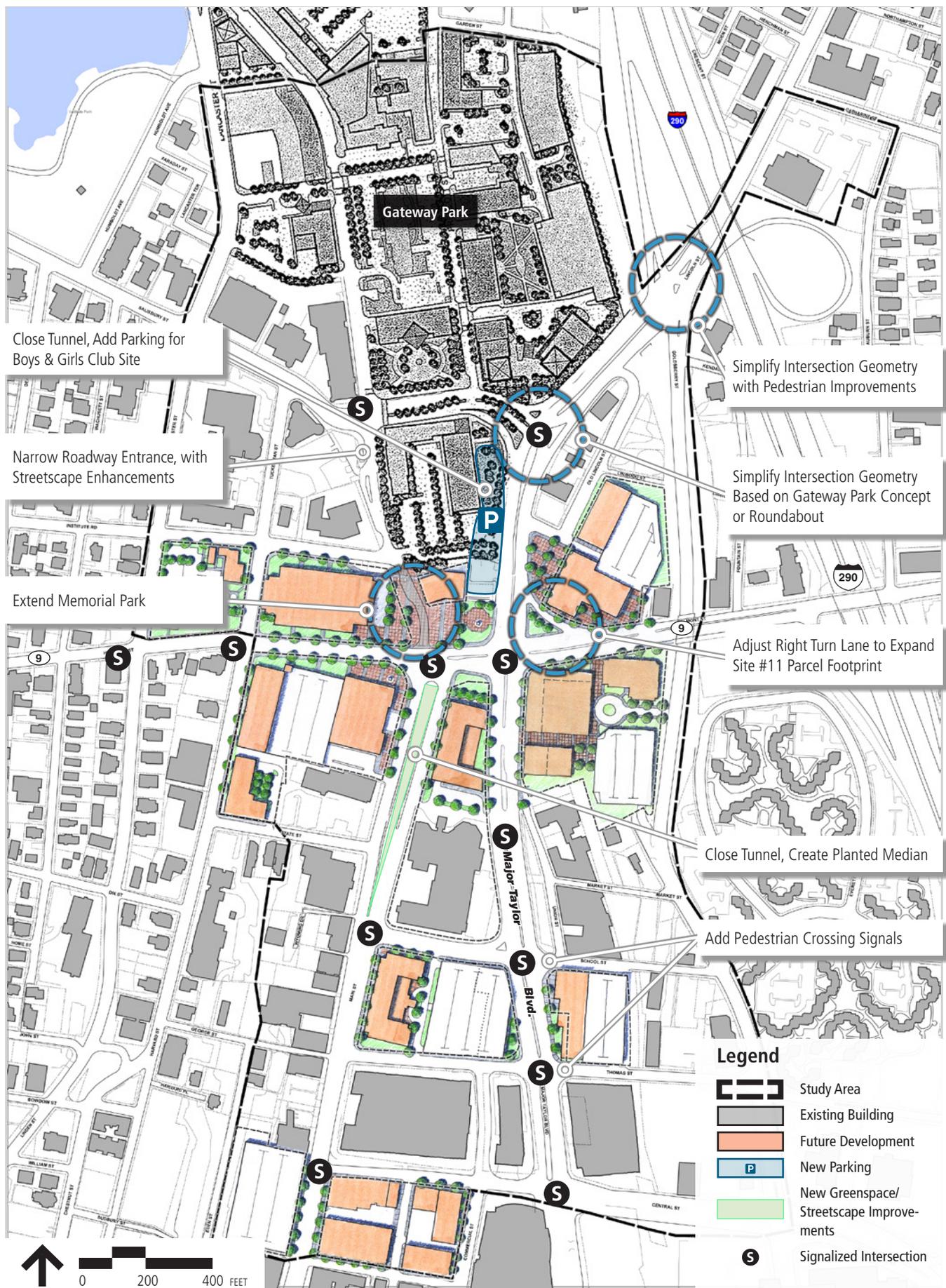


FIGURE 10: Traffic Improvement Concepts



Close Tunnel, Add Parking for Boys & Girls Club Site

Narrow Roadway Entrance, with Streetscape Enhancements

Extend Memorial Park

Simplify Intersection Geometry with Pedestrian Improvements

Simplify Intersection Geometry Based on Gateway Park Concept or Roundabout

Adjust Right Turn Lane to Expand Site #11 Parcel Footprint

Close Tunnel, Create Planted Median

Add Pedestrian Crossing Signals

**Legend**

-  Study Area
-  Existing Building
-  Future Development
-  New Parking
-  New Greenspace/ Streetscape Improvements
-  Signalized Intersection

# six

## Development Strategies

~ This chapter describes the “Action Items” or predevelopment activities required to put the strategies in motion; the roles and responsibilities of organizations or persons who will have a hand in implementing the strategies; and possible funding sources. ~

### Near-Term Projects

Near-term development/redevelopment projects are vital in creating a positive image and momentum to jump start redevelopment and revitalization of the North Main Study Area. The near-term phasing strategy comprises development on five concentrated and strategic sites that can have highly visible and an immediate positive impact on the area’s economic growth and improvement.

These projects are listed below and include a brief description of their catalytic potential and immediate benefit they can provide to the North Main Study Area as well as the adjacent areas. The projects are organized by thematic subareas. These five sites were selected due to their concentration on the highly visible to Lincoln Square area and because of public and private sector interest have a high probability of sale.

This starting point for the revitalization of the North Main Study Area is Lincoln Square due to its visibility and significant aesthetic and economic impacts revitalization of this specific area will have on “jumpstarting” the redevelopment of the North Main Area. On a site-specific level, these sites utilize highly visible existing structure, existing structures which provide excellent opportunities to provide cost efficient and market responsive office and retail space, residential units, and valuable community amenities/attractions (i.e. museums and a health club).

Redevelopment of these addresses market demand, stimulates the full revitalization process, and provides for the most immediate and highly visible community needs.

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## Urban Village/Downtown Connector

### Site 3 – AT&T Site

Approximately 1,800 SF of new retail development flanking the current AT&T building will provide valuable neighborhood retail space “activating” this portion of North Main and adding further appeal to the area.

## Cultural/Academic District

### Site 5 – Old Courthouse

The 99,000 SF of office space that will be added to the renovated historic section of the Old Courthouse complex will provide a significant amount of high-quality office space. This new space can house new firms relocating to or within the area who want a central, urban location that provides amenities not found in business parks on the fringe of the City.

### Site 8 – Salisbury Mansion & Parking

Redevelopment of the Salisbury Mansion property involves enhancement of landscaping and existing green space on site and development of a small park. This redeveloped site will provide an aesthetic complement to the Worcester Auditorium and buildings in the area. The reconfigured 75-space lot will provide sufficient parking approximately 10-15 parking spaces for existing uses and for additional creative industry uses located in the Auditorium.

### Site 9 – Worcester Memorial Auditorium

This historic landmark will be “reactivated” through renovations to accommodate new or relocated creative industry uses. Additional renovations could prepare the building for private, revenue-generating, uses such as office or flex space geared toward one of the nearby academic institutions or Worcester’s burgeoning R&D/Bioscience industry.

### Site 10 – Boys Club

The renovation of the former Boys Club building will provide 24 units of much-needed housing in the North Main Study Area. The central location of the site and its frontage on Lincoln Square will provide an appealing living location for college students, employees and other new or relocating residents within the area. The 24,000 SF health club will provide a very valuable amenity to North Main residents and employees.

## Action Items

This section presents both area-wide and site-specific actions and strategies that help to promote the effective redevelopment of the North Main Study Area.

The project team has denoted the relevance and immediacy of these actions by grouping them into general categories and site specific actions and organizing them into three phases: 1) immediate action steps which can be put in place now; 2) immediate follow-up pre-development, organizational and promotional actions (which are relatively low costs, highly visible) and set the stage and development; and 3) funding/implementation actions which will achieve near-term redevelopment.

1. High-Priority/Immediate Actions – essential actions that can be taken immediately to mobilize resources and create interest/higher impact.
2. Pre-Development/Organizational & Promotional Actions – that should be initiated to promote the Strategic Plan and attract additional financial and supportive resources.
3. Funding and Implementation Actions – which achieve redevelopment including funding/financing resources to structuring the actual deals and transform by the Strategic Plan’s vision into bricks & mortar.

## General Actions

### High-Priority/Immediate Actions

- City adoption of the North Main Economic Development Strategy
- Allocate funds for public sector development and improvements
- Create organizational structure to manage implementation of redevelopment plan
- Put financial tools in place to incentivize projects

### Pre-Development/Organizational & Promotional Actions

- Promote, market, and merchandise the overall Plan and individual projects
- Initiate area-wide business development plan for merchants and potential office tenants (e.g. start-up business support/incubators)
- Organize events to promote new drinking and eating establishments (family-/college-oriented, food festivals, pub crawls)

- Form coalition of North Main (possibly combined with Downtown) restaurants and bars (discounts, coordinated marketing efforts, distributor networks)
- Form coalition of North Main (possibly combined with Downtown) retail merchants (discounts, coordinated marketing efforts, distributor networks)

#### Funding and Implementation Actions

- Identify financing/funding tools (Historic Tax Credits, Tax Incentive Financing, Development Grants, Credit Enhancement, Public/Private Partnerships)
- Provide TIF to support North Main (re)development (creation of TIF district[s]; alternative financing)
- Initiate Main Street Programs (National Trust for Historic Preservation and/or Main Street-supported organization or district) for aid with historic rehab and streetscape improvements
- Formulize the Gateway Park partnership (WPI/WBDC) to create funding mechanisms, institutional support and corporate support for large-scale R&D development to occur within the Study Area.
- Work with developers to structure deals and execute projects
- Review zoning to identify required changes

#### Site-Specific Actions

##### Site 3 – AT&T Site

- Evaluate the site
- Negotiate with existing building owner
- Formulate implementation/funding/developer solicitation strategies
- Issue a Request for Proposals

##### Site 5 – Old Courthouse

- Transfer control of state property to the City of Worcester
- Prepare detailed concept design and cost estimate
- Identify additional public funds to support signature project
- Formulate implementation/funding/developer solicitation strategies
- Issue a Request for Proposals
- Review zoning to identify any required changes

##### Site 8 – Salisbury Mansion

- Perform public improvements including realignment of parking
- Formulate implementation/funding/developer solicitation strategies for open space improvements

##### Site 9 – Worcester Memorial Auditorium

- Perform basic renovations/maintenance to prepare for future use(s)
- Have broad discussions between the City and local museums, hotels and R&D developers; issue a letter of interest request to parties
- Study reuse expansion options in Little Theatre to maintain active use
- Remove on-site parking and redesign area at base of steps and other public realm improvements
- Light building, add signage and event programming
- Formulate implementation/funding/developer solicitation strategies
- Issue a Request for Proposals

##### Site 10 – Boys Club

- Identify housing creation incentives
- Perform public improvements
- Formulate implementation/funding/developer solicitation strategies
- Issue a Request for Proposals

## Organizations

The organizations below represent potential private, non-profit and public partnerships for the City and development-related entities working on the project. These organizations have been categorized according to the relevant activities and development types for which they can provide support. A description of each organization's basic role in the redevelopment of the North Main Area is also provided.

### Marketing/North Main Event Promotion

- Destination Worcester – market and provide information to the region and beyond of new attractions and amenities offered by redevelopment in the North Main Study Area

- Worcester County Convention and Visitors Bureau – organize promotional events and spearhead advertising campaign to promote North Main’s “points of interest”
- Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism – provide state-level support to local CVB and promote general tourism in North Main outside of the Worcester region
- Worcester Cultural Coalition & Commission – raise awareness of North Main’s cultural and historic assets to encourage community support and patronage
- Massachusetts Cultural Council – provide state-level support to local cultural organizations and promote North Main’s cultural amenities and attractions outside the Worcester region

### Commercial Development/Acquisition

- Choose Worcester – business attraction to draw tenants for new office and retail space
- Worcester Business Development Corporation – potential player in structuring and managing overall redevelopment of North Main area
- Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce – marketing and promotion for new companies and visitors
- Mass Development – financing agency that focuses on providing low-interest for projects in underserved areas of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

### Residential Development/Housing

- Colleges of Worcester Consortium, Inc. – create connection between student housing demand and new North Main Area residential development
- Massachusetts Department of Housing & Community Development – administration of housing and urban renewal programs in the Commonwealth.
- MassHousing – allocation of additional funds for eligible projects and state-level organizational support

### Funding/Incentive Sources & Programs

The programs and tools below represent potential funding sources/mechanisms for the City and development-related entities working on the project. These tools and programs have been categorized according to the relevant area in which they can be used to fund relevant aspects of the Strategic Plan for North Main.

### Infrastructure/Streetscape Improvements

- Façade & Awning Incentive Grant Program – grants for storefront and other building façade improvements
- Microloan Program – provides funding to small businesses/sole proprietors for minor improvement projects
- Public Art Program – funding for public art and beautification of Lincoln Square and the North Main area
- Worcester Lights Initiative – provide funding for enhanced lighting to improve nighttime pedestrian environment throughout the North Main area
- Public Works Economic Development (PWED) Grants – provide funding for infrastructure and utilities to support other development in the North Main area
- The Community Development Action Grant (CDAG) – provides funding for publicly-owned or managed projects to leverage private investment, create and retain jobs for low- and moderate-income persons, and address the needs of deteriorated and disinvested neighborhoods
- District Improvement Financing (DIF) – allows for bonding against future increases in property value to finance infrastructure improvements
- Infrastructure Investment Incentive Program (I-Cubed) – finances significant new public infrastructure improvements necessary to support major new private development through an innovative cost and risk sharing arrangement among the Commonwealth, the Municipality and the private developer
- Storefront Improvement Grant Program – funding for façade and aesthetic improvements specifically for retail businesses in the North Main area

### Marketing/North Main Event Promotion

- Wayfinding Initiative – provide financial support for improved/increased signage throughout the North Main Area (especially Lincoln Square)
- Cultural Facilities Fund – financial support to maintain and improve North Main’s many cultural assets

- Colleges of Worcester Consortium (Downtown Student Housing Initiative, WOOBus, WOOCard) – providing incentives (discount bus passes, retail coupons) to local students living, shopping in the North Main area

### **Development (Residential, Commercial, Flex/R&D)**

- City HOME Funds – financial incentives for the construction of affordable housing from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- City Land Disposition Program – enable land transactions between the City and private owners/developers
- District Improvement Financing Program (DIF) – provide financing for coordinated development projects throughout the North Main area
- Urban Center Housing & Economic Development Incentive Program – 100% TIF District – funding for infrastructure and support projects
- Commonwealth Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Grants – funding for promoting high-density development around bus/trolley stops over long-term in North Main area
- Community Development Action Grants – state-level funding for publicly owned or managed projects having significant impacts on the overall economic condition of Worcester
- Historic Tax Credits – utilized to incentivize private investment in North Main rehabilitation/ renovation projects (Worcester Auditorium, Old Court House, Boys Club)
- Massachusetts Technology Collaborative Funding – provide financial support for longer-term R&D and green building development around Lincoln Square
- Community Development Block Grants – provide general funds for redevelopment of North Main
- New Markets Tax Credits – subsidies to incentivize private investment in housing, retail and commercial development
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits – incentivize private investment to fund low income rental housing

### **Summary**

As the Strategic Plan for North Main moves forward into implementation, it will be important to understand how these potential funding/incentive sources and programs can be targeted for the various projects and programs that the City and development-related entities will be advancing. While some of the sources and programs relate to specific development opportunities, others focus on infrastructure, streetscape and potential marketing efforts that could apply to the larger North Main district.



