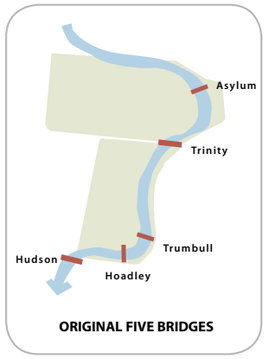
School groups in Bushnell Park crossing Hoadley Bridge (above) and traversing the Park River on stepping stones (below) c. 1930

"...the bridges of Bushnell Park created an occasion for gathering, for observation, for wonder. Their architecture was a treasure in itself. They can become that once again."

- Doug Suisman

Buried Bridge

During this planning process, it was discovered that the Trinity Street Bridge may still exist, but buried beneath tons of dirt. The plan proposes an excavation to determine the condition of the structure.

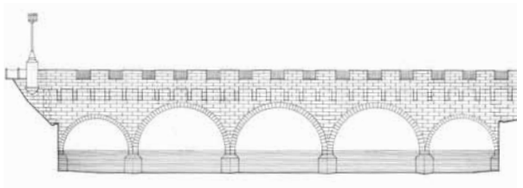


Asylum Street Bridge

Originally built in wood (1858) followed by a second wooden structure (1878) and then a steel bridge (1911), this bridge served both vehicles and pedestrians, and connected the park to Union Station

Trinity Street Bridge

This stone arch bridge predated Bushnell Park; cantilevered walkways were added in 1885 in preparation for the construction of the Memorial Arch, dedicated in 1886. The structure was almost completely buried when the Park River was placed underground in the 1940's.



Trumbull Street Bridge

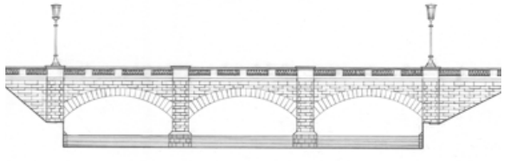
The original span - a delicate trestle footbridge built in 1864 - was replaced with a stone structure in the 1920's, which was in turn demolished in the late 1940's.

Hoadley (Mulberry) Bridge

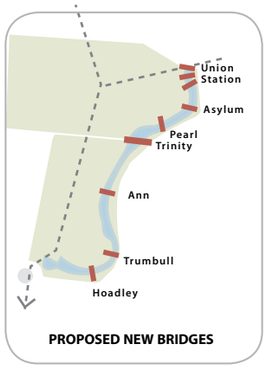
Four structures have occupied this site - a train depot (completed 1838), a wooden trestle bridge (1855), a second wood bridge (1878), and a stone pedestrian bridge dedicated to Jeremy Hoadley (1909), which demolished in the 1940s; fragments were incorporated into Hoadley Gate.

Hudson Street Bridge

This stone arch bridge (on the site of today's Pulaski Circle) was added in 1917 to carry vehicles south along the newly built Hudson Street. It spanned the last sharp eastward turn of the Park River, and was removed in the late 1940's when the Park River was buried.

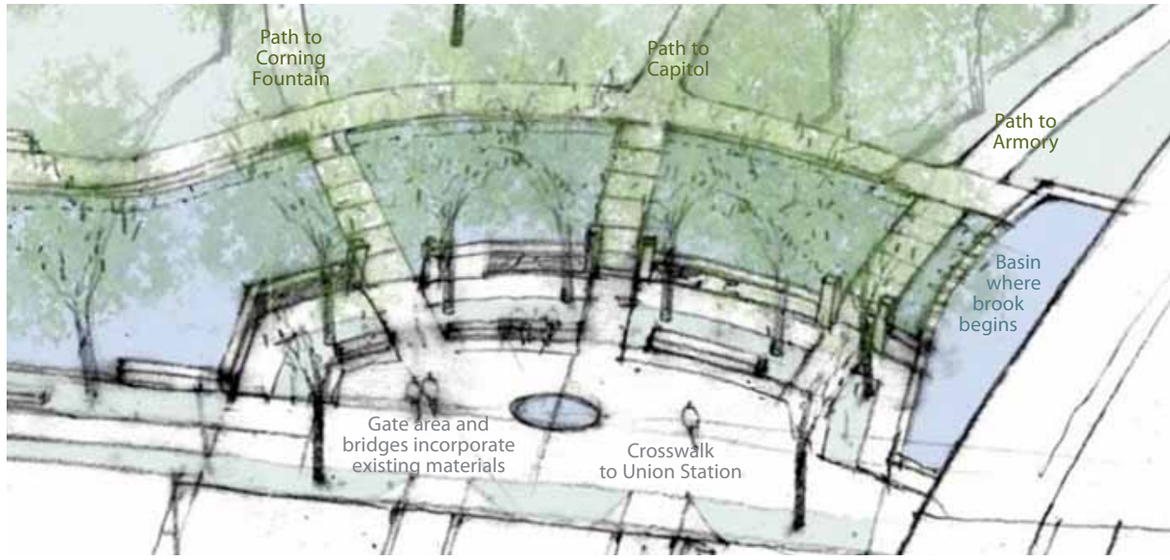


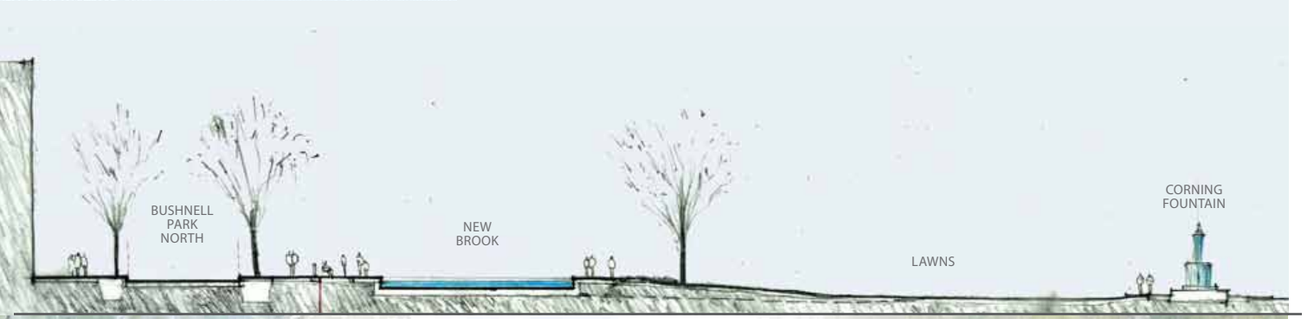
New Bridges

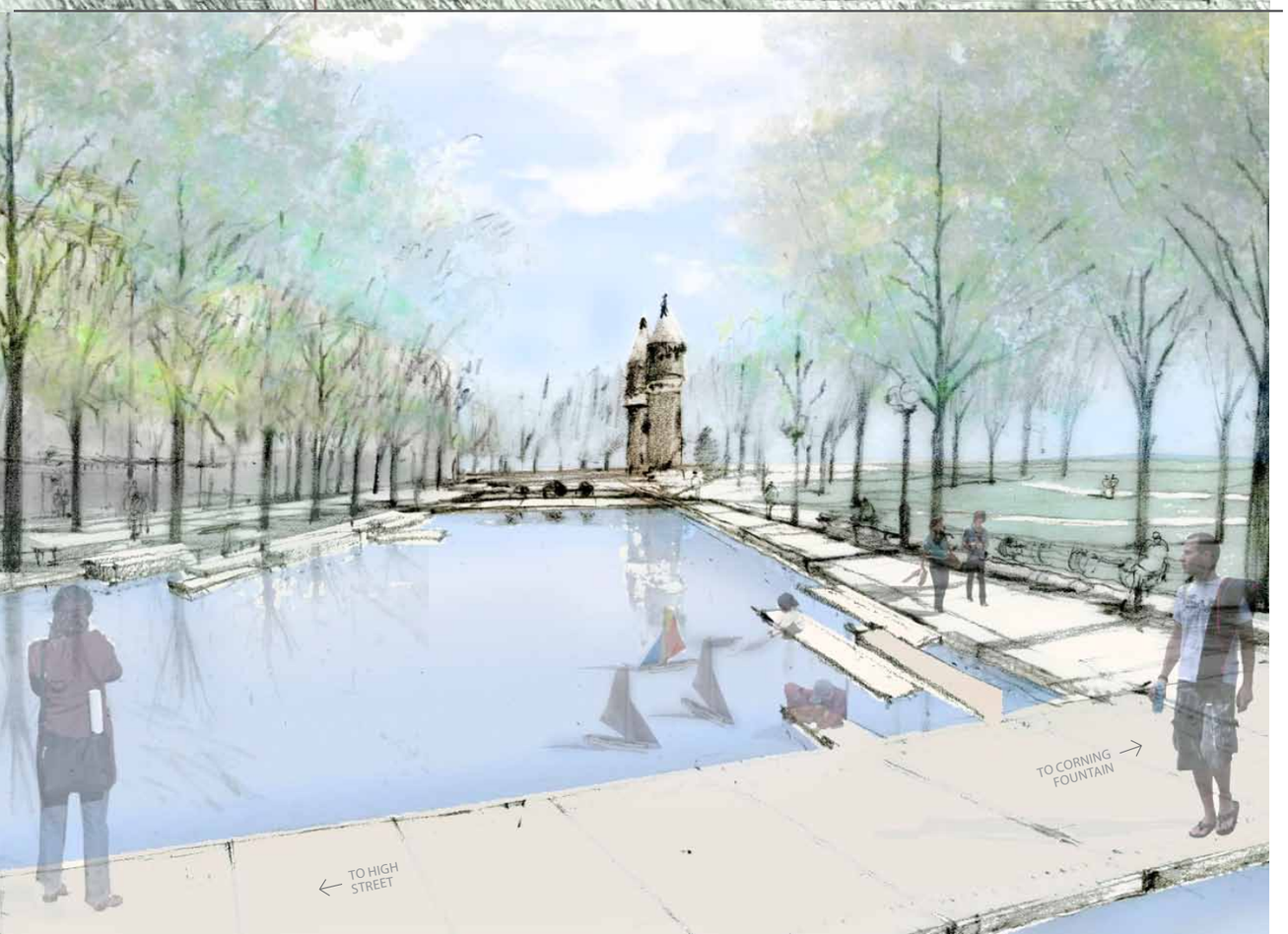


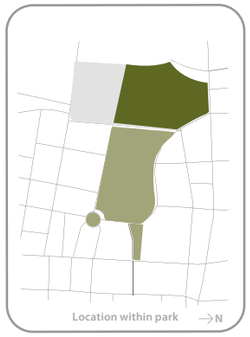
Eight new footbridges, along with the unearthed and restored Trinity Street Bridge, will provide a wide array of views and vantage points. The bridges will vary in height, length, and physical relationship to the water below. They will draw inspiration from the park's historic bridges while taking advantage of contemporary structural systems and materials. Beautifully lit at night and reflected in the water, the bridges will align with walkways and adjacent streets to fully integrate the park with downtown.

Bridge	Length	Width	Water Surface Elev / Height Above Water	Description
Station Bridge	40'	10'	34.5'/ 2"-4"	Narrow stone bridge just above water level; accessible to vehicles
Capitol Bridge	40'	10'	34.5'/ 2"-4"	Narrow stone bridge just above water level
Corning Bridge	40'	10'	34.5'/ 2"-4"	Narrow stone bridge just above water level
High St. Bridge	50'	15'	31.5'/ 2"-4"	Narrow stone bridge just above water level
Pearl St. Bridge	50'	12'	31.5'/ 2"-4"	Narrow stone bridge just above water level
Trinity St. Bridge	175'	40'	24.5'/ 13.5'	Restoration of existing bridge to expose three primary arches
Ann St. Bridge	100'	15'	22.25'/ 0'	Cubic blocks at grade to cross, with gaps to pass water
Trumbull Bridge	20'	25'	20'/ 8'	Classic in character, stone broad span; 7-8' clearance for pedestrian path
Hoadley Bridge	45'	20'	19.5'/ 13'	More contemporary in character, stone and steel broad span with clearance below for pedestrian path on east side









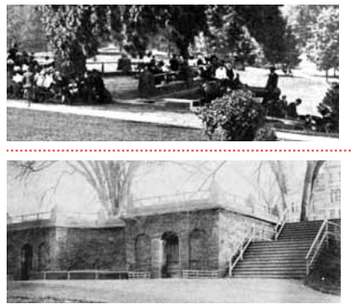
BUSHNELL PARK RESTORATION AND EXTENSION PLAN

West Section

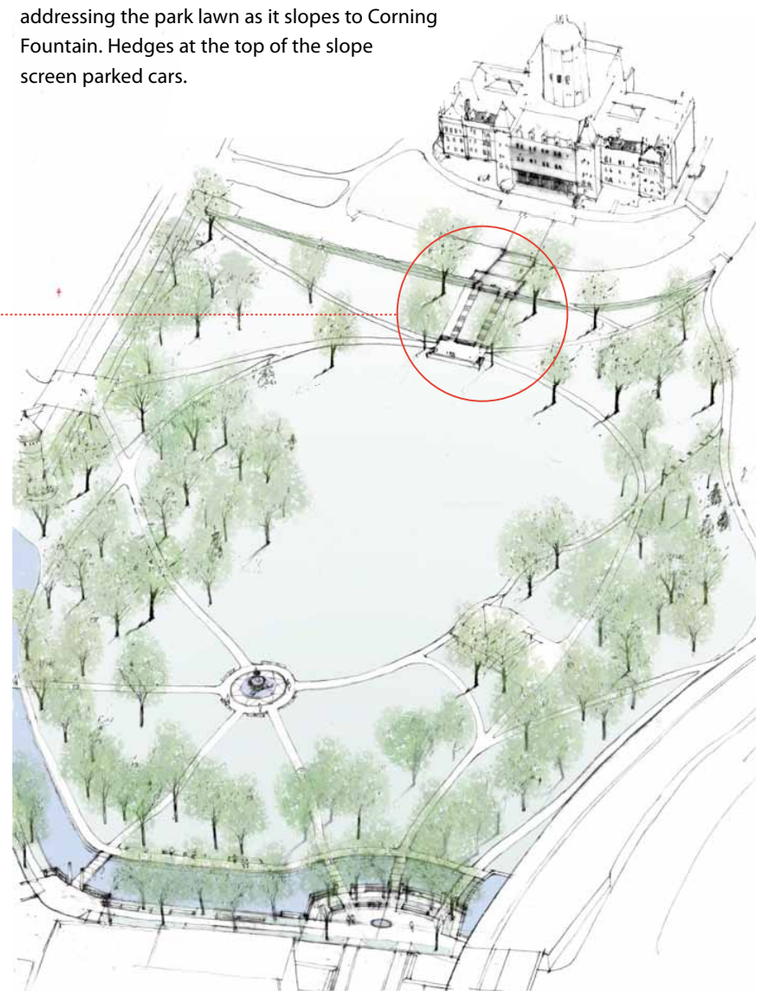
The primary design goal in the western section of the Park is to connect this detached park area to the city, the State Capitol and the central and eastern park sections.

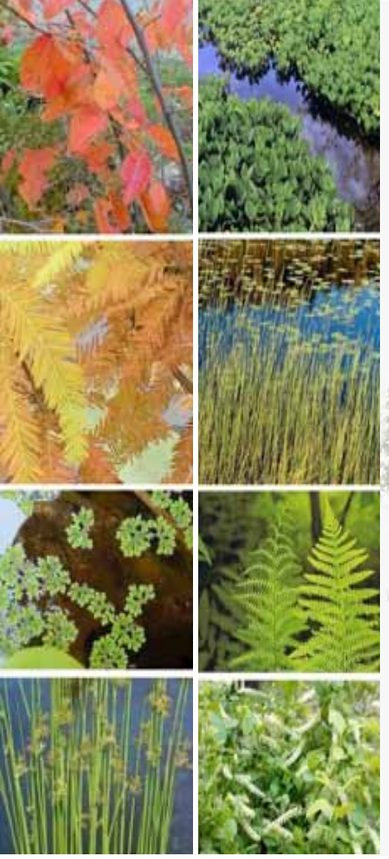
This effort begins with the appearance of the new brook at the base of the landmark brownstone railroad wall at the park's northwest corner. There the brook is crossed by three footbridges linking Union Station to Corning Fountain and the Capitol. The brook's water is clearly visible from the street. New park trees are tall headed providing open views into the park. Paths along both sides of the water course encourage people to linger and stroll. The water course is shallow and calm, and reflects views of the Capitol. The shallow depth will freeze in the winter allowing impromptu skating.

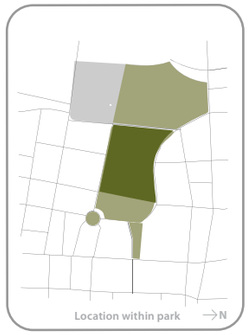
Primary landscape changes are focused upon the park's relationship to the Capitol and Union Station. Portions of paths are realigned to simplify circulation and to formally reinforce the Capitol's symbolic alignment with the western lawn. A new terrace recalls the Capitol's historic belvedere, directly addressing the park lawn as it slopes to Corning Fountain. Hedges at the top of the slope screen parked cars.



Elements of the historic Overlook Terrace and staircase from the Capitol will be restored





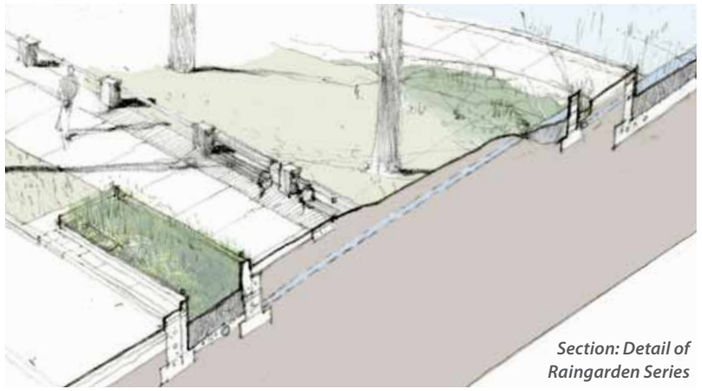


BUSHNELL PARK RESTORATION AND EXTENSION PLAN

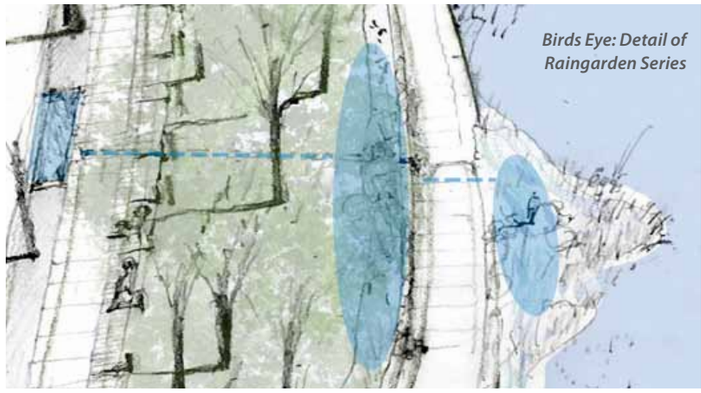
Center Section

The central section of the Park is the link between the open, casual formality of the landscape between the Capitol and Union Station, and the active family area in the eastern section. The water course is lower than the street, and articulated with riparian edge plantings. The water flow becomes more lively, broken by gentle falls as it steps to a lower elevation. The landscape here maximizes its ecological benefit, bringing a bit of "wild" nature into the heart of the city.

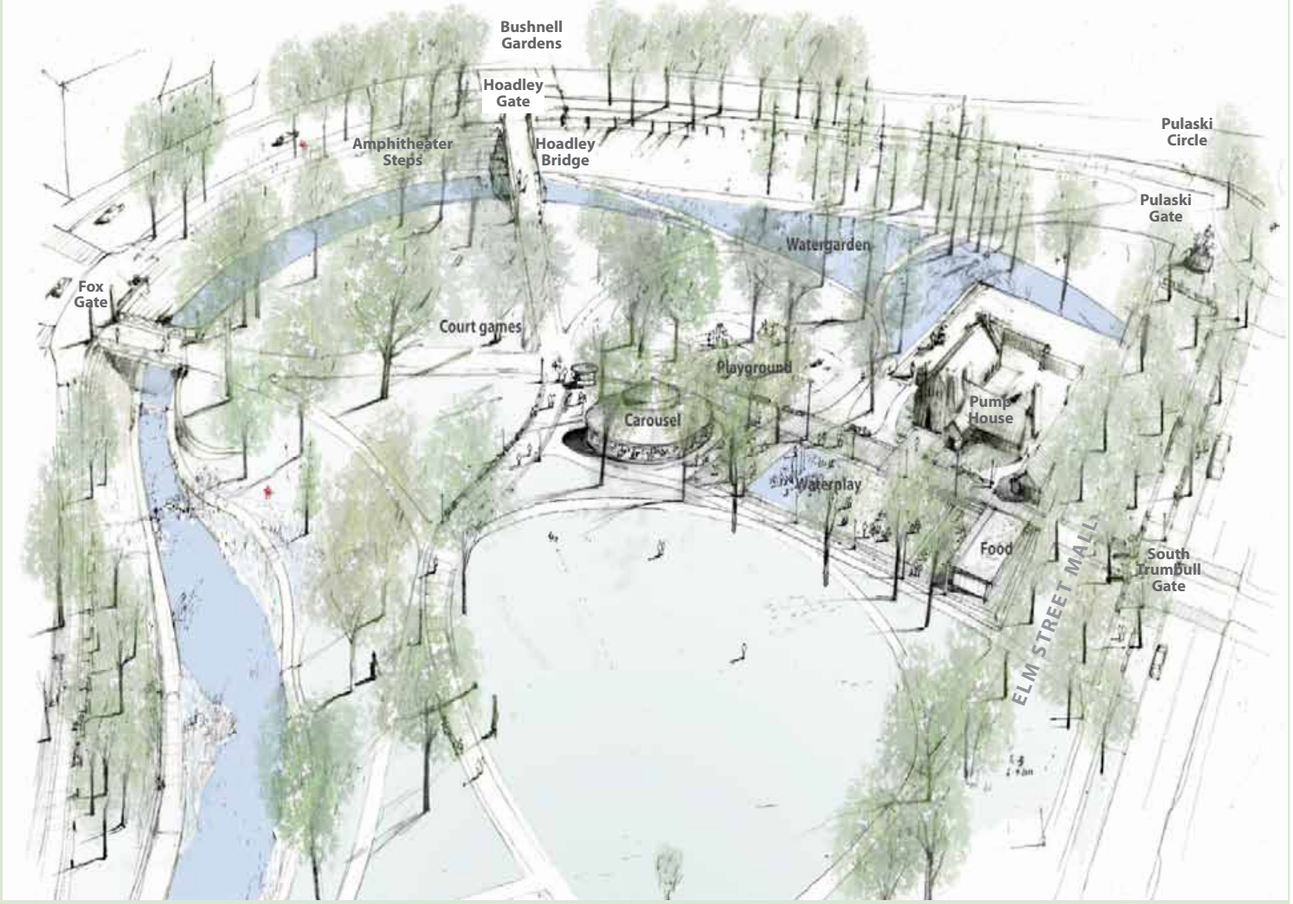
Butterflies, dragonflies and other wildlife thrive. Plantings are more varied and diverse in texture and color throughout the seasons. The channel and the plantings support the ecological function of the park and city, supporting storm water treatment through collection at the street and filtering through a series of stepped rain gardens before returning cleansed to the stream channel. Stepping stones cross the stream at a number of places, allowing casual interaction with the water. Paths in the landscape wind in and out of plantings, offering opportunity for nature walks and talks.

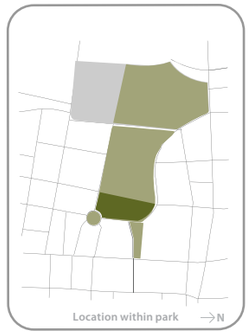


Section: Detail of Raingarden Series



Birds Eye: Detail of Raingarden Series





BUSHNELL PARK RESTORATION AND EXTENSION PLAN

East End

The eastern end of the park is comfortably nestled into the existing pastoral landscape. Trees provide canopy, shade and intimacy while programmed activities planned for Hartford's community and families are significantly increased. The relocated carousel, water play area, and playground are adjacent to the brook, whose stepping stones encourage interaction with the water. Two new bridges at Trumbull Street and at Hoadley Gate make a strong connection to the city, including the park's extension to Main Street via Bushnell Gardens.

The stream corridor takes on another character as it arcs southward from Trumbull. The water level is significantly below the street, allowing stream-side walkways to pass under the new bridges. As the stream narrows again, the water flow increases in speed and arrives at the park's most active area, concluding in a water garden next to the Pump House's new brookside terrace, where model sailboats can be rented.

A new playground shares space under the trees with tables and chairs, and book stalls. Court play activity may include bocce, giant chess, and ping pong. Food kiosks offer a sampling of the food of Hartford's many communities.

Hartford's success with winter time skating is made permanent with a new ice skating rink, which in the summer time would be used for shallow water play. In addition, this flexible space can support intimately scaled summer music series with the use of a portable stage and seating.

"A home run for the City of Hartford."

Mayor Pedro Segarra

BROOK AND BRIDGE LIGHTING

GENERAL WALKWAY LIGHTING

LIGHTING OPTIONS FOR KEY WALKWAYS

Park Lighting

Bushnell Park is currently closes at sundown. The Plan's goal is to make the park a nighttime destination, through enhanced programming and lighting. The lighting design has three main objectives:

Improve Wayfinding & Safety at Night

- Improve walkway light levels, both measured & perceived
- Emphasize park entrances & wayfinding
- Highlight key park elements
- Reinforce the sense of visual transparency "through" the park
- Enhance visual acuity via better color rendering sources (metal halide, LED)
- Use of color to support wayfinding

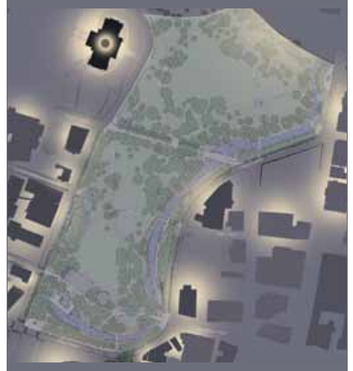
Enhance Visual Identity and Drama

- Reinforce identity via distinctive historic light pole selection
- Supplemental path lighting to emphasize park movement
- Highlighting key historic elements (monuments & structures)
- Infrastructure upgrades to support future art installations & performances
- Seasonal lighting treatments (i.e. Holidays, special events)
- Coordination with park furniture / planting / identity programs
- Selective lighting of specimen trees / special plantings
- Illuminate perimeter facades; reinforce sense of "Urban Room"
- Improve lighting at key park elements: Memorial Arch, Carousel, Corning Fountain, State Capitol, new brook and footbridges

Provide Economical Approach to Capital and Maintenance Costs

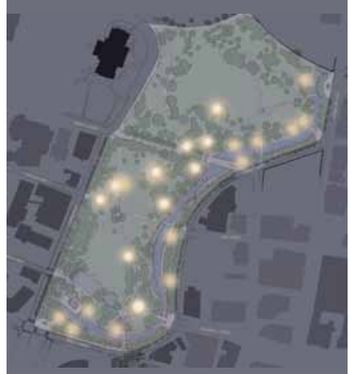
- Capital cost (Initial)
- Operational cost (Maintenance & Energy)
- Energy efficient / long life light sources (e.g. Metal halide, LED)
- Appropriate standard of durability

URBAN ROOM



Illuminate key facades surrounding the park (including the railroad wall at west end) to reinforce transparency through the park and create the sense of a great "urban room."

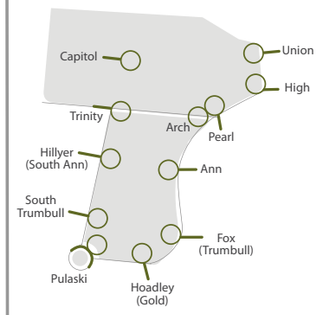
TREE LIGHTING



Selectively uplight the park's "champion" specimen trees.

MONUMENTS

Highlight historic monuments and important structures to celebrate the park's rich heritage and clarify its organization and various uses.

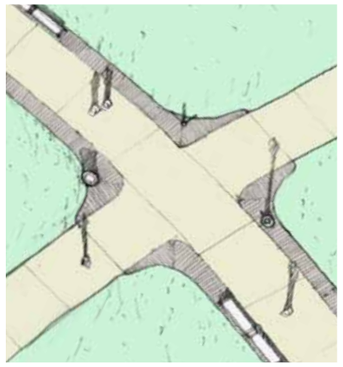


Existing and Proposed Gates

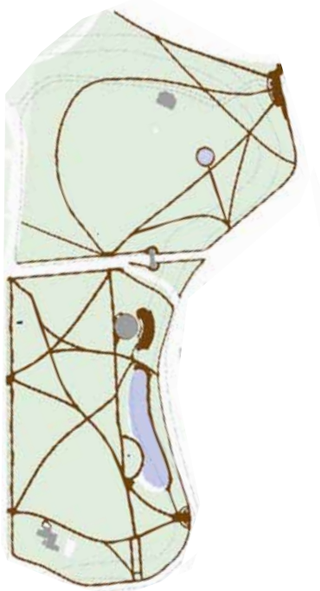
Gates, Paths and Furnishings

Bushnell Park's gates and paths are the vital links with the city around it. The restoration plan places new emphasis on gateways, enhancing existing ones while naming and adding new ones at critical locations. As a threshold between city and park, each gateway will provide a place to pause, sit, or get information -- facilities, programing or wayfinding -- before proceeding.

The pathway network is revised to highlight features and connections within the park, and to better integrate the park with downtown's pedestrian network. Pathway materials are kept simple and maintainable - concrete and pavers - but organized to delineate a furnishing strip and to protect vulnerable turf and plantings.

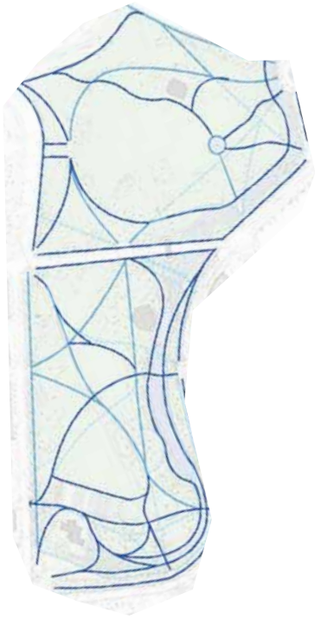


PROPOSED PAVING AND INTERSECTION TREATMENT



EXISTING PATH SYSTEM

Existing Path



PROPOSED PATH SYSTEM

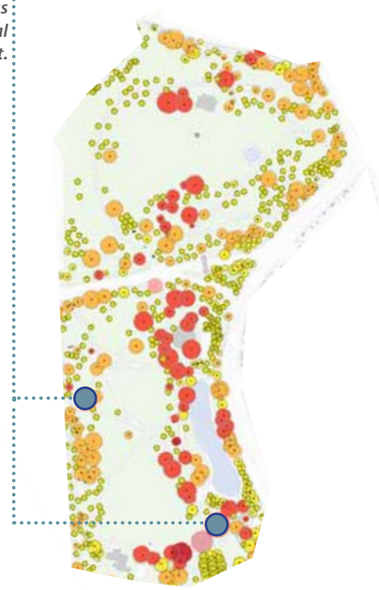
New Path
Existing Path to Remain
Existing Path to be Removed

For the City of Hartford and the State of Connecticut, the celebrated Charter Oak is an extraordinarily important symbol - historically, culturally, and botanically. The two Charter Oak scions in Bushnell Park are given new prominence, both as beloved trees and as valuable cultural assets within the iQuilt.

Trees

Trees are an essential part of the park's character, offering history, comfort and environmental benefit. The plan focuses on the legacy of existing trees, enriches the palette, and anticipates the future as trees age and go into decline. There are more than 700 existing trees, of which around 290 pre-date the major platings of 1988. Through path realignments, the plan enhances the prominence of the Charter Oak scions. The plan emphasizes deciduous trees over shrubs to maintain open vistas.

The new stream course impacts a large number of trees - an estimated 286 - many of which are among the park's younger trees (only 49 are pre-1988). In adding flowing water to the park, the plan adds approximately 225 new trees to the 23 that will remain along the watercourse's path.



EXISTING TREE PLAN

Charter Oak scions
Weidenmann
1870- 1940
Olmsted 1940-45
1945-1988

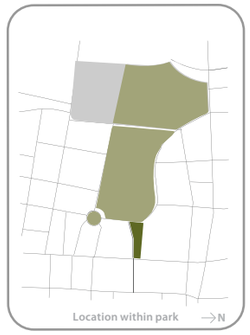
PROPOSED TREE PLAN

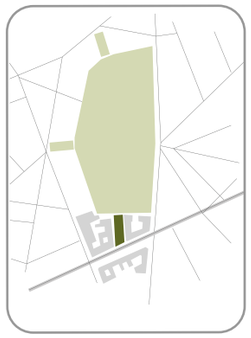
289 total impacted, including
49 historic (pre-1988) trees

225 new planted +
423 remaining

BUSHNELL PARK RESTORATION AND EXTENSION PLAN

Bushnell Gardens



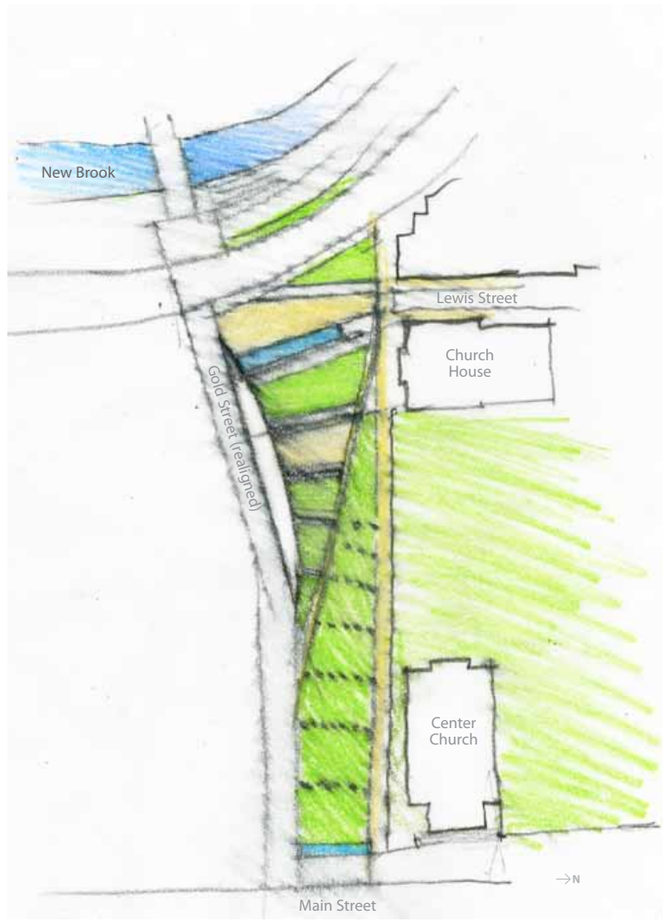


Like Bushnell Park, the Parc Monceau in Paris is one block from the main boulevard, but is beautifully linked by a garden extension

Bushnell Gardens will be the first expansion of Bushnell Park in its 150 year history.

By realigning Gold Street with the new Hoadley Bridge, Bushnell Gardens will connect Bushnell Park to Main Street, providing a critical but missing link in the GreenWalk. The gardens transform the existing roadway and unused lawn into a 1.5 acre model park for sustainable land use, rain harvesting, native gardens, cultural activity, and public engagement.

The orientation of the Gardens and the realignment of Gold Street emphasize the striking visual axis to the Capitol



Bushnell
GARDENS

WALKING
& BIKING / TRANSIT

Create a vibrant gathering place for people to walk to, and enhance the connections of downtown's pedestrian network

CULTURE
& HOSPITALITY

Link downtown cultural destinations, and highlight the historic and cultural features of the site

INNOVATION
& SUSTAINABILITY

Showcase innovation in land stewardship through water management and sustainable design

THE HARTFORD JAZZ SOCIETY
50th
KEEPING JAZZ ALIVE
ANNIVERSARY
1960 – 2010

GREATER HARTFORD FESTIVAL OF JAZZ

Bushnell Gardens is the site of the Heublein Hotel, a venerable landmark and the birthplace of Hartford's jazz scene in the 1950's and 60's. The Gardens celebrate the Heublein's legacy with a café, terrace, and jazz circle.

ATTRACTIONS

A striking linear pavilion houses pop up design labs, information centers, and refreshments of local origin. Cultural amenities include the new Heublein terrace, café, and jazz circle, which celebrate the architectural, culinary, and jazz musical history of an extraordinary Hartford institution.

Additional attractions include a UConn / Ballard School puppet theater, information booth, restrooms, kiosks with historic and cultural information, and public art including Carl André's Stone Field Sculpture. A new camera obscura will provide unusual views of the site and highlight the site's exceptional history of photography and daguerrotype.

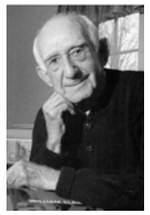
The Gardens incorporate Hartford's central segment of the 1,000-mile East Coast Greenway and welcomes hikers and bikers with special facilities, including Hartford's first BikeStation.

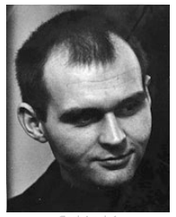
A SITE WITH A RICH CULTURAL HISTORY

The design of the Gardens incorporates the exceptionally rich history of this site, including The Ancient Burying Ground, Center Church's Tiffany windows, America's first school for the deaf, and the Heublein Hotel, birthplace of Hartford's jazz scene. These and other narratives are woven into the features and storytelling component of the gardens.

Emily Holcombe

Louis Comfort Tiffany


Art Fine


Carl André

Lydia Sigourney

Gilbert Heublein

Thomas Gallaudet

Randy Weston

Frederick Law Olmsted

Thomas Hooker

I.M. Pei

Augustus Washington

BUSHNELL PARK RESTORATION AND EXTENSION PLAN

BUSHNELL GARDENS FEATURES

Water tower with cistern

New Main Street gate to Bushnell Park

Downtown Information Center

Carl André's Stone Field Sculpture

Heublein Jazz Circle

BikeStation for East Coast Greenway

View to Capitol along main walkway

Pop-up studios and greenhouses

Formal gardens and urban farming

Picnic area on main lawn

Puppet theater

Heublein Terrace and Café

Heublein

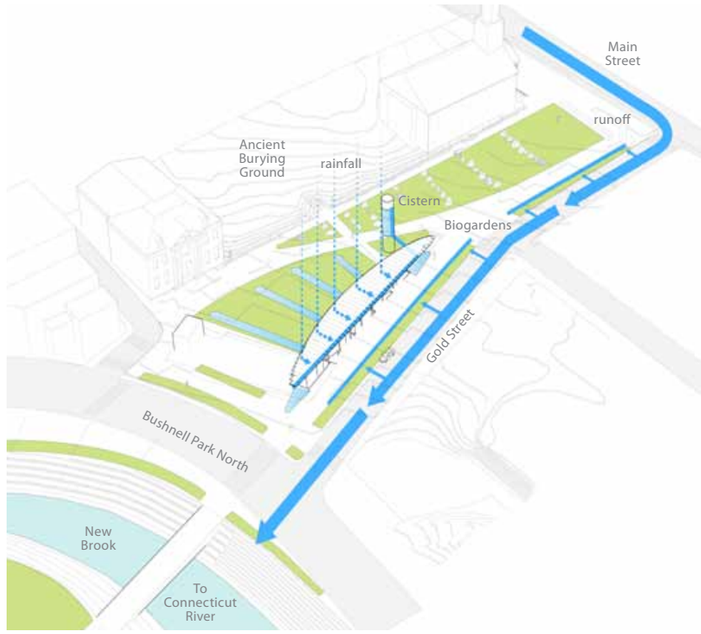
Heublein

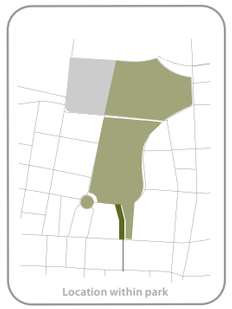
BUSHNELL PARK RESTORATION AND EXTENSION PLAN

BUSHNELL GARDENS GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The site's green infrastructure includes a clocktower with graywater cisterns, bioswales, stormwater gardens, native plantings, teaching gardens, urban farming, greenhouses, and photovoltaic panels. Its pedestrian and transit features include pedestrian wayfinding maps and signs; new transit shelters, maps and information; and zero net energy electric car charging stations.

The site is organized to capture stormwater runoff from the Main Street watershed, from the Ancient Burying Ground, and from within the site itself; rainwater is stored as "graywater" in the tower cistern and reused on the site for irrigation and other purposes. Other stormwater is cleaned either through infiltration or in biogardens before returning to the new brook and from there to the Connecticut River.



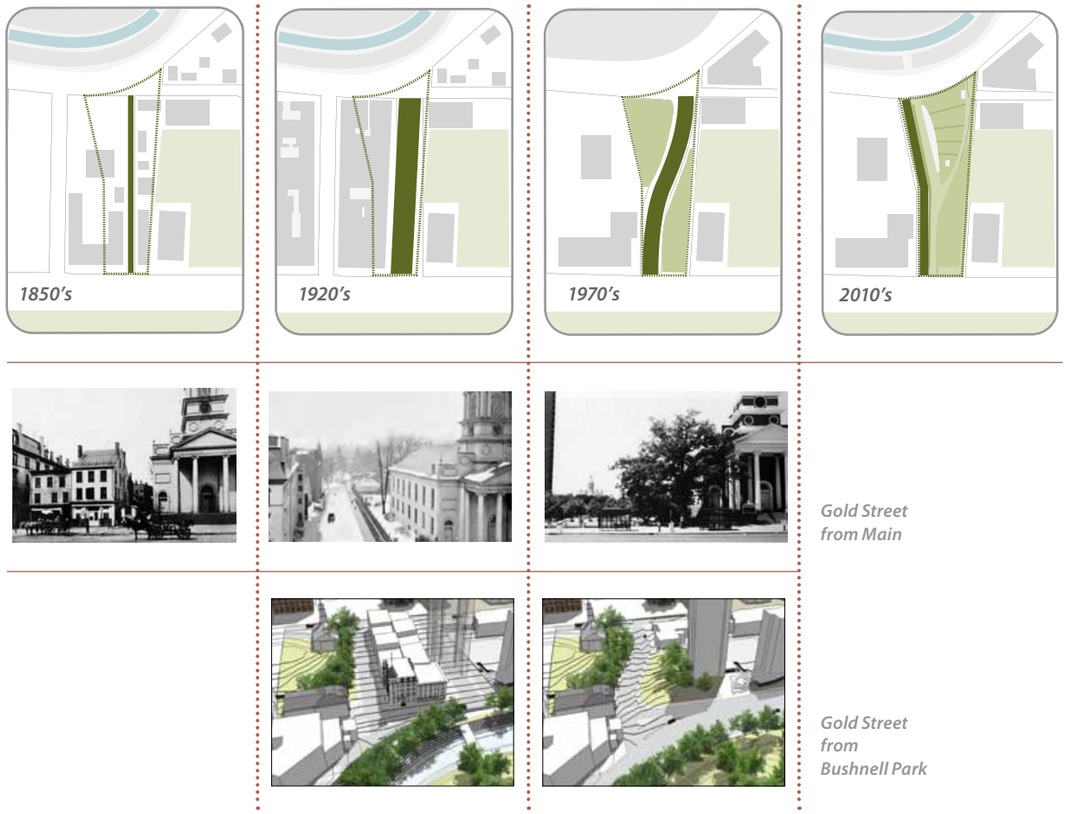


BUSHNELL PARK RESTORATION AND EXTENSION PLAN

Gold Street

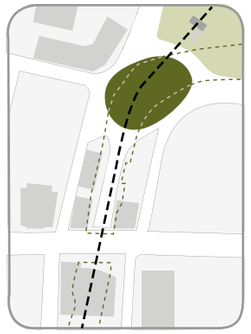
From its origins as a narrow alley, Gold Street has been reconfigured twice. In the 1920's, it was widened to create a dignified border and gate for the previously hidden Ancient Burying Ground. Several tenement buildings were removed in the process. In the 1970's, the area was redeveloped and all buildings south of Gold Street were cleared to make way for the Bushnell Plaza complex. Gold Street was curved to align its Main Street end with Atheneum Square North. This created two triangular parcels. One became the site of the public art work, Stone Field Sculpture. The other has remained a little used lawn.

The iQuilt Plan proposes to narrow and realign Gold Street southward, creating the site for Bushnell Gardens. The street will remain open to vehicular traffic and will continue to have on-street parking. The alignment is parallel to the diagonal footpath in Bushnell gardens that captures the view of the Capitol dome; Gold Street itself will visually terminate on the relocated Carousel, which will provide a landmark destination and an illuminated beacon at night.

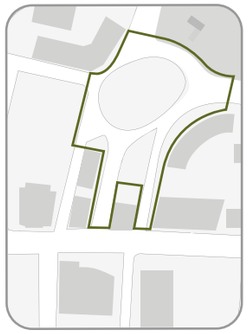


1850's
Historic Park River

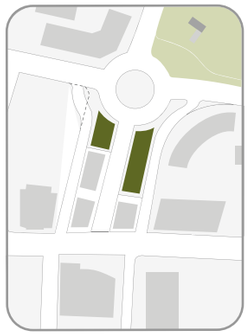
1920's
Hudson Street Bridge



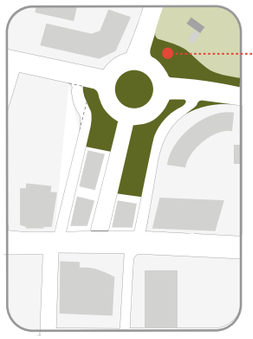
1940's - 1960's
River Conduit & Pulaski Circle



4.5 Acres of City Owned Land



Potential New Development



Proposed Pulaski Circle and Gate, with Recaptured Park Land

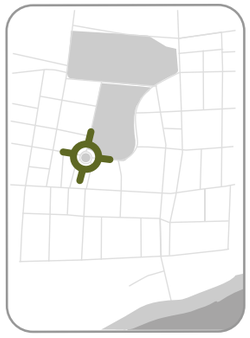
General Pulaski statue relocated from Main to mark Pulaski Gate

ELM STREET MALL

Bushnell and Weidenman's original design for Bushnell Park (below left) called for a "mall" -- a promenade and double row of trees -- running parallel to Elm Street; elements of it are still visible today. In conjunction with the new Pulaski Gate, the Elm Street mall will be restored.

BUSHNELL PARK RESTORATION AND EXTENSION PLAN

Pulaski Circle

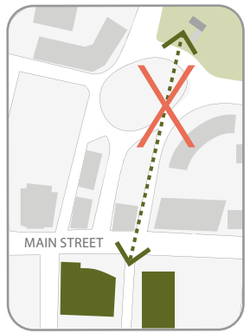


Project Location within Downtown

This project will reconfigure the existing but obsolete traffic circle with a smaller (148' diameter) two-lane roundabout, designed to modern standards. This will dramatically improve the area's walkability, while accommodating vehicular traffic in a more efficient manner. Ample crosswalks will ring the circle. Pedestrians will be able to move easily from the SoDo neighborhood north along Hudson to Bushnell Gardens; and from the Hartford Public Library and City Hall along Wells Street to Bushnell Park.

The reconfiguration will return nearly an acre of former park land to Bushnell Park, creating a new Pulaski Gate at the park's southeast corner, marked by the relocated statue of General Pulaski. This will be the primary gateway for school groups. Nearby, along the park's eastern edge, the roadway will be reconfigured to create a drop-off zone for school buses and community groups. The center of the roundabout will be a sustainable landscape of approximately 100' in diameter.

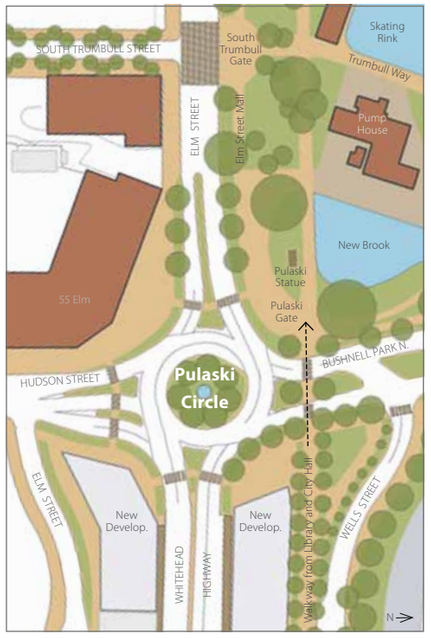
The reconfiguration will also make several acres of publicly owned land, now devoted to asphalt and unused traffic, available for housing and mixed used development.

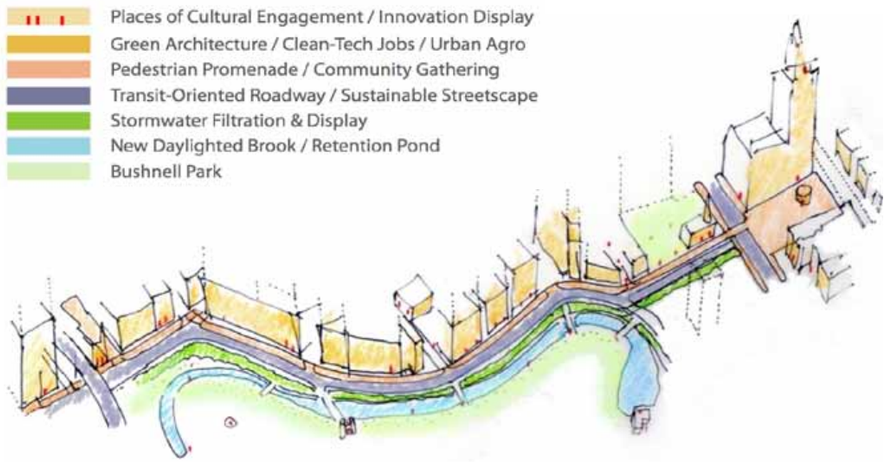


Pulaski Circle's shape and traffic speeds now effectively inhibit walking from the Library and City Hall to Bushnell Park

Pulaski Circle (below) can be reduced and reconfigured to modern standards, comparable to Annapolis's walkable new Westgate Circle (bottom), which has generated redevelopment around it.

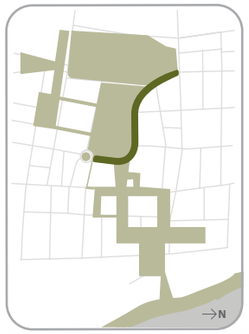
Careful traffic studies show that the reconfiguration can handle traffic loads, reduce speeds, and create a walkable environment, with potential housing on land now used for roadway.



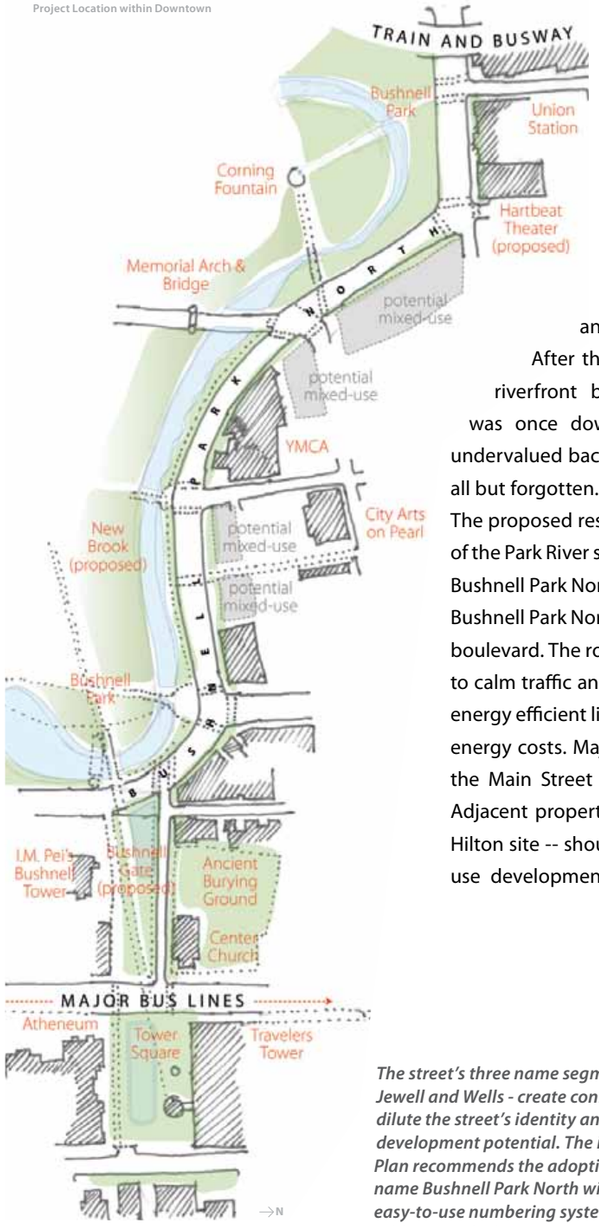


BUSHNELL PARK RESTORATION AND EXTENSION PLAN

Bushnell Park North



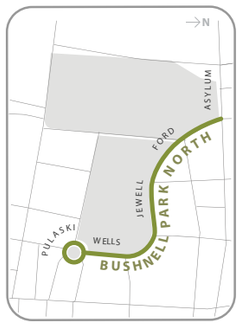
Project Location within Downtown



Bushnell Park North is the street between Asylum and Main along the northern edge of Bushnell Park. For nearly a century, the street's landmark buildings created an elegantly curving wall, which paralelled the undulating Park River. An architectural parade of luxury hotels, commercial buildings, and bustling factories presented a showplace of urbanity and innovation. South facing, sunlit, and mirrored in the river, the brick and brownstone facades created an urbane backdrop to the lawns of Bushnell Park. After the Park River was buried in the 1940's, many of the riverfront buildings were abandoned or demolished. What was once downtown's front façade became a moribund and undervalued back edge. The dramatically curving riverfront wall was all but forgotten.

The proposed restoration of flowing water along the old watercourse of the Park River should add visibility and value to the properties along Bushnell Park North. The iQuilt Plan recommends the reconception of Bushnell Park North as a beautiful, vibrant, sustainable, and innovative boulevard. The roadway, sidewalks, and crosswalks will be redesigned to calm traffic and encourage walking. New sidewalk furnishings and energy efficient lighting will create an attractive ambiance and reduce energy costs. Major transit facilities at each end – Union Station and the Main Street bus corridor – will be integrated into the design. Adjacent properties -- including the old YMCA and former Hartford Hilton site -- should be able to support cafés, restaurants and mixed-use development, which could include artist and actors housing.

The street's three name segments - Ford, Jewell and Wells - create confusion, dilute the street's identity and dampen development potential. The iQuilt Plan recommends the adoption of the name Bushnell Park North with a new, easy-to-use numbering system for street addresses. The historic names would be memorialized on street name signs.



Conceptual aerial view of Tower Square, Bushnell Gardens, and Bushnell Park.

Note: the rendering of Tower Square is illustrative only; the final design may vary significantly.

Project Location within Downtown

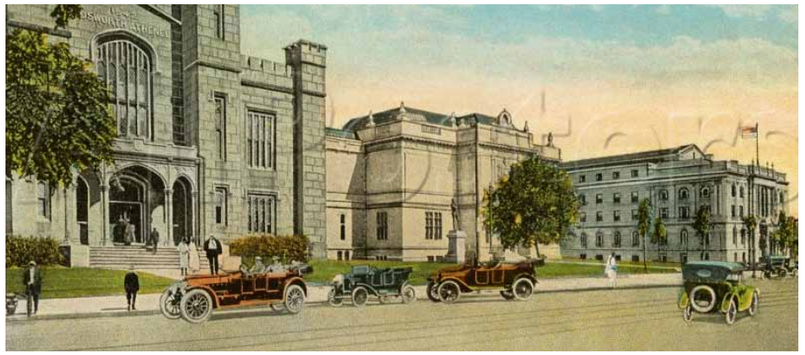
Tower Square

Tower Square is the 1.5-acre outdoor space between Travelers Tower and the Wadsworth Atheneum, bounded by Main Street on the west and Prospect Street on the east. Travelers owns the 1-acre raised plaza; the street (somewhat confusingly named Atheneum Square North) is a public right-of-way. The iQuilt envisions this as a single, integrated public space to be called Tower Square, which would serve as the hub of the iQuilt and downtown. It can become a kind of "living room" for all of Hartford, comparable to the similarly sized Pioneer Courthouse Square in Portland.

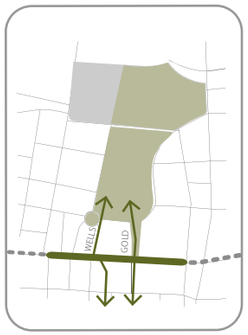
Tower Square has the potential to become one of the most vibrant and successful public spaces in the country.

Given the square's central location, its accessibility on foot and by transit, its favorable scale and solar orientation (with the taller buildings on the north side), its landmark buildings, its wealth of nearby cultural assets, the immediate adjacency of the Atheneum (100,000 visitors a year) and Travelers (more than 6,000 employees), and the proposed adjacency of Bushnell Park (when extended to Main Street via Bushnell Gardens), Tower Square has the potential to become one of the most vibrant and successful public spaces in the country.

Under the direction of a public-private partnership led by Travelers, the Atheneum, and the City of Hartford, the space can be transformed with outdoor seating, cafés, and landscaping. Travelers has plans to resurface the plaza and intends to make other improvements that may involve the removal of the high walls and planters, all associated with the renovation of the 172-car garage below the plaza. At the same time, the Atheneum is exploring the relocation of its interior café to a location along its north facade, facing Tower Square. The City is also considering a "road diet" for Atheneum Square North that could improve conditions for pedestrian activity. These three initiatives provide an extraordinary opportunity to jointly plan and design the space as the virtual centerpiece of the GreenWalk and the iQuilt.



Project Location within Downtown



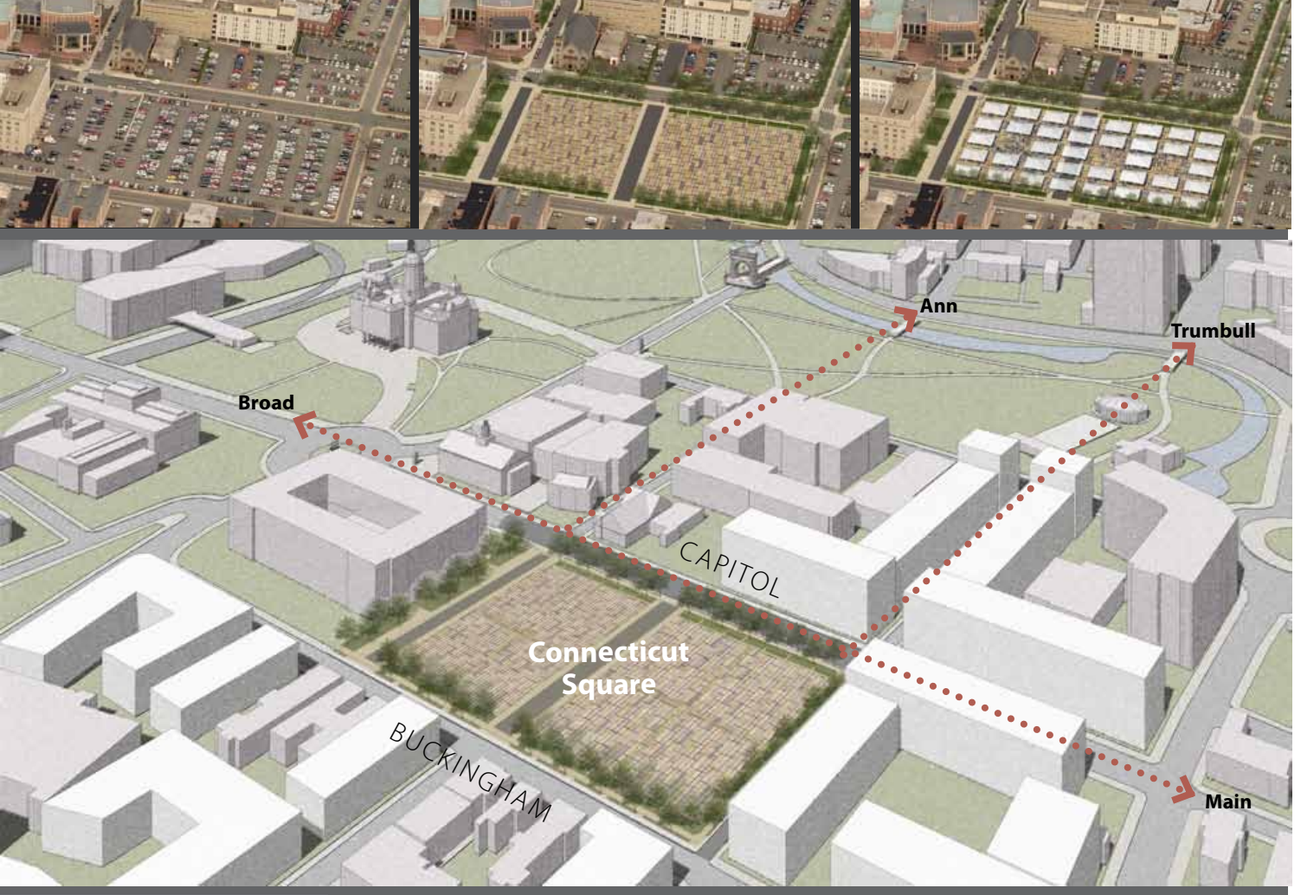
The intersection of the GreenWalk and Main Street is the principal crossroads of the iQuilt plan; the two critical links are at Wells (to Burr Mall) and at Gold (to Tower Square).

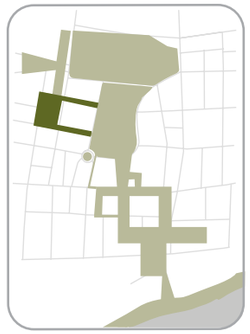
Main Street

The iQuilt Plan makes recommendations to Main Street primarily in the vicinity of Gold Street, where Bushnell Gardens creates a new gateway into Bushnell Park. The intersection of Main Street and the GreenWalk is the principal crossroads of the iQuilt Plan, and therefore a site of critical importance.
In addition to recommended improvements over the long term, it is also suggested that this area is a natural candidate site for pilot projects and the testing of prototypes that can be applied elsewhere in downtown. In iQuilt Phase 3, the full length of Main Street will be addressed, especially with respect to bus transit and streetscape.

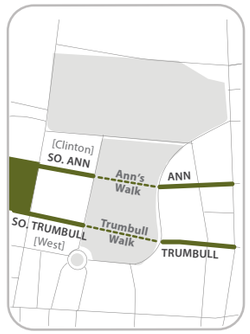
- Improve the functionality and symbolic importance of this length of Main Street- roughly a quarter mile length from Wells Street at the south, to The Old State House at the north
- Provide visual and experiential continuity between Hartford's most important historic, civic, cultural, and commercial buildings
- Create a "Downtown Crossing" at the intersection with east/west path of the GreenWalk
- Transform Main Street into a Complete Street
- Pedestrian Amenities - Encourage walking and enjoyment with street trees, paving, and benches
- Environmental Improvements - Crosswalks of permeable pavers, bioswales at bus shelters and in front of key sites - Bushnell Gardens, Ancient Burial Ground, The Old State House, Tower Square, Bushnell Towers, The Wadsworth Atheneum, City Hall, and the Hartford Public Library
- Provide amenities for a broader range of users - Transit riders: new bus shelters, transit information displays, wayfinding; Cyclists: bike lanes; Pedestrians: street trees, benches, wayfinding
- Bump-outs at crosswalks shorten crossing distances to encourage the east/west pedestrian use of the GreenWalk
- Pilot Projects bring bus shelters, street trees and sustainable plantings, wayfinding, benches, and other street improvements in the immediate term to demonstrate citywide street elements
- Road Diet benefits and improved bus operations and stops will be part of the upcoming Phase 3 Main Street study from Trumbull to Park Street

New Main Street Gate to Bushnell Park through Bushnell Gardens





Project Location within Downtown



Recommended path naming and street renaming to achieve north-south continuity for pedestrians through Bushnell Park

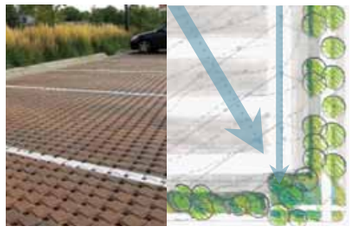
Connecticut Square

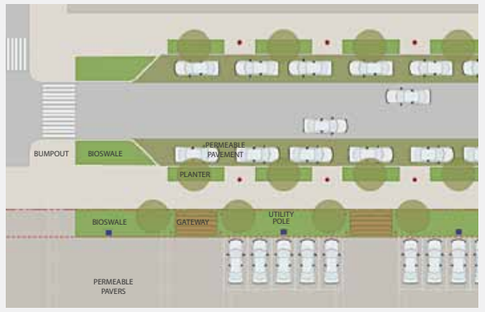
The iQuilt Plan includes the transformation of this 6.3 acre, 700-car State-owned surface parking lot into a sustainable, mixed-use public square. The space will continue to serve much of the time as parking for the State and for Bushnell patrons. But new electrical and lighting infrastructure will allow the square to host festivals, markets and performances on nights, weekends, and holidays. Its new perimeter landscaping will enhance the surrounding streets and neighborhoods. And its green infrastructure for stormwater will make the Connecticut Square and its surrounding streets a model of multi-use, sustainable design.

The site will be regraded and refinished with permeable pavers. Bioswales will border the site's perimeter. Site runoff is collected at the southeast end of the site in a rain garden. All these features will manage the quantity of stormwater runoff, reducing the contaminants that drain into the Connecticut River and Long Island Sound.

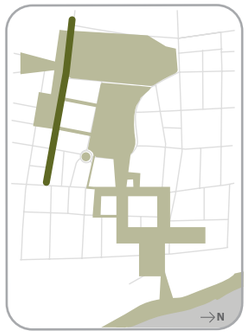
The plan includes dedicated preferred parking spaces for electric vehicles, carpools, vanpools, and bicycles. The square will have event infrastructure - power, lighting, and mechanical accessories - to support a range of activities. The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts will take a lead role in managing and programming activities.

Beyond the square's central space, bordering streets - Capitol Avenue and Buckingham Streets, as well as West and Clinton Streets - will receive sustainable streetscape improvements to improve neighborhood quality of life, encourage walking, especially north across Bushnell Park to the central business district, and south to the businesses on Park Street and to Hartford Hospital.





Proposed street and sidewalk reconfiguration of Capitol Avenue, with potential housing and mixed uses on the north side along Connecticut Square



Project Location within Downtown

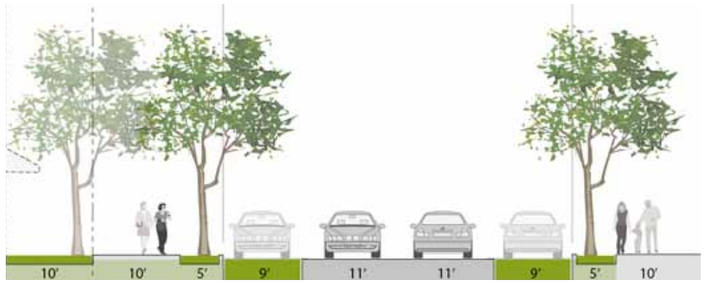
Capitol Avenue

Recommendations

- Improve the length of Capitol Avenue using the standards and ideas established in the Greening America's Capitals Charrette
- Engage stakeholders along the length of the avenue to participate in the refinement of the existing design work
- Review and transform the avenue according to the standards of a "Complete Street"

Background

- Work done to date is federally funded and supported by the Greening America's Capitals program
- Creates a Complete Street consistent with the importance of an avenue connecting Downtown with the State's Legislative Office Building, and linking SODO, Connecticut Square, The Bushnell (and its possible campus), the State Office Building, the State Library and Museum, and the State Capitol
- Transforms Capitol Avenue into a Complete Street
- Pedestrian Amenities-Encourages walking and enjoyment with street trees, paving, and benches
- Environmental Improvements-Crosswalks of permeable pavers, bioswales
- Provide amenities for a broader range of users-Transit riders: new bus shelters, transit information displays, wayfinding; Cyclists: bike lanes; Pedestrians-street trees, benches, wayfinding
- Bump-outs at intersections, and new cross walks and corner geometries encourage north/south pedestrian linkages to Bushnell Park and SODO at West and Clinton Streets
- Improves the north side of Connecticut Square and links this multi-use urban space with The Bushnell, The Capitol, and Downtown



Proposed road diet, complete street, and green infrastructure on Capitol Avenue near the Bushnell

Implementation

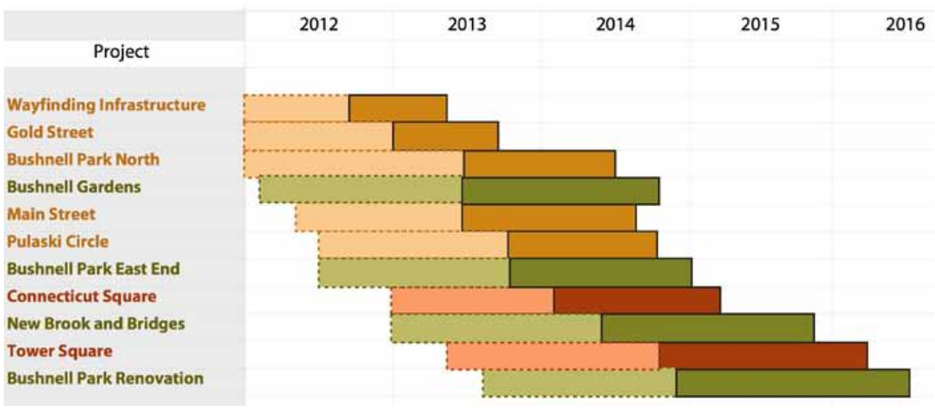
3

Phasing

The iQuilt Plan is not a single large project, but a framework and strategy for a constellation of related, mutually reinforcing projects. These range from small to large, from marketing and private investment to bonding and public infrastructure. The phasing of projects will to a large extent be determined by the economic climate on the private side, and the availability of funds on the public side.

The hypothetical phasing plan below makes a series of assumptions which may not prove to be the case, but it is based primarily on the cost, complexity, and lead time required under optimal circumstances. In any event, there is a broad concensus that it is important to begin, and that is reflected in the emphasis on smaller, doable projects, such as wayfinding, the realignment of Gold Street, and various pilot projects. The success of Winterfest as presented by iQuilt is indicative of the goodwill and encouragement generated by positive early steps. For this reason, iNVISIONFEST, scheduled for September 2012, is organized as both a testing ground for many of the iQuilt initiatives, and as a means to broaden public understanding and engagement.

HYPOTHETICAL CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENT & CONSTRUCTION PHASES



Costs and Funding Sources

Funding to implement various aspects of the iQuilt plan will come from a multiplicity of sources: public, private, non-profit, and combinations. Key categories for potential funding include:

Transportation
pedestrian, bike, bus, rail, historic bridge structures
Sustainability
green infrastructure, stormwater management, energy conservation, green building, housing near transit, trip reduction
Economic Development
job creation, arts economy, housing construction, parks enhancement, workforce attraction and retention
Creative Placemaking
Arts as economic and social catalyst; support for artistic production

The estimates below are preliminary and based only on conceptual drawings rather than on well defined construction documents. Nonetheless they offer an indication of the relative scope and scale of the principal parts of the plan.

PRELIMINARY ESTIMATED COSTS

Streets
Squares
Parks

Project	Preliminary Cost Estimate	
	Construction Documents	Construction
Wayfinding Infrastructure	$90K	$1.0 million
Gold Street	$198K	$2.2 million
Bushnell Park North	$873K	$9.7 million
Bushnell Gardens	$612K	$6.8 million
Main Street	$90K	$1.0 million
Pulaski Circle	$234K	$2.6 million
Bushnell Park East End	$612K	$6.8 million
Connecticut Square	$1,116K	$12.4 million
New Brook and Bridges	$2,556K	$28.4 million
Tower Square	tbd	tbd
Bushnell Park Renovation	$792K	$8.8 million

Everyday Programming

Develop strategies for the everyday use of public space

Achieving successful, vibrant public space in downtown Hartford requires not only a roster of ongoing programs and special events, but a combination of uses which create everyday liveliness – day and night, weekdays and weekends, all year long. This can best be achieved through a combination of well designed public spaces, strong connections to nearby office workers, complementary active uses within the space and on adjacent private property, and the growth of an increasingly robust downtown residential population – all key elements of the iQuilt Plan. Programming can be designed and operated not only to draw users but to generate revenue whenever possible.

CALCULATING THE POTENTIAL FOR SUCCESS OF HARTFORD'S PUBLIC SPACES

This diagram shows the potential to activate the GreenWalk's public space core from the Pump House to Travelers Plaza; sustained public space vibrancy at the critical periods of lunchtime and after-work depends most heavily on close walking proximity (4-6 minutes) to sufficient numbers of office workers. Assuming an adequate pool of potential users, the public spaces must then be carefully programmed to succeed.

People Per Building
Class A Office and State Office Buildings
(based on total leased square footage divided by 250 s.f. per person)

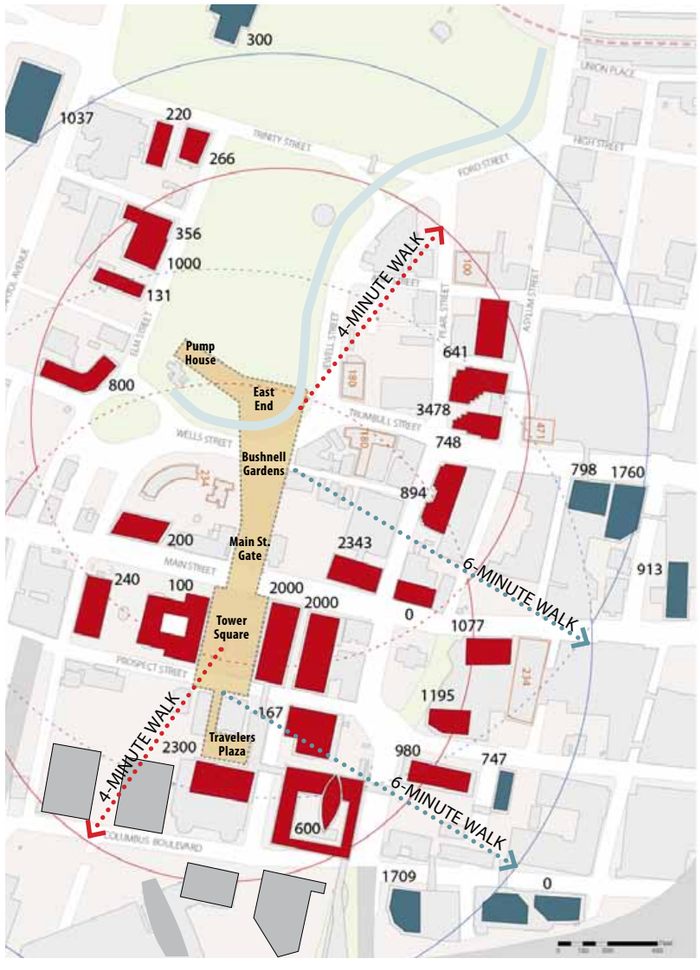
- # of people working in buildings within 1000' radius (4-minute walk)
- # of people working in buildings within 1500' radius (6-minute walk)
- residential buildings - # of units at 1.8 people per unit (identified but not added)

30,113 people

at 1% market share

301 number of people expected to visit project area

2.40 acres at a visitor density of 125 people/acre



Management and Maintenance

A key recommendation of the iQuilt plan is that any investments in the improvement of public space - parks, streets, squares - be accompanied by long-term commitments for their maintenance and management. In light of ebbing public finances, cities around the country have found the most successful approach is the creation of public-private organizations whose mission focuses on the sustained care and management of one or more public spaces. Working in close coordination with city and regional government agencies, these organizations consolidate and unify management structure, and facilitate planning, decision making, and execution. Private sector experience and efficiencies can bee applied to such activities as food service, performances, and special events. This approach minimizes impacts from public revenue shortfalls and political turnover, and supports sponsorship and fundraising efforts from corporations, individuals, and the general public.

Downtown Hartford has two very successful models of this hybrid approach. The Hartford Business Improvement District has been providing critical services in much of downtown and Asylum Hill for the last 5 years. Along the Connecticut River, the non-profit Riverfront Recapture provides exceptional programming and management services with the public agency MDC providing overall maintenance. These organizations are exceptionally well positioned to continue, in partnership with the City of Hartford, and to expand their roles in the management and maintenance of iQuilt-related public space initiatives.

Caring for Hartford's Parks

The critical situation regarding the management and maintenance of Hartford's parks and public spaces has been carefully studied in three outstanding documents (below). Their general recommendations should guide specific actions related to Bushnell Park and other public spaces on the GreenWalk. The documents may be downloaded from the iQuilt website (www.iquiltplan.org).

Hartford's Parks Report (2011) by the Green Ribbon Task Force

At Risk: City of Hartford Parks System (2009) by the Cultural Landscape Foundation

The Park System of Hartford: Renewing a Historic Legacy (2007) by the Trust for Public Land

Special Events

Downtown Hartford's public space becomes quite active when major special events - such as the Marathon, sports events at the XL Center, or Riverfront concerts - take place. While the true test of downtown's vitality will be sidewalk vibrancy on an everyday basis (see above right), special events are an important component of the iQuilt Strategic Plan. Key recommendations are:

- Create a special events calendar to allow all stakeholders to jointly plan and coordinate
- Bring together the many downtown entities, including the BID, Metro Hartford, Convention Center, and Riverfront Recapture, to develop an overall special events strategy aimed at bringing large and diverse audiences to downtown
- Develop event infrastructure at key sites such as Bushnell Park to avoid temporary infrastructure (such as generators) with its attendant high costs and potential physical damage
- Develop a special events parking strategy that encourages walking and increases foot traffic near downtown shops, restaurants, and cultural destinations
- Use the annual iNVISIONFEST (see page 111) as a tool to develop and test innovative approaches to the planning and execution of special events which can activate all of downtown

14 Pilot Projects

PiLOT PROJECT

Developing and implementing pilot projects is a key part of the iQuilt strategy, to test ideas, raise public awareness engagement, achieve early successes, and build confidence for larger projects. The pilot projects are expected to:

- Jumpstart larger improvements to experiment and innovate
- Heighten public awareness, elicit input, increase public support
- Establish Bushnell Gardens as a showcase
- Create prototypes for wider application
- Foster innovation and sustainability
- Put ideas into practice - improve pedestrian mobility and wayfinding to sites
- Continue momentum of iQ2
- Gain publicity for Hartford and the iQuilt Plan
- Complement/be part of Innovations Festival

Pop-Up Studio

Map Kiosk

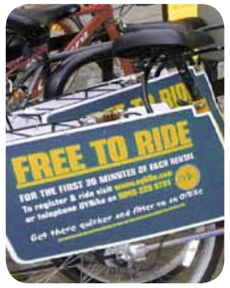
Banners

Childrens Puppet Theater

ballard institute & museum of puppetry

Bus Wraps and Shelters

Biking Amenities

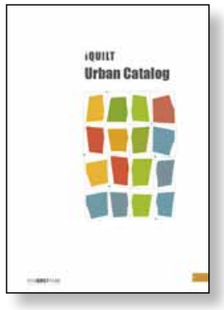


Giant Chess and Checkers

Furniture Showcase

Cultural Markers

Urban Catalog Template

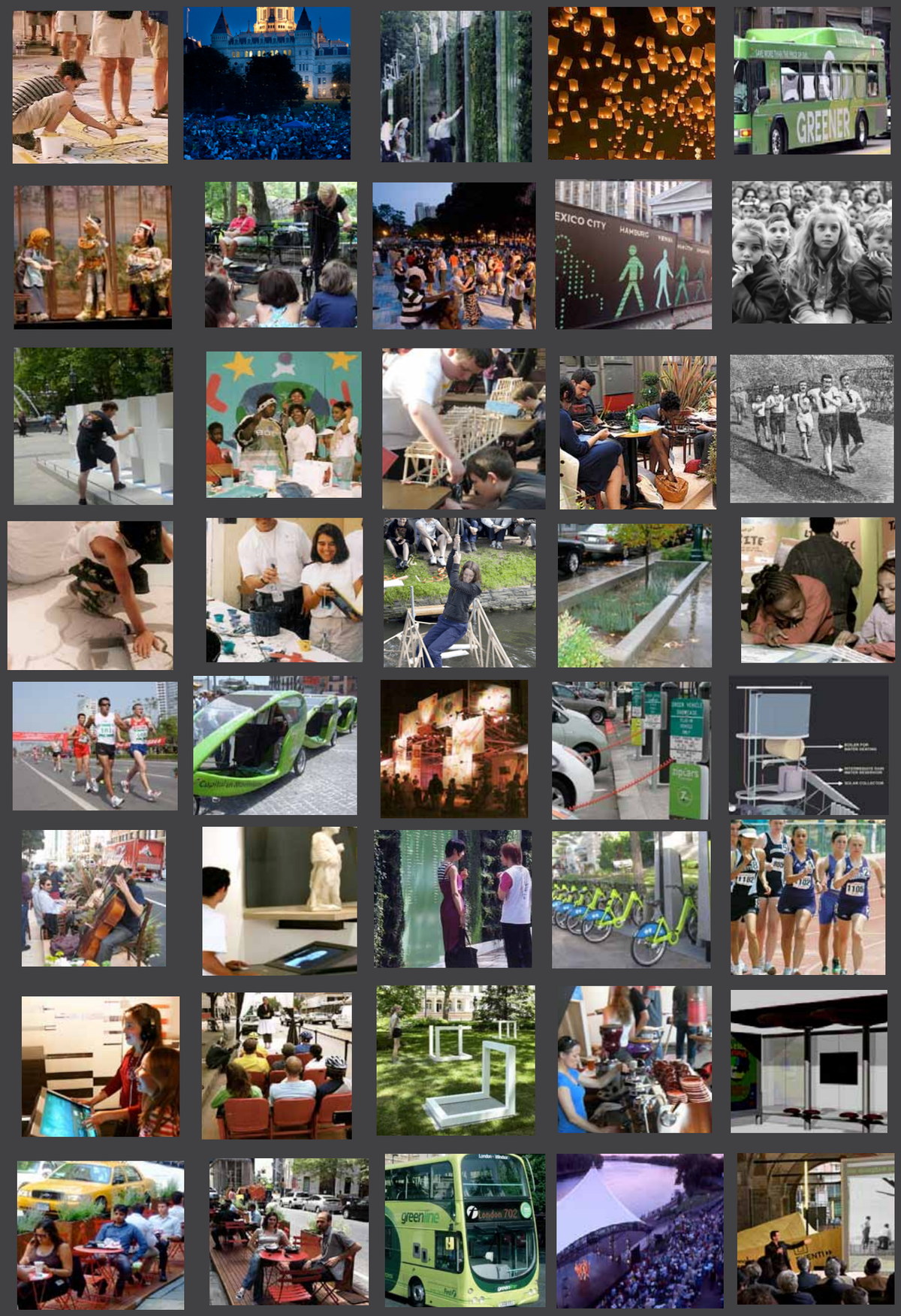


Festival Planning

Wayfinding Signs

Camera Obscura Kiosk

Blanket Program



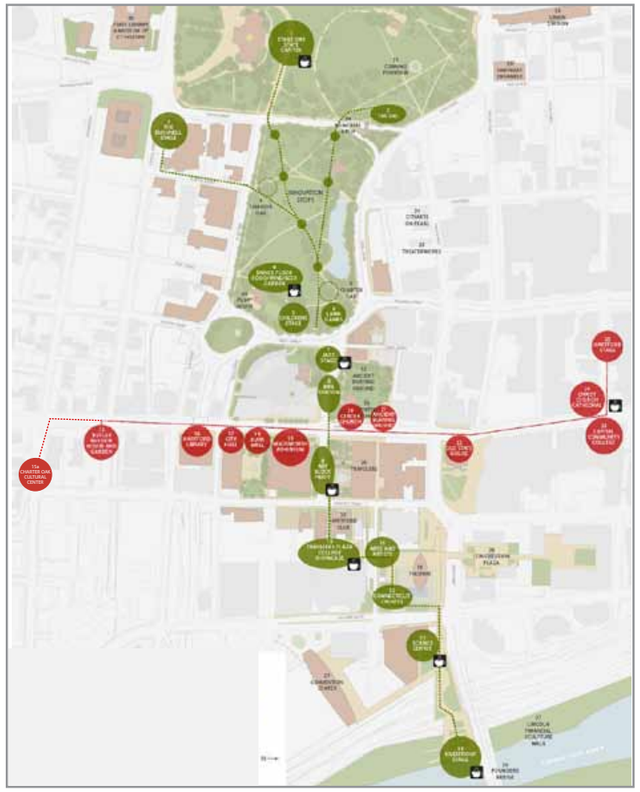
iNVISIONFEST 2012

The iQuilt Plan is developing an event that invites people to see Hartford in a new way. The festival will begin to change perceptions of Hartford by stimulating the senses through culture, innovation, imagination and ingenuity. This celebration of Hartford's urban vitality will begin next September and grow into a multi-year celebration that parallels the transformation underway in Hartford through the progress of the iQuilt plans. The event offers an opportunity to build a collaborative energy and spirit around a shared vision for Hartford.

Hartford's newest event will showcase and celebrate the ingenuity of the city's and state's industries, artists and people, while offering a taste, for the first time, of the transformation of Hartford through the iQuilt plan. Visitors will get a glimpse of the future as they experience the iQuilt through walking, culture and innovation.

Hartford cultural institutions, Connecticut's industries, and artists will celebrate their vision of the future through interactive displays, exhibits, performances and activities in open houses and public spaces throughout downtown, all connected through walking and biking routes. The iQuilt vision will be displayed along the GreenWalk, along with sidewalk activities and prototypes of seating, lighting and signage. Walking throughout downtown will bring visitors to various Hartford destinations, connected with food, drink, music, artists and activities.

iNVISIONFEST
HARTFORD'S FESTIVAL OF WALKING•CULTURE•INNOVATION
2012



NEW HOUSING CAPACITY

Today there are approximately 1475 housing units in the area surrounding Bushnell Park.

Spurred by improvements to the park and public space along the GreenWalk, there may be capacity for as many as 1000-1300 additional units around the park.

Governor Malloy has called for as many as 3,000-4,000 new housing units throughout downtown; the iQuilt and the GreenWalk can support the majority of these.

Collateral Development

The iQuilt Plan team has identified a number of locations where investments in public space could catalyze mutually beneficial development on adjacent private property, and throughout Downtown. In the majority of locations, the recommendation is for "mixed-use" development -- a combination of housing, office, retail, and/or cultural facilities which can satisfy a number of the plan's economic and cultural goals.

POTENTIAL MIXED-USE INFILL PROJECTS

Potential development sites along Bushnell Park North

Potential infill development around Connecticut Square, in line with the SoDo Neighborhood Plan

Potential housing and retail development along Capitol Avenue in conjunction with the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts

Potential housing on recaptured, publicly owned land around the reconfigured Pulaski Circle, adjacent to the new Pulaski Gate into Bushnell Park.

Project Information

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WALKING / CULTURE / INNOVATION

View of the GreenWalk from the Atheneum to the Capitol (rendering of Tower Square is illustrative only).