



IL2 District Planning Study

March, 2020



TRUMBULL IL2 DISTRICT PLANNING STUDY

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LETTER FROM THE FIRST SELECTMAN

I am excited to present these results and recommendations from the Town's planning study of the IL2 zoning district surrounding the intersection of Reservoir Avenue and Lindeman Drive.

This part of our community has always served an important role providing jobs, services, and fiscal benefits for Trumbull. Over the past decade, the area saw significant business exodus and high vacancy. Recently, the district has seen exciting changes as new housing reshapes the land use mix and emerging office market trends pressure property owners to consider how best to position their buildings for relevance in today's and tomorrow's economic landscape.

The Town commissioned this study to begin a holistic conversation about the future of the IL2 district in Trumbull given this region's, and the nation's rapidly changing economic and demographic contexts. The study offers a compelling and achievable vision for a retrofitted IL2 district that leverages existing assets and employs strategic interventions to reposition the area so it can once again benefit the community as much in the future as it has in the past.

The plan focuses on how stakeholders and the Town can work together to generate meaningful, safe, and balanced economic development results.

We invite your support and ideas as we celebrate completing this first step and prepare for the next steps in this exciting journey!

Vicki Tesoro, First Selectman

PROJECT GOALS

PROJECT GOALS

This study's purpose is to envision a new future for the IL2 district and develop strategies to better position the district for economic and community prosperity while reinforcing its established and emerging strengths.

IL2 District Study goals:

- **Guide future development**
- **Promote a sense of neighborhood**
- **Shape public perception of the IL2 District**
- **Conceptualize a brand for the District**
- **Prioritize physical improvements**
- **Build excitement and attract desirable investment**



**CONTEXT AND
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

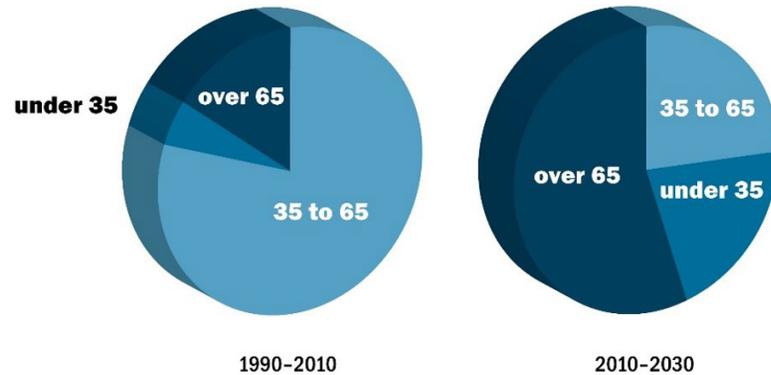
CONTEXT: DEMOGRAPHICS AND HOUSING TRENDS

Baby Boomers and Millennials represent the country's two largest and fastest growing demographic cohorts. These groups have different housing needs and lifestyle preferences than the dominant cohorts before them.

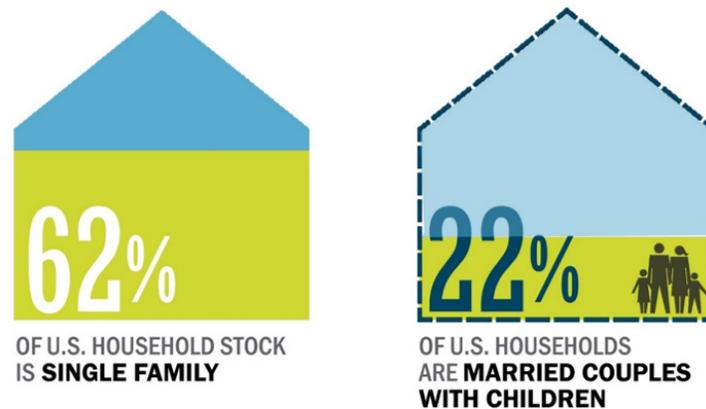
Millennials are having fewer children and waiting longer to have them, resulting in an increased demand for smaller housing units such as apartments and decreased demand for larger single family housing. Boomers generally lack children in their households and therefore are also drawn to smaller, more cost-effective and low-maintenance houses and apartments/condos.

These groups are also attracted to different community environments and resources than previously predominated. In general, Millennials and Boomers are increasingly drawn to walkable neighborhoods with a diversity of retail, dining, service, and leisure amenities as might traditionally be found in urban cores (but which can also occur in small towns and suburban "town centers").

New Normal: A Society Growing Younger and Older



More Houses Built Than Families to Live in Them

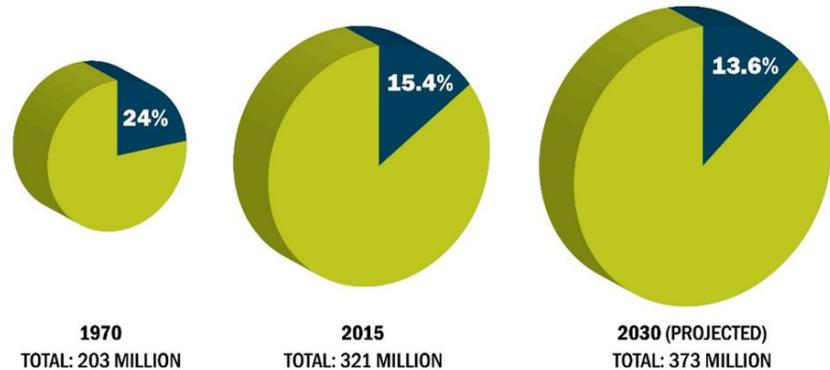


CONTEXT: DEMOGRAPHICS AND HOUSING TRENDS

Trumbull and many suburban communities like it therefore contain an excess of traditional single family houses and a shortage of smaller and multifamily options relative to today's and tomorrow's prevailing demand profiles. Additionally, Trumbull and similar places lack many walkable "town center" environments that Boomers and Millennials increasingly find preferable.

To remain attractive to today's dominant demographic cohorts, Trumbull and its peers need to prioritize augmenting the housing stock and retrofitting neighborhoods to better correspond with demand, generally translating into more compact housing and multifamily development in walkable, amenity-rich neighborhood environments.

School Age Children as a Proportion of the U.S. Population



SOURCE : U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
[HTTPS://WWW.CHILDSTATS.GOV/AMERICASCHILDREN/TABLES/POP1.ASP](https://www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/tables/pop1.asp)



Today's largest demographic groups and their employers increasingly prefer living, working, and investing in walkable, amenity-rich environments.

CONTEXT: SHIFTING WORKPLACE AND EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Related to the aforementioned shifts in prevailing lifestyle preferences, growing segments of the working-age population prefer workplaces in walkable, amenity-rich, neighborhood environments. Due to a tightening labor market – especially among high-skilled jobs – employers trying to attract top talent must locate their offices in places and environments reflecting their employees preferences.

Additionally, remote working has pushed employees into a broader range of environments ranging from home offices to coworking spaces to coffeeshops. This gives employees more freedom to life and work where they like.

Comparing commercial rents over time in cities versus suburbs illustrates how these workplace trends impact the office market. Rents in downtown environments are rising much more quickly than suburban rents which are effectively stagnant.

In order to protect the value of their office supply, suburban communities like Trumbull should encourage retrofitting employment centers with the sorts of amenities, flexible offices, shared workspaces, and walkable environments attractive to today's workforce and, by extension, attractive to today's employers.

Average Office Rents Over Time by Location

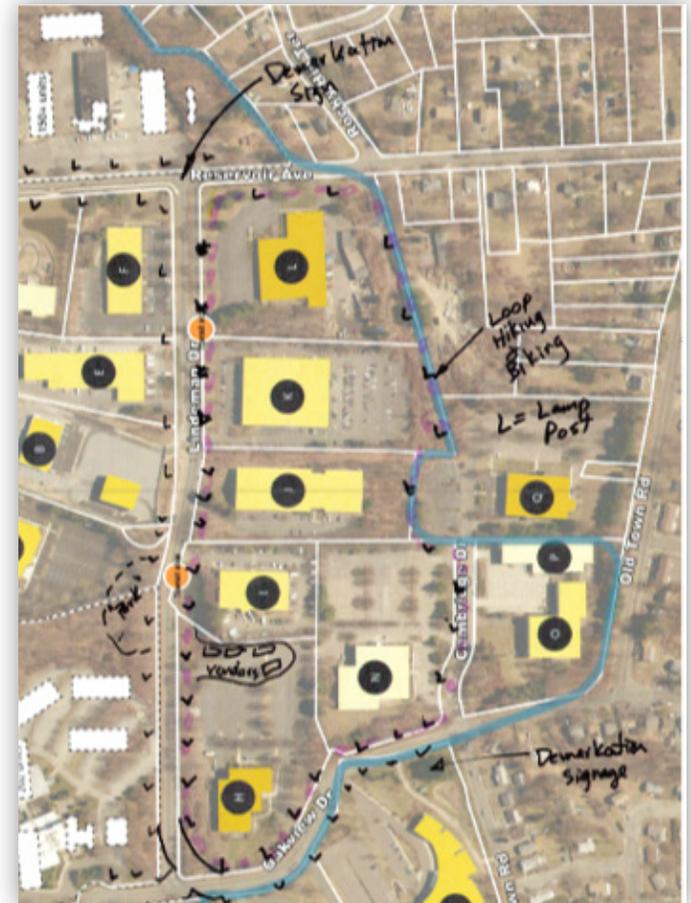
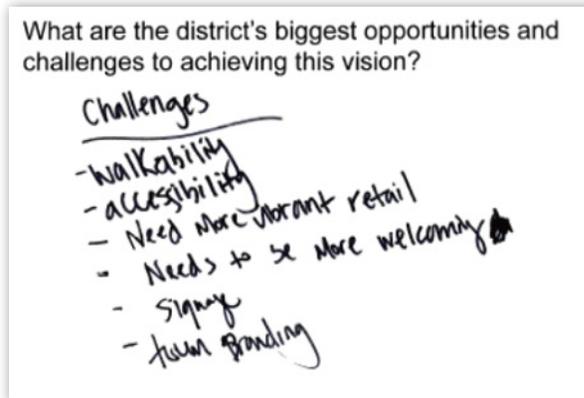
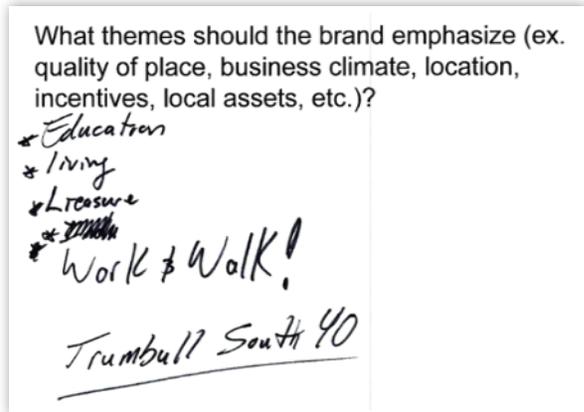


COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The IL2 District study process included broad engagement with the community including numerous interviews with stakeholders such as local business and property owners and an on-site community workshop.

Key themes and ideas we heard from community stakeholders:

- Address vacancy
- Residential development viewed as positive.
- Need for lifestyle and convenience retail.
- Add services and amenities that complement new residential development in the district
- Expect more pedestrian and vehicle traffic.
- Reduce industrial look (i.e. facades and property frontage).
- Improve streetscape, roadways and related amenities.
- Provide neighborhood recreation.
- Consider shared office opportunities.
- Attract nearby residents to new businesses.
- Provide connections to regional bike paths.
- Optimize use of existing parking.



Excerpts from questionnaires and sketches produced during the community workshop give a sense of the priorities and ideas introduced by participating stakeholders.

FRAMEWORK PLAN

THE FRAMEWORK PLAN

The framework plan synthesizes analysis and community input from the planning process into a cohesive blueprint for comprehensive district improvement and enhancement.

The following concepts and ideas underpin this framework plan:

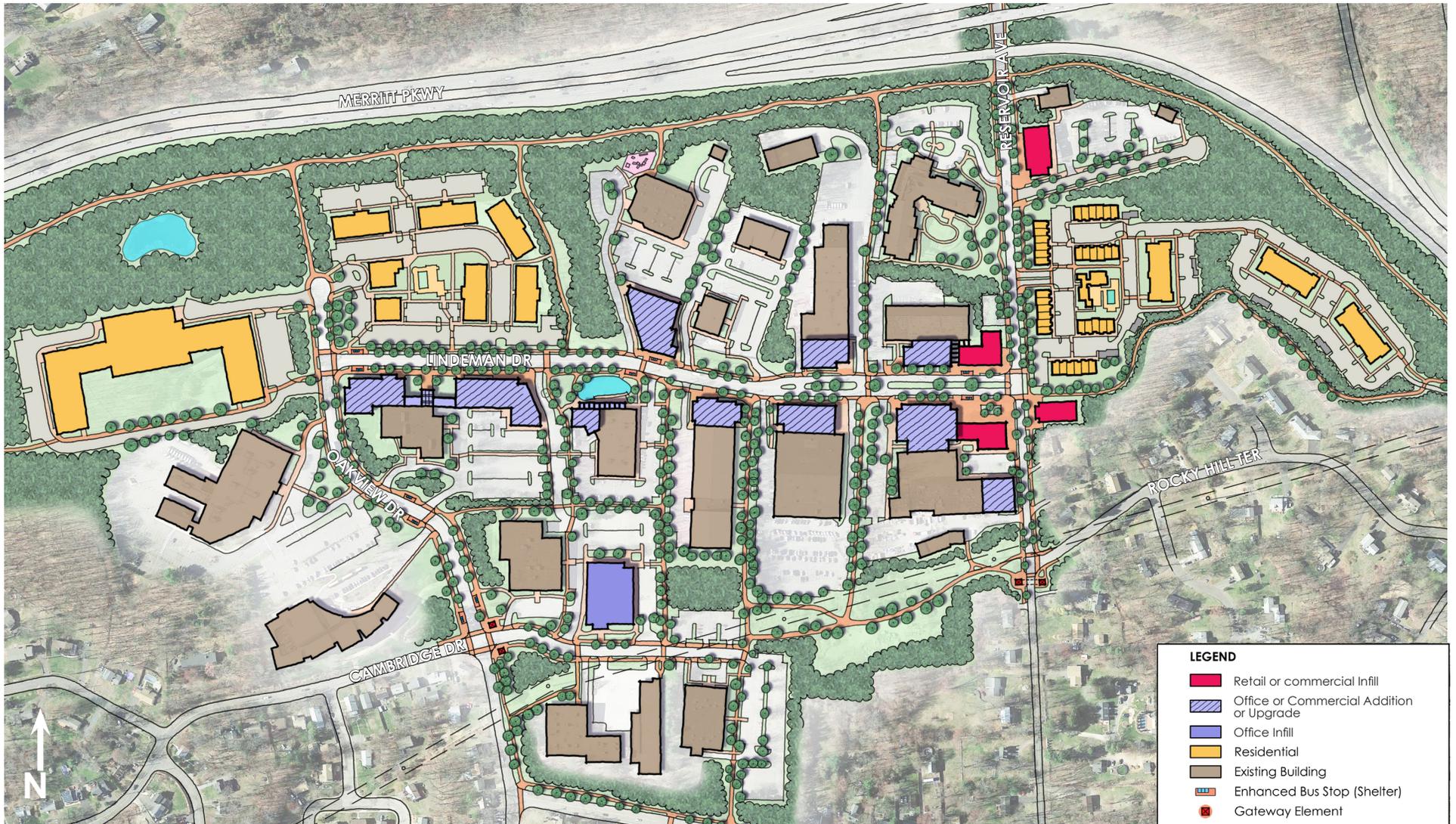
- **Walkable network**
- **Crossings and connections**
- **Multimodal mobility**
- **Destinations**
- **Private investment**

This overview section is followed by a more detailed discussion of specific implementation strategies to make these ideas reality.

The framework plan on the following page illustrates how the district could proactively be retrofit to respond to community feedback and shifting demographic and employment trends.

Reflecting a combination of public realm improvements and policy changes influencing private reinvestment, the plan envisions increased walkability through streetscapes and new pedestrian pathways; infill development on underutilized parking lots; a transformed gateway intersection at Lindeman and Reservoir with community-serving retail; and a generally more integrated and dynamic mixed-use neighborhood attractive and appealing to both established Trumbull residents and newcomers alike.

ILLUSTRATIVE FRAMEWORK PLAN



THE FRAMEWORK PLAN: WALKABLE NETWORK

Improving pedestrian connectivity by adding new facilities such as sidewalks, off-street paths, accessible ramps, and other links will help knit the district into a walkable neighborhood.

- Comprehensive pedestrian network
- Complete streets ROW design
- Accessible facilities
- Off-street paths throughout the district
- Greenway network that incorporates green infrastructure



THE FRAMEWORK PLAN: CROSSINGS AND CONNECTIONS

Upgrading intersections with stop signs and crosswalks (such as at Reservoir and Lindeman) and adding mid-block crossings (such as along Lindeman) will improve overall pedestrian safety and create welcoming, walkable gateways into the district.

- Safe, comfortable routes connecting to surrounding neighborhoods
- Key crossings and gateways



THE FRAMEWORK PLAN: MULTIMODAL MOBILITY

Integrating enhanced transit, bike, and pedestrian accommodations help make district access and mobility without a car much more feasible and attractive.

- Added bike routes and connections
- Improved transit integration and service levels
- Upgraded bus stop facilities with shelters featuring covered seating
- A safe and accessible neighborhood environment for local employees, visitors, and residents of all ages, especially for those who do not drive
- Bike racks required at all properties



THE FRAMEWORK PLAN: DESTINATIONS

Adding a diverse and compelling mix of destinations for community gathering and activities will help give people from throughout Trumbull and the region a reason to come to the district to visit, live, or work.

- Community gathering spaces
- Parks and green spaces (including infrastructure designed as amenity)
- Shops and restaurants



THE FRAMEWORK PLAN: PRIVATE INVESTMENT

Ongoing investment in existing and new buildings will create opportunities to improve walkability and add valuable community amenities by gradually reorienting the district's properties from parking lots and private drives to sidewalks and public spaces

- Street frontage retrofits
- Building repositioning
- Redeveloping underutilized buildings
- Develop new buildings on surface parking lots
- Design and development guidelines



**NEAR-TERM
IMPLEMENTATION
STRATEGY**

NEAR-TERM IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

While the community's vision for the IL2 District is fully achievable, successful implementation requires strong leadership and a package of tools and strategies to unlock the opportunity. The following pages describe these tools and strategies in detail with an emphasis on near-term action items geared to build quick momentum.

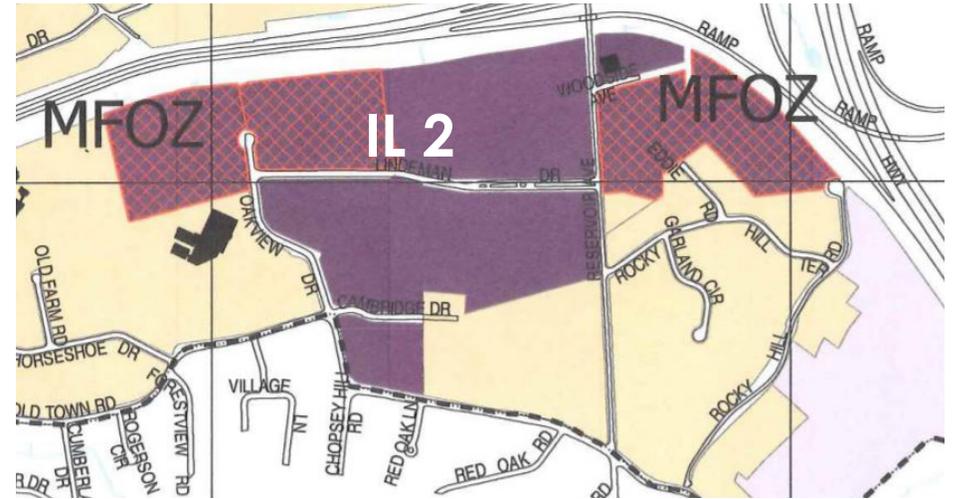
Primary implementation strategies:

- **Revise the IL2 zoning district**
- **Consider investment incentives**
- **Improve walkability and multimodal mobility**
- **Introduce new public spaces**
- **Enable shared parking if redevelopment creates demand**
- **Establish a sense of identity**
- **Facilitate business organization**



REVISE IL2 ZONING DISTRICT

- The existing IL2 zoning regulations do not permit some of the development types or building forms that would help realize this study's vision for the district. As such, an immediate action item should be revising the IL2 zoning district to enable this change. In fact, as discussed in the "investment incentives" section below, some of these revisions might even catalyze reinvestment toward realizing the vision because they help property owners and developers unlock new real estate value.
- Broaden list of land uses allowable by-right to include more neighborhood and destination amenities such as food trucks and breweries as well as mixed-use combinations of primary and secondary uses.
- Reduce setback requirements to enable building much closer to the street edge (for example, lining the edge of an existing or future sidewalk), potentially promoting new infill development in front of existing buildings within today's setback where, for example, neighborhood-serving amenities could locate.
- Enable denser development with higher allowable lot coverage and lower minimum street frontage requirements.
- Allow multiple buildings of any permitted use on a single lot by-right (potentially favoring introduction of uses that promote this plan's vision such as community-serving amenities and retail).



- Explore loosening parking requirements and enabling shared parking if redevelopment opportunities emerge and current parkign supplies are insufficient to support demand.
- Consider incentive-based zoning provisions that allow development flexibility (such as pertaining to height, density, parking ratios, etc.) in exchange for providing increased community benefits (such as public open space, enhanced stormwater management, etc.). Consider zoning language that explicitly specifies how such exchanges are calculated to enable by-right development and avoid the need for discretionary oversight or interpretation.
- In general, expand what can be developed by-right to avoid special permit processes discouraging desirable projects. However, by-right possibilities should be limited to those that fulfill the plan's vision.

CONSIDER INVESTMENT INCENTIVES

Financial, regulatory, and other incentives can help catalyze new investment by helping defray costs, remove hurdles, and increase allowable development capacities. In exchange for incentive packages, the Town can take more control of the form new investment takes, ensuring compatibility with the community's vision for the district and maximizing public benefits.

Typically, incentives are primarily reserved for significant redevelopment or reinvestment projects and targeted at properties that are currently underperforming from a tax or market standpoint.

The town should consider building a “menu” of incentives that provide owners and developers a range of options, possibly including the following:

Zoning relief

One of the most powerful ways to incentivize new investment, conditional zoning relief allows owners and developers to exceed standard density, dimensional, and related limits of underlying zoning regulations in exchange for integrating public benefits such as compliance with higher standards design, placemaking, walkability, stormwater management, energy efficiency, etc.

Often, municipalities create an area master plan and corresponding district-specific zoning overlay that clearly defines allowable zoning relief parameters and eligible public benefits in the context of a holistic community vision for the



area. New projects are then allowed to exceed underlying zoning in specific ways on the condition they comply with the district vision and deliver a requisite package of related public benefits.

Developers and investors might respond particularly favorably to circumventions such as setback relief and increased bulk/density allowances.

Façade improvement program

The town could promote reinvestment in existing structures through a façade improvement program which might award grants that help businesses upgrade their street frontages. This program could also address streetscaping and other

TRUMBULL IL2 DISTRICT PLANNING STUDY

exterior improvements. Candidate projects should promote an enhanced overall district appearance, improve pedestrian mobility and accessibility, and help add activity to sidewalks and streetscapes.

Building fee relief

Typically, building owners interested in improving their assets must pay fees associated with administrative tasks such as filing building permits. The Town's legislative body could consider establishing a special ability to reduce or waive these fees associated with new investments in the district to entice owners to pursue improvements that will build new value and attract more tenants and users to the area.

Tax increment financing (TIF)

TIF financing reserves the projected increment of net new property tax revenue created by a new development to underwrite supporting improvements in and around the development area such as transportation or utility infrastructure. In general, there is not a strong appetite in Trumbull to utilize TIF but it could be considered for a new commercial investment of sufficient transformative scale in the district.

Tax incentives

The Town's tax incentives program is reserved for projects that spark patterns of new development in districts such as this. The tax incentive was applied to the 100 Oakview residential

development in 2017 to help launch the district's current wave of investment and, as such, is unlikely to be applied again there. In general, such tax incentives are intended to be used very sparingly and, as such is unlikely to be applied again in this district.



IMPROVE WALKABILITY AND MULTIMODAL MOBILITY

The IL2 district generally lacks sidewalks, bike facilities, and other non-vehicular and transit accommodations which impairs its ability to attract the growing portion of businesses, employees, residents, and visitors who prefer walkable neighborhood environments. The following recommendations identify opportunities to enhance mobility across numerous modes in the district.

The illustrative plan in this document's Framework Plan section and the pedestrian and bicycle network diagram on the following page provide detailed reference to help direct and inform these recommendations.

Reservoir/Lindeman intersection

Transform into a three-way stop intersection and add crosswalks.

Lindeman streetscape

Prioritizing the eastern portion of the street first, introduce sidewalks, bike lanes, and street trees along each side of Lindeman Drive. Consider restriping that visually constricts the travel way and removes the centerline to encourage slower speeds. Enhance plantings within existing median. Add crosswalks across driveways and consider additional transverse crosswalks from one side of Lindeman to the other at intervals aligning with bus stops.

Other streetscapes, crosswalks, and intersections

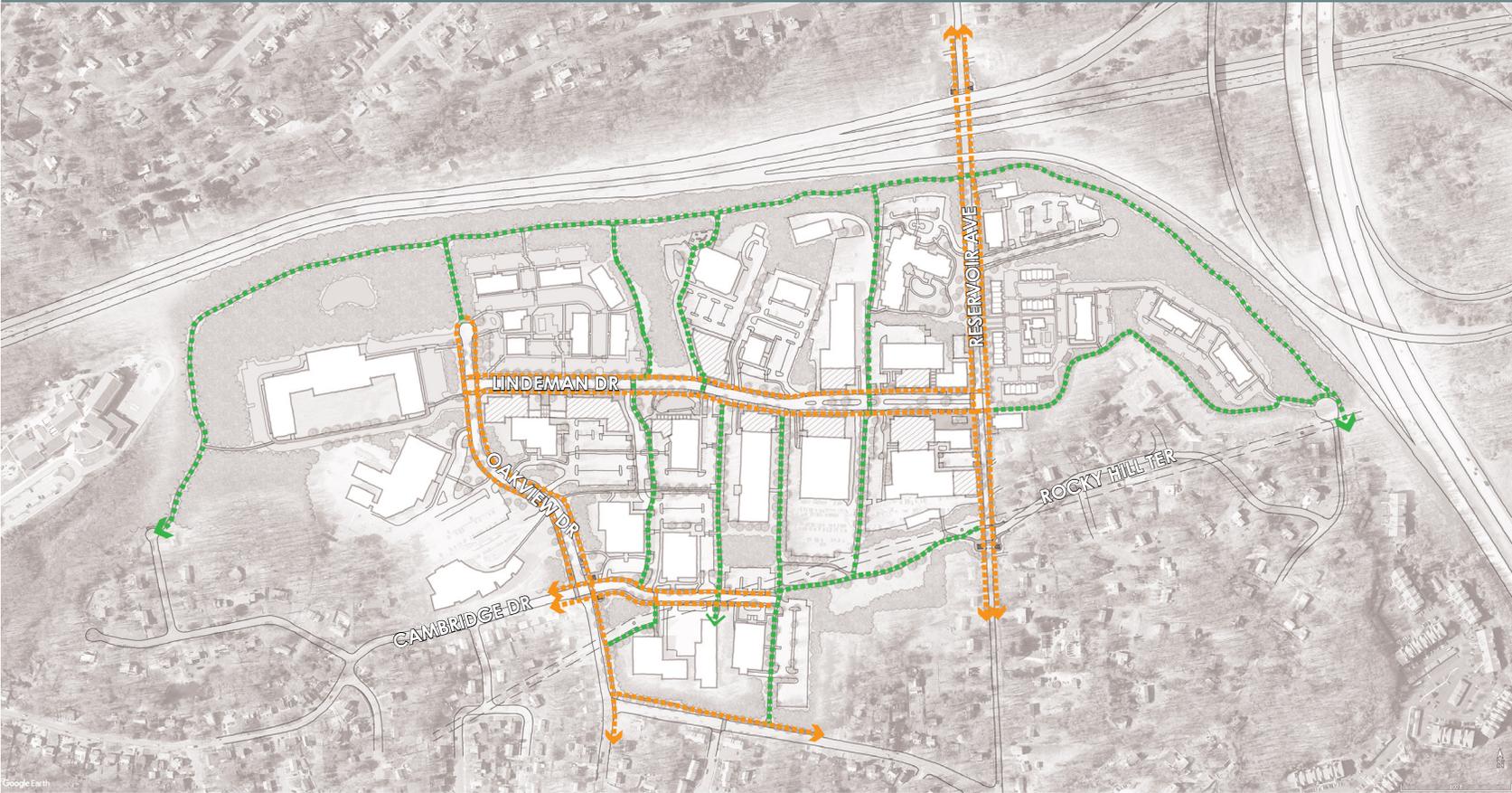
Add crosswalks at all intersections and across all significant driveways. Consider sidewalks, street trees, and other plantings along Oakview Drive and Cambridge Drive. Negotiate opportunities with property owners to improve pedestrian connectivity within large blocks by adding protected walkways through and between surface parking lots.

Transit shelters

Add covered bus shelters at all transit stops, or at least at those most heavily utilized.

Pedestrian and bicycle network

Bike and pedestrian infrastructure investments could create a comprehensive network of sidewalks and multi-use trails to improve pedestrian safety, establish new recreational loops, and increase the district's walkable integration with into the surrounding neighborhoods.



- — — — — SIDEWALK WITH LANSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS
- — — — — MULTI-USE PATH/TRAIL

INTRODUCE NEW PUBLIC SPACES

Successful mixed-use neighborhoods typically include a network of diverse public spaces where people can meet, come together, and identify with. The IL2 district currently lacks a centralized, defining public space where residents, employees, and visitors can gather and where signature branding elements might focus. Additionally, the district would benefit from a stronger network of smaller gathering spaces and connective pedestrian paths. The following recommendations address how the Town might augment the district's public space portfolio within the public and private realms.

The illustrative plan in this document's Framework Plan section provides detailed reference to help direct and inform these recommendations.

Public realm

As part of reconfiguring the Reservoir/Lindeman intersection for signals and pedestrian enhancements, the Town should consider carving out a small open space where pedestrians could gather. This location would be optimal for signature branding signage as it is particularly prominent to the broader community and relatively centralized within the district.

As part of enhancing the Lindeman streetscape, the existing Lindeman median could include pedestrian amenities supporting recreation and socialization such as benches and gardens.



Though not technically public space, the electrical transmission line right of way effectively connecting Rocky Hill Terrace and Cambridge Drive could, in concert with the utility, be retrofit into a multi-use trail that would add a unique recreational asset and create an important new connection within the district.

Private realm

Given the district does not include large publicly owned parcels to locate significant new public spaces, the Town

TRUMBULL IL2 DISTRICT PLANNING STUDY

should consider public-private partnership opportunities with existing landowners to create new publicly accessible open space amenities on private land. For example, the Town could negotiate with an owner considering new investment or redevelopment to incorporate a public space into the project, perhaps in exchange for incentives. Two priority locations for such a space include near the Lindeman/Reservoir intersection and within the interior of the Lindeman/Oakview/Cambridge/Reservoir superbblock.

Public art

The Town should consider establishing a public art program to supplement public realm improvements and direct cultural resources to private real estate investments.

In the public realm, art should be located at prominent locations to support district branding and placemaking. In addition to permanent installations, temporary or rotating pieces could add a dynamic character to the district and allow participation by more artists and creators.

On private property, the Town could support public art investments by connecting owners with artists, contributing partial funding for contributing partial funding for art installations, and providing incentives for developers and investors to incorporate public art.



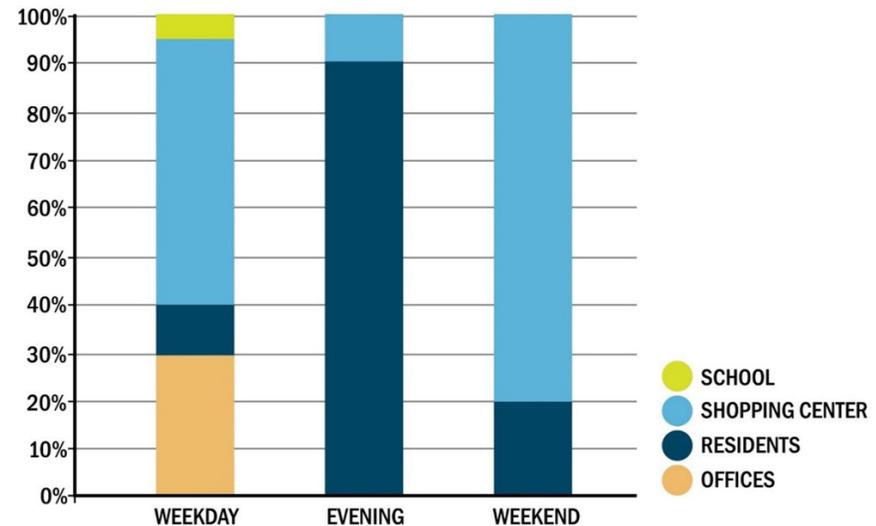
ENABLE SHARED PARKING IF REDEVELOPMENT CREATES DEMAND

Though not a presently a pressing matter, if new, denser redevelopment occurs in the future, the district's parking supply may begin to experience strain. To avoid parking shortages forestalling substantial new investment in the district, the Town could explore opportunities for shared parking with existing and prospective owners and tenants.

Shared parking works best among different uses with complementary parking demand schedules. For example, office demand peaks during the weekday; housing peaks during evenings and weekends. Therefore, housing and office uses could efficiently utilize a shared supply of parking that includes fewer spaces than if each reserved its own dedicated supply.

Tools enabling shared parking include agreements between users, contracts between owners, and district-wide regulations and ordinances. Stakeholders may require assistance navigating key concerns such as liability between owners and users; impacts on property value and salability when encumbered by shared parking agreements; technical and management issues during implementation.

How Different Uses with Differing Peak Demand Times Can Share the Same 100 Parking Spaces



SOURCE : https://2.bp.blogspot.com/-XALYIP2S0ES/V9E_H0DWVPI/AAAAAAAAAB5Q/U4U1UHBMTHWWC1UIBKZP6YRLH1AWA-I2ACLBC/S1600/ITDP%2BShared%2BParking%2BGraph.JPG

ESTABLISH A SENSE OF IDENTITY

The IL2 district suffers from a lack of cohesive visual and community identity. As a result, the district is not well known within the local community or the regional marketplace as a place to do business, visit, or live. A branding and signage initiative could help improve the district's prominence "on the map" and enhance internal navigation so it appears and functions more clearly and cohesively.

District branding

Consider establishing a foundation for identity formation by developing a "brand" for the district that might include a name, logo, and graphic standards (colors, fonts, etc.). The Town could develop this brand in house, in conjunction with local businesses and the community, or with help from a consultant (potentially as part of a branding and wayfinding scope of work). This brand would manifest physically through a signage and wayfinding program.

Signage and wayfinding

A clear, compelling, and comprehensive signage and wayfinding system would help users navigate the district's businesses and destinations and generally convey a valuable sense of organization and neighborhood coherence. The signage inventory might include branded monument signs at key entrances such as Reservoir/Lindeman and consistently directional and informational signs at intersections and in front of key landmarks and destinations. Wayfinding signage might include multiple scale tiers, such as larger signs along



Participants at the IL2 public planning workshop generated these district name ideas during discussion about district identity

roadways for cars and smaller signs along sidewalks for bikes and pedestrians. The town could develop this system in house, in conjunction with local businesses and the community, or with help from a consultant (potentially connected to the aforementioned branding work).

The town might consider incorporating the IL2 district's identity package into town-wide signing programs to help integrate it into the municipal economic development and placemaking context. Ideas for a new district name might also be considered relative to the names and personalities of other Trumbull districts and neighborhoods to avoid IL2 seeming too different or removed.

FACILITATE BUSINESS ORGANIZATION

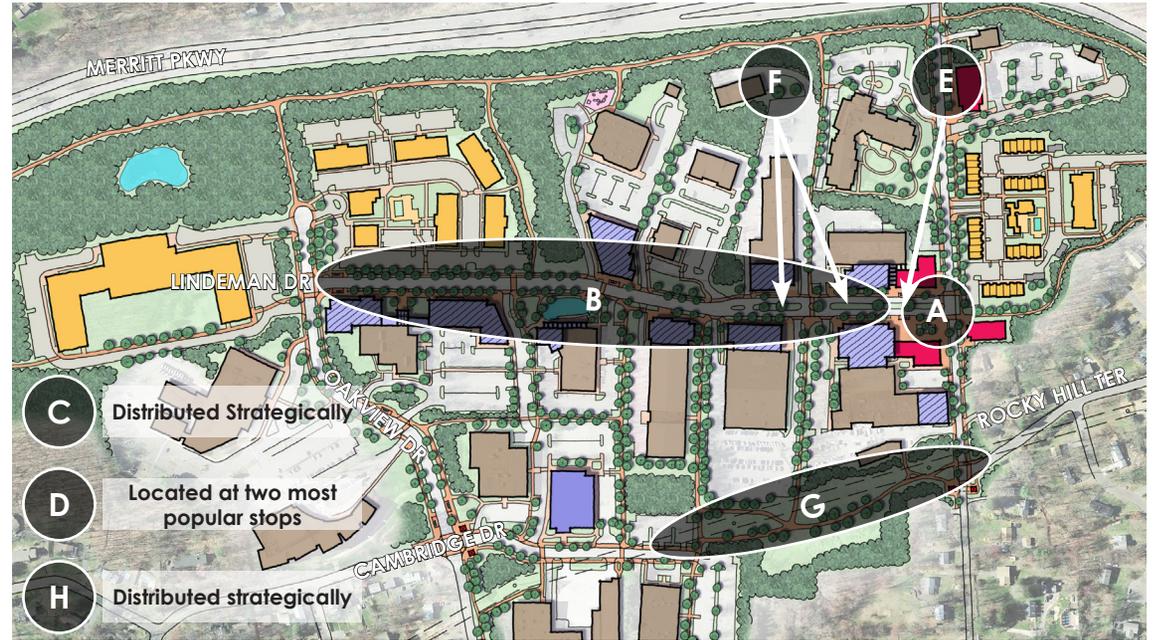
Many successful business districts and mixed-use communities are self-managed through organizations such as business improvement groups and neighborhood associations. These organizations can help businesses and others within a district network, share knowledge and resources, advocate for common interests, and cross-promote to the broader community.

The Town should consider promoting organization within the IL2 business and residential communities by facilitating initial meetings, providing examples of useful models from elsewhere in the region or country, and offering legal and regulatory council on organizational formation details. However, the Town's assistance role should be temporary; the resultant organization should ultimately be self-managed and self-sustaining.

**NEAR-TERM
IMPROVEMENT
PROJECTS**

NEAR-TERM IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

To establish momentum and help encourage complementary and synergistic private investment within the district, this plan recommends the town consider funding an initial package of catalytic public realm projects.



RECOMMENDED PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

HARD AND SOFT COST

PROJECT	ORDER OF MAGNITUDE COST
A. Reservoir/Lindeman intersection (stop signs and crosswalks)	\$375,000
B. Lindeman streetscape (purely public realm; both sides; Reservoir to Oakview; sidewalks, landscape, lighting, trees, etc.)	\$2,200,000
C. Other streetscape improvements (misc. amenities allowance; not including trees, lighting, sidewalks)	\$75,000
D. GBTA transit shelters (4 at \$20,000 each; two stops with shelter on each side of street; one at each end of Lindeman)	\$80,000
E. Open space/plaza space at Reservoir/Lindeman (out-of-right-of-way partnership; plaza in/around red buildings)	\$300,000
F. Lindeman median enhancement (working with existing median)	\$60,000
G. Transmission line easement improvements (easement area and property connections; just bike/ped)	\$850,000
H. Public art installations (allowance)	\$75,000