



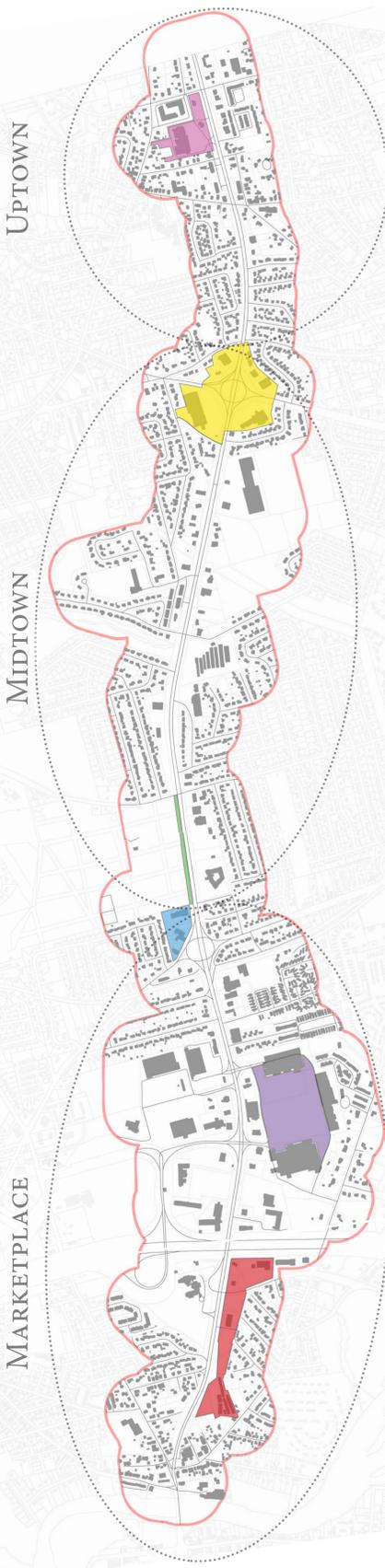
University of
Massachusetts
Amherst

Memorial Drive Revitalization (Chicopee, MA)

Item Type	article;article
Authors	Anyzeski, Emily;Chen, Pei-Yu;Goldstein, Noam;Koullias, Stephanos;Regnier, Jesse;Shulman, Elena
Download date	2025-09-23 23:43:22
Link to Item	https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14394/31971

MEMORIAL DRIVE: CONNECTING THE PIONEER VALLEY

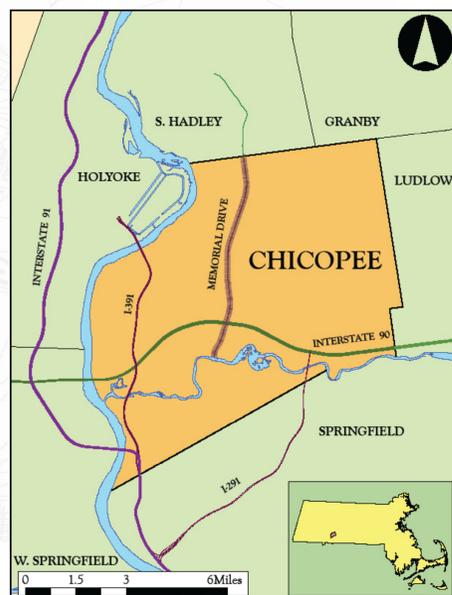
CHICOPEE, MASSACHUSETTS



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Chicopee has tasked the Hills House Planners with “developing a conceptual Vision Plan for ‘Re-Visioning’ Memorial Drive.” Memorial Drive is a 3.7 mile long commercial and residential strip that can be characterized as “Anywhere U.S.A.” The Memorial Drive corridor is impacted by the adjacent Westover Air Reserve Base, the Massachusetts Turnpike, which bisects the southern portion of the corridor, and it’s location in the heart of the Knowledge Corridor. Some of the issues facing the corridor include conflicts between commercial and residential uses, problematic zoning, unfriendly pedestrian conditions, and issues related to a large quantity of impervious surfaces.

Hills House Planner’s vision for the Memorial Drive corridor is concentrating highintensitycommercialandentertainment uses in the southern “Markeplace” area off of the Massachusetts Turnpike, utilizing the central “Midtown” area as a transitional area with residential and neighborhood business establishments, and returning back to the historic Fairview Village feel of the northern “Uptown” area to reestablish a more human scaled and walkable neighborhood. The use of performance zoning, implementation of a road diet, and increasing green infrastructure will assist the City of Chicopee in implementing this vision.



REVISIONING THE CORRIDOR

Hills House Planners were tasked by the City of Chicopee to identify and analyze existing land use and current zoning, commercial development, vacancy and infill opportunities, and opportunities and constraints near the two rotaries. Our recommendations include proposed land use and zoning to encourage and enhance commercial development, ease transitions between commercial and residential uses, and provide greater opportunities for all modes of transit, as well as an analysis of potential green infrastructure applications. Recommendations have further been tailored to six priority areas.



COUNCILOR JAMES K. TILLOTSON PRESENTING FINDINGS AT HHP'S PUBLIC WORKSHOP (CREDIT: GREG LEWIS)



GREEN

INFRASTRUCTURE

One of Chicopee’s greatest opportunities to attract development, ease land-use transitions, and further its achievements in stormwater mitigation in green infrastructure, with the greatest of those opportunities in complete streets projects, as all state owned roads, including Memorial Drive, are being brought into compliance. Further opportunities include reducing combined sewage overflow through on-site solutions such as bioswales in parking lots and creating an inviting environment for consumers. By implementing walkable locations along the corridor through green infrastructure techniques, Memorial Drive can improve its sense of place and economic development.



UPTOWN

The Bargain Outlets Shopping Center has the potential to spur growth and economic activity by redeveloping this location with mixed use (commercial / housing). By creating a village structure Chicopee can capitalize on its central location in the Pioneer Valley.

NORTHERN ROTARY

Community input from the workshop suggested a farmer’s market as a desirable use for the vacant parcel adjacent to CVS. We also propose redesigning the Price-Rite parking lot with green infrastructure and including bumped-out crosswalks to greater foot traffic. We envision increase community activity in this priority area.

MIDTOWN

A well designed walking and bicycle path can set the tone for future development and aid the transition from a heavily concentrated commercial area to lower intensity residential neighborhoods. The path, along with changes in land-use, should encourage scaled-down commercial along the last forested right-of-way and connect Chicopee’s river pathways.

SOUTHERN ROTARY

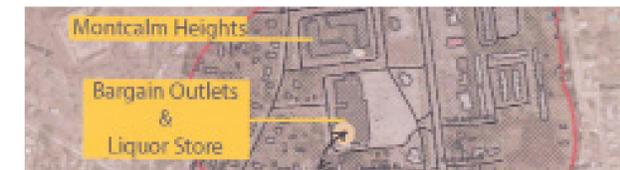
We propose the Southern Rotary as a new entertainment destination two new mixed-use facilities. The design employees wide set-back and landscaped buffer to mitigate any conflicts with the existing and adjacent residential uses.

MARKETPLACE NORTH

To reduce the impact of impervious surfaces, we propose implementing green parking that will filter stormwater, reduce runoff, and increase the aesthetics of the Chicopee Marketplace. Additionally, permeable sidewalks should increase the sites’ sustainability and walkability.

MARKETPLACE SOUTH

Due to this location’s adjacency to the Massachusetts Turnpike, we propose hospitality and other commercial uses to not only capitalize this prime location, but also to extend commercial activity to the corridor’s southern boundary.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

HILLS HOUSE PLANNERS WISH TO THANK:

City of Chicopee Community Development and Planning Departments, and especially, Lee Pouliot and Kate Brown, without whom we would not have had the opportunity to undertake this project. Thanks also to Carl Dietz, Tom Haberlin, and Jim Dawson for assistance and feedback.

City Councilors George R. Moreau, President, Adam D. Lamontagne, Shane D. Brooks, Gerard Roy, Gerry Roy, William M. Zasky, Robert J. Zygarowski, Frederick T. Krampits, James K. Tillotson, as well as Chief of Staff Mary Moge, and the Hon. Mayor Richard Kos.

University of Massachusetts, Amherst Civil Engineering Department Professor Eleni Christofa, Professor Eric Gonzalez, Professor Michael Knodler, and Graduate Students Forough Hajiseyedjavadi and Derek Roach.

University of Massachusetts, Amherst Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning Department Professors Elizabeth Brabec, MLA, J.D., Ellen Pader, Ph.D., Wayne Fieden, FAICP, John Mullin, FAICP, Robert Ryan, Ph.D., and instructor Christina Aragon.

REGIONAL PLANING 675 • STUDIO FALL 2014
PROFESSOR DARREL RAMSEY-MUSOLF
TEACHING ASSISTANT: GREG LEWIS