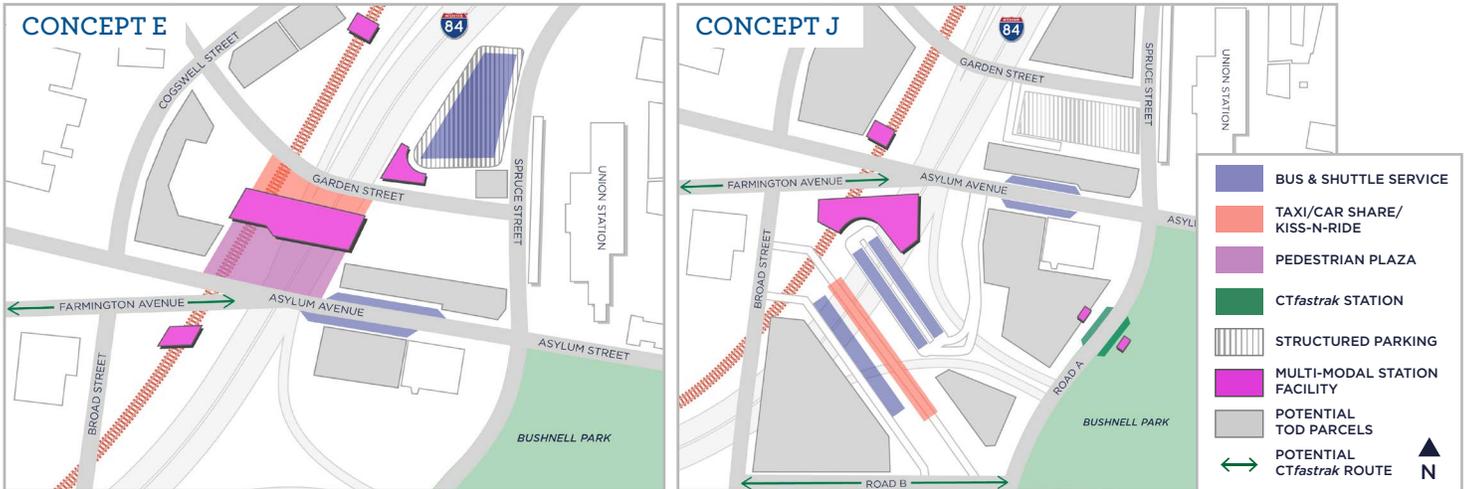




I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT

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Don't Go it Alone: Station Planning With The City



Graphics illustrate some potential multi-modal station concepts. Concept E (left) locates the station and parking primarily north of Asylum Avenue. Concept J (right) clusters station functions south of Asylum Avenue, including a CTfastrak station. Union Station is at the corner of Spruce and Asylum Streets.

Years ago, the City of Hartford's Sean Fitzpatrick worked at The Hartford Insurance Company on Asylum Avenue. He remembers standing on the majestic front steps, looking toward the gold-topped State Capitol. His view of the building was mostly blocked by I-84 and the rail trestle. "I thought, wouldn't it be nice to see Bushnell Park and the Capitol from here?" he recalls.

Mr. Fitzpatrick, Director of Development Services for the City of Hartford, wants to improve downtown's hindered *viewsheds*, or lines-of-sight of distinction, as part of a greater effort to reconnect the city.

Today, the City is working with the I-84 Hartford Project team to plan for a new multi-modal station and surrounding area. With overlapping goals, the teams are identifying the location, services, and amenities of the station, and determining how to best integrate the roadways. These efforts will set the stage for the reuse planning of Union Station.

What's a "Kiss-n-Ride"?
Ever been dropped off at a transit station or airport terminal by a partner or friend? "Kiss-n-Ride" is a designated area where drivers stop briefly to drop off their traveler and both continue on their way.

A relocated I-84 could free up about 20 acres of land for the multi-modal station and surrounding development or open space.

Some considerations include: Where should the station be located - north or south of Asylum Avenue? How should the station be positioned on the site? How can the local streets and highway ramps be integrated into the site? Should any of it be built over the highway?

The teams will also focus on the details, such as how to best accommodate rail, local and intercity bus, taxis, rideshare, kiss-n-ride, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Another element, and one that is important to many, is what the station should look like. Is a traditional building compatible with Hartford's historic architecture the best way to go? Or would a modern, iconic station indicate Hartford's forward-looking progress?

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¿Habla usted español? Una versión de este boletín está disponible en español a i84hartford.com.

Faces & Places of the Corridor

Welcome to Faces & Places of the Corridor, profiles of people who live, work, run businesses or lead groups, as well as notable places, within the I-84 study area. Know someone or some place that should be featured? Share your ideas!

The Reinvention of Union Station

Weathering a destructive fire and numerous remodels, the historic station is poised for yet another reinvention



Union Station is one of many American rail stations that may undergo renovation as travel modes and preferences evolve.

Hartford is blessed with many public buildings that inspire. Few, however, have stood the test of time and serve such a vital purpose as Union Station. The station has been reinvented many times over.

Before there was Union Station, there was Union Depot, built in 1843. Union Station replaced the original depot in 1889, and was designed to eliminate the crossing of automobiles (or, originally horse drawn carriages) and rail cars.

The elevated tracks built to serve Union Station removed rail interference from road traffic. From that point on, passengers boarded trains on the upper level.

Disaster struck on February 22, 1914. An oil stove overturned in a top-floor office, and fire spread quickly. Although the tracks were largely undamaged, only the brownstone walls remained. The handsome interior and stately gables were lost. These architectural flourishes were replaced by a fireproof steel interior.

While the fire caused severe damage, the station's destruction presented opportunities for improvements. Archives from the *Hartford Courant* explain the scheme of former Senator Morgan G. Bulkeley to "crowd" the railroad into Asylum Hill, so that Asylum Street would pass over the tracks. Senator Bulkeley's plan was never constructed due to anticipated high costs, and the station was rebuilt in place.

Following the collapse of the private rail industry (and the rise of automobiles and the highways that

served them), the neglected station was purchased by a developer in 1965. Soon thereafter, citizens successfully nominated the station for the National Register of Historic Places.

The Greater Hartford Transit District (GHTD) bought Union Station in 1981 and oversaw restoration of the Great Hall in 1987.

As GHTD's Executive Director Vicki Shotland walks through the Great Hall and fully-leased office spaces, she affectionately points out the unique characteristics.

GHTD continues to upgrade the historic facility. A new **CTtransit** Transit Center was completed in 2014. A high-level pedestrian platform was added in 2016, improving access for Amtrak and forthcoming **CTrail** Hartford Line passengers. Secure bike storage accommodates bicyclists.

Senator Bulkeley's vision for safe and efficient rail travel in downtown Hartford may not be far off. And the similarities between his century-old proposal and today's Lowered Highway Alternative are striking.

The I-84 Hartford Project's station planning effort and the City's *Capital Gateway Master Plan* will jointly plan for the station. Until a new multi-modal station is built, Union Station is the region's bus and rail hub.

While every decision requires careful consideration, one thing is certain - Union Station will carry on as a beloved Hartford landmark.

Factoring CTfastrak Into the Bigger Picture



construction phase. It's essential that service is fully operational throughout the life of the project. Since construction could take up to ten years, there may be two new alignments of CTfastrak: a temporary solution in effect for several years, and a permanent solution once the highway and railroad are rebuilt.

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CTfastrak took years to plan, design, and construct. Now operational, ridership numbers have exceeded original estimates. That's good news for the Hartford region and increases the possibilities for service expansion.

CTfastrak is critical to the region's transportation network. Therefore, it must remain a dependable travel option for commuters and local riders during the reconstruction of I-84, its ramps, and local roads.

Similar to the railroad, the elevated highway crosses over CTfastrak. It will also be necessary to relocate the busway in order to lower the highway.

The team is looking to relocate CTfastrak early in the

The segment between Sigourney Street and Union Station (Routes 101 and 128) will likely experience the greatest change, especially during construction. The team is developing concepts that will minimize disruption to riders, and is considering opportunities to enhance service and encourage more ridership!

Although much thought is focused on what happens to CTfastrak during construction, the service will ultimately be integrated with Hartford's new multi-modal station. This planning effort is underway, and we encourage your thoughts and helpful insights!

Local Creatives Are Shaping Hartford

Planning to rebuild I-84 requires a lot of engineering analysis. But project concepts have been courtesy of creative ideas from the public.

One transit station concept under consideration was provided by local citizens. Hartford planner Toni Gold and creative professional Bill Mocarsky presented their *transit mall concept* to the team this past summer. Their proposal centralizes transit and pedestrian corridors (see Concept J on [page 1](#)).

Prioritizing the busway, the proposal utilizes underground and ground level space on a prime swath of land between downtown and Asylum Hill. It emphasizes pedestrian corridors around the multi-modal station area, and recommends land to support transit-oriented development and open space. Portions of this concept have been rolled into some of the options being assessed this fall.

Where might the next remarkable idea come from? All dreamers, artists, teachers, children, residents, and

travelers take note; we love your ideas! They ensure that this remains your city, your highway, and your solutions.



Two community members provided a thoughtful proposal for the multi-modal station area, including provisions for CTfastrak, pedestrians, bicyclists, and developable land.

Station Planning With The City, *continued*



Planning for the multi-modal station means thinking about details great and small. The teams are considering everything from station location to the architectural style of a new facility. The public gathered at Multi-Modal Station Planning Working Sessions on October 30th to discuss these elements, and more! View materials at i84hartford.com/multimodal.

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City staff are working with consultants HOK and WSP to spearhead their *Capital Gateway Master Plan (Plan)*.

The core component of the *Plan* is the planning of the multi-modal station. However, it will also set a vision and strategy to promote transit-oriented development in the surrounding area. Streetscape design, road network connectivity, and economic development opportunities are elements of the *Plan*.

“The City of Hartford’s Capital Gateway Master Plan will also address ‘soft’ improvements. Reducing physical barriers and enhancing viewsheds will help improve neighborhood connections.”

The *Plan* will also address “soft” improvements. Reducing physical barriers and enhancing viewsheds will help improve connections among Hartford neighborhoods.

The City began their effort during the environmental phase of the I-84 Hartford Project, during which

a preferred alternative for the project corridor is anticipated.

The teams meet regularly to plan, collaborate, and critique each other’s work. City staff present to the public with the I-84 Hartford team at jointly planned meetings. Hartford Principal Planner Sandy Fry is on the I-84 Public Advisory Committee and Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit Working Group. Simply put, the processes benefit each other.

Mr. Fitzpatrick notes these related efforts are an opportunity to “erase the sins of the past”. Citing unfortunate decisions that negatively impacted Hartford, he asserts, “If done well, we can reconnect the western half with the eastern half of the city.”

For more information about the City’s *Capital Gateway Master Plan*, visit hartford.gov/dds.

Multi-modal station guiding principles

- Centrally located
- Well connected
- Compact
- A catalyst for economic development
- Iconic design
- Improved viewsheds