

# Mixed Use Activity Center **PRECEDENT REPORT**



Town of Amherst, New York  
DECEMBER 13, 2016

# INTRODUCTION

Imagine Amherst is a project to re-imagine and improve commercial and mixed use areas in the Town so that they reflect the character of the surrounding neighborhoods and encompass the vision that resident's desire. The project aims to update the Town's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code, which do not provide the tools to produce the type of commercial and mixed use development desired by the Town and its residents, nor do they respond to the physical characteristics of Amherst's varied commercial centers. The goal is to uncover the community's future vision for existing commercial and mixed use areas in the Town. As people's lifestyles, habits and use of new technologies drive the economy and create different ways to live, work and play, Amherst must anticipate the community's needs. Once that vision is established in the Comprehensive Plan, the Zoning Code can be updated with corresponding language that physically creates the types of centers the community would like to see in future.

This document provides the Town of Amherst and its residents with examples of recent, successful commercial and mixed use projects in New York and other communities across the country. It is intended to provide real-life examples of built mixed use and pedestrian-friendly developments. By understanding the practices illustrated in these projects, the Town can begin to formulate an approach to the next generation of commercial and mixed use development in Amherst.

These case studies were selected to illustrate mixed use concepts that could transform Amherst's commercial centers. These precedents show project phasing over time and especially transformation of existing under-performing sites into dynamic and vibrant places. The selected case studies provide a variety of sizes and intensities, and include both new single use development in mixed use settings, as well as more comprehensive mixed use projects. The case studies highlight the fact that new mixed use and pedestrian-friendly projects can happen on formally underutilized, more auto-oriented sites. It is critically important to understand that the case studies are useful as a tool to illustrate concepts and may be used to develop zoning code language to be applied at appropriate sites in the Town.

In order to be certain that new Plan and Zoning Code concepts will work for a variety of sites throughout the Town, a series of typologies were established that might be found elsewhere in the Town. The five typologies are: 1) Deep/large parcels; 2) Traditional nodes; 3) Suburban nodes; 4) Williamsville edge; and 5) Shallow parcels. Ten projects that are representative of the typologies were selected for detailed review and analysis. In addition, the Appendix to this report includes 7 other mixed use activity centers that are representative of the typologies but are not described in detail.

Each case study includes a click-able web-link that locates the project geographically (via Google Maps). Additionally, a link to the project website (where available) is provided for further information on each development. These links are noted in blue and underlined (e.g. [web-link](#)).

## Icon Acknowledgments:



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# I-SQUARE IRONDEQUOIT, NEW YORK



## DESCRIPTION

The I-Square development, located at 400 Bakers Park, is a project conceived of by two Irondequoit locals, Mike and Wendy Nolan. Envisioned as a small town center, the project is being developed in phases and is planned to include an indoor market, an outdoor stage, offices and apartments.

An important feature of the I-Square project is the realignment of Bakers Park Street within the project area. This creates an improved intersection and transition between the development and the existing block structure.

## Key Facts

	Built	2014 (Phase I)
	Height	2-3 stories
	Type	Commercial Mixed Use
	Zoning	Mixed Use Commercial
	Size	2.2 acres
	<a href="#">Project Location</a>	
	<a href="#">Project Website</a>	

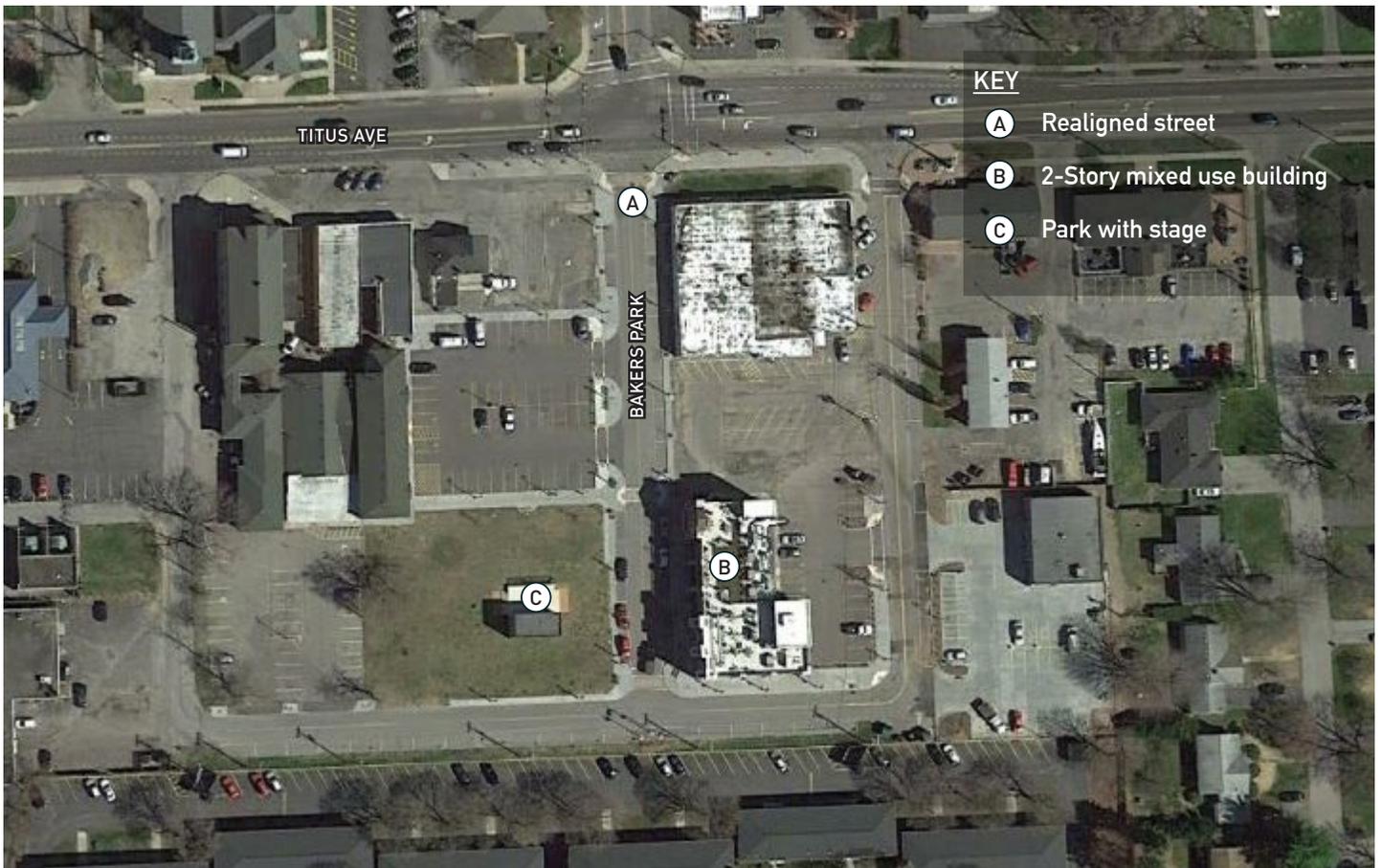
## Project Area (Phase I)

	Commercial	5,700 sf
	Office	9,300 sf
	Hospitality	None
	Residential	None
	Parking (surface)	76 spaces

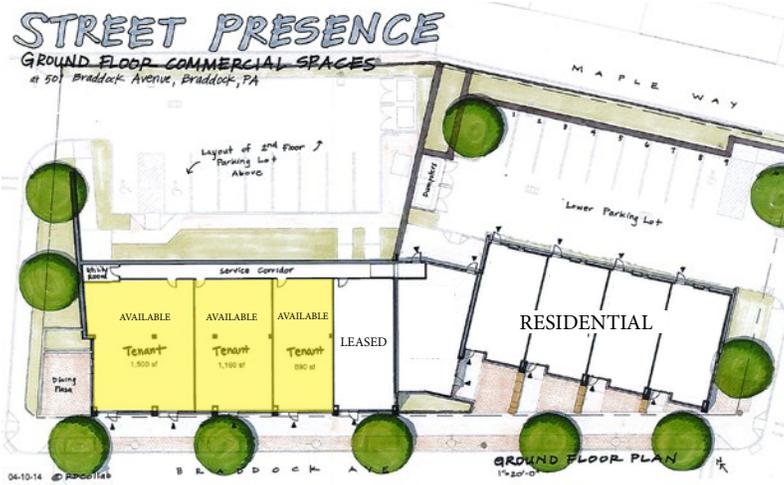
I-SQUARE: 2011



I-SQUARE: 2016



# 501 BRADDOCK BRADDOCK, PENNSYLVANIA



## DESCRIPTION

501 Braddock is located on the site of a former hospital that was torn down in 2010. It is part of a larger redevelopment project financed by the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County and the Mon Valley Initiative.

The project includes 4 commercial spaces as well as 5 live-work units that are affordable for residents in the area. The project also includes an Urgent Care Center intended to replace some of the services provided by the former hospital.

In addition to 501 Braddock, a large 4-story apartment building has been created down the street, along with a number of townhomes adjacent to the project site. Each project works to revitalize and increase engagement in the declined borough through infill development.

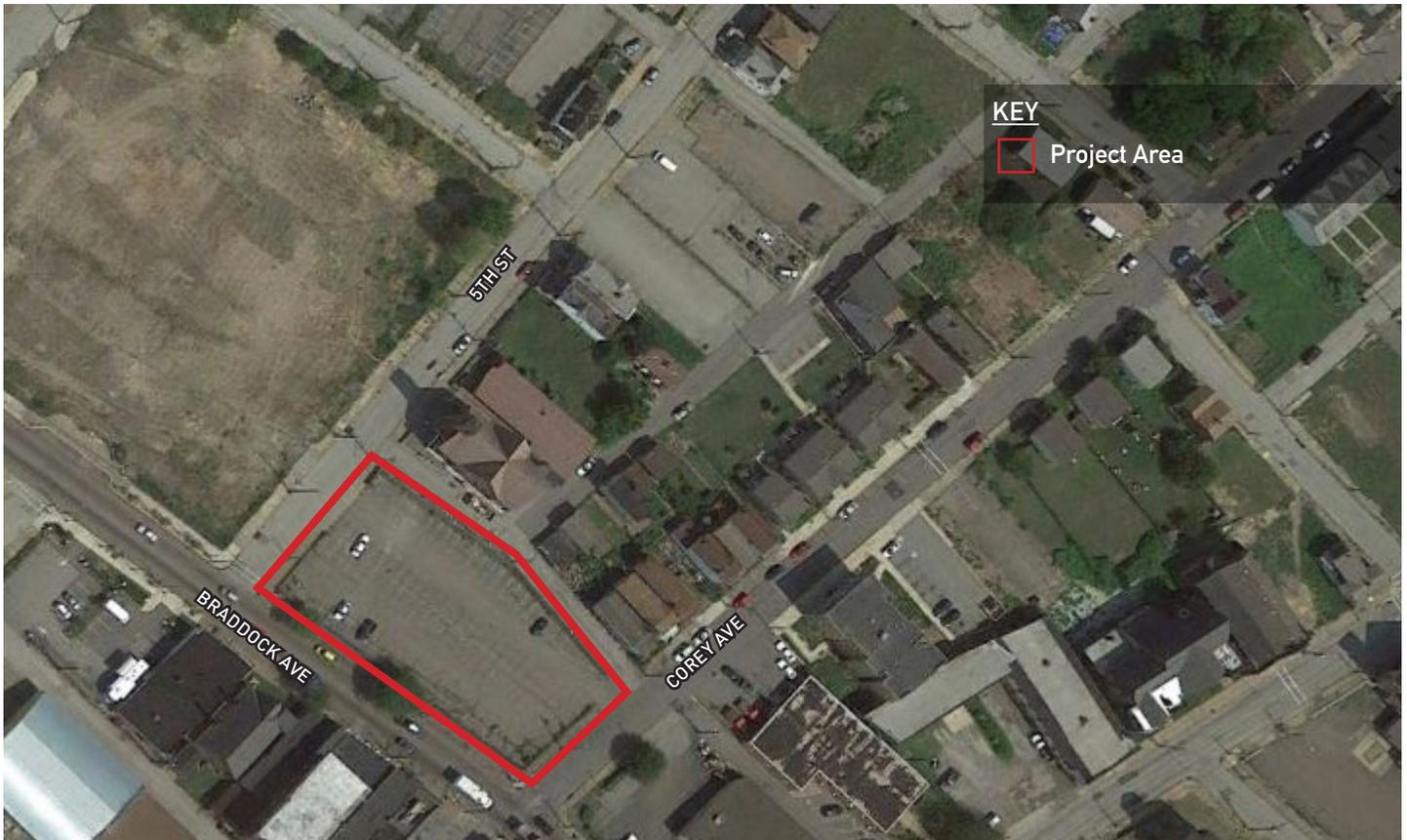
## Key Facts

	Built	2014
	Height	2 stories
	Type	Commercial / Live-Work
	Zoning	Unknown
	Size	.75 acres
	<a href="#">Project Location</a>	

## Project Area

	Commercial	None
	Office	20,000 sf
	Hospitality	None
	Residential (Live/Work)	13,000 sf (5 units)
	Parking (surface)	19 Spaces

501 BRADDOCK: 2012



501 BRADDOCK: 2016



# PANERA BREAD (W 38TH) DENVER, COLORADO



## DESCRIPTION

This Panera Bread is located at 3552 W 38th Street, where the Berkeley and West Highland neighborhoods meet in Denver, Colorado. The building is actually part of a larger commercial strip center that was updated in addition to this Panera Bread.

## ZONING

Built under Urban-Main Street-2 (U-MS-2) zoning, the redevelopment has created an improved streetscape along with an upgrade to the parking facilities behind the front structure. This showcases the positive impact zoning changes can have at a smaller scale for all use types.

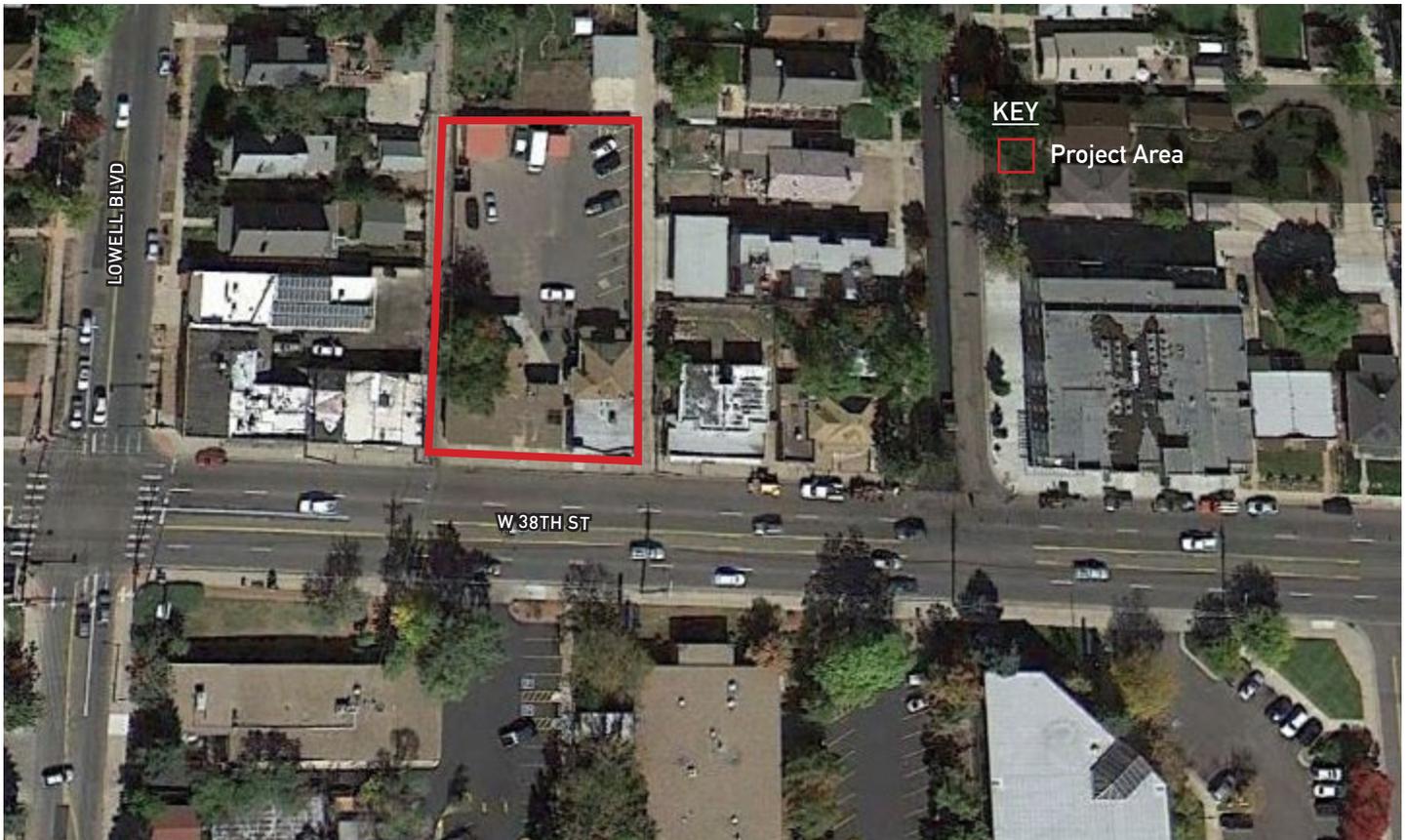
## Key Facts

	Built	2014
	Height	1 story
	Type	Commercial
	Zoning	Main Street-2 (U-MS-2)
	Size	.5 acres
	<a href="#">Project Location</a>	

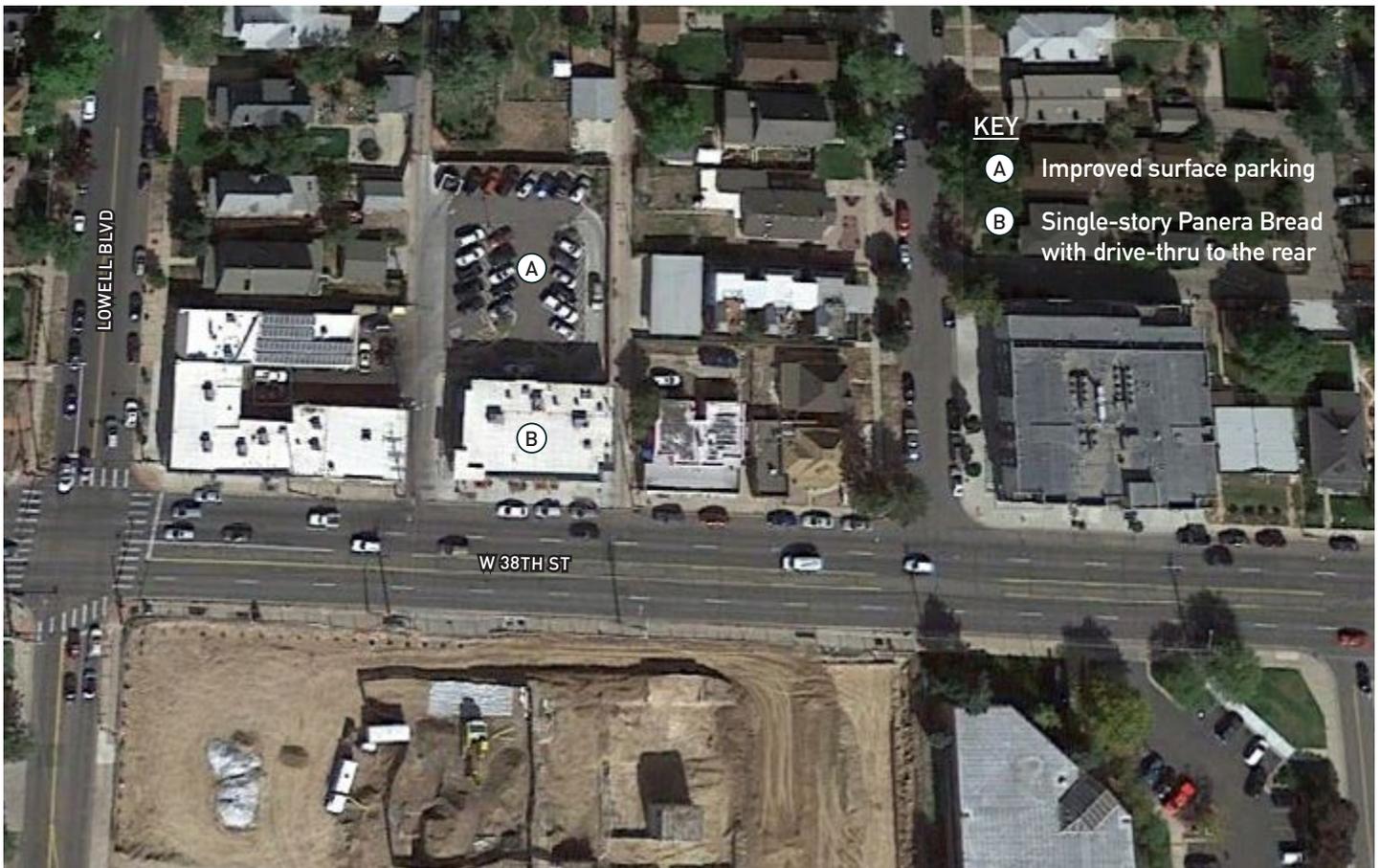
## Project Area

	Commercial	4,000 sf
	Office	None
	Hospitality	None
	Residential	None
	Parking (surface)	30 spaces

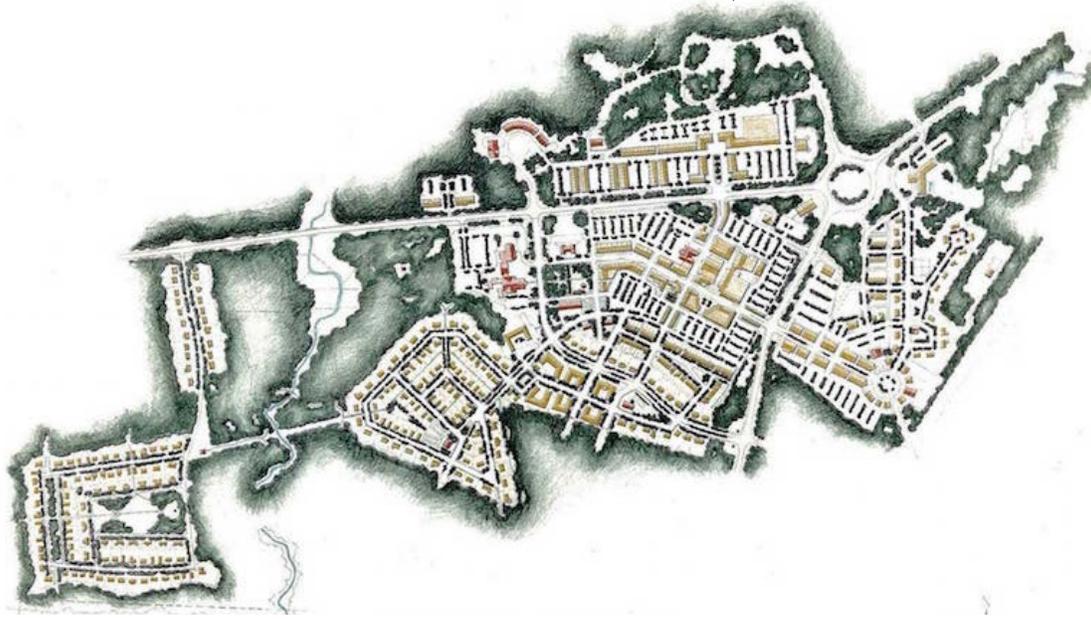
PANERA BREAD: 2011



PANERA BREAD: 2015



# MASHPEE COMMONS MASHPEE, MASSACHUSETTS



## DESCRIPTION

Mashpee Commons is a mixed-use retrofit of a former suburban mall into a new “downtown” for Mashpee, Massachusetts. Before this project, there had been no town center to speak of. The development is notable for its use of the Cape Cod architecture style, reminiscent of historic town centers in the state.

Mashpee Commons is part of a larger development that includes the expansion of the commercial center, as well as new residential neighborhoods that will create a transition between existing residences and the new town center.

## Key Facts

	Built	1988
	Height	1-3 Stories
	Type	Commercial Mixed Use
	Zoning	C1
	Size	140 acres
	<a href="#">Project Location</a>	
	<a href="#">Project Website</a>	

## Project Area

	Commercial	130,000 sf
	Office	70,000 sf
	Hospitality	None
	Residential	40 units
	Parking (surface)	950 spaces

MASHPEE COMMONS: CIRCA 1960



MASHPEE COMMONS: 2016



# ZUMA APARTMENTS DENVER, COLORADO



## DESCRIPTION

The Zuma Apartments is located at 3455 W 38th St in Denver, Colorado. The project is sited on a former parking lot and includes 2 commercial spaces on the ground floor and 18 residential units above.

By replacing a parking lot with medium density development, the Zuma apartments allow more housing to be placed in a neighborhood without displacing existing units. The project is also notable as an example of how smaller-scale projects can fit well into and assist in transitions between major commercial areas and the residential neighborhoods that they serve.

## Key Facts

	Built	2008
	Height	3 stories
	Type	Residential Mixed Use
	Zoning	Main Street-3 (U-MS-3)
	Size	.5 acres
	<a href="#">Project Location</a>	
	<a href="#">Project Website</a>	

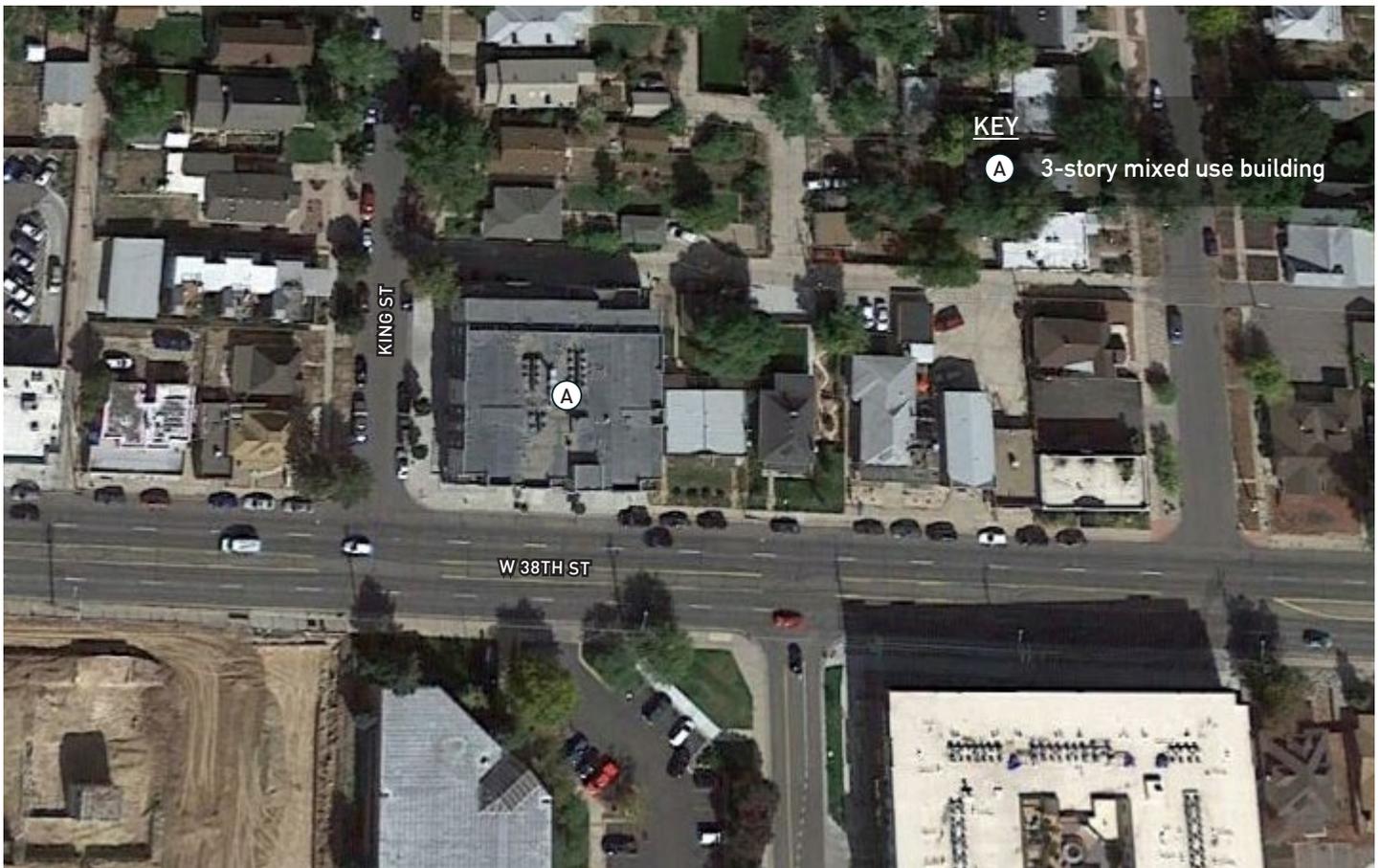
## Project Area

	Commercial	2,450 sf
	Office	None
	Hospitality	None
	Residential	32,250 sf (18 units)
	Parking (underground)	18 spaces

ZUMA APARTMENTS: 2006



ZUMA APARTMENTS: 2015



# THE TRIANGLE AUSTIN, TEXAS



## DESCRIPTION

The Triangle is a mixed use development sited on property previously owned by the state. Located between the Rosedale and Hyde Park neighborhoods of North Central Austin, the development of this project began in 1996. The Triangle is predominantly residential, but includes a number of retail tenants. The design also created new streets, breaking down the large piece of land into a finer grained network of blocks, allowing for better circulation. A park at the center of the Triangle is used recreationally, as well as for a local farmer's market.

The project site will be built out with the completion of The Village at the Triangle, a senior-living facility with 206 residential units that will be completed in 2018.

## Key Facts

	Built	2006
	Height	1-4 stories
	Type	Residential Mixed Use
	Zoning	Planned Unit Development
	Size	30 acres
	<a href="#">Project Location</a>	
	<a href="#">Project Website</a>	

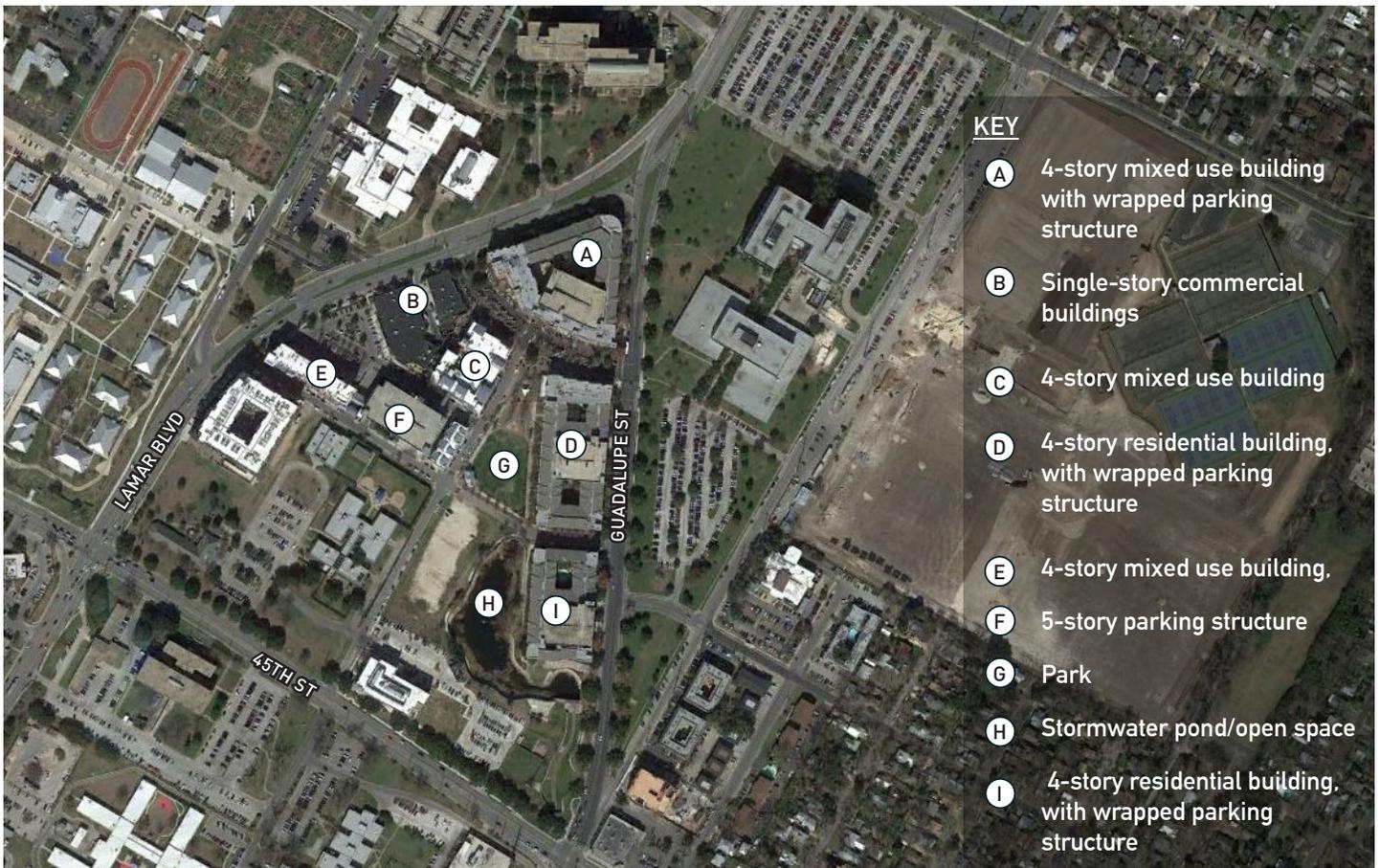
## Project Area

	Commercial	120,100 sf
	Office	None
	Hospitality	None
	Residential	456,000 sf (450 units)
	Parking (structured)	1,267 spaces

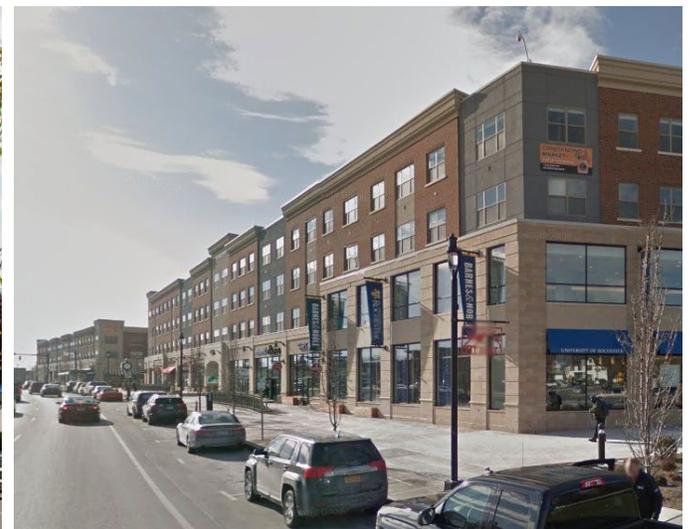
## THE TRIANGLE: 2003



## THE TRIANGLE: 2016



# COLLEGE TOWN ROCHESTER, NEW YORK



## DESCRIPTION

College Town is a mixed-use development in Rochester, New York. Located at the intersections of Mount Hope and Elmwood, the project is a public-private partnership between the University of Rochester, Fairmount Properties and Gilbane Development Company to create a new activity center designed to serve both students and faculty of the University as well as residents of the city.

## ZONING

The project has a special zoning designation, College Town Village, one of many floating zones used to identify the city's urban centers. This allows for the district to have special development standards that allow for taller buildings and a more developed streetscape as compared to the surrounding area.

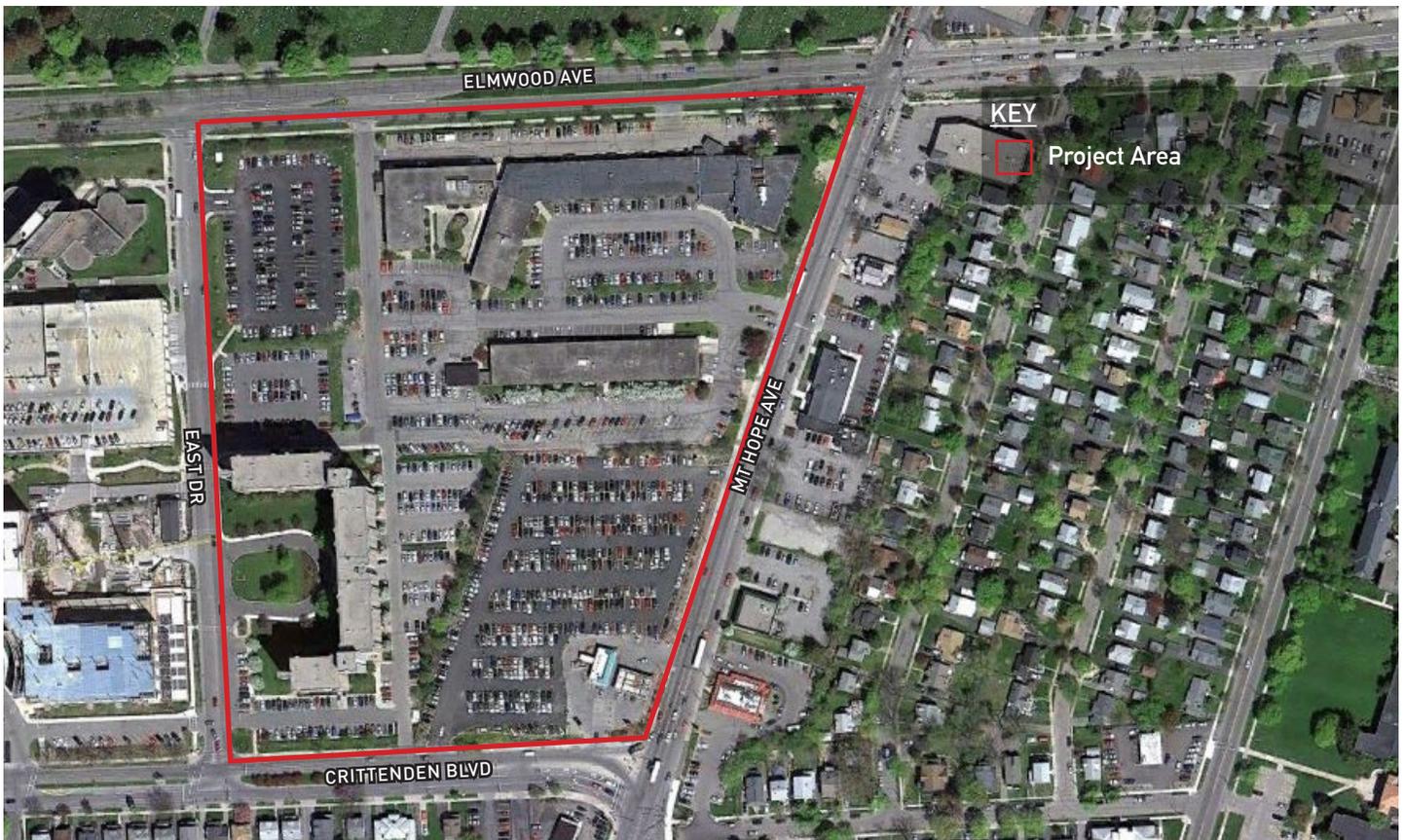
## Key Facts

	Built	2015
	Height	3-5 stories
	Type	Commercial Mixed Use
	Zoning	College Town Village (C-V)
	Size	17 acres
	<a href="#">Project Location</a>	
	<a href="#">Project Website</a>	

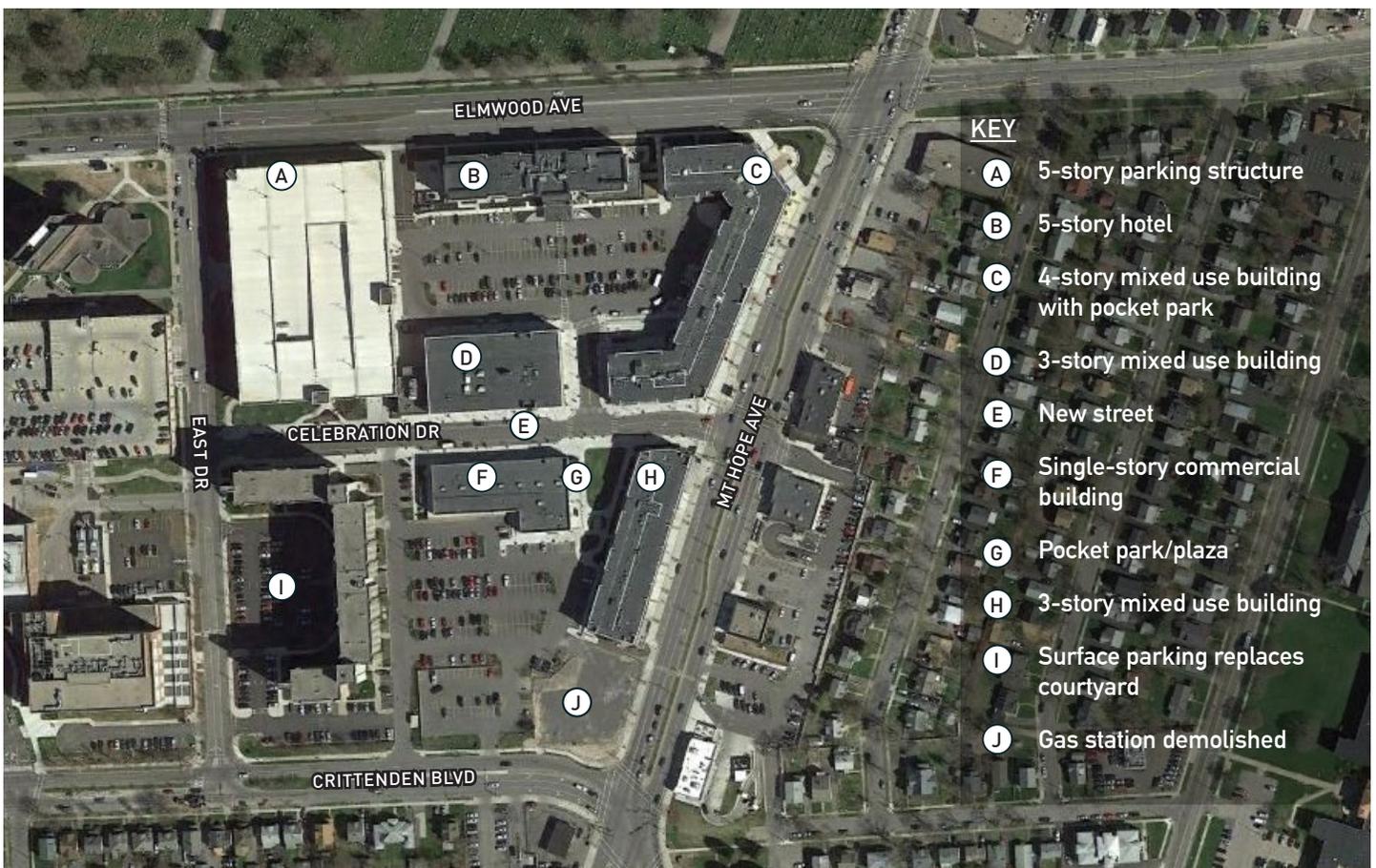
## Project Area

	Commercial	121,190 sf
	Office	78,080 sf
	Hospitality	99,000 sf (136 rooms)
	Residential	210,000 sf (150 units)
	Parking (structured)	574,000 sf

COLLEGE TOWN: 2011



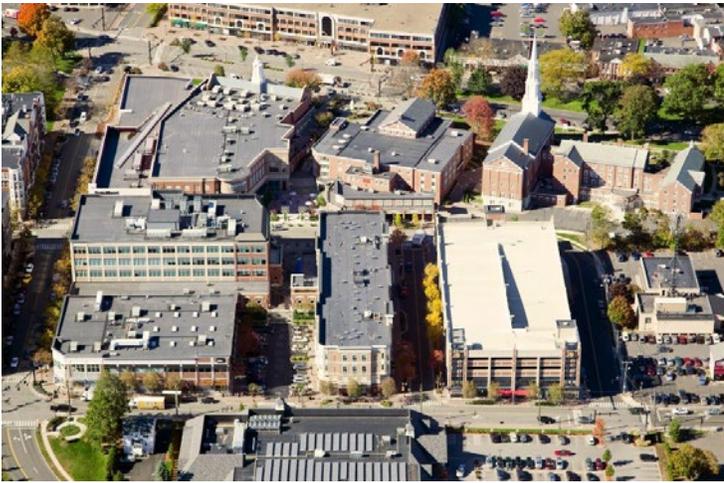
COLLEGE TOWN: 2016



KEY

- A 5-story parking structure
- B 5-story hotel
- C 4-story mixed use building with pocket park
- D 3-story mixed use building
- E New street
- F Single-story commercial building
- G Pocket park/plaza
- H 3-story mixed use building
- I Surface parking replaces courtyard
- J Gas station demolished

# BLUE BACK SQUARE WEST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT



## DESCRIPTION

Blue Back Square is a mixed-use project that combines an open air mall with residences as well as a regional wellness center. The project is a public-private partnership between the city of West Hartford and a private developer. The redevelopment site of Blue Back Square is a combination of two former car dealerships and some city-owned land.

The development is well-integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods, with the exterior designs taking cues from the surrounding buildings in terms of materials and scale. The town's investment, roughly \$48 million of a total \$300 million, has been repaid through increased tax revenue as well as revenue from the project's parking structures.

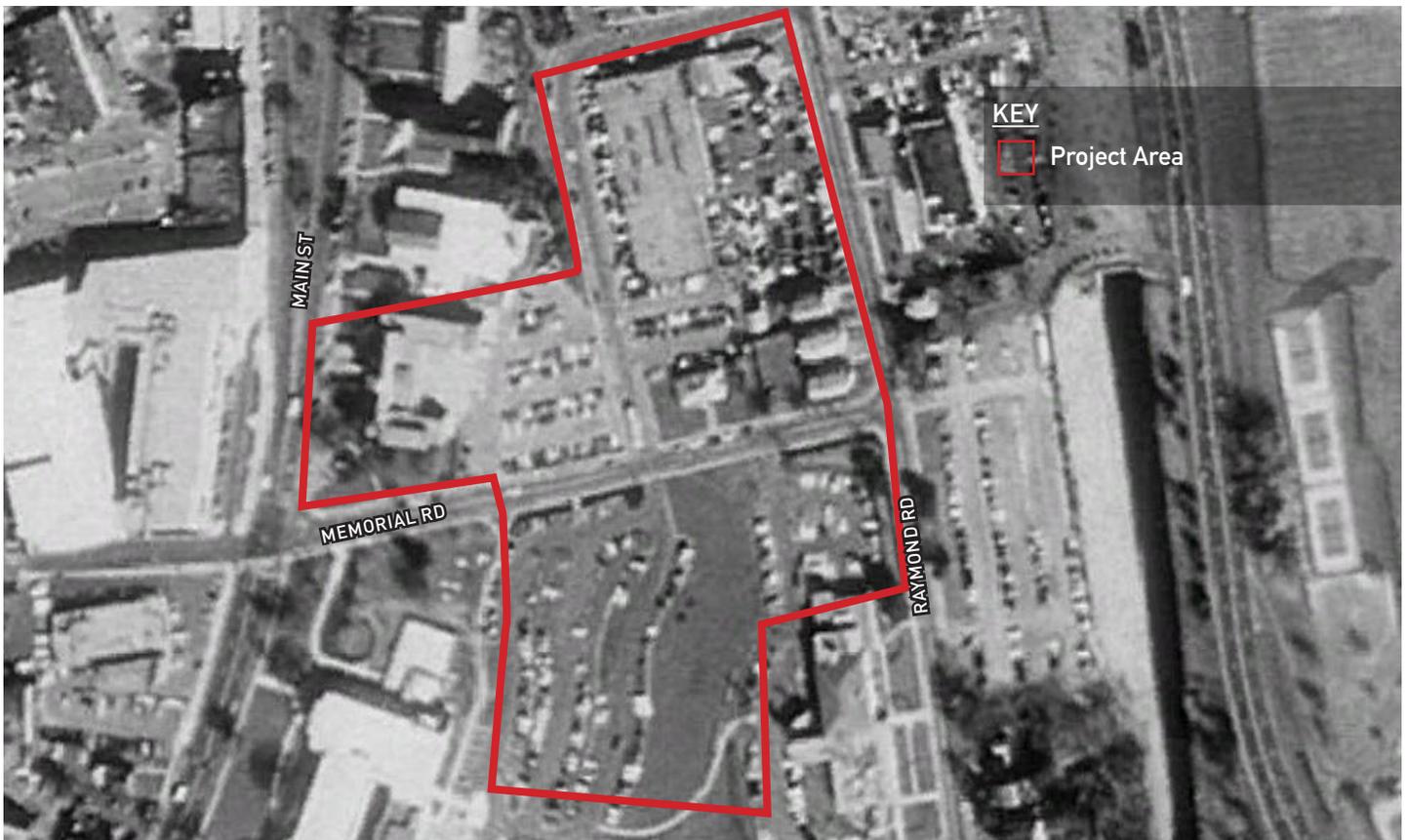
## Key Facts

	Built	2008
	Height	1-5 stories
	Type	Commercial Mixed Use
	Zoning	Special District
	Size	20 acres
	<a href="#">Project Location</a>	
	<a href="#">Project Website</a>	

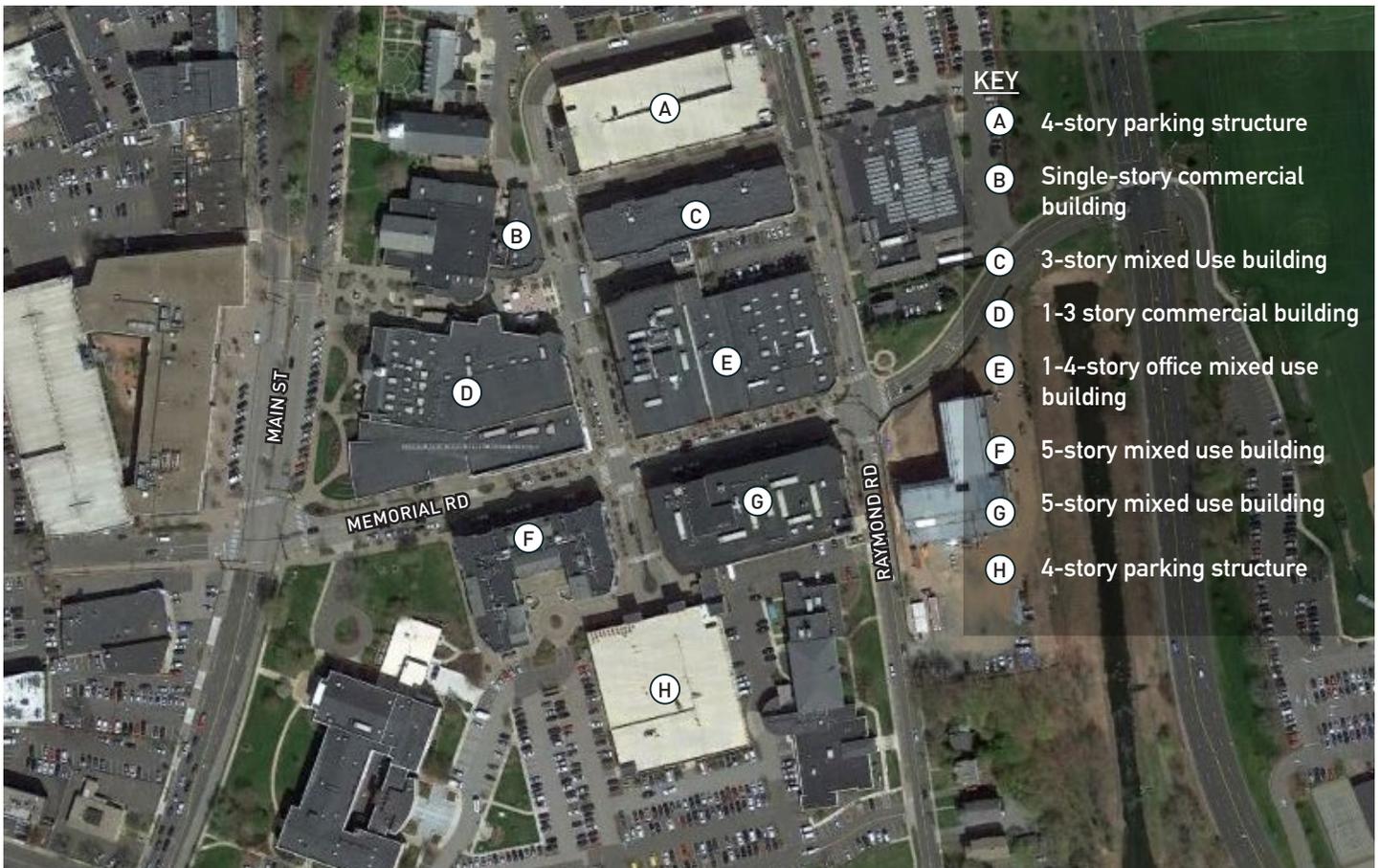
## Project Area

	Commercial	305,000 sf
	Office	183,000 sf
	Hospitality	None
	Residential	122,000 sf (107 units)
	Parking	Unknown

## BLUE BACK SQUARE: 1992



## BLUE BACK SQUARE: 2014



# THE WASHINGTON SARATOGA SPRINGS, NEW YORK



## DESCRIPTION

The Washington is a small-scale mixed use building located in downtown Saratoga Springs at 422 Broadway. The structure is located on the former site of a Masonic temple that burned down in the 1950s and was never replaced. Since then, the lot had been used for surface parking. The building has retail tenants and offices on the ground floor and more office tenants on the second floor. The third and fourth floors contain residential units.

## ZONING

The zoning of the area required more windows and doors on the ground floor, which supports the storefront retail units that face Broadway. The building is set back in line with the neighboring buildings and provides a wide streetscape that includes public benches and street trees.

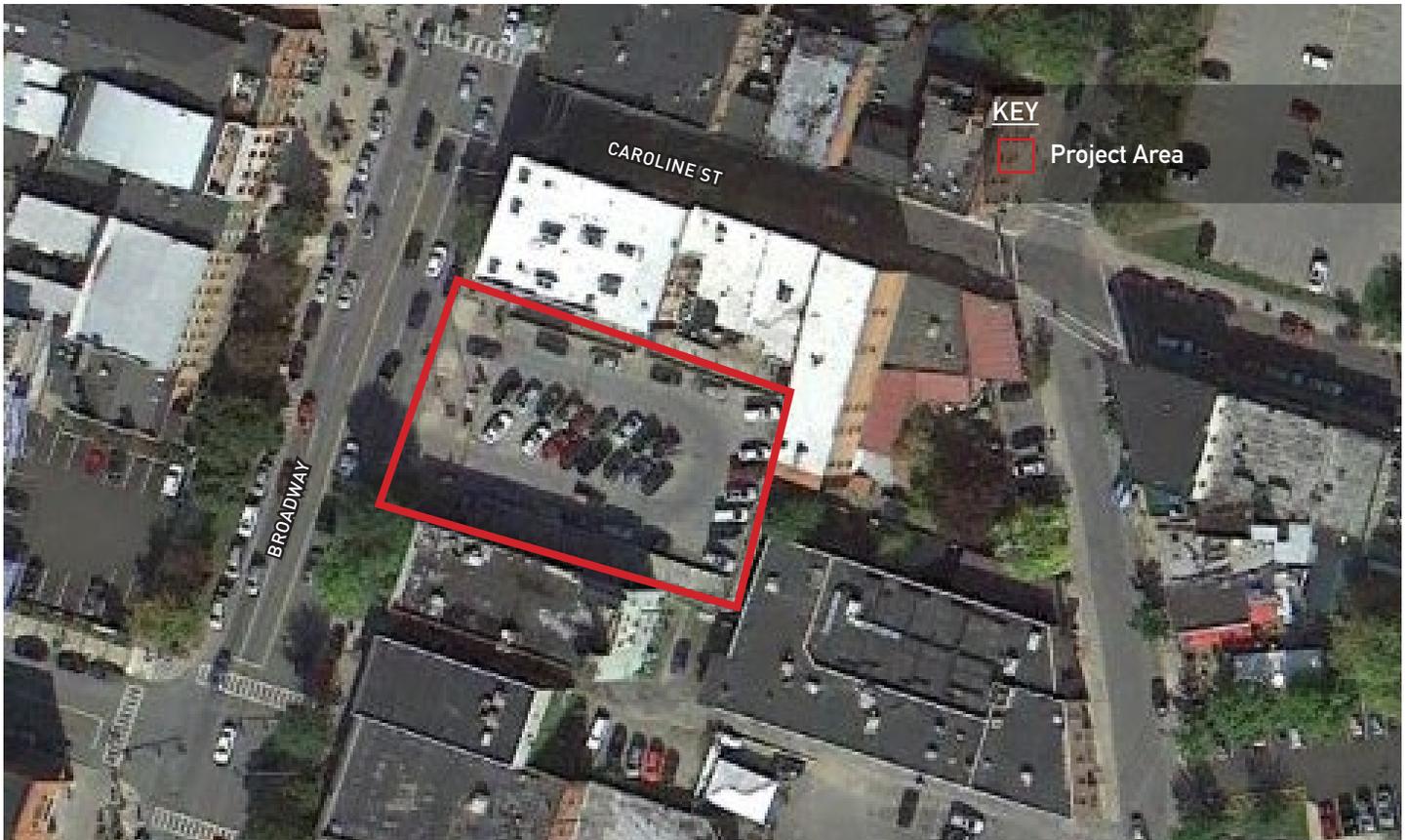
## Key Facts

	Built	2013
	Height	4 stories
	Type	Commercial Mixed Use
	Zoning	T-6 Urban Core
	Size	.5 acres
	<a href="#">Project Location</a>	
	<a href="#">Project Website</a>	

## Project Area

	Commercial	26,000 sf
	Office	6,000 sf
	Hospitality	None
	Residential	18,000 sf (14 units)
	Parking	Unknown

THE WASHINGTON: 2011



THE WASHINGTON: 2015



# 321 BROADWAY SARATOGA SPRINGS, NEW YORK



## DESCRIPTION

321 Broadway, also known as Congress Park Centre, is a full-block mixed use project. While the site once hosted a grocery store, the land previously sat vacant for a number of years. The structure depicted in the images to the right is the first of a number of buildings that will be built on the site.

The project's design calls for a series of liner buildings that will surround a new parking garage for the downtown area. Future development will include structures up to 7 stories high with space for both office and residential tenants. This project intends to revitalize a declining downtown block through reinvestment and the addition of new workers and residents to the area.

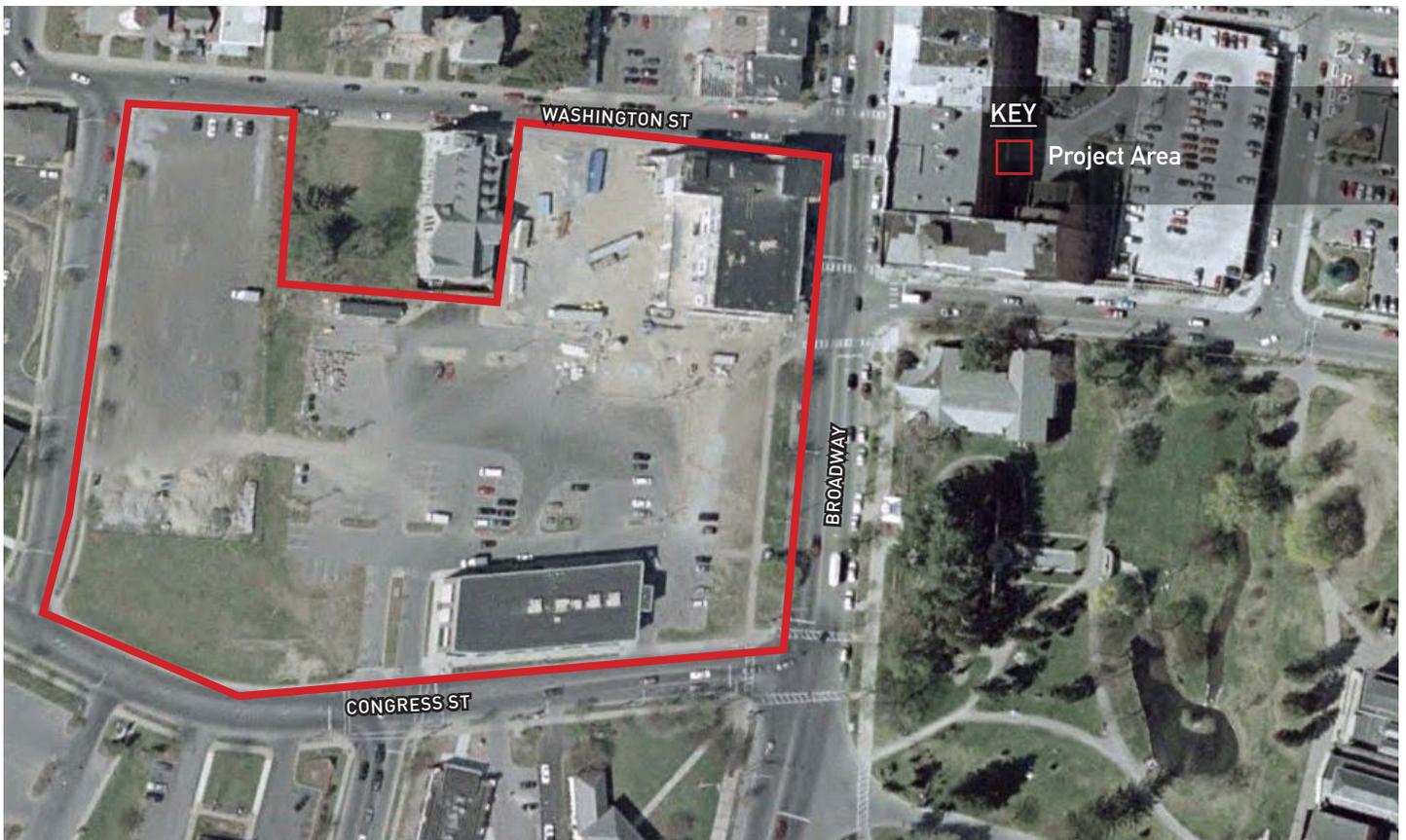
## Key Facts

	Built	1998-2005
	Height	3-5 stories
	Type	Commercial Mixed Use
	Zoning	Planned Unit Development
	Size	6 acres
	<a href="#">Project Location</a>	
	<a href="#">Project Website</a>	

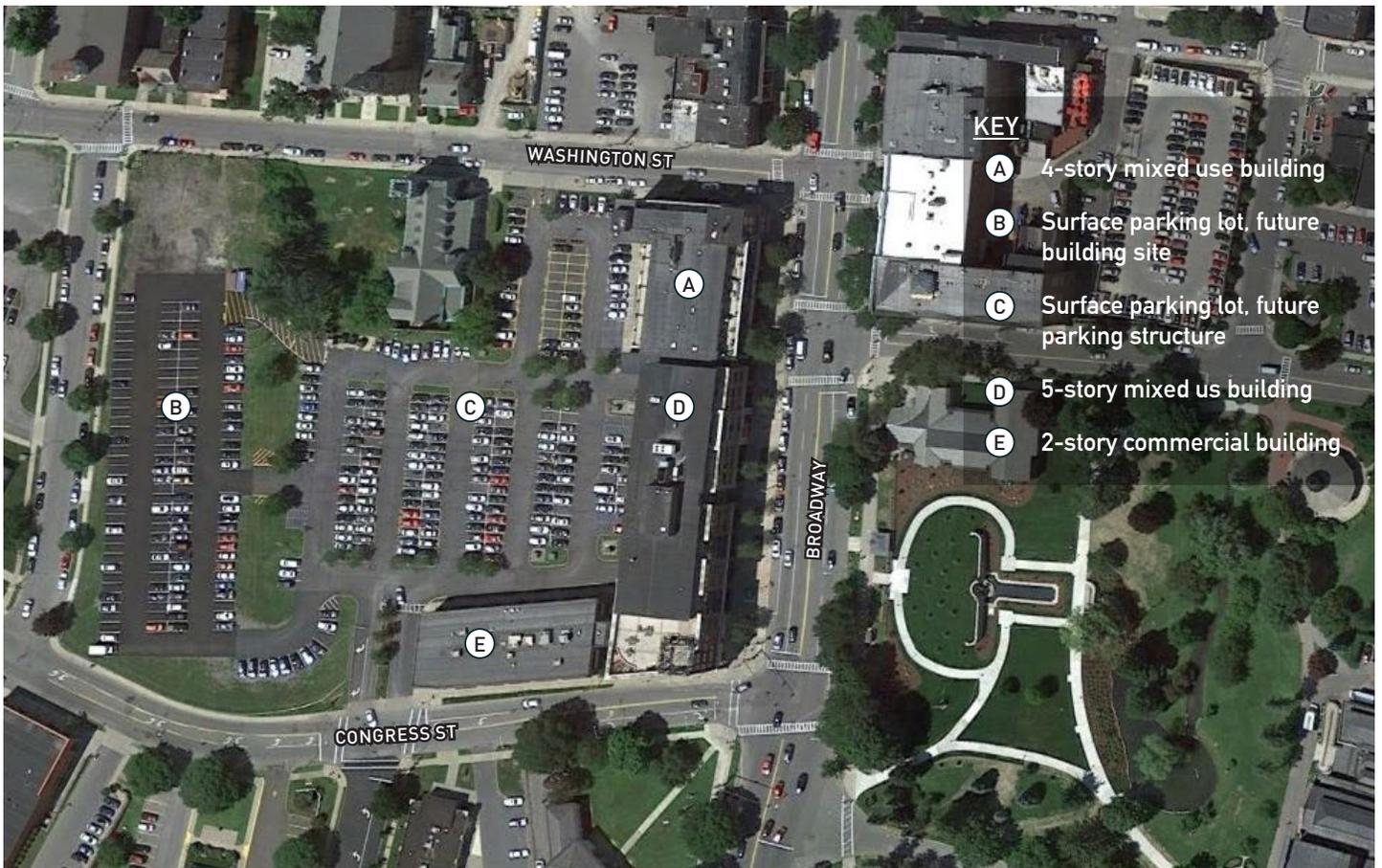
## Project Area

	Commercial	150,000 sf
	Office	Unknown
	Hospitality	None
	Residential	30 units
	Parking (surface)	370 spaces

321 BROADWAY: 2001



321 BROADWAY: 2015



# APPENDIX

## COMPLETE LIST OF PRECEDENT SITES

\* included in Precedent Report

### 1. DEEP/LARGE PARCELS

- \* Rochester, NY "[College Town](#)"
- \* West Hartford, CT "[Blueback Square](#)"
- Norwalk, CT "[Waypointe District](#)"
- Merrifield, VA "[Mosaic District](#)"
- Richmond, VA "[Libbie Mill Midtown](#)"
- Rockville, MD "[Town Square](#)"

### 2. TRADITIONAL NODE

- \* Saratoga Springs, NY "[The Washington](#)"
- \* Irondequoit, NY "[I-Square](#)"

### 3. SUBURBAN NODE

- \* Mashpee, MA "[Mashpee Commons](#)"
- \* Braddock, PA "[501 Braddock](#)"

### 4. WILLIAMSVILLE EDGE

- \* Saratoga Springs, NY "[321 Broadway](#)"
- \* Austin, TX "[The Triangle](#)"

### 5. SHALLOW PARCELS

- \* Denver, CO "[Panera Bread](#)"
- \* Denver, CO "[Zuma Apartments](#)"
- Denver, CO "[Highland Place](#)"
- Austin, TX "[3016 Guadalupe](#)"
- Austin, TX "[Texas North Campus](#)"

## PRECEDENT SITES DESCRIPTIONS

### 1. DEEP/LARGE PARCELS

#### Rochester, NY "[College Town](#)"

- » Similar to: Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard (Northtown Plaza).
- » Surrounding environment: Single-family, hospital and a hotel nearby.
- » Development details: 4 stories; large lots; multiple buildings; ground floor retail (bookstore, food); apartments.

#### West Hartford, CT "[Blueback Square](#)"

- » Similar to: Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard (Northtown Plaza).
- » Surrounding environment: Outside of Hartford's downtown core; surrounded by single family residential.
- » Development details: 4+ stories; mixed use development, large parcels, structured parking.

#### Norwalk, CT "[Waypointe District](#)"

- » Similar to: Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard (Northtown Plaza).
- » Surrounding environment: Immediately abuts single-family.
- » Development details: 5 stories; large lot; primarily residential development with some ground floor retail, wrapped structured parking.

#### Merrifield, VA "[Mosaic District](#)"

- » Similar to: Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard (Northtown Plaza).
- » Surrounding environment: Commercial center; outside Washington DC and Arlington.
- » Development details: 6+ stories; mostly retail; some apartments; very dense; big box retail like Target, structured parking.

#### Richmond, VA "[Libbie Mill Midtown](#)"

- » Similar to: Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard (Northtown Plaza).
- » Surrounding environment: Commercial district at two highways; residential setting;
- » Development details: 2 stories; Commercial mixed-use; phased development; surface parking.

#### Rockville, MD "[Town Square](#)"

- » Similar to: Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard (Northtown Plaza).
- » Surrounding environment: Arterial roadways; along main commercial corridor.
- » Development details: 4+ stories; large mixed use development, structured parking.

## 2. TRADITIONAL NODE

### Saratoga Springs, NY “[The Washington](#)”

- » Similar to: Eggertsville (Eggertsville/Main)
- » Surrounding environment: Surrounded by lower heights; Main Street style development.
- » Development details: 4 stories; infill of a surface parking lot; single building; residential with ground floor retail (cafe and bookstore).

### Irondequoit, NY “[I-Square](#)”

- » Similar to: Snyder (Harlem/Main)
- » Surrounding environment: Surrounded by multi-family and single family; outdated commercial node; smaller lots.
- » Development details: 2 stories; small lot phased development.

## 3. SUBURBAN NODE

### Mashpee, MA “[Mashpee Commons](#)”

- » Similar to: Getzville Plaza
- » Surrounding environment: Greenfield development; subdivision style residential; highway intersection.
- » Development details: Low-scale outdoor walkable shopping center.

### Braddock, PA “[501 Braddock](#)”

- » Similar to: Getzville Plaza.
- » Surrounding environment: Historic buildings, residential area, arterial roadway.
- » Development details: Low-scale infill of a parking lot.

## 4. WILLIAMSVILLE EDGE

### Saratoga Springs, NY “[321 Broadway](#)”

- » Similar to: Main Street- Union to 290.
- » Surrounding environment: Near downtown Saratoga Springs; residential with ground floor retail.
- » Development details: 4 stories; deep large parcel; surface parking.

### Austin, TX “[The Triangle](#)”

- » Similar to: Main Street- Union to 290
- » Surrounding environment: Arterial roadways; commercial corridor, single-family and multi-family neighborhoods
- » Development details: 4 stories; primarily multi-family with limited retail activity.

## 5. SHALLOW PARCELS

### Denver, CO “[Panera Bread](#)”

- » Similar to: Transit Road/Main.
- » Surrounding environment: Single-family directly behind; fronts commercial corridor.
- » Development details: 1 story; surface parking in the rear, includes a drive-through.

### Denver, CO “[Zuma Apartments](#)”

- » Similar to: Transit Road/Main.
- » Surrounding environment: Single-family directly behind.
- » Development details: 3 stories; multi-family with ground floor retail, alley access.

### Denver, CO “[Highland Place](#)”

- » Similar to: Transit Road/Main.
- » Surrounding environment: Single-family directly behind.
- » Development details: 3 stories; multi-family with ground floor retail, alley access.

### Austin, TX “[3016 Guadalupe](#)”

- » Similar to: Transit Road/Main.
- » Surrounding environment: Single-family directly behind.
- » Development details: 3 stories; multi-family with ground floor retail, no alley.

### Austin, TX “[Texas North Campus](#)”

- » Similar to: Transit Road/Main.
- » Surrounding environment: Single-family directly behind.
- » Development details: 4 stories; multi-family with ground floor retail, no alley.



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