

2008

Development Program

Worcester North Main Area

Prepared for

The City of Worcester
Executive Office of Neighborhood and Economic
Development
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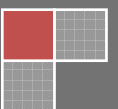
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City of Worcester Economic Development Division



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Executive Summary

Introduction

This Development Program presents both a near-term, market-based program and a long-term “vision” resulting from on the momentum created by the earlier market-based development. The Development Program represents a synthesis of the market and planning themes generated by the input from public participation and technical analyses conducted by the Project Team.

The Program will inform near-term, interim and long-term development policy directives that capably and flexibly respond to market opportunities. The Program also provides guidance on design and explores potential public/private partnerships for the Study Area. These recommendations provide the framework upon which the final Economic Development Strategy for the North Main Area will be produced.

Basis of Program

The Development Program is based upon prior work conducted by the Project Team including, but not limited to:

- North Main/Worcester Market Analysis
- Identification of Priority Sites
- Physical analyses of the Priority Sites
- Physical evaluation of the overall Study Area and related infrastructure
- Technical evaluation of several buildings on the Priority Sites
- Parking and circulation analysis
- Focus groups and stakeholder interviews
- Input from the North Main Charrette conducted in September 2007

Key Components

Area Vision / Themes

The Program has three major overarching themes that guide the development recommendations. These themes were developed through the technical analyses, public input and deliberation with the Project Team. These themes sculpt out “activity nodes” within the Study Area and inform the specific uses within these nodes.

The three themes are:

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1. *Urban Village/Downtown Connector* – focuses on the southern portion of the Study Area (Site 1, 2, 3 and 4), envisioning a distinct neighborhood that provides a connection between the North Main Area, Downtown Worcester, CitySquare and Union Station.
2. *Cultural/Academic District* – focuses on the northwestern portion of the North Main Area (Sites 5, 8, 9 and 10), aiming to reinvigorate and expand on this civic and cultural center, as well as link it both physically and thematically to nearby academic institutions like Worcester Polytechnic Institute.
3. *“Idea Central” / Gateway to the New Economy* – the northern part of the Study Area (Sites 6, 7, and 11) may possess the most catalytic potential of any part of North Main. There is also the opportunity to synergize uses with those on Sites 5, 9 and 10 to create a civic and economic focal point for the North Main area. With proximity to Gateway Park and the great potential of the expanding life sciences and biotech industries, the City can use the power of its future economy to drive the overall revitalization of the North Main Area.

These themes are further divided into three development timeframes, which provide perspective on feasible timelines along the envisioned revitalization can occur. These timeframes include:

1. A realistic, market-based *near-term timeframe* that sets the stage for a long-term vision.
2. A *long-term timeframe* derived from a build-out analysis that depicts optimum development based on potential future conditions, public policy directives and the guiding themes. This long-term vision provides a flexible and responsive framework responding to project future market conditions and City/community aims.
3. An *interim development timeframe* that bridges the gap between near-term market opportunities and the long-term vision.

Build-Out Vision (15 Years +)

The long-term vision is further framed by the maximum physical parameters that are possible for the 11 Priority Sites.¹ This build-out scenario includes determinations of square footage for each site at build-out, based on policy guidelines and anticipated zoning, development and design regulation, as well as other related public policies. The uses incorporated for each site in the build-out scenario are informed by the three overarching revitalization themes.

The build-out scenario for the North Main Area revitalization ultimately comprises:

¹ Public input and technical market analysis showed limited potential for Site 12 (Catherine Street) this, primarily given its significant distance from Lincoln Square and isolation from the rest of the Priorities Sites. Therefore, this site was excluded from consideration so that greater time and resources could be focused on the other 11 sites.

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- 11 parcels
- 31.8 acres
- 1.6 million square feet of development of approximately the following composition:
 - Approximately 300 residential units
 - 750,000 – 950,000 SF office development
 - 300,000 – 500,000 SF flex/R&D development
 - 40,000 – 50,000 SF meeting/convention development
 - Approximately 220 hotel rooms

Near-Term (0-5 Years)

In order to set the stage for the long-term vision and provide immediate, high-impact development/redevelopment projects that can initiate the overall revitalization of the North Main Area, the Program lays out a detailed near-term program that focuses on specific sites ripe for immediate action and general improvements that provide the aesthetic and functional foundation for future revitalization and reinvigoration.

The near-term program consists of projects on five of the Priority Sites, as well as streetscape and infrastructure improvements to North Main Street and the immediate Lincoln Square area. This program aims to restore the former prominence of Lincoln Square, while forwarding the Cultural/Academic and Urban Village/Downtown Connector themes.

Site-Specific

- Renovation of the Old Courthouse Building (Site 5) to accommodate 99,000 SF of high-end office space.
- Renovation of old Boys Club building to accommodate health club and loft-style residential units.
 - 2-level, 24,000 SF health club catering to young professionals and high-end residents living in and around Lincoln Square
 - 24 loft-style residential units on the upper floors aimed at young professionals and empty nesters
- Interim development of the Main Street West Parking Lot (Site 2) to accommodate distinctive restaurants and retail uses, as well as residential units on the upper floors.
 - 8,600 SF of retail, comprising distinctive independent (possibly ethnic) restaurants and shops that complement CitySquare offerings
 - 27 residential units (5 levels) catered to students, young professionals and empty nesters
- Development of street front retail along Main Street next to the existing AT&T building

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- 15,000 SF of retail including telecommunications/wireless products associated with AT&T

Near-Term Development Summary and Market Context

- Development of approximately 99,000 square feet of new or renovated office space. This represents 13% of the office space expected to be absorbed in the Worcester office market (City and remainder of Worcester County) in the next five years, and 24% of the office space expected to be absorbed in the Worcester Metro submarket (City and immediate outlying areas) over the same period.
- Development of approximately 51 multifamily residential units. This would increase the current multifamily housing stock in the North Main Area by about 94%, or the total housing stock in the area (multifamily and single-family) by 69%.
- Development of approximately 24,000 square feet of new retail space.

General Area Improvements

- Addition of green space (through demolition/filling-in of North Main underpass), and sidewalk/street improvements to North Main Street in order to create boulevard-like character
- Green space/public space enhancements to Lincoln Square, particularly in front of the Boys Club (Site 10) and the Worcester War Memorial Auditorium (Site 9)
- Various additional infrastructure improvements in and around Lincoln Square, particularly related to access and circulation
- A particular focus on reducing the barrier created by excessive vehicular traffic that tends to separate the northern and southern portions of the Study Area
- Consistent with required traffic capacity, a reduction in width of the existing roadways in the Study Area, creating “traffic calming” effects and a more pedestrian friendly environment

Interim (5-15 years)

Development occurring between the near-term program and long-term vision will both follow the guidance of the long-term vision and themes, as well as respond to changing market tradition and economic trends in the North Main Area, City and region.

As development moves toward long-term revitalization goals, new development will have to be responsive to the current state of the life sciences/biotechnology industry in Worcester and the region, as well as the intended growth of a creative class of young professionals, academics and empty nesters within the central part of the City.

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Interim Development Summary and Market Context

- Development of approximately 180,000 square feet of flex/R&D space (phased development on Morgan Construction site). This represents about 24% of the flex/R&D space expected to be absorbed over the 10-year interim period in the Worcester flex/R&D market and 46% of the expected absorption in the Worcester Metro flex/R&D submarket over the interim period. This represents an average of 18,000 SF of flex/R&D space coming on line each year during the interim period.

- Development of approximately 392,000 square feet of new or renovated office space. This represents about 26% of the office space expected to be absorbed in the Worcester office market and about 48% of that expected to be absorbed in Worcester Metro office submarket. This represents an average of 39,200 SF of flex/R&D space coming on line each year during the interim period.

- Development of approximately 59,000 square feet of new retail space.

- Development of about 109 multifamily residential units, which would more than double the multifamily residential stock in the North Main Area.

- A 55,000 square-foot urban grocery store serving North Main, Downtown and other central Worcester residents.

1. Development Program Overview

1.1. General Description

The Development Program takes into consideration the market potential for different uses, access and circulation issues, proximate development, physical site/building elements, financial feasibility and input from the public/stakeholders. Based on these factors, this document provides a recommended development program for the North Main Study Area, in particular the 11 Priority Properties that have been designated and analyzed to this point.

The Development Program also focuses on some key elements of the recommended development actions for the Study Area. The Program includes both public and private parking options to support the proposed development, addressing both conventional parking demand and shared parking opportunities. The Program also identifies civic goals and basic urban design principles that will shape development in the area and document the optimum land use mix, including open space.

Focusing on these elements and the foundational factors mentioned above, the Development Program ultimately tests the market and financial feasibility of the various land uses. This includes gauging the need for public development incentives and/or third-party funding sources that may be necessary to attract the preferred mix of private development and investment.

The Development Program draws upon the findings from the Market Analysis conducted on the Study Area, and synthesizes this information into both a near-term, interim and long-term “blueprint” for development, overall design and potential funding for the Study Area. These recommendations provide the framework upon which the final Economic Development Strategy for the North Main Area will be produced.

1.2. Program Components

Following is a brief overview of the sections of the Development Program.

Market Outlook

This section provides a summary of the most relevant findings from the North Main Market Analysis. It frames these recommendations as basic guidelines for the overall themes and goals of

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the North Main revitalization, using market data to set realistic expectations for the Project Team and the public.

Overall Elements/Thematic Development Considerations

Building off of the Market Outlook, this section identifies the development “themes” for the Study Area. These themes help provide context for the development recommendations. To a certain extent the themes address near-term and interim recommendations, but their main focus is on the characteristics of long-term development.

Build-Out Scenarios

This section presents the build-out potential for the Priority Sites. Namely this is the ideal development scheme that incorporates uses informed by the Market Analysis and other research done on the Priority Sites and overall Study Area. These scenarios include calculations of square footage for each site at build-out, based on Worcester’s zoning and development regulations, and other related public policies.

Near-Term Development

This section provides near-term development options, those intended to be implemented within five years of Development Program initiation. The intended uses are prescribed, along with the respective amount of square feet for each use, including parking, on relevant sites.

Near-Term Actions

This section outlines actions necessary to carry out the near-term development recommendations. These include regulatory actions, policy creation/changes, financing measures, marketing efforts, etc.

Interim Development

In this section, development recommendations are laid out for transitional development bridging long-term and short-term projects. This time period runs roughly from 5 to 20 years after Development Program initiation.

Interim Actions

This segment provides specific actions necessary to implement interim development projects. Additionally, it lays out necessary steps to bridge the gap between the near-term program and long-term vision. Interim actions would build upon early market success, focusing on the long-term vision.

Long-Term Development Approach

This section provides long-term development options and vision, intended to be implemented between five and 25 years (or more) after the initiation of the Development Program. This stresses

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the flexible, overall themes that could be incorporated given the future market and economic climate.

2. Market Outlook and Thematic Considerations

2.1. Market Outlook

The Worcester North Main Market Analysis analyzed five types of development uses in Worcester and the greater metro region: *office*, *flex/R&D*, residential *retail* and *lodging*. The most relevant findings from the Market Analysis are summarized below. These findings provide the market context in which the subsequent build-out scenario and time-specific development programs are based.

The findings were based on data projections for 2011, and provide predictions and recommendations that are geared towards near-term conditions. However, combined with information from other related analyses and the market/development expertise of the Project Team, informed and reasonable assumptions have been made for the interim and long-term periods.

2.1.1. Office Market Findings

- Worcester office occupancy rates have steadily increased in recent years, and have historically been higher than Metro Boston office occupancy rates. This provides potential for expansion of the office market and new office construction in the North Main Area. This office market potential could be further enhanced by demand spurred by the growth of the biotech/life sciences industry, as well as spin-off demand from the R&D/flex market.
- Prior to the potential emergence of the biotech/life sciences industry in Worcester, initial office tenants will most likely consist of general office users that require spaces of 5,000 square feet or less. These general office users in the Worcester and Boston markets tend to have a preference for smaller buildings (50,000 square feet or less). This provides a near-term market for office buildings with 20,000 to 25,000 square-foot floor plates, occupying two to three floors.
- Class B office space currently dominates the Worcester market. In the short term, renovation of this space, particularly in older buildings with significant historic features, could offer very appealing space for new tenants.

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- One major factor potentially impacting renovation of old office space or development of new office space in the near term is the 225,000 square feet of new office space now under development near North Main Street in the CitySquare development project.
- As office demand grows in the interim and long term periods, there could be a greater need for new construction of Class A office space

2.1.2. Flex/R&D Market Findings

- The Worcester flex/R&D market has exhibited higher vacancy rates than the Boston Metro region. This has resulted in lease rates more affordable than those in the Boston area.
- Given the pricing structure initial rehabilitation of old industrial or office space may be more financially feasible than new flex/R&D development. This could provide the cost effective, smaller research spaces that are currently in demand for tenants in the Metro Boston region (5,000 – 25,000 square feet).
- Development of mixed-use projects with ground floor retail and upper-level lab space offers diverse space that may also appeal to multiple users. Likewise, combining historic rehabilitation elements with new, state-of-the-art lab space construction could provide even more appealing flex space to users in the biotech/life sciences industry.
- As the biotech/life sciences industry expands, larger, more modern spaces may be more in demand. This could warrant new, large-scale construction offering flex space usable by both research tenants and biotech/life sciences related office tenants.
- One major factor potentially impacting new flex/R&D development in the near term is the 225,000 square feet of new office/flex space now under development near North Main Street in the CitySquare development project. A portion of this space is being geared toward life science, biotech and other R&D firms.

2.1.3. Residential Market Findings

- Despite the nationwide slowdown in the housing market, sales volume for housing has experienced an overall increase in Worcester in recent years. This has been driven by the great affordability compared to the Boston area (Worcester median housing prices are 55 percent of Boston prices).
- 1,500 residential units are under construction or planned in the Worcester area, 650 of which are slated to be developed at nearby CitySquare. Therefore, new residential

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development in the North Main Area should initially be limited and focus on emerging, underserved market segments, such as young professionals or empty nesters. In the long term, population growth, an expanding economy (especially due to biotech/life sciences industry growth), and a resurging housing market should generate significantly more demand in the Worcester residential market.

- New residential development should focus on affordability, good highway and/or public transportation access, and proximity to jobs. These conditions abound in the North Main Area, which also provides a funky, distinctive character; great potential for future job growth; and high overall residential appeal due to the potential for revitalization in the near future.
- With the growing biotech/life science industry likely to provide a substantial number of jobs in the City and particularly in the North Main/Downtown areas, demand for residential should increase significantly over the next several years. The national trend of young professionals and empty nesters moving into urban cores should make the North Main residential market especially attractive.

2.1.4. Retail Market

- Retail vacancy rates in Worcester are comparable to Boston area vacancy, but there is a significantly higher vacancy rate for general retail, which is the retail type generally found in downtown areas. Worcester retail space is more affordable than the same space in Metro Boston.
- Despite the relatively high vacancy rates for general retail, there is substantial room for expansion in the Worcester retail market, given that Downtown Worcester currently captures only 2 percent of retail expenditures of City residents. This includes room for expansion in many retail types including eating and drinking establishments and food stores, two types that are a particularly good fit for the North Main Area.
- Specialty and niche retail, distinct from national chains and mainstream retail found in traditional shopping centers, are also a very good fit for the North Main Area.
- This significant capture potential for new retail in the North Main Area should expand as new residents move into the center of the city, new jobs are created, and the local economy expands in coming years. With this economic and population growth at the City's core, significant growth in both general and specialty retail is expected in the North Main Area.

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2.1.5. Lodging Market

- Hotel vacancy rates are higher in the City than in the greater Worcester region. Therefore, there should be limited or no hotel development/expansion in the near term.
- The demand for upgrading and “up-scaling” hotels in the City is a result of preferences for upscale properties by hotel developers and users in the area.
- The growth in the local economy, and particularly the biotech/life sciences industry could generate much greater demand for lodging, hospitality and convention demand in the future. Rather than just expanding the supply of hotel rooms, future lodging development should focus on upgrading and expanding function space. The future demand will mostly be driven by business travel and convention use, especially with the potential boom of R&D and related business activity spurred by the biotech/life sciences industry.

2.2. *Overall Elements/Thematic Development Considerations*

This section relays the “themes” that characterize development in different segments of the Study Area. These themes provide context for North Main revitalization and help guide the development recommendations. These themes pertain mainly to the long-term development actions, but are also linked to near-term and interim development actions. They characterize the ultimate goals of the revitalization and therefore provide direction for long-term development that culminates several years down the line.

2.2.1. Urban Village / Downtown “Connector” Theme

Location: southern Study Area – Sites 1, 2, 3 & 4.

The main focus of development in the southern portion of the Study Area is to create a distinct neighborhood that provides a connection between the North Main Area, Downtown Worcester, CitySquare and UnionStation. The resulting development in this area should be mainly mixed-use and high-density, in order to create a “twenty-four hour” neighborhood with high street activity and vibrancy. Although not a dedicated entertainment district, the neighborhood night life can be enhanced by the presence of live music venues and performing arts theaters. This entertainment element can be anchored by a renovated and expanded Palladium Theatre. In addition, other new or expanded spaces can provide smaller entertainment venues, such as comedy clubs or small improve theaters.

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The area is envisioned to have a young, “funky” feel to it. This can be established by populating new retail space with independent shops, cafes, bars and ethnic restaurants that is distinct from the more mainstream and chain-based retail that is found at the urban fringe or in the suburbs. These types of establishments can start populating the retail space that will be expanded or newly developed on Sites 1, 2 and 4. This type of restaurant and retail is demanded by the young professionals and new retirees who will be prominent in Worcester’s future population.

In association with these two prominent future populations and their often moderate incomes, affordable, moderately-priced apartments and condos should populate the residential space programmed for these sites. This location provides an opportunity for more affordable development in contrast due to the higher-end residential development planned as part of the CitySquare project. With greater affordability, the area will be accessible to recent college graduates and “empty nesters” who will add the needed vibrancy to this area, but often have limited budgets.

The expected increased residential density and foot traffic resulting from the new development will also provide a market for an urban supermarket. Currently, there is no major supermarket in the Downtown or North Main areas. Residents in these areas must drive further out in the City for groceries. Site 1 appears to be an opportune location for an urban grocery store given its size and proximity to both Downtown and North Main. This urban supermarket is seen more as an interim or long-term development, as a sufficient population and demand for such an establishment will come over time as the North Main Area is revitalized.

2.2.2. Cultural / Academic District Theme

Location: northwestern Study Area – Sites 5, 8, 9 and 10 (in the near-term/interim period)

The northwestern portion of the North Main Area has for years been a civic and cultural center, comprising the Old Courthouse, Worcester Art Museum, Central Mass Symphony Orchestra, and the once-active War Memorial Auditorium. The North Main Project provides an opportunity to uphold and expand on this historical use of the area.

There is still potential to develop uses in the old court building and surrounding sites that will enhance street activity and the vitality of the area. The proximity of this area to Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Institute Park and Salisbury Pond provide untapped opportunities to connect with significant academic and recreational resources. The main focus of new development/redevelopment/renovation in this portion of the Study Area is to create connections between North Main, WPI and proximate areas, and to create a focal point for these interconnected areas in Lincoln Square.

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Professors and other academic professionals, many of whom work at WPI, make up a large portion of the current North Main and Downtown populations,² and are expected to remain a substantial portion of these populations. There is an opportunity to attract this demographic to live, shop and otherwise patronize North Main with expanded and improved residential, retail and cultural offerings.

These offerings include the high-end condos, high-end office and specialty retail programmed for the Old Courthouse site, a science-related museum or academic center reuse for the War Memorial Auditorium, a health club/recreation center in the former Boys Club building, additional park and green space on the Salisbury Mansion site and potential relocation of the buildings on this site. These uses will provide living, shopping, cultural and working opportunities for this academic/"College Town" population and create stronger connections between the Institute, Park and North Main.

One of the key considerations in creating this "Cultural/Academic District" is the connection between the sites north and south of Route 9/Highland Street. This is currently a high-traffic route that creates a barrier between several of the sites included in this envisioned District. In order to create a connection between these component sites, it is necessary to address pedestrian access issues and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment. Traffic flows, street width, and pedestrian access points must be adjusted/improved to create the appropriate connections – *to* and not *through* the districts – necessary for a successful, consolidated District revitalization.

2.2.3. "Idea Central" / Gateway to New Economy Theme

Location: northern/northeastern Study Area – Sites 6, 7, & 11.

The northern part of the Study Area may possess the most potential of any part of North Main. The three sites that abut Lincoln square have ideal locations, large acreage, and significant redevelopment potential. Most development actions for this area are programmed to occur in the interim and long-term, given the substantial projects that could occur on these sites and the major coordination and planning required.

With a \$500 million investment planned for a stem cell bank and a gene research center at the University of Massachusetts Medical School and the further growth of the Gateway Park development, Worcester has myriad opportunities to capture significant investment in the biotechnology/life sciences industry. Although the UMass Medical Schools is two miles away from Lincoln Square, the development of Gateway Park has laid the foundation for a critical mass of

² The ESRI College Town tapestry group, which includes a well-educated population primarily in their 30s and 40s of middle- to high-income who prefer small city or urban living, compose 23 percent of the Study Area population.

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biotech/life science R&D/office space that can draw more related investment to the North Main Area. The area could serve as the nexus between UMass Medical School, WPI, the private biotech/life science industry, and the City of Worcester.

This potential is magnified when considering Site 11 (Morgan Construction) and Site 7 (Worcester Police Headquarters), two large parcels that are adjacent to Lincoln Square and very close to Gateway Park. Although these sites presently have other active uses, there exists the long-term potential to redevelop and reuse these sites for large developments that incorporate biotech/life science R&D uses with office space and potentially residential units. Also, the potential for expanded hotel and convention space on Site 6 can greatly complement and enhance this technology, innovation and academic center.

In addition to the opportunity to capitalize on new biotech and life sciences investment in the City, there is also the opportunity to synergize uses on Sites 6, 7 and 11 with those on Sites 5, 9 and 10 to create a civic and economic focal point in the North Main area. The combination of high-end residential/retail/office space (Site 5), a life science-related museum/academic center (Site 9), significant biotech R&D/office space (Sites 7 & 11) and expanded hotel/convention space (Site 6) can create a center of science, innovation, academia, culture and civic activities akin to Kendall and Harvard squares in Cambridge, MA.

Route 9/Highland Street currently creates a barrier between the somewhat isolated “Idea Central District,” the Cultural/Academic District, and the Downtown Area. Pedestrian access must be improved and traffic flows must be adjusted in order to create enhanced north/south pedestrian connections. This will not only help to improve connections between the Idea Central District sites, but also improve the synergy between this District and the Cultural/Academic District.

3. Technical Development Program

This section presents the technical recommendations for the Priority Sites according in the context of the three overarching development themes presented earlier. In addition, specific development recommendations for the sites are provided for three development timeframes:

- 1) Near Term (0-5 Years)
- 2) Interim (5-15 Years)
- 3) Build-Out (15 Years +)

These three timeframes are described in more detail below. The build-out timeframe is described first and presented first throughout the Development Program to focus on the long-term vision and ultimate goals of the North Main revitalization efforts.

Existing site conditions/specifications and relevant market information gleaned from the Market Outlook section is also presented below for build-out, near term and interim development. These market notes relate across the three development themes within each timeframe.

3.1 Development Timeframes

3.1.1. Build-Out (15 Years +)

This timeframe takes into account the build-out potential for the 11 sites, looking 15 years after project initiation and beyond. Technical development recommendations for this timeframe are based on current Worcester zoning regulations and related public policies.³ This involves calculation of total square footage for general intended uses on the sites (incorporating FAR, minimum lot area/frontage, and setback regulations), as well as parking demand/requirements⁴ based on the intended uses of the sites at build-out. The parking demand/requirement calculations

³ Market data and research informs initial market, economic and development feasibility assumptions for the build-out scenario. However, the Market Analysis only provides projections to 2011. Therefore, the build-out scenario provides a flexible responsive framework for long-term development based on potential, general economic and market scenarios in the distant future (25 years or more). The build-out scenario also strongly incorporates the three overarching development themes composed by the public, stakeholders and the Project Team.

⁴ For ratios used to calculate current and recommended parking ratios, please see Appendix.

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will take into account parking reduction methods that could be utilized by the City, such as shared parking, as well as recommended parking ratios proposed by the National Parking Association and Urban Land Institute.

The complete Study Area lies within a Business - General zoning district that allows up to a floor-to-area ratio (FAR) of 6:1 (BG-6).⁵ The Study Area also lies within a Mixed Use overlay district (MU), which among other zoning modifications, allows FARs to be increased up to 20%, which would allow for FARs of up to 7:1 in the Study Area. As the build-out scenarios propose significant mixed-use development for the Priority Sites, this FAR was used in setting the parameters for building sizes.⁶

Additional assumptions include:

- Parking (in lots or structures) were not counted toward gross floor area as part of FAR calculations.
- In order to reduce costs, all parking was proposed above ground with a few exceptions in which underground parking made the optimum development scenario feasible.

Two parking scenarios are presented for each site:

- *Conventional* – provides the conventional parking requirements for the respective uses on each site according to the Off-Street Accessory Parking requirements in City's zoning ordinance.
- *Realistic Reduction* – provides the realistic parking requirements based on parking reduction potential, as well as parking data and recommendations from expert research on parking demand and requirements.

3.1.2. Near Term (0-5 Years)

Near-term development options are those that are intended to be implemented within five years of development Program initiation. This includes projects that can be started and completed within five years (e.g. Boys Club renovation/reuse), as well as projects that provide the foundation for some longer term development plans (e.g. Old Courthouse Building renovation/reuse). The intended uses (and alternative uses, where feasible and appropriate) are prescribed along with the respective amount of square feet for each use for each site with near-term recommendations.

⁵ The western half of Site 5 and all of Site 8 and 9 are currently in a BO-1.0 zoning district which allows an FAR of 1:1 (1.2:1 for a mixed-use development such as that proposed for the western half of Site 5). It is assumed that these sites can be rezoned to BG-6.0. Therefore, recommendations for these sites were based on the BG-6 district regulations and related FAR allowance.

⁶ For more information on the Mixed Use Development Overlay district, see <http://www.ci.worcester.ma.us/cc/clerk/ordinances/zoningord.pdf>, p. 146.

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Finally, parking requirements were determined for each relevant site's intended uses, along with any related development, such as parking structures and/or lots.

Overall, the near-term focus of development is on establishing the infrastructure for long-term improvements and completing small-scale projects that lay the groundwork for larger-scale projects or provide interim uses for priority sites. Two near-term renovation projects – The Boys Club (Site 10) and The Old Courthouse (Site 5)—have significant effects on the North Main revitalization in the near future. These projects would put two significant structures central to the North Main area back on line and provide a catalyst for longer-term future development in the area.

3.1.3. Interim (5-15 Years)

In this section, the Development Program will lay out recommendations over time for bridging long-term and short-term projects. The goal of development and related actions taken during this period is to flexibly and respond to market demand over time consistent with the long-term vision. This time period runs roughly from 5 to 15 years of development Program initiation.

3.2 Relevant Market Notes

3.2.1 Near Term

Office Market

- Initial office tenants will most likely demand general office uses (as opposed to R&D/lab-related uses) and require spaces of 5,000 square feet or less.
- There is currently a general preference among office tenants to occupy smaller buildings or building segments (50,000 square feet or less).
- Initial floor plates should be 20,000 to 25,000 square feet, and office buildings or building segments should initially be limited to about 2-3 floors.
- Initial office space development should involve renovation or redevelopment of existing Class B space, which is currently the most common type in the Worcester office market.

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- Office development planned for the near-term should take into consideration the approximate 225,000 square feet of office space planned to come on line in Downtown at CitySquare.

Flex/R&D Market

- Initially, there should be rehabilitation of old, small industrial or office space as flex/R&D space to provide the smaller research spaces (5,000 – 25,000 square feet) currently in demand in the Metro Boston region.

Residential Market

- New residential development should be geared toward untapped or growing market segments, such as young professionals and empty nesters. The following residential characteristics/amenities should be incorporated for each group, respectively:
 - Young professionals – affordability; access to public transportation; funky characteristics/atmosphere; proximity to nightlife
 - Empty Nesters – relative affordability; high-end features; proximity to cultural amenities; good highway/public transportation access
- Residential development planned for the near-term should take into consideration the 1,500 units currently under construction or planned in Worcester, particularly the 650 units planned for Downtown at CitySquare.

Retail Market

- Initially, retail should be developed modestly, due to high general retail vacancy rates.
- Near-term retail development should begin to focus on serving future North Main and Downtown residents soon to be populating new residential development in the area.
- In the near-term, the types of retail targeted should be specialty/niche retail, eating and drinking establishments, and food stores.
- Near-term retail development should differentiate itself from mainstream/chain retail currently available just outside of Downtown and at nearby shopping centers and malls.

3.2.2 Interim

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Flex/R&D Market

- As the biotech/life sciences industry expands, larger new spaces may be more in demand. This could warrant new, large-scale construction offering flex space usable by both research tenants and biotech/life sciences related office tenants.
- Development of mixed-use projects with ground floor retail and upper-level lab space offers diverse space that may also garner more demand in the interim, as well as developments that combine historic rehab elements with new, state-of-the-art lab space
- The types of developments mentioned above should be initiated later in the interim period, transitioning into the long-term period. This is because larger, mixed-use projects require a critical mass of residents, businesses and employees, as well as a larger market area that extends outside of the Study Area.

Office Market

- As biotech/life science industry begins to grow, market for more (and potentially larger) general office space should develop as a result of spinoff demand.
- Demand for larger buildings (greater than 50,000 square feet) and larger individual spaces (greater than 5,000 square feet) may begin to develop. Office buildings or buildings over three floors can be considered.
- As office demand grows in the interim period, there could be a greater appeal for new Class A space (or lower classes updated/improved to Class A).

Residential Market

- Interim residential development should build upon success garnered from near-term residential development (namely young professionals and empty nesters), and should take the biotech/life science industry more into consideration over time.
- With greater economic activity and a potentially surging biotech/life science industry, higher-end residential, particularly around Lincoln Square, can become more of a focus. This would start to include industry employees and executives looking for appealing, amenity-rich living options close to their workplace.
- Relatively affordable residential to serve young professionals should be the focus of residential development in the southern segment of the Study Area.

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Retail Market

- Interim retail development should focus more on the growing North Main and Downtown populations. Retail space can expand in conjunction with new residents and employees in and around the North Main Area.
- Interim retail development should still maintain a focus on specialty/niche retail, but as a critical mass of residents, businesses and employees materializes, general retail development can be developed to serve the growing population.

Lodging Market

- Depending on the nature of the developing economy and real estate market in the North Main Area and the City (biotech and life science/cultural and academic/urban village), hotel rooms and convention/meeting space could be expanded and/or upgraded to meet the needs of the prevailing market.
- Specific features making up or related to this expanded lodging development could include new hotel rooms serving diverse markets (business, convention/meeting, tourism) and price points (budget, value, extended stay, corporate, boutique, luxury).

3.3 Urban Village/Downtown Connector

The following scenarios for the Priority Sites represent the recommended development that follows the Urban Village/Downtown Connector theme, broken down by development timeframe. The sites are presented in the order of priority, with the sites most integral to this thematic development listed first.

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3.3.1 Build-Out

(See Appendix 1 - Priority Parcel Data Sheets "Build-Out" for further site details)

Site 2 – Main and Exchange Street

- 114,222 SF
- Maximum FAR conversion = 799,554 SF
- Assume 80% lot coverage
 - ~90,000 SF

Site Uses

Building 1 (Main Street)

- 18 stories
- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 14,500 SF
- Office (Floors 1-18)
 - 302,000 SF
- Parking (3 underground levels)
 - 72,000 SF
 - 151 spaces

Building 2 (Exchange Street)

- 5 stories
- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 8,600 SF
- Residential (Floors 1-5)
 - 37,500 SF
 - 27 units
- Parking (Floor 1)
 - 15,000 SF
 - 27 spaces

Building 3 (Commercial Street)

- 7 stories
- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 1,500 SF
- Residential (Floors 1-7)
 - 69,600 SF
 - 49 units
- Parking (Floor 1)
 - 22,000 SF
 - 49 spaces

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Parking Demand

Conventional

• Retail =	91 spaces
• Office =	1,007 spaces
• Theater =	625 spaces
• Residential (1 space/DU) =	<u>152 spaces</u>
• TOTAL =	1,875 spaces

Realistic Reduction

• Retail =	68 spaces
• Office =	755 spaces
• Theater =	0 spaces
• Residential =	<u>76 spaces</u>
• TOTAL =	899 spaces

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Site 1 – Main St. (West Parking Lot)

- 78,929 SF
- Maximum FAR conversion (7:1) = 552,503 SF
- Assume 80% lot coverage
 - 64,000 SF

Site Uses

- Grocery Store (Floor 1)
 - 55,000 SF
- Parking Structure (Floors 1-8)
 - 383,000 SF
 - 950 spaces

Parking

Conventional

- Grocery Store = 184 spaces
- **TOTAL = 184 spaces**

Realistic Reduction

- NO REDUCTION

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Site 3 – AT&T Site

- 137,555 SF
- Maximum FAR conversion = 962,885 SF
- Assume 80% lot coverage
 - ~108,000 SF

Site Uses

- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 45,000 SF
- Convention/Meeting Space (Floors 2)
 - 45,000 SF
- Hotel (Floors 3-7)
 - 220 rooms
- Parking Structure (5 levels)
 - 981 spaces

Parking Demand

Conventional

- Hotel = 220 spaces
- Retail = 152 spaces
- Convention/meeting space = 450 spaces
- **TOTAL = 822 spaces**

Realistic Reduction

- Hotel = 220 spaces
- Retail = 114 spaces
- Convention/meeting space = 0 spaces
- **TOTAL = 389 spaces**

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Site 4 – Honey Farms Site

- 62,218 SF
- Maximum FAR conversion (7:1) = 438,326 SF
- Assume 80% lot coverage
 - ~48,000 SF

Site Uses

Western Half (16,000 SF)

- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 20,000 SF
- Office (Floors 2-4)
 - 60,000 SF
- Residential (Floors 5-7)
 - 48 units

Eastern Half

- Parking
 - 3 levels (grade + 2.5 levels)
 - 387 spaces

Parking Demand

Conventional

- Retail = 67 spaces
- Residential = 96 spaces
- Office = 200 spaces
- **TOTAL = 363 spaces**

Realistic Reduction

- Retail = 50 spaces
- Residential = 48 spaces
- Office = 150 spaces
- **TOTAL = 248 spaces**

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3.3.2 Near-Term

Site 2 – Main and Exchange St.

Building 2 (Exchange Street)

- 5 stories
- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 8,600 SF
- Residential (Floors 1-5)
 - 37,500 SF
 - 27 units
- Parking (Floor 1)
 - 15,000 SF
 - 27 spaces

Site 3 – AT&T Site

- Retail
 - 15,000 SF
 - Along Main Street next to existing AT&T Building
 - Related retail uses (e.g. AT&T Wireless store)

Site 4 – Honey Farms Site

Western Half (16,000 SF)

- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 20,000 SF
- Office (Floors 2-4)
 - 60,000 SF
- Residential (Floors 5-7)
 - 48 units

Eastern Half

- Parking
 - 3 levels (grade + 2.5 levels)
 - 387 spaces

3.3.3 Interim

Site 2 – Main and Exchange Street

Building 1 (Main Street)

- 18 stories
- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 14,500 SF
- Office (Floors 1-18)
 - 302,000 SF
- Parking (3 underground levels)
 - 72,000 SF
 - 151 spaces

Site 1 – Main St. (West Parking Lot)

- Grocery Store (Floor 1)
 - 55,000 SF
- Parking Structure (Floors 1-8)
 - 383,000 SF
 - 950 spaces

Building 3 (Commercial Street)

- 7 stories
- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 1,500 SF
- Residential (Floors 1-7)
 - 69,600 SF
 - 49 units
- Parking (Floor 1)
 - 22,000 SF
 - 49 spaces

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3.4 Cultural/Academic District

The following scenarios for the Priority Sites represent the recommended development that follows the Cultural Academic District theme, broken down by development timeframe. The sites are presented in the order of priority, with the sites most integral to this thematic development listed first.

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3.4.1 Build-Out

(See Appendix 1 - Priority Parcel Data Sheets "Build-Out" for further site details)

Site 9 – War Memorial Auditorium

- Renovate current building
- ~55,000 SF/floor
 - Renovation creates ~50,000-100,000 SF of institutional/office/flex
- Biotech/life science institute and/or Museum

Site Uses

- Potential for 50,000 SF of office or R&D/flex space
- Potential for 50,000 SF of museum space

Parking

Conventional

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| • Office/R&D = | 167 spaces |
| • Museum = | <u>143 spaces</u> |
| • TOTAL = | 310 spaces |

Realistic Reduction

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| • Office/R&D = | 115 spaces |
| • Museum = | <u>143 spaces</u> |
| • TOTAL = | 258 spaces |

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Site 5 – Old Courthouse

- 193,841 SF
- Assume 80% lot coverage
 - 152,000 SF

Site Uses

Building 1 (currently the original Courthouse building)

- Involves renovation of existing building
- Office (Floors 1-4)
 - 99,000 SF

Building 2 (currently 1950s addition and parking)

- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 22,500 SF
- Office (Floors 2-5)
 - 90,000 SF

Building 2 (currently 1950s addition and parking)

- Residential (Floors 1-4)
 - 60 dwelling units
 - Parking under building – 64 spaces

Parking Structure

- Parking structure
 - 4 levels
 - 648 spaces

Parking

Conventional

- Retail = 75 spaces
- Office = 630 spaces
- Residential = 120 spaces
- **TOTAL = 825 spaces**

Realistic Reduction

- Retail = 57 spaces
- Office = 473 spaces
- Residential = 60 spaces
- **TOTAL = 590 spaces**

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Site 10 – Boys Club

- Renovate existing building
- 4 floors (including basement)
- ~12,000 SF/floor
- ~48,000 SF of renovation potential

Site Uses

- Health Club (Floors 1-2)
 - 24,000 SF (12,000 x 2 floors)
- Residential (Floor 3-4)
 - 24 dwelling units
- Parking Lot
 - 93 spaces

Parking

Conventional

- Health club = 69 spaces
- Residential = 48 spaces
- **TOTAL = 117 spaces**

Realistic Reduction

- Health club = 69 spaces
- Residential = 24 spaces
- **TOTAL = 93 spaces**

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Site 8 – Salisbury Mansion & Parking

- 78,743 SF
- Maximum FAR conversion (7:1) = 551,201 SF
- Assume 80% lot coverage
 - ~63,000 SF

Site Uses

- Enhancement of landscaping and existing green space on site
- Development of a small park integrated with green space/landscaping enhancements and the Salisbury Mansion property.
- Redevelopment of the existing 130-space parking lot into a compact 75-space lot
- Potential relocation of the Salisbury Mansion from Institute Road to Highland Street (this would involve relocation of the parking lot to the central or northern segments end of the site, away from Highland Street).

3.4.2 Near Term

Site 5 – Old Courthouse

Building 1 (currently the original Courthouse building)

- Involves renovation of existing building
- Office (Floors 1-4)
 - 99,000 SF

Site 10 – Boys Club

- Complete interior renovation of existing building
- 4 floors (including basement)
- ~12,000 SF/floor
- ~48,000 SF of renovation potential

- Health Club (Floors 1-2)
 - 24,000 SF (12,000 x 2 floors)
- Residential (Floor 3-4)
 - 24 dwelling units
- Parking Lot
 - 93 spaces

3.4.3 Interim

Site 5 – Old Courthouse

Building 2 (currently 1950s addition and parking)

- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 22,500 SF
- Office (Floors 2-5)
 - 90,000 SF

Building 2 (currently 1950s addition and parking)

- Residential (Floors 1-4)
 - 60 dwelling units
 - Parking under building – 64 spaces

Parking Structure

- Parking structure
 - 4 levels
 - 648 spaces

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3.5 *“Idea Central”/Gateway to the New Economy*

The following scenarios for the Priority Sites represent the recommended development that follows the “Idea Central”/Gateway to the New Economy theme, broken down by development timeframe. The sites are presented in the order of priority, with the sites most integral to this thematic development listed first.

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3.5.1 Build-Out

(See Appendix 1 - Priority Parcel Data Sheets "Build-Out" for further site details)

Site 7 – Worcester Police Station – Option A

- 198,198 SF
- Maximum FAR conversion (7:1) = 1,387,386 SF
- Assume 80% lot coverage
 - ~160,000 SF

Site Uses

Building 1

- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 20,000 SF
- Office (Floors 2-8)
 - 200,000 SF

Building 2

- R&D/flex space (Floors 1-7)
 - 225,000 SF
- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 12,500 SF

Parking Structure

- 6 levels
- 1,044 spaces

Parking

Conventional

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| • Retail = | 109 spaces |
| • R&D/Flex | 750 spaces |
| • Office= | <u>684 spaces</u> |
| • TOTAL = | 1,543 spaces |

Realistic Reduction

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| • Retail = | 82 spaces |
| • R&D/Flex | 450 spaces |
| • Office= | <u>513 spaces</u> |
| • TOTAL = | 1,045 spaces |

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Site 7 – Worcester Police Station – [Option B](#)

Overview of Alternative Site 7 Development Option (“Option B”)

- A second scenario for Site 7 was developed exploring the reuse, as opposed to demolition of, the Police Station
- This scenario incorporates the reuse of the current Station building as flex/R&D space with additions being added to the west and north faces of this building, providing additional space for retail and R&D uses (“Building 1” – see below)
- In addition, two additional buildings would be developed in the southwest (Building 2) and northwest (Building 3) corners of the site to accommodate retail and office space
- *The overall build-out development summary on page 46 includes the technical development program and square footages for Option A only*
- *See [Appendix 1 - Priority Parcel Data Sheets “Build-Out”](#) for further details on Option B*

Site Uses

Building 1

- 39,000 SF footprint
- 4 floors
- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 9,000 SF
- R&D/flex (Floors 1-4)
 - 147,000 SF

Building 2

- 13,500 SF footprint
- 6 floors
- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 7,000 SF
- Office space (Floors 1-6)
 - 87,500 SF

Building 3

- 18,200 SF footprint
- 7 floors
- Office space (Floors 1-7)
 - 127,400 SF

Parking Structure

- 7 levels (grade + 6 levels)
- 875 spaces

Parking Requirements

- Office & Retail = 577 spaces
- R&D/Flex 294 spaces
- **TOTAL = 871 spaces**

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Site 6 – Crowne Plaza

- 173,166 SF
- Maximum FAR conversion = 1,212,162 SF
- Assume 80% lot coverage
 - ~136,000 SF

Site Uses

- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 5,000 SF
- Residential (Floors 2-6)
 - 92 dwelling units
- Parking Structure
 - 3-level (2 underground levels & 1 above-ground)
 - 340 spaces

Parking

Conventional

- Retail = 17 spaces
- Residential = 184 spaces
- **TOTAL = 201 spaces**

Realistic Reduction

- Retail = 13 spaces
- Residential = 92 spaces
- **TOTAL = 105 spaces**

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Site 11 – Morgan Construction Site

- 123,696 SF
- Maximum FAR conversion (7:1) = 865,872
- Assume 80% lot coverage
 - ~98,000 SF

Site Uses

Building 1

- Office (Floors 1-5)
 - 90,000 SF

Building 2

- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 20,000 SF
- R&D/flex (Floors 1-7)
 - 180,000 SF

Parking Structure

- 5 levels
- 625 spaces

Parking

- Retail = 67 spaces
- Office = 300 spaces
- R&D/laboratory = 600 spaces
- **TOTAL = 967 spaces**

Realistic Reduction

- Retail = 50 spaces
- Office = 225 spaces
- R&D/laboratory = 360 spaces
- **TOTAL = 635 spaces**

3.5.2 Interim

Site 11 – Morgan Construction Site

Building 2

- Retail (Floor 1)
 - 20,000 SF
- R&D/flex space (Floors 2-7)
 - 180,000 SF

Parking Structure

- 3 levels
- 313 spaces
- Ability for future expansion when Site 11 is built-out

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3.6. Build-Out Scenario Summary

Overall, the 11 sites comprise the following development uses and respective, approximate square footages, number of units, etc.:

- 405,000 square feet of *R&D/flex*
- 876,000 square feet of *office*
- 300 residential units
- 228,000 square feet of *retail*
- 220 hotel rooms
- 45,000 square feet of convention/meeting space
- A 24,000 square-foot health club

- 5,435 *parking spaces (including 1,000 replacement spaces)*

❖ ***Approximately 1.6million square feet of development overall***

The table on the following page shows a summary of build-out development for each site.

Build-Out Scenario Summary

<i>Site</i>	<i>Retail*</i>	<i>Office</i>	<i>Flex/R&D</i>	<i>Conv./Mtg. Space</i>	<i>Hotel Rooms</i>	<i>Residential Units</i>	<i>Health Club</i>	<i>Total SF**</i>	<i>Required/ Displaced Parking</i>	<i>Parking Supplied</i>
1	55,000							55,000	379	950
2	27,200	302,000				76		329,200	1,149	227
3	45,500			45,000	220			90,500	469	981
4	20,000	60,000				48		80,000	348	387
5	22,500	189,000				60		211,500	680	712
6	5,000					92		5,000	395	340
7	32,500	200,000	225,000					462,500	1,045	1,044
8								-	-	75
9		30,000						30,000	258	-
10						24	24,000	24,000	93	93
11	20,000	90,000	180,000					290,000	635	625
Total	227,700	871,000	405,000	45,000	220	300	24,000	1,577,700	5,451	5,434

* Includes grocery store use for Site 1 (55,000 SF)

** Does not include residential or hotel square footage

3.7. Displaced Parking Considerations

Since some of the Priority Sites include existing parking lots, redevelopment of these sites will result in displaced parking. Below is a description of specific parking considerations for the Priority Sites whose development will involve displaced parking.

Site 1 – Main Street (West Parking Lot)

Redevelopment of this site will result in the loss of about 195 parking spaces in the existing lot. Combined with the new demand for about 184 spaces total estimated demand is 379 spaces. This demand will be met by supplied parking on Site 1 as well as Site 3.

Site 2 – Main and Exchange St.

Redevelopment of this site will result in the loss of about 250 parking spaces in the existing lot. New development will most likely create demand for about 899 additional spaces. This combined demand for 1,149 spaces can be met by supplied parking on Sites 1, 2 and 3.

Site 3 – AT&T Building

Redevelopment of this site will result in the loss of about 80 parking spaces in the existing lot. New development will most likely create demand for about 389 additional spaces. This combined demand for 469 spaces can be supplied onsite.

Site 4 – Honey Farms Site

Redevelopment of this site will result in the loss of about 100 parking spaces in the existing lot. New development will most likely create demand for about 248 additional spaces. This combined demand for 348 spaces can be supplied onsite.

Site 5 – Old Courthouse

Redevelopment of this site will result in the loss of about 90 parking spaces currently in use in the existing lot. Combined with the new demand for about 590 spaces, total estimated demand is 680 spaces. This demand will be met by supplied parking on Site 5 as well as Site 3.

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Site 6 – Crowne Plaza

Redevelopment of this site will result in the loss of about 290 parking spaces in the existing structure. Combined with the new demand for about 105 spaces, total estimated demand is 395 spaces. This demand will be met by supplied parking on Site 6 as well as Site 3.

4. Action Steps

4.6. Near-Term Action Steps

4.6.1. General Actions

- Exploration of TIF to support development through North Main area
 - Initiate efforts to establish TIF district to support development on Priority Sites and throughout other parts of Study Area
- Explore possibility of initiating a local Main Street Program (National Trust for Historic Preservation and/or Main Street-supported organization or district (e.g. a Business Improvement District)
 - For aid with historic rehab and streetscape improvements
- Initiate area-wide business development plan for merchants and potential office tenants
 - Start-up business support to aid retail and office occupancy
- Organize events to promote new drinking and eating establishments (particularly for Sites 1, 2 & 4)
 - Geared more toward younger population (recent grads and young professionals) that will be attracted to this area
 - “Taste of North Main” (could also coordinate with Downtown for higher-profile event)
 - North Main “Pub Crawl”
- Efforts to form coalition of North Main (possibly combined with Downtown) restaurants and bars
 - Provide discounts to patrons who want to sample area restaurants
 - Coordinated marketing for these businesses
 - Formation of distributor networks to reduce costs and improve supply
- *Same as above* for retail establishments and merchants within the North Main Area

4.6.2. Site-Specific Actions

Site 2 – Main and Exchange St.

- Solicit arts-related foundations for potential funding for rehab, expansion and additional uses for Palladium Theater
- Create incentives/appeal for performing arts-related organizations
 - Move towards development of arts/cultural center

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Site 5 – Old Courthouse

- Due to the significant amount of office space provided by this segment of the building, a strong anchor tenant is required to generate further demand for remaining space and other proximate office space in the North Main area
- Public and/or developer incentives may be required to draw such tenant

Site 9 – War Memorial Auditorium

- No actual development, but possibly basic renovations/maintenance to prepare for future use(s)
- Utilize small theater in rear to generate revenue and maintain activity/presence
 - Independent film series
 - Local/regional theater productions
 - Events informing residents/patrons of Auditorium’s history and potential future uses
- Visual marketing (banners, posters, newspaper ads, local television commercials, etc.) promoting presence of Auditorium
- Removal of onsite parking
- Event programming on plaza in front of Auditorium
- Marketing /merchandising
- Architectural/reuse study
- Maintenance of building
- Continuation of state law department lease on interim basis (maintain for financial support of near-term actions)

Site 10 – Boys Club

- Incentive program and/or City-wide health initiative to promote gym/recreation center usage/membership
- Program providing employers/employees discounted memberships and other incentives to join/use health club
- Initiate traffic circulation and improvements

4.7. Interim Action Steps

Specific actions necessary to implement these interim development projects are described below. Many of the actions recommended for near-term development can be extended into this program,

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as many of those actions represent ongoing marketing, funding and financing mechanisms that can support further development and overall revitalization of the North Main Area.

- An organizational structure, similar to the development partnership formed by WPI and WBDC should be formed to start creating funding mechanisms, institutional support and corporate support for large-scale R&D development to occur within the Study Area.
- Initiate campaign to raise funding for reuse of Auditorium, specifically for public/ institutional use that benefits public as a whole (museum, public market place, public educational institute, etc.).

5. Long-Term Development Approach (25+ Years)

5.1. Overview

This section provides general, long-term development options and vision, intended to respond to the competitive market environment and economic changes. Although completion of many of these projects may not occur until 20 or more years down the line, initiation of these projects could occur as early as five years after the Program is initiated, and will be linked to earlier projects and interim development occurring within the Study Area.

The long-term development recommendations are generally based on future expected demand and growth. These recommendations represent the long-term potential of the area in terms of favorable development conditions and successful short-term and mid-term revitalization efforts en route to the long-term goals of the City and the community. Ideally, these recommendations are focused on achieving the results highlighted in the build-out scenario. The long-term approach and build-out scenario are not necessarily distinct, but rather the build-out scenario is the ideal result and the long-term approach describes the general means of arriving at that result, along with possible constraints, complications and modifications.

5.2. Specific Thematic Approaches to Long-Term Development

Long-term development for the North Main Area seeks to fulfill the build-out scenario based on the appropriate uses determined in the Development Program. This progression towards build-out is guided by the three underlying development themes mentioned earlier, which not only guide initial development, but also inform the potential alternatives for future development.

Since the Development Program will likely be modified and adjusted in upcoming years due to changing conditions and the actual development occurring in the North Main Area, the long-term approach must provide flexible and responsive development options that frame future revitalization, rather than specifically dictating it.

Following are general development scenarios based on the three underlying development themes. These scenarios give an overview of potential long-term development in the context of the build-out scenario. They describe possible dominating themes for the overall character of development in the North Main area, based on progress of near-term and interim development, as well as different future economic and market conditions.

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5.2.1. Idea Central / Gateway to the New Economy Scenario

With the potential for a booming local economy driven by a surging biotech/life sciences industry in Worcester, the possibility of an R&D and academic center for life sciences and bioengineering looms positively in the future of the North Main area. This scenario would see a predominance of new R&D/flex space being developed in the northern segment of the study area, catalyzed by the completion (and possibly further expansion) of Gateway Park.

R&D/flex uses are already burgeoning in the North Main Area (primarily within the Gateway Park Development), and future growth in the life sciences industry could increase the demand for this use exponentially. Residential, office, retail and hotel space would support R&D workers, academics and life science related businesspeople.

Some site-specific results of this scenario include:

- Sites 7 and 11 would realize maximum build-out potential, resulting in up to 2 million square feet of R&D, lab and office space dedicated to biotech/life sciences industry functions.
- Sites 6 would become part of an expanded hotel and convention center, serving as the major convention location and meeting place for life science academic and business activities. Several hundred hotel rooms and some 50,000 square feet of function/meeting space would be included.

5.2.2. Cultural / Academic District Scenario

Building on the proximity of Worcester Polytechnic Institute, major development would originate from the northwest segment of the Study Area, spread across Lincoln Square and south through Downtown. This scenario could work in combination with the “Idea Central” scenario, as the academics, the life sciences industry and cultural offerings are highly complementary.

This scenario would have similar results as the above scenario, however there would some thematic differences in development. Many of the uses developed in this scenario would cater to academics, and especially the growing market segment of young professionals and empty nesters.

Additional and/or alternative site-specific results of this scenario include:

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- Site 9 is renovated to accommodate a academic/cultural attraction, such as a museum, taking advantage of its original massive open floor plan. The Little Theater in the rear of the building is maintained for educational presentations. Just as in the Idea Central theme, this site acts as an iconic focal point for development and activities around Lincoln Square.
- Site 5 would serve as upscale residences for biotech company executives and life science professors, also providing high-end, specialty retail and entertainment. Up to 60 upscale condos on the site would be complemented by up to 20,000 to 30,000 square feet of retail and entertainment space.
- Site 10 maintains the historic façade of the original Boys Club, but new, modern additions are developed to form a visually capturing collegiate activity center that serves as a focal point for Lincoln Square. 20,000 to 30,000 of small office space in the old building will be complemented by and additional 50,000 square feet of flex space in the additions, which will cater to general uses such as recreation, meeting space and potentially institutional space.

5.2.3. Urban Village / Downtown “Connector” Scenario

As opposed to the north-to-south progression of the two scenarios above, this scenario directs development south-to-north. The expected growth in the population of young professionals could foster either the *Academic/Cultural District* or this *Urban Village/Downtown “Connector”* scenario. The former is driven more by the older, generally more culturally-oriented empty nesters, while young professionals tend to demand more vibrant, funky and eclectic neighborhoods.

This scenario therefore banks more on the demand of young professionals who frequent restaurants and bars, live music venues, and who seek relatively affordable housing to meet the needs of their often limited finances. The scenario revolves around creation of a distinctive neighborhood that creates a vibrant corridor between Downtown and the North Main Area.

Some site-specific results of this scenario include:

- Site 2 is a high-density, mixed use development that contains a completely renovated and refurbished Palladium Theater, as well as an adjacent nightclub geared toward a young, yet sophisticated crowd. The site also includes office space, and about 76 moderately priced residential units catering to young professionals.
- Sites 3 would become part of an expanded hotel and convention center, serving as the major convention location and meeting place for life science academic and business activities. Several hundred hotel rooms and some 50,000 square feet of function/meeting space would be included.

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- Sites 1, 2 and 4 would serve as offices and residences for employees of spinoff businesses, young professionals and graduate students. This development would include a mix of residential, office and retail that would create a connection between North Main and Downtown.