



Alternative Fuels and Transportation Forum



New Britain, CT
Complete Streets Case Study

**If You Build it Will They
Come?**

Tuesday, June 5, 2018





THE CITY NEW BRITAIN, CT CASE STUDY



If You Build it Will They Come?

A look at how the State's and City's investment in
“sustainable transportation” is impacting
development and revenue

State's investment in Public Transit (CTfastrak)

City's investment in livability (Complete Streets)

New Britain TOD Developments

Economic Benefit related to the State's and City's investment

City of New Britain - Complete Streets Initiative





- Involves Dedicated Rapid Bus Transit (BRT) Corridor between New Britain and Hartford
- Also offers off-corridor routes to destinations (UConn Medical Center, Hartford Loop, downtown Bristol, Bradley Airport, etc...)
- \$500 Mil. Investment
- Began service in the spring of 2015 & has been very successful in terms on achieving ridership and attracting new development



GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY





But in 2011 when NB began our Complete Streets Master Plan for Downtown New Britain...

CT *fastrak* still in design & being referred to as the NB to Hartford Busway

- Many people assumed that people wouldn't ride the busway & that a train should have been built
- Former Governor Roland had a local radio talk show that where his primary topic was bashing the Busway project
- There was great concern that the project wouldn't be successful or be successful quickly enough to justify the expense



GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY





The City of New Britain recognized early that:

- Local projects that supported CTfastrak ridership would be highly fundable
- Local projects that leverage other State and Federal funds are highly fundable
- This was a once in a lifetime opportunity & we needed to take advantage of it early
- Opportunity to redefine the City of New Britain
 - Encourage TOD & other development
 - Improve the quality of life the City offers its residents and those that spend time in the City
 - Improve Tax Base & Grow the Grand List

GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY



NEW BRITAIN COMPLETE \$TREETS\$ INITIATIVE

The thing about **OPPORTUNITY** though is ...



YOU NEED TO SIEZE IT!!!

Great quote by **Thomas Edison** about Opportunity:

“Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work”





NEW BRITAIN COMPLETE STREETS INITIATIVE



Complete Streets

- Complete Streets are streets that are designed, operated and maintained with everyone in mind, regardless of age or physical ability. They enable safe access for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users of all ages and abilities.
- Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work, and support transit.
- Supporting bicycle, pedestrian and transit modes helps revitalize communities and attract new development, which in turn can boost property values.
- There is no singular design for a Complete Street; each street is unique and must be designed in response to its community context.

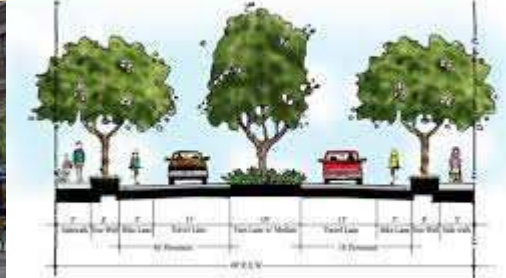


NEW BRITAIN COMPLETE STREETS INITIATIVE

COMPLETE STREETS NO STANDARD APPROACH,
REQUIRES DESIGN PER LOCATION



COMPLETE
STREETS



Complete Streets are Safe Streets

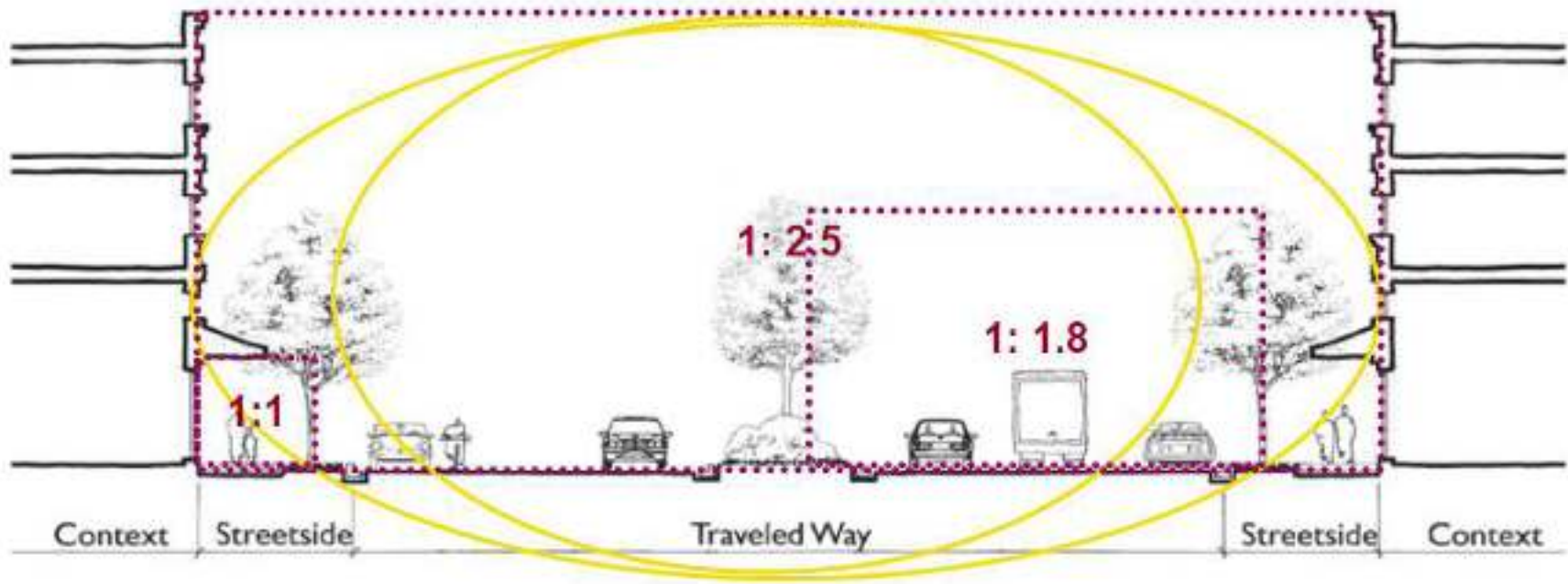


City of New Britain - Complete Streets Initiative



NEW BRITAIN COMPLETE STREETS INITIATIVE

Complete Streets is a lot about scale & how features relate to each other



Context & landscape provides vertical frame → Outdoor Room
Comfortable Ratio of Enclosure - 1:1 to 1:4



NEW BRITAIN COMPLETE STREETS INITIATIVE

Goal: New Britain's **Complete Streets** initiative was a tool to increase livability & thus create an environment supportive of TOD



DEVELOP A **PLAN** TO HELP YOU
ACHIEVE YOUR **GOAL!**

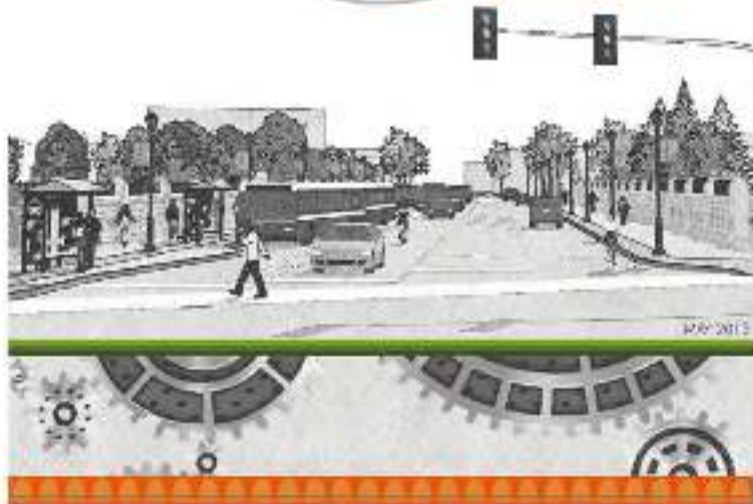
City of New Britain - Complete Streets Initiative





**COMPLETE
STREETS
MASTER PLAN**

**for
DOWNTOWN
NEW BRITAIN**

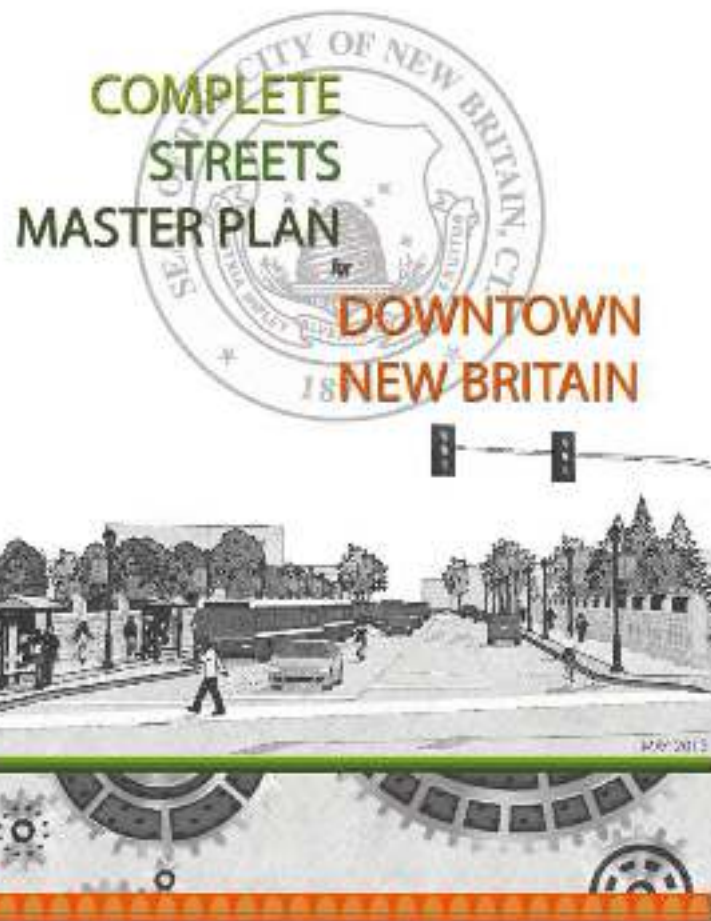


COMPLETE STREETS MASTER PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN NEW BRITAIN

- Began in 2010 with HUD Planning Grant for \$212,500 administered through CRCOG
- Largely spurred by coming of CTfastrak & potential for Transit Oriented Development

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COMPLETE STREETS MASTER PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN NEW BRITAIN

PLACE MAKING

- Create a consistent, distinct & attractive streetscape throughout entire downtown
- Capitalize on the City's art & history to create public interest
- Create public spaces that will draw people to the downtown

LIVABILITY

- Right size roads through road diets to establish the correct balance between vehicles, pedestrians, and other users
- Create an area that best supports TOD

CONNECTIVITY

- Re-link both sides of the downtown split by Route 72
- Improve pedestrian linkages
- Make New Britain bike friendly
- Improve wayfinding signage

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Complete Streets Master Plan Overview

DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE WORKING GROUP

- Began meeting in October of 2011
- Group changed and grew beyond a formal working group
- Responsibilities & Commitment:
 - Members have a specific area of expertise, are representing a stakeholder group, or both
 - Responsible to share information with other stakeholders and bring it forward to the Working Group
 - Make well educated, informed, and unified decisions
 - To understand complete streets, streetscape enhancements, goals we're trying to achieve
 - Provided local input to City's Consultant Team
- Still involved as implementation phases continue

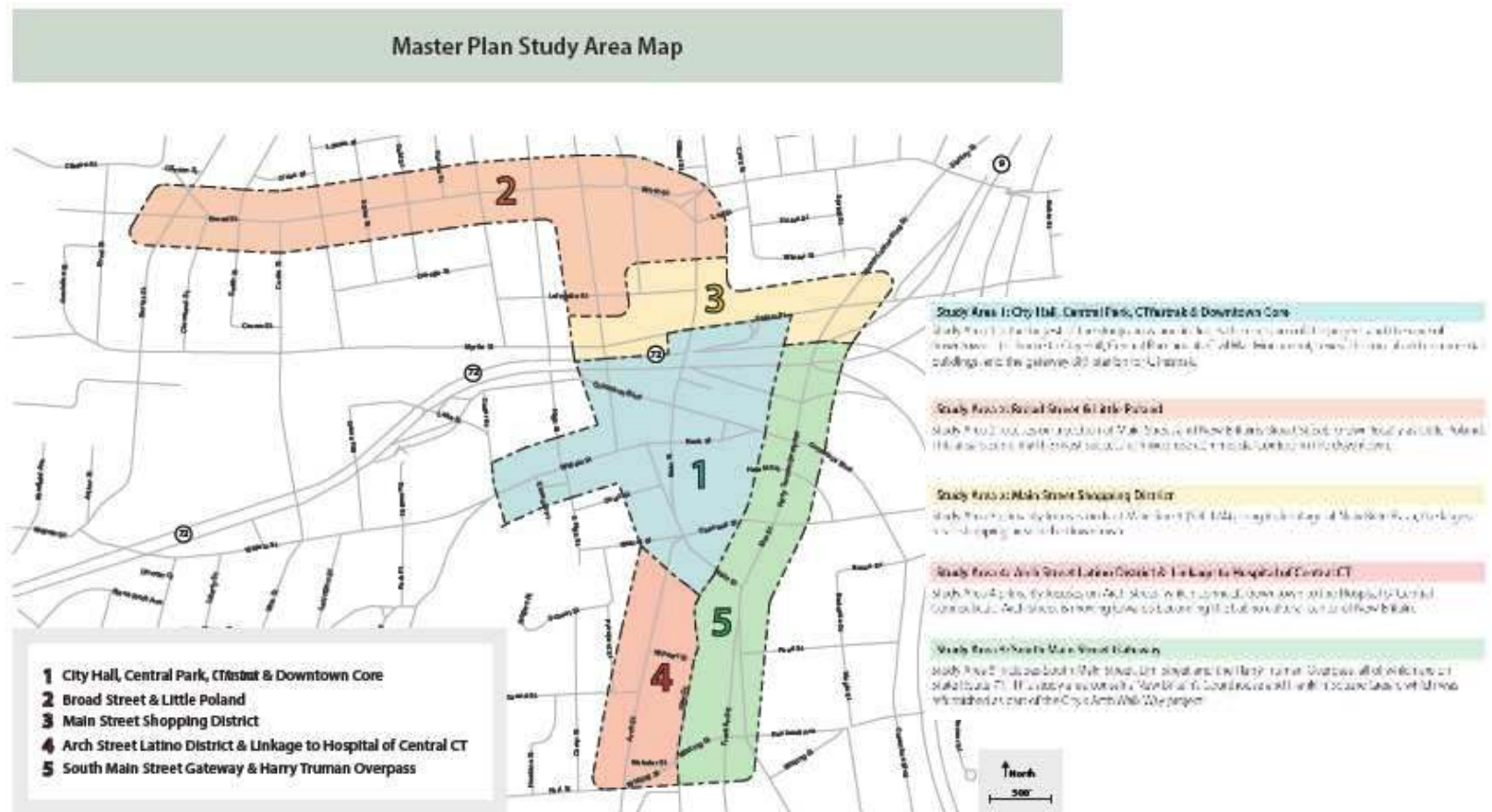


Picture shows early field trip by DSSWG members looking at already constructed example projects



Complete Streets Master Plan Excerpts and Examples

The Complete Street Master Plan broke Downtown New Britain into five (5) distinct Study Areas



City of New Britain - Complete Streets Initiative



About Downtown New Britain

Downtown New Britain also faces many
Challenges:

- **Roads & Transportation:**
 - Many roads overly wide & not pedestrian or bicycle friendly
 - Route 72 construction split Downtown – non-pedestrian friendly bridges create a barrier, Rt. 72 Construction also took down over 450 Downtown properties and businesses
- **Aesthetics :**
 - Streetscape looks dated & tired, and there's no continuity throughout the Downtown
- **Safety:**
 - Downtown NB doesn't feel safe, large homeless population contributes to this
- **Poor Prior Planning Decisions:**
 - Urban Renewal Efforts in 1970's demo'd many historic structures including NB's Downtown Theater "The Strand"
- **Population:**
 - High percent of NB's population lives well below CT's typical earnings and standard of living



Complete Streets Master Plan for Downtown New Britain

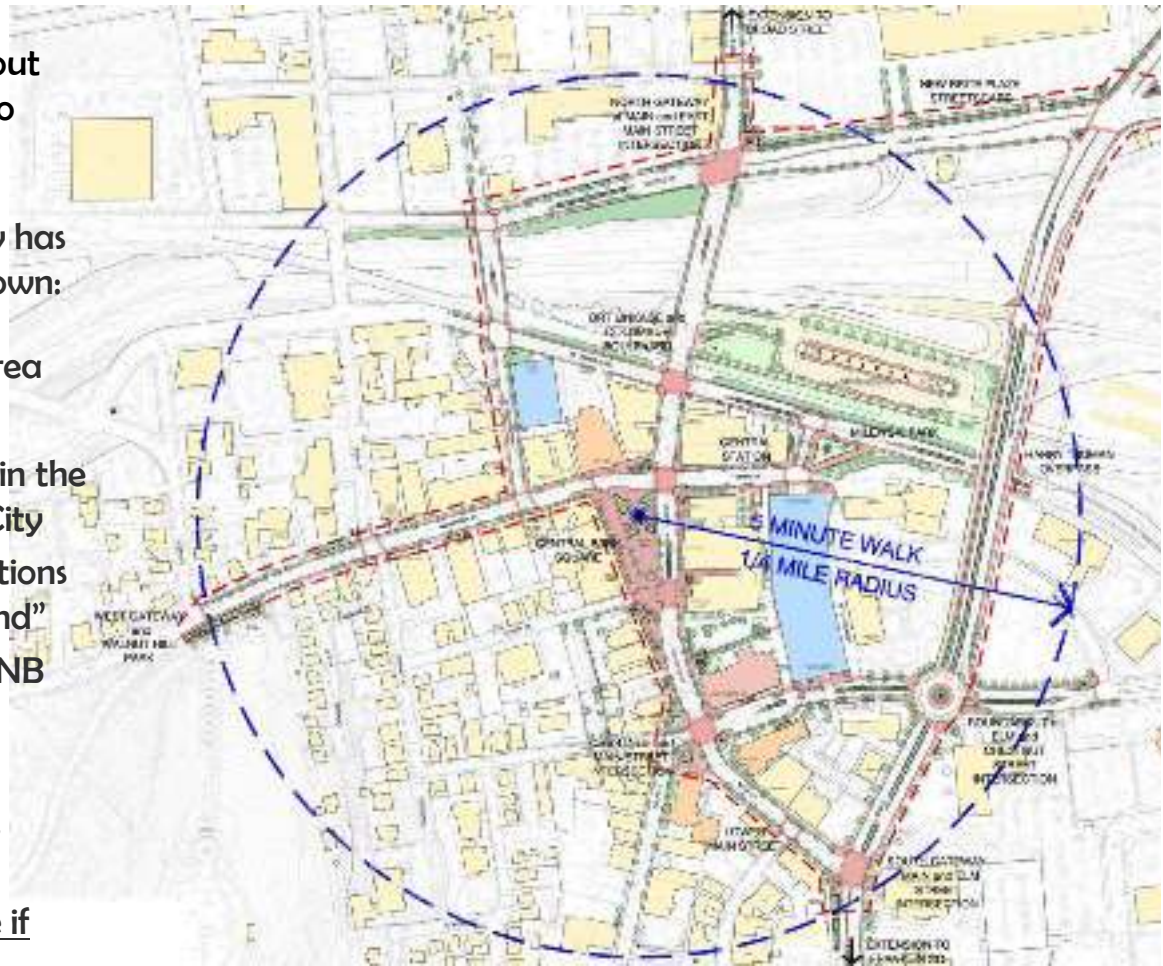


About Downtown New Britain

There are many good things to say about New Britain & there are many things to capitalize on:

Opportunities - Downtown NB already has the key ingredients of a livable downtown:

- Compact & highly walkable area
- Shopping & restaurants
- Affordable residential housing in the downtown & throughout the City
- Historical and Cultural destinations like Broad Street's "Little Poland"
- Strong Arts Community & the NB Museum of American Art
- Very strong Parks System
- Public facilities (CCSU, Library, Hospital)
- These we couldn't easily create if they didn't already exist....



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Complete Streets Master Plan Excerpts and Examples - Design Standards



Images show excerpts from the Master Plan that relate to brick pavers and pavers patterns developed as design standards for the downtown streetscape. These were developed and approved through the Downtown Streetscape Working Group. As the first phase of construction was completed prior to the completion of the Complete Streets Master Plan these images show the design standards actually being applied in downtown New Britain.

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Complete Streets Master Plan Implementation and Construction



Phase 1 - Muni. Parking Lot / Main & Chestnut Streets

Images shows the Design Standards adopted for Downtown Streetscape which will be carried out throughout the rest of the downtown.



Complete Streets Master Plan for Downtown New Britain



Master Plan Implementation and Construction – Phase 2 Streetscape Improvements

Chestnut and Main Street



Blow-out of Master Plan Road Diet and Streetscape Treatments around Chestnut & Main Streets



Road Diet at the Intersection of Main, Chestnut & Arch Streets in Construction

2013 Construction addressing the pedestrian scale of the downtown through road diets. The Main, Chestnut, and Arch Street intersection was given 60% reduction in size.

LESSON LEARNED: Road Diets Work!

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Complete Streets Master Plan Implementation and Construction – Phase 2 Streetscape improvements



**Place Making & Public Art - Home
Sculpture and Trinity-on-Main
at Chestnut & Main Street Intersection**

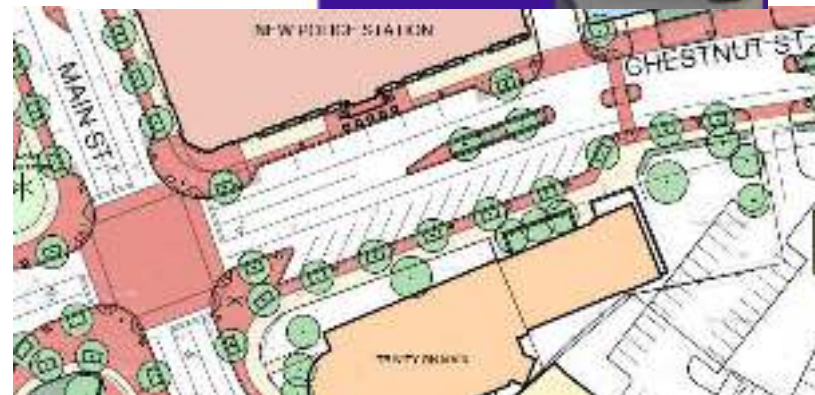


**Pedestrian Friendliness - Installation
of Stamped Asphalt Crosswalk across
Arch Street**

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Master Plan Implementation and Construction



Phase 2 – Introduced Head-out Angled Parking on Chestnut Street

- Implemented in 2013 (no accidents to date)
- Approved by NBPDC Commission (LTA)
- Used Successfully in many other US Cities
- NB had first Head-out (Back-in) Angled Parking Spaces in CT
- Implemented a second phase in Central Park

LESSON LEARNED:

Within reason don't be afraid to try something new

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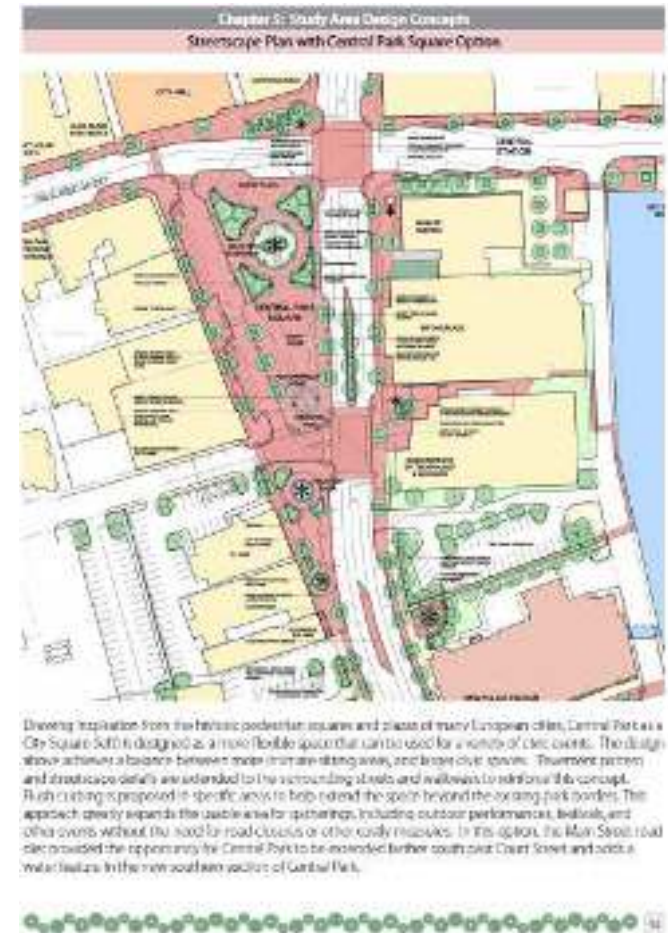
Complete Streets Master Plan Excerpts and Examples – Phase 3 Project

Central Park Area & the Winged Glory Civil War Memorial



Civil War Soldiers and Sailors monument,
Central Park

Images show excerpts from the Area 1 Study area of the Complete Streets Master Plan. This area is regarded as the “core area” of the downtown, and received a lot of focus in the master planning process. Images show the “Winged Glory” Civil War Memorial in Central Park, traffic patterns studied around Central Park, and a plan for Hardscape / City Plaza Style improvements in Central Park.



Drawing inspiration from the historic pedestrian squares and plazas of many European cities, Central Park's City Square (left) is designed as a more flexible space that can be used for a variety of civic events. The design shows activities taking place between more intimate sitting areas, and large civic spaces. Treatment patterns and streetscape details are extended to the surrounding streets and walkways to reinforce this concept. Rush curbing is proposed in specific areas to help extend the space beyond the existing park borders. This approach openly expands the usable area for gatherings, including outdoor performances, festivals, and other events without the need for road closures or other costly measures. In this option, the Main Street road also provided the opportunity for Central Park to be extended further south past Court Street and into a wider feature in the more southern portion of Central Park.

Complete Streets Master Plan for Downtown New Britain



Complete Streets Master Plan Excerpts and Examples **Central Park Area & the Winged Glory Civil War Memorial**



Phase 3 Complete Streets

- STP Urban Funds combined with FHWA TCSP Funds

Complete Streets Phase 2, Central Park & City Hall Area



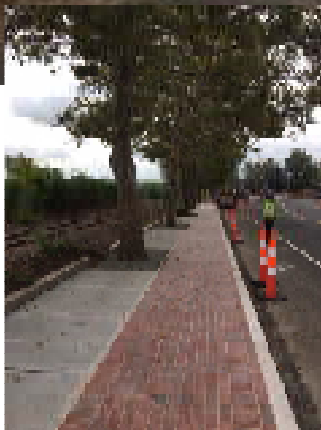
Complete Streets Phase 4 - Gateway to Downtown & Bus Connectivity



Leo A. Milewski
Park Sculpture



Complete Streets Phase 4 - Gateway to Downtown & Bus Connectivity



New Britain Complete Streets - Phase 4 In Construction 2017-18

Various Images from September 2017



Master Plan Implementation and Construction – Complete Streets Phase 5 / “Beehive Bridge”



- Currently in design
- Partially funded through a FTA Bus Livability Grant
- Construction began spring 2018
- Adjacent downtown NB CTfastrak Station

LESSON LEARNED:
Don't be afraid to think big

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Master Plan Implementation and Construction – Complete Streets Phase 5 / “Beehive Bridge”



Elihu Burritt known as the “*The Learned Blacksmith*” who was a 19th-century New Britain resident, diplomat, philanthropist and social activist coined the City’s motto:

“Industria implet alveare et melle fruitur”

– translated from Latin – means:

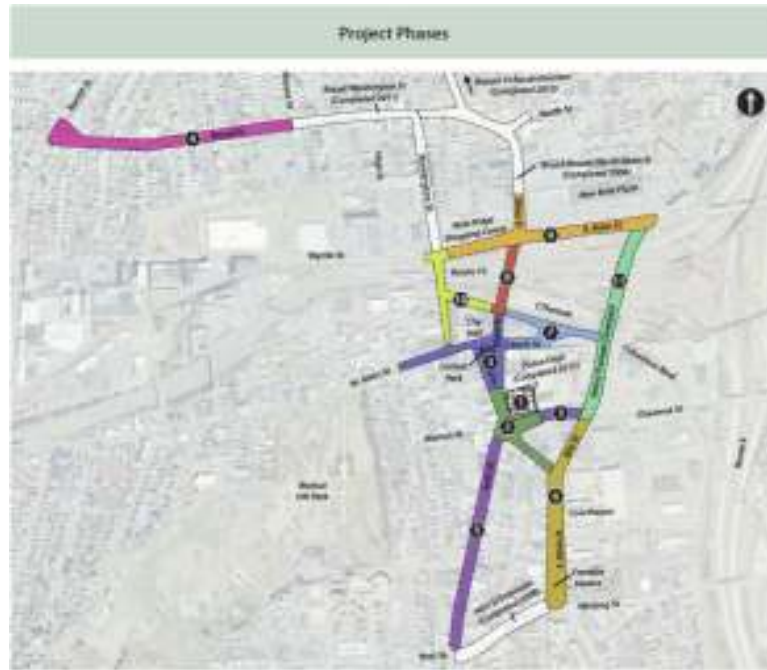
“Industry fills the hive and enjoys the honey.”



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Complete Streets Master Plan Implementation



Phase	Name	Status	Cost	Funding Source
1	Police Station / Parking Lot / Main	Complete	\$0.4	City Bond (approved)
2	Main / Chestnut / Arch	Construction	\$1.3	Connecticut DOT Grant (TMM) (City Bond) (LMM approved)
3	Central Park / Main / W. Main	In Design	\$3.8*	TCIP II (3M); STP-Urbani (2.5M); City Match (0.5M)
4	Broad Street (Main to Burnet)	In Design	\$4.5*	City Bond (approved); STP-Urbani
5	Arch Street	In Design	\$5.8*	City Bond (approved)
6	Elm / S. Main	In Design	\$7.4*	City Bond (approved)
7	Columbia / Bank (Bus Loading)	Planning	\$2.5*	HUD Bus Livability Grant (1.0M); City Bond (approved)
8	Main St. Overpass over SR 72	Planning	\$2.3*	undetermined
9	Main / E. Main	Not Active	\$5.8*	undetermined
10	Washington/Columbia Streetscape	Not Active	\$7.0*	undetermined
11	Main/Truman Overpass	Construction	\$4.0*	undetermined
12	Main St, Chrysalis, & Parking Streetscape	Not Active	\$2.1*	undetermined
Costs in Millions (Estimated)			Total:	\$36.8*

Complete Streets Construction Grant Awards to Date

1. CT Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Grant - \$750k
2. FHWA, Transportation, Community and System Preservation Grant (TCSP) - \$1.3 Mil.
3. FTA, Bus Livability Grant - \$1.6 Mil.
4. State Transportation Program, Urban STP-U - \$3.7 Mil.
5. LRARP (Accident Reduction) - \$4.2 Mil.
6. CT Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) - \$3.0 Mil. (Phase 6)
7. Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) - \$3.0 Mil.
8. OPM / Beehive Bridge - \$2.2 Mil.
9. CT DEEP Recreational Trails Grant - \$132k (2 awards involved)
10. LRARP (Accident Reduction) - \$650k Mil.
11. OPM TOD - \$2.0 Mil.

Total: \$22.5 Mil. to date

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Complete Streets Master Plan Implementation and Construction



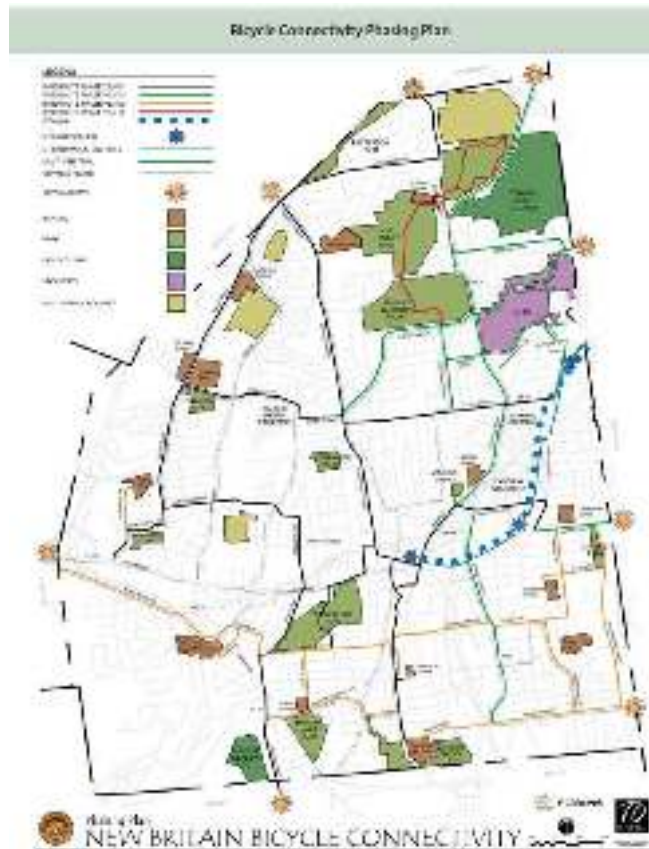
NB Complete Streets Capital Projects:

1. Phase 1, NBPD – Complete 2012 (\$250k)
2. Phase 2, Lower Main Street – Completed 2014 (\$1.5 Mil.)
3. Phase 3, Central Park & Main Street – Completed 2017 (\$4.1 Mil.)
4. Phase 4, Bus Livability – In Construction, Scheduled to Be Complete Fall 2018 (\$3.2 Mil.)
5. Phase 5, Beehive Bridge – In Construction, Scheduled to Be Complete Fall 2019 (\$7.5 Mil.)
6. Phase 6, East Main Street – In Design, Scheduled to be bid Fall 2018 (\$3.0 Mil.)
7. Phase 7, Columbus & Chestnut Streets – In Design, Scheduled to be bid Fall 2018 (\$2.0 Mil.)
8. Phase 8, Columbus & Washington Streets – Submitted for Funding Application May 2018 (\$3.0 Mil.)

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Master Plan Implementation and Construction – Complete Streets through City-wide Bicycle Connectivity



LESSON LEARNED: Complete Streets Projects don't need to be Expensive

Capital Projects Update



Master Plan Implementation and Construction – Complete Streets through City-wide Bicycle Connectivity



Bicycle Connectivity



New Britain Complete Streets Initiative



Awards & Recognition to date:

- National Civic League's All-America City Award
- CT-Main Street – Award of Excellence
- ACEC, CT Chapter - Engineering Award of Excellence
- ACEC, National – National Recognition Award
- National Recognition as Bronze Level Bicycle Friendly Community by League of American Bicyclists
- No. 3 Ranking Bicycle and Pedestrian Friendly Community in CT by Bike-Walk CT
- CSCE Award – Engineering Design for City's Phase 2 Complete Streets project

More Important our Complete Streets work & its impact continues to bring a lot of positive attention to New Britain & is helping the City redefine itself

City of New Britain - Complete Streets Initiative



OUR END GOAL: Transit Oriented Development



Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

Defined as “walkable, compact, mixed-use, higher-density development within walking distance of a transit facility.” TOD generally provides a mix of residential and commercial uses and is designed to make public transit successful, enhance the convenience and safety of walking and bicycling, and provide for a vibrant, livable community.

By 2025, 14.6 million households will demand homes within walking distance of public transit and rail systems. TOD can help meet some of that demand.



T.O.D. – 2016 TOD Study “Creating Hives of Activity”



- City completed TOD Study around the three New Britain CTfastrak Sites in 2016
- Unless we had a patron saint billionaire would be hard to achieve much of the complete rebuilt TOD redevelopment in the Planning Study
- Much of development now occurring **organically**, there's clearly a “buzz” about New Britain

City of New Britain - Complete Streets Initiative



T.O.D. – “New” Downtown New Britain Restaurants



Some of the Great Recent Culinary Additions to Downtown New Britain: MONFONGO, SWEET WATER, RILEY'S GOURMET BURGERS, THE KITCHEN EATERY, KC'S ON MAIN, ETC...

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T.O.D. – Columbus Commons Development



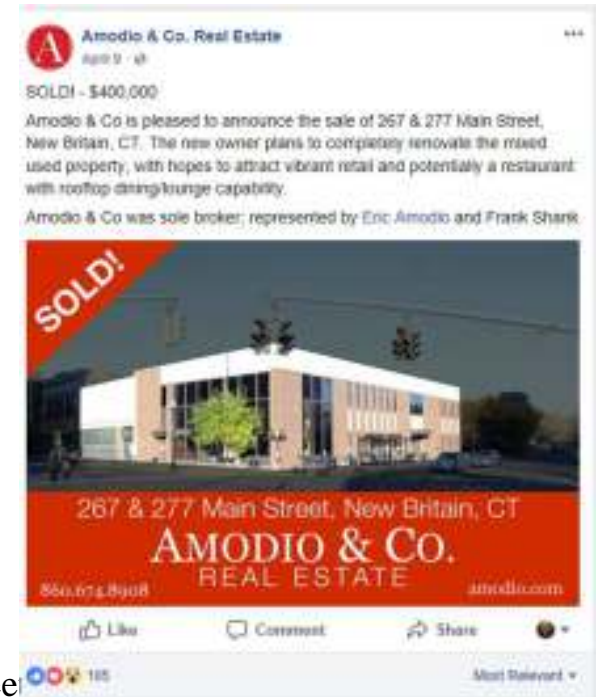
- \$58 Mil. Mixed Use Development located across from downtown CTfastrak Station – catalyst project
- 160 residential mixed-income units, ground level retail
- Led by New York based Xenolith Partners
- Project has received financial assistance through Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) & OPM
- Property is the site of former New Britain Police Station (moved in 2012)



City of New Britain - Complete Streets Initiative



T.O.D. – Burritt Bank Building



- Old Burritt Bank property, located at the corner of Main and West Main Street, City Hall, Central Park, and 1 min. walk from CTfastrak Station
- Building has been vacant for over 30 years
- Property finally sold in April of 2018
- New York City based developer, plans to completely renovate mixed use property

**Making this happen has
been being talked about for
years and years!**

City of New Britain - Complete Streets Initiative



T.O.D. – Arch Street Developments & Breweries



- **Arch Street** is one of the more difficult streets in New Britain. Large homeless shelter & homeless population.
- **5 Churches Brewery** opened up in Downtown New Britain in March 2018. This involved over a \$750,000 investment into the Arch Street property. It is the second major brewery to open in New Britain in the past two years (Alvarium Brewery was the first in 2016)
- **5 Arch Street** (located corner of Main, Arch & Chestnut Streets (where we constructed our first major road diet in 2015)

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T.O.D. - PORTER BUILDING Rehabilitation, Built 1885



- Building fronts on just renovated Central Park
- New development, property acquired in April 2018
- Façade removed in May 2018
- Façade placed on the building in 1967 to “modernize” it
- Developer planning 50 apartment units & first floor retail / restaurant

**Making this happen has
been being talked about for
years and years and years!**

City of New Britain - Complete Streets Initiative



2017 Tax Revaluation for City of New Britain



COMPLETE STREETS GOAL: Increase value of properties City-wide by improving downtown (livability, attractiveness, and character) & thus improving people's perception of New Britain.

The City of New Britain completed a tax revaluation in 2017. It was the first revaluation since significant complete streets work had been performed downtown & City-wide.

Result was 6.7% growth in in Real Estate valuation, and a 5.95% increase in the grand list based on the City's current mill rate, and increased revenue of \$7.5 million per year.

Other current revaluation's grand list growth for CT town & cities:

- Glastonbury – 5.38%
- South Windsor – 5.6%
- Berlin – 4.98% (Hartford – New Haven Line & new downtown Train Station)
- Middletown – 3.71%
- Waterbury – 2.99%
- Bristol – 0.16%

City of New Britain - Complete Streets Initiative



New Britain Complete Streets Initiative

If You Build it Will They Come?

Based on the New Britain Case Study the State of CT's and the City of New Britain's investment in "Sustainable Transportation" is paying off

Development & TOD specific Development is now occurring at unprecedented rates & occurring organically

City investment of \$7.5 Mil. in bonding for Complete Streets Improvement basically equivalent to General Fund Growth

