



THE I-84 HARTFORD PROJECT

Urban Design Working Group

November 12, 2014

I-84 Hartford Project Mission

With **active engagement** of the public, **evaluate** all reasonable options for the replacement of I-84 through Hartford and to **build** the resulting project.



First, a little history...

- Rail line built in 1830s
- I-84 built in 1960s
 - Designed to avoid impacting rail
 - Resulting design is mostly elevated



A product of its time...

- I-84 was conceived prior to NEPA / Federal regulations
- Soon after it was built, many realized that its effect on Hartford was not all positive



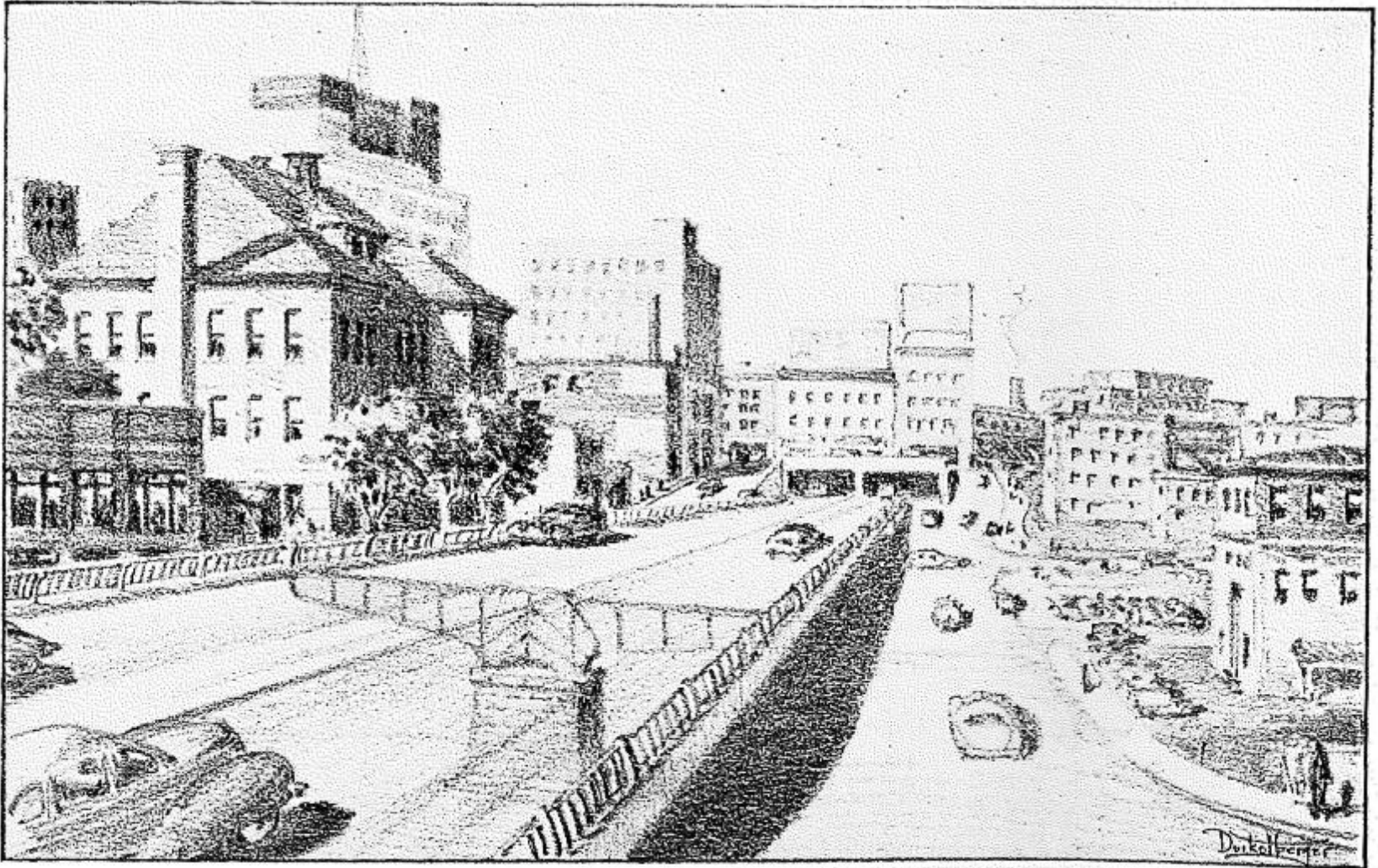
“The impact of the I-84 freeway upon the physical environments into which it was introduced has been both dramatic and overwhelming.” - 1970 CTDOT & FHWA

- The I-84 Hartford Project provides an opportunity to rethink the previous design

Hartford Metropolitan Area Expressways (1945)



Hartford Metropolitan Area Expressways (1945)



LOOKING WEST ALONG MORGAN ST. VIADUCT TOWARD TUNNEL UNDER MAIN ST.

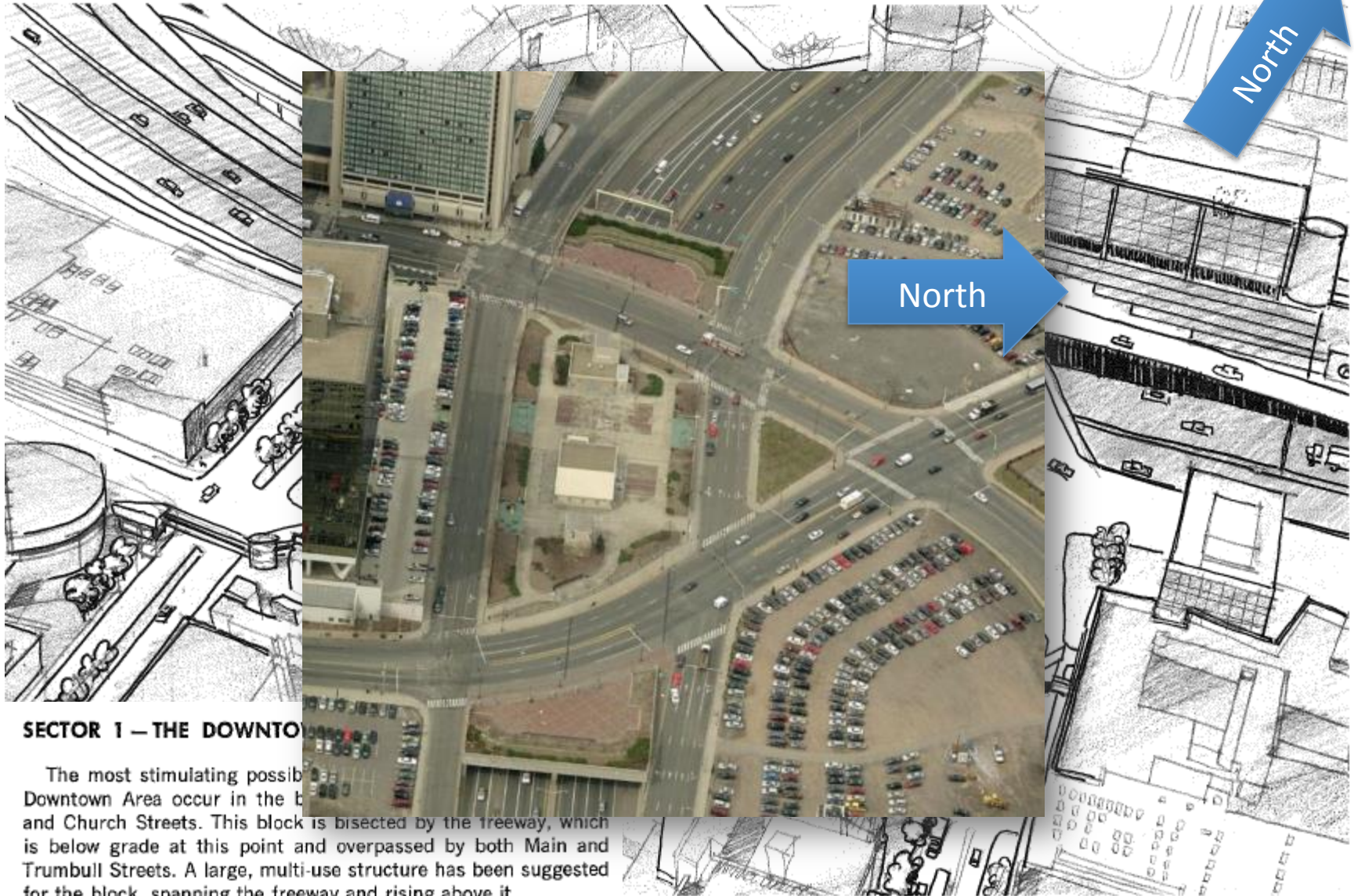
I-84 Environmental and Joint-Use Study (1970)



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SECTOR 1 – THE DOWNTOWN

The most stimulating possible Downtown Area occur in the block between Main and Church Streets. This block is bisected by the freeway, which is below grade at this point and overpassed by both Main and Trumbull Streets. A large, multi-use structure has been suggested for the block, spanning the freeway and rising above it.

I-84 Environmental and Joint-Use Study (1970)

SECTOR 2 -- THE UNION STATION AREA

The railroad passenger station occupies an equivocal position in central Hartford. Train service is infrequent and the station has fallen into disrepair, as have many other establishments in the immediate vicinity; vacant lots and empty buildings betoken a depressed area with little vitality. This, however, seems likely to be a temporary condition, for the current revitalization of Downtown Hartford, together with expansion of office functions in the State Capitol area and in the insurance complex on Asylum Hill, business district definition would of the busi- d, over the



I-84 Environmental and Joint-Use Study (1970)



WOOD OBJECTS

the multideck parking
ney-Hawthorn-Laurel-Capitol
the proposed Underwood
of I-84 in the background.

ay in the two sectors
surface and structured
parking, and service and commercial facilities.

I-84 Environmental and Joint-Use Study (1970)



block. Landscaped parking facilities constitute the main space user in this central area. The development of the office and parking facilities could be carried out over several years, as demand permitted.

I-84 Environmental and Joint-Use Study (1970)



Role of cities

- Facilitate exchange
- Minimize need for auto mobility
- Efficiency of resources



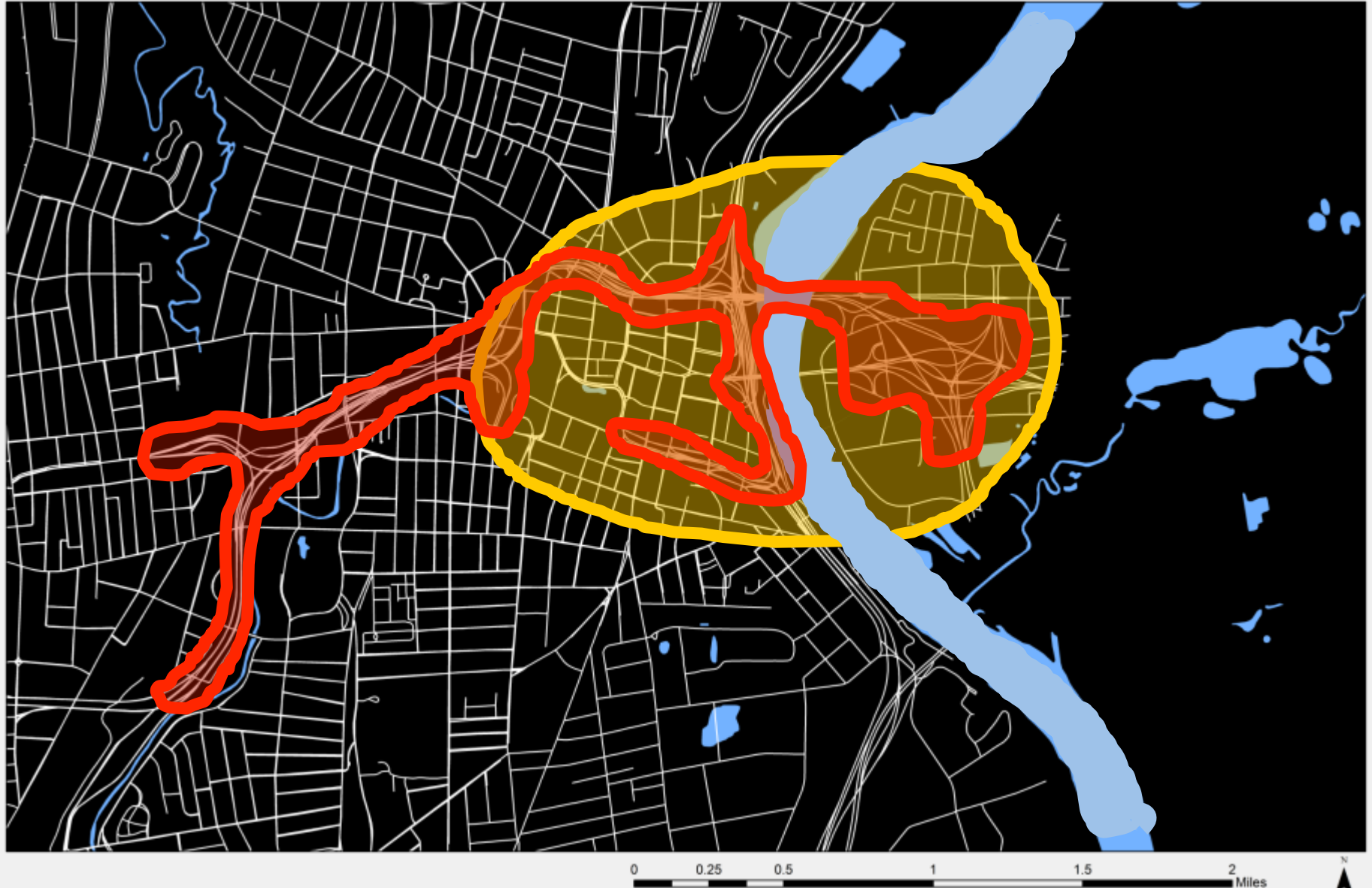
This.....or.....this?

Future of cities

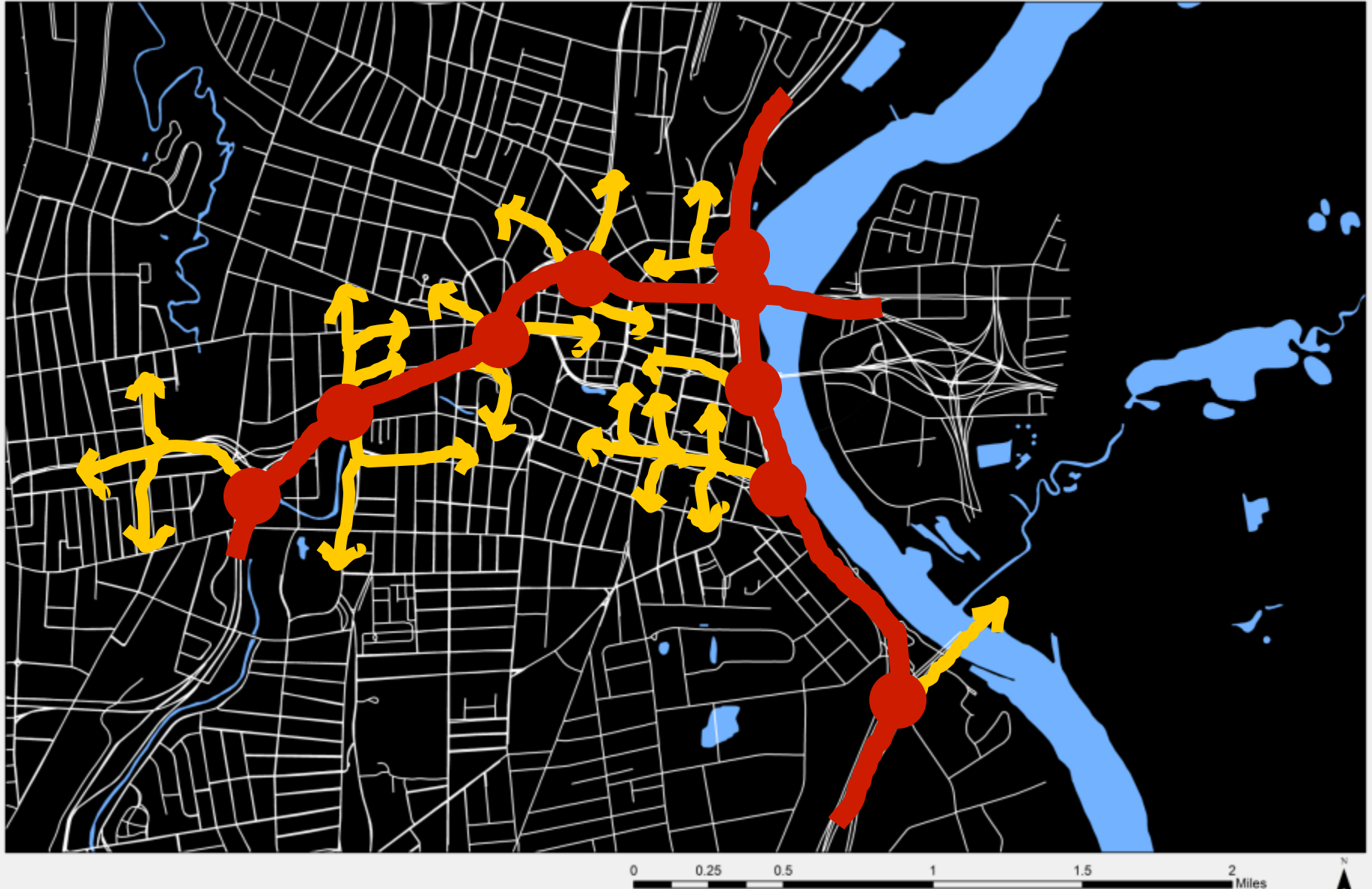
- In 1800, only 2% of people lived in cities and towns.
- In 1950, only 30% of the world population was urban.
- 3.3 billion people -- more than half the world's population -- live in cities.
- 60% of all people will live in cities by 2030.
- Almost 180,000 people move into cities each day.
- City populations are growing faster than city infrastructure can adapt.



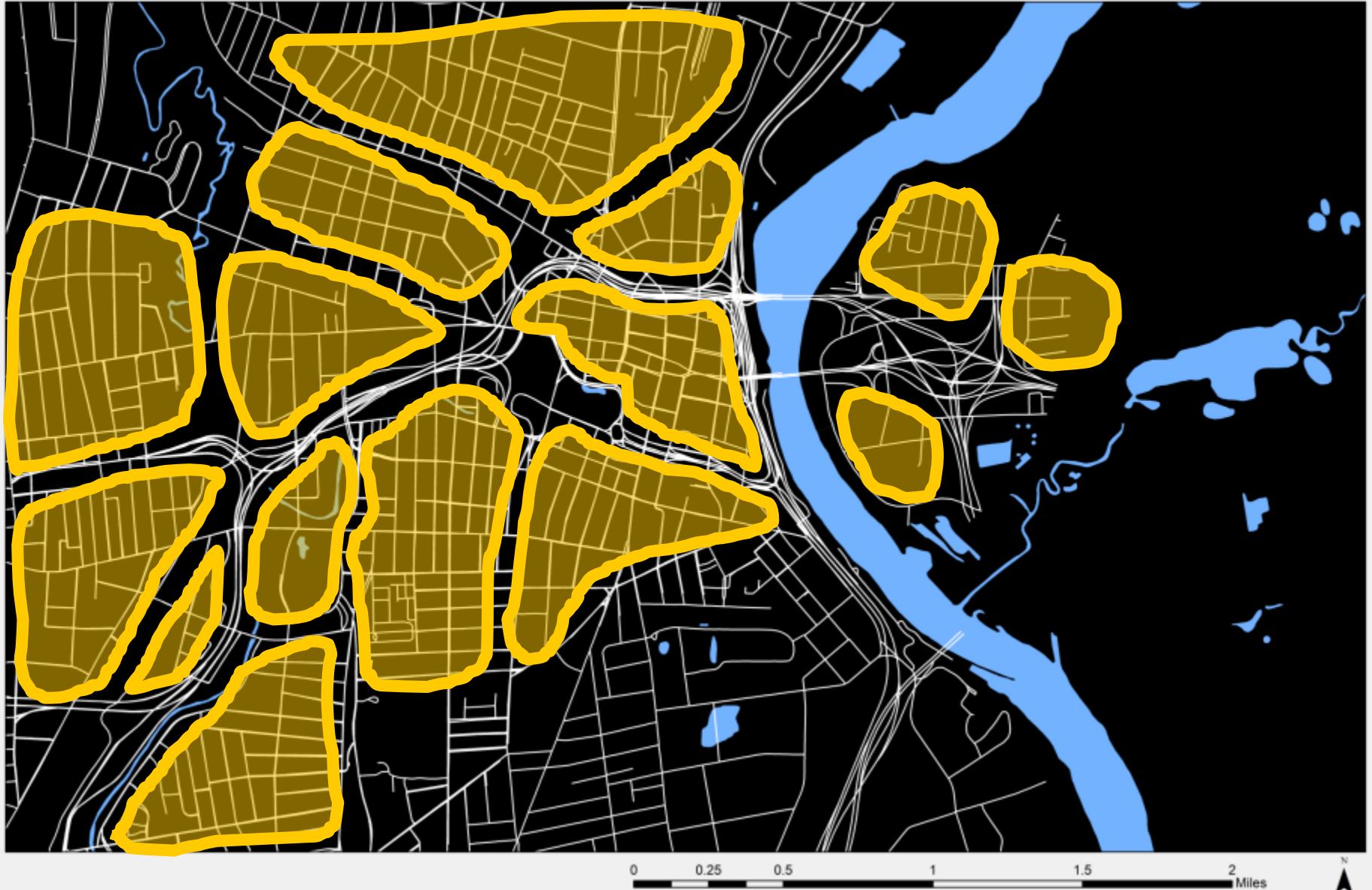
Hartford's network



Interface between vehicles and people



City becomes disconnected





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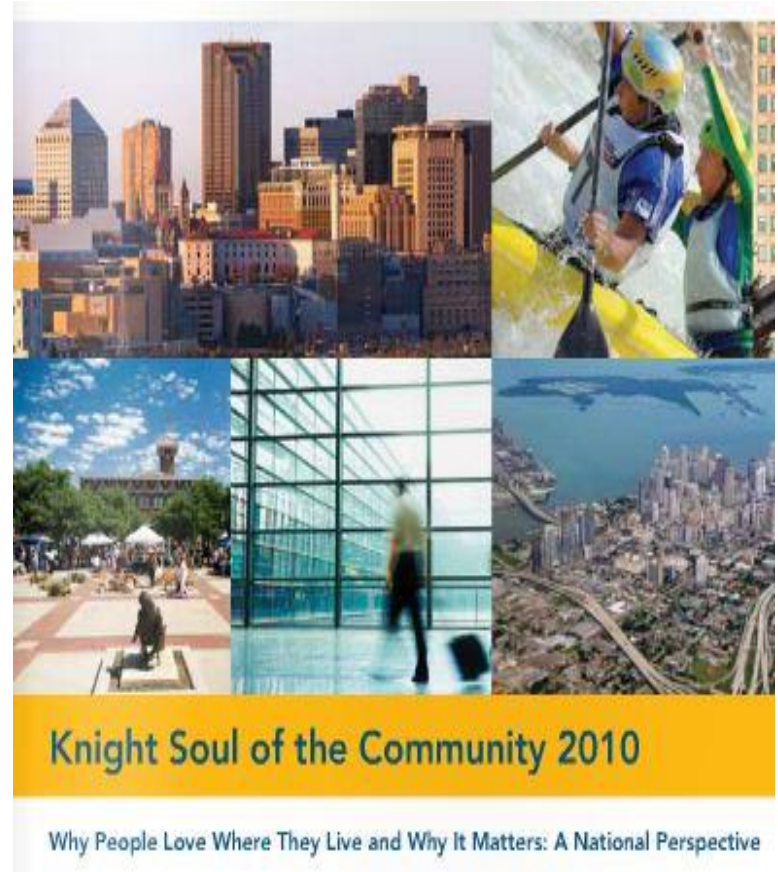
Urban design:

What is it and why does it matter?



Why is urban design important?

- Economic success of cities
- High-quality jobs that are drivers of local economies
- Physical beauty of the public environment contributes directly to local economic growth



Urban design challenges in the I-84 corridor

I-84 divides the city

- Neighborhoods are separated from downtown limiting social and economic interaction and synergies
- The employment center created by Aetna and The Hartford is separated from the core of downtown, eliminating the possibility of some key social and economic synergies



Urban design challenges in the I-84 corridor

I-84 and its associated ramps consume large quantities of valuable urban land

- The I-84 corridor creates a no-mans land that is both a barrier and blighting influence on surrounding areas
- Land within the corridor, especially around Union Station, is some of the best transit-served land in the state. The absence of TOD in this area is a major lost opportunity.

How do we meet the challenges?

- Transit-Oriented Development
- Complete Streets
- Context Sensitive Design





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I-84 Opportunity: Transit Oriented Development



What is TOD

- TOD is typically mixed use commercial and residential development designed to maximize public transportation ridership
- Generally located between $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from a train, bus, subway or ferry terminal
- Tends to be higher density than surrounding areas

Elements of Successful TOD

- Walkability
- Density
- Mix of Uses
- Travel Options
- Public Spaces
- Community Engagement



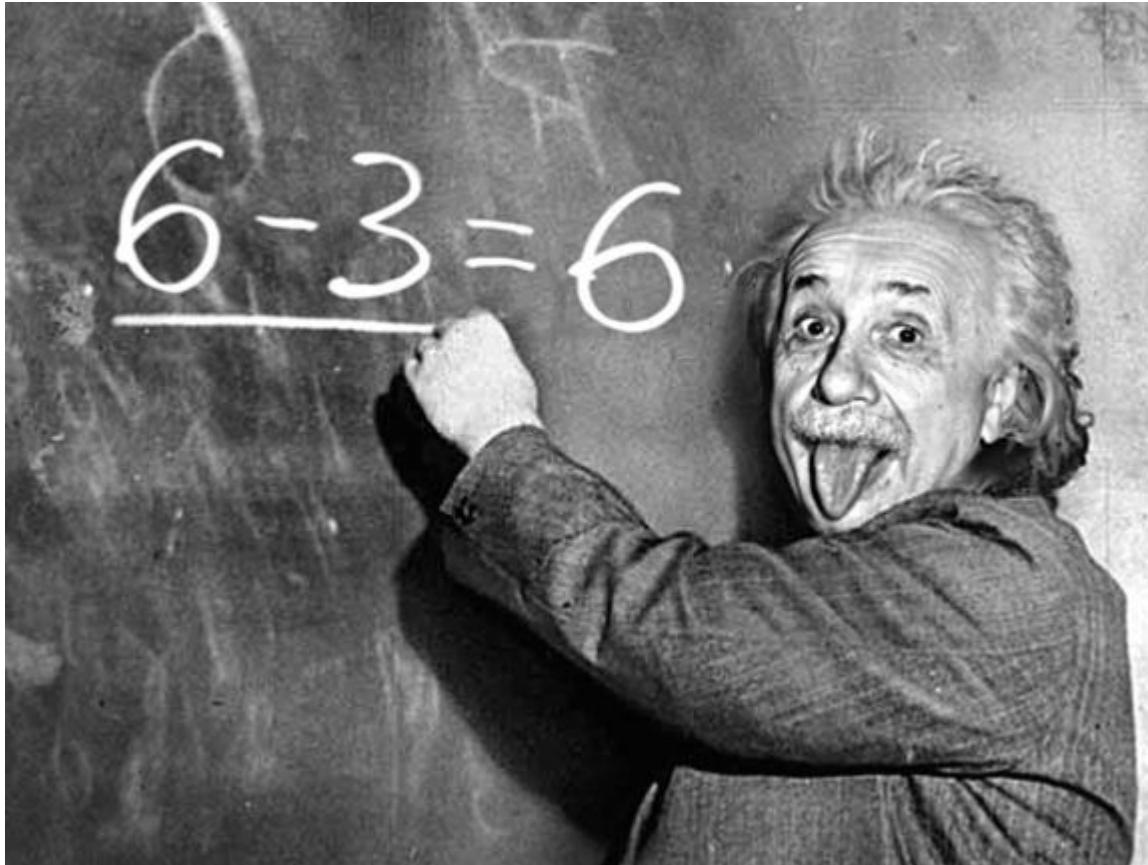
Urban Design Opportunities: TOD

Provide new transit oriented development opportunities to create vital links across the corridor

- Development (TOD) within the highway corridor in key locations will be essential if the barrier is to be eliminated
- Unless this development is actively planned for as an ingredient of the project, it is very unlikely to be feasible at some later point



Recent planning for development in the former I-195 Corridor in Providence



“We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.” - Albert Einstein



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The I-84 Hartford Challenge

Explore concepts for replacing I-84 through Hartford while simultaneously creating opportunities to restore the city's urban fabric

- Be innovative
- Think comprehensively
- Forget constraints (at first)
- Break conventions

