

Transit-Oriented Development Planning Initiative

Community Forum

May 26, 2021



with assistance from



Agenda

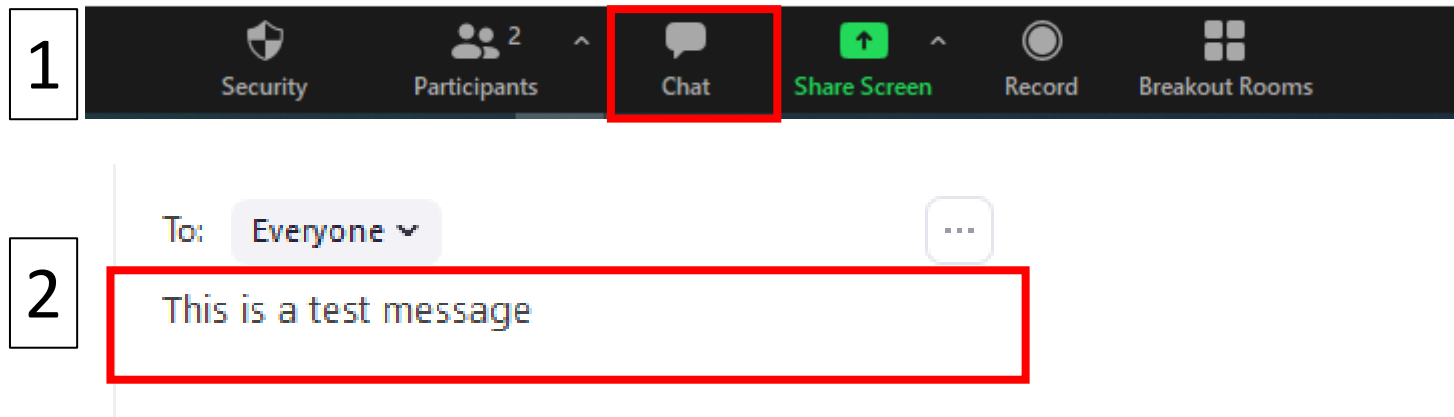
1. Introduction
2. Existing Conditions
3. Survey Results
4. Interactive Exercise
5. Recap and Next Steps

Ground Rules:

- Please leave your questions and comments in the chat
- We will have an interactive portion of the workshop where you can share specific feedback on the TOD Planning Initiative

How to Participate: Desktop Computer

Please leave your questions or comments in the chat

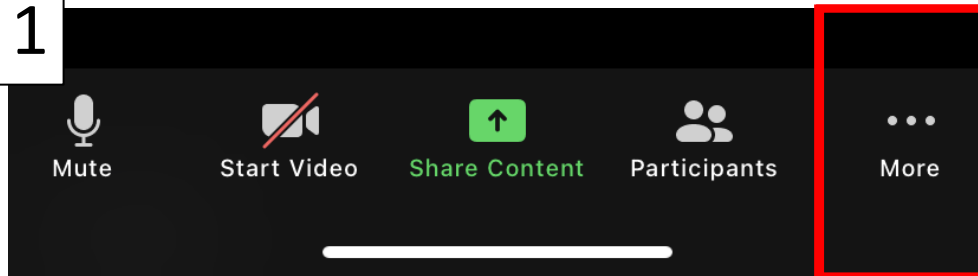


1. Click on the “Chat” button or speech bubble icon to access the chat function
The chat dialogue will show up on the right-hand side of your screen
2. Type your message and hit enter to submit

How to Participate: Mobile

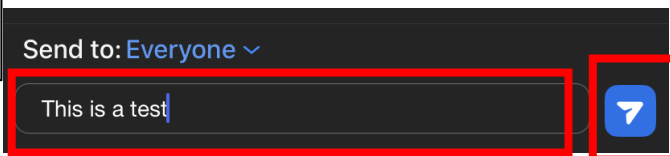
Please leave your questions or comments in the chat

1



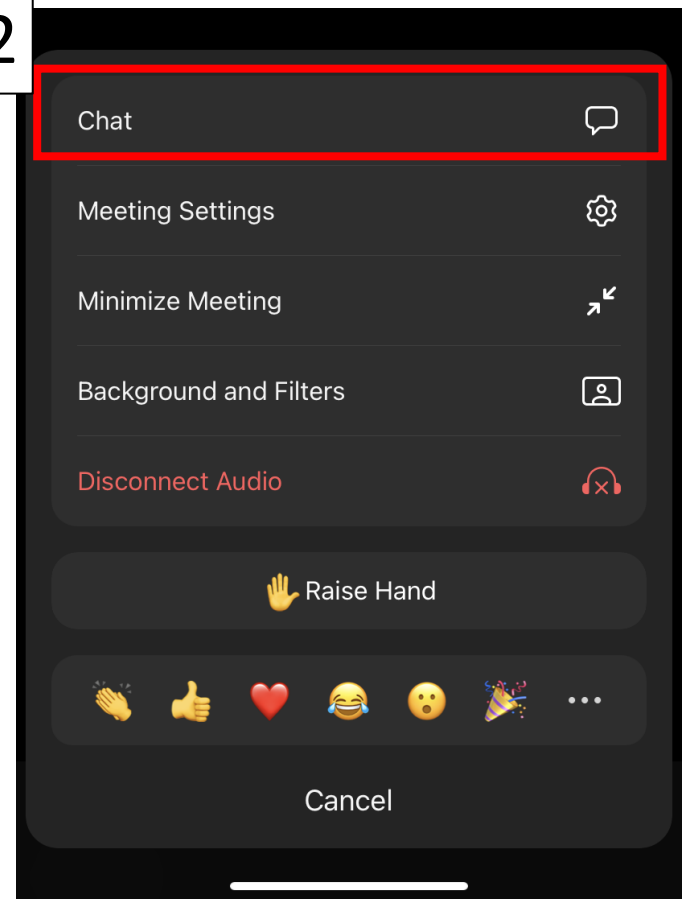
1. If you are on a mobile device, please hit the “More” button
2. Click on the “Chat” button or speech bubble icon to access the chat function
3. Type in your message
4. Hit the send button (blue triangle)

3



4

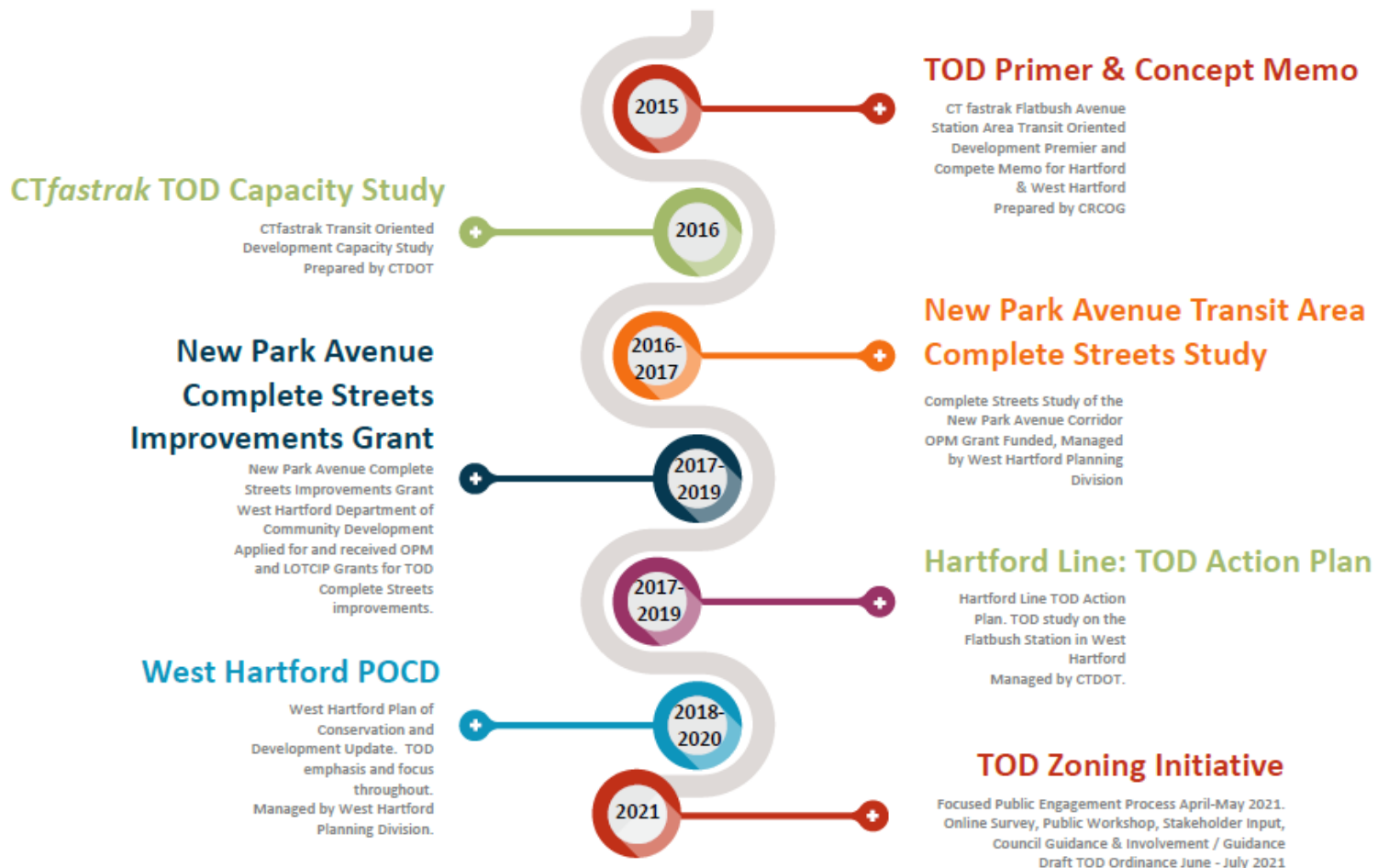
2



Introduction

Transit-Oriented Development Studies & Initiatives Timeline

5-13-21



What is Transit-Oriented Development?

The Four Ds:

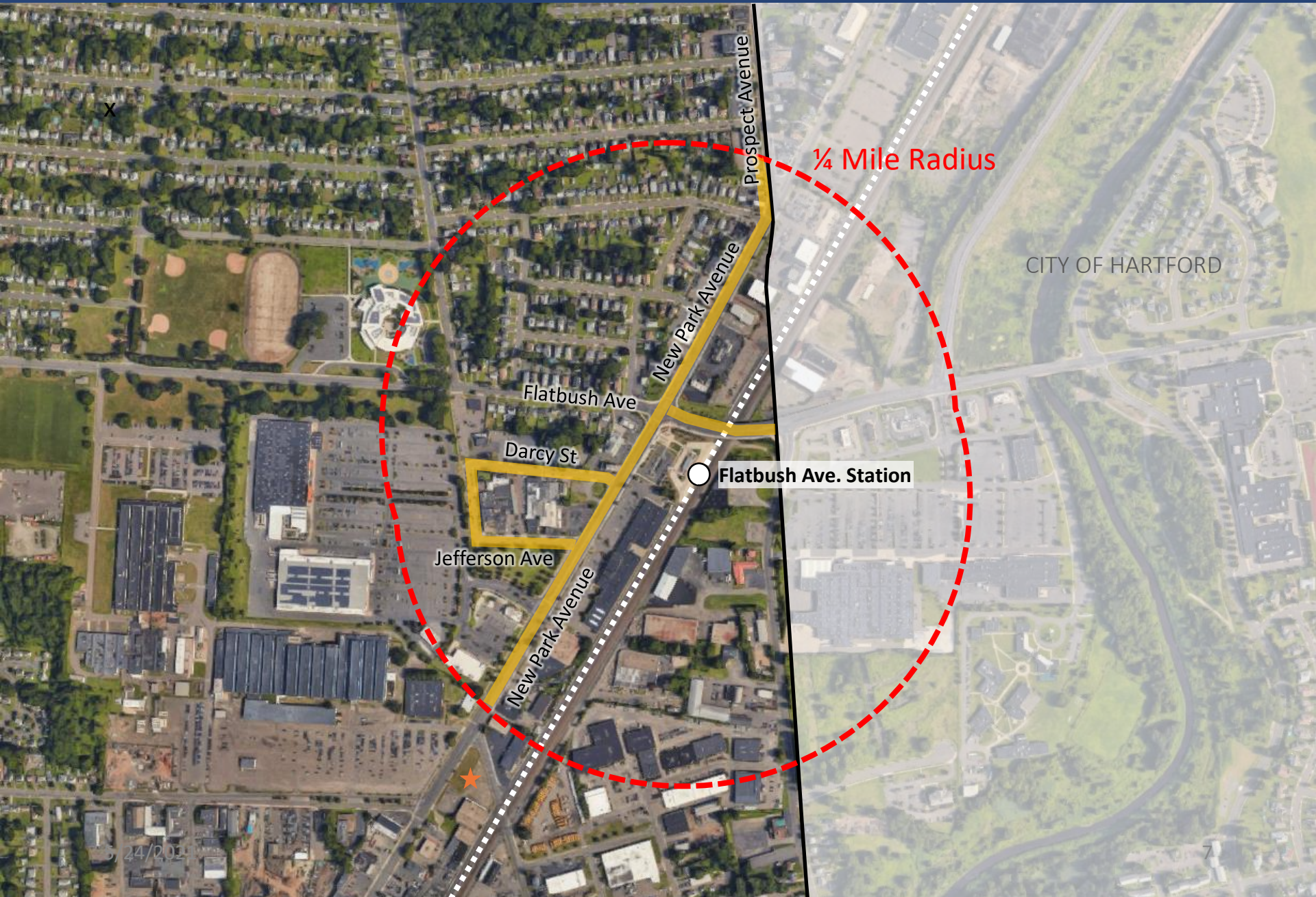
Distance – located within a 5 to 10 minute walk from a fixed transit station

Density – relatively high population and/or employment density that supports transit ridership

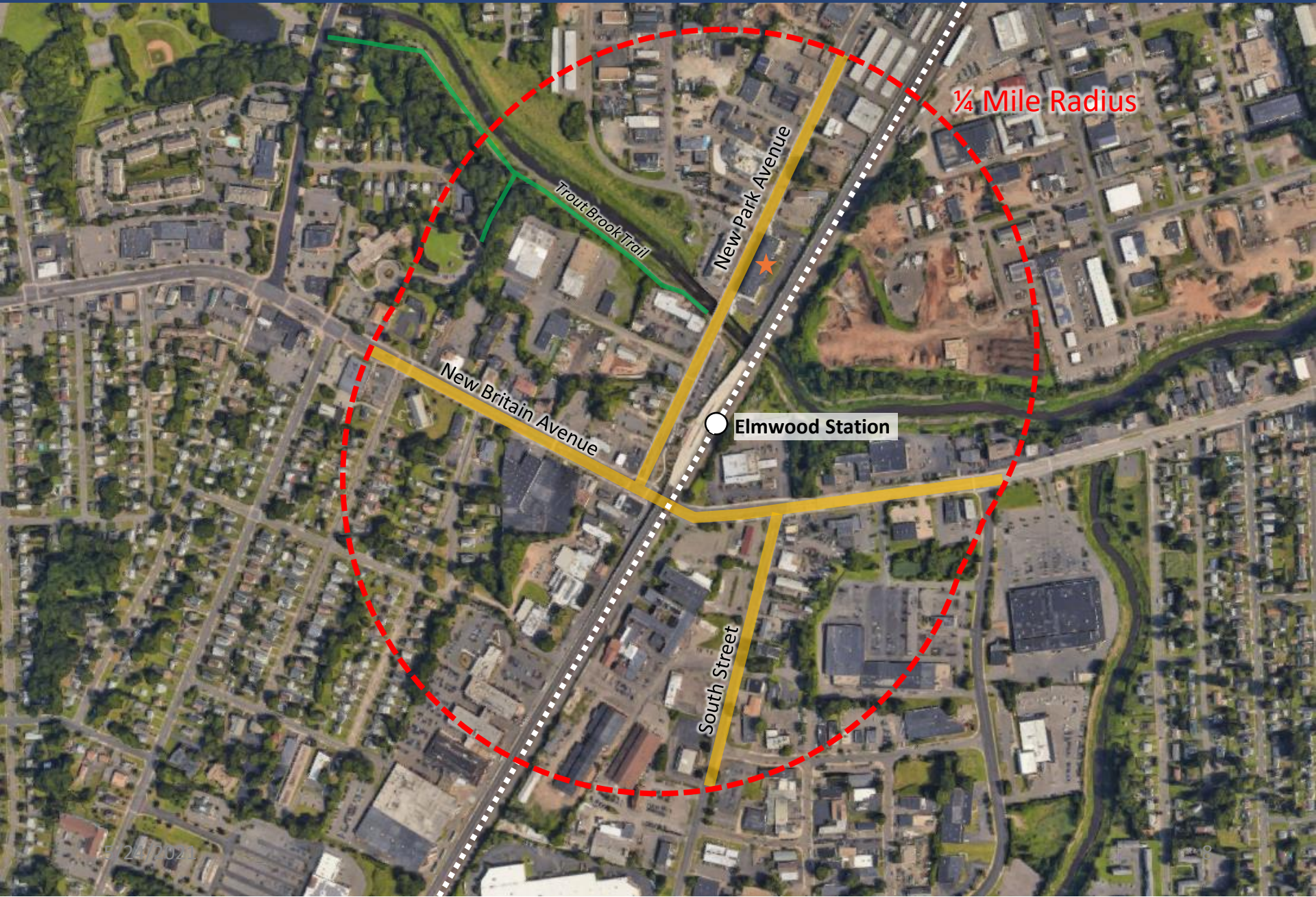
Diversity – diverse mix of land uses that creates vibrant live, work, play opportunities

Design – pedestrian friendly public realm and building design, compact development, and well-designed parking opportunities that support transit use

Existing Conditions: Flatbush Ave. Study Area



Existing Conditions: Elmwood Study Area



Density

Density – A neighborhood population density of 3,000 people per square mile is typically considered the lower limit of transit-supportive density, with 10,000 people per square mile supportive of high frequency service. Employment density is also an important consideration.



Case study: Fairfield Metro – Fairfield, CT

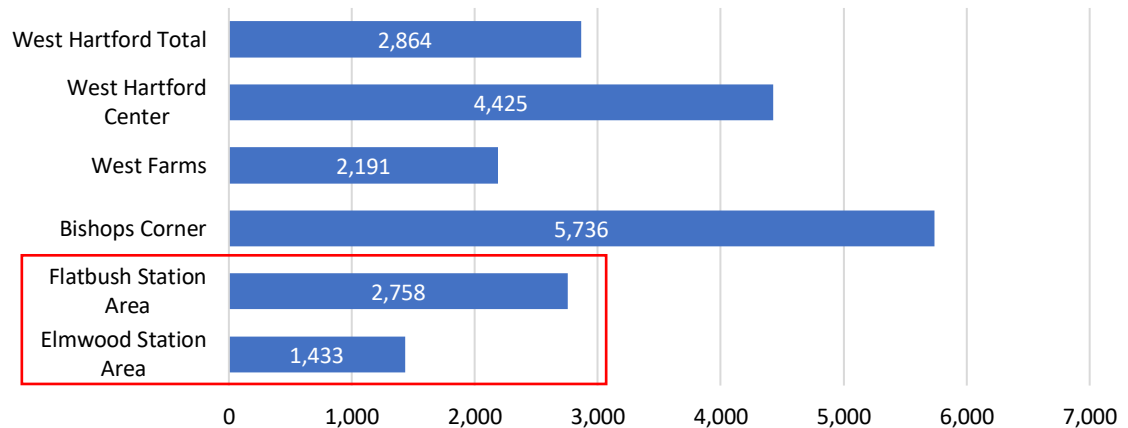


Case Study: Bay Street Station – Montclair, NJ

Existing Conditions: Density

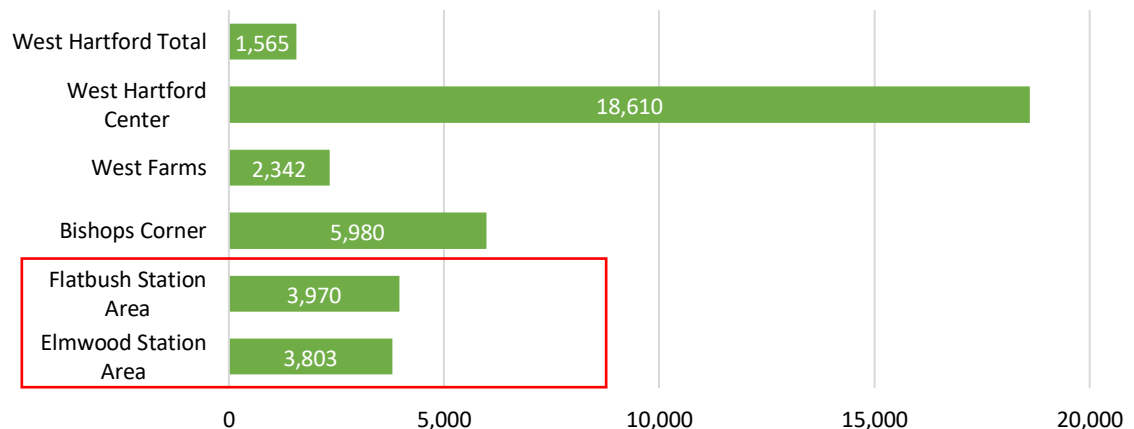
- Both station areas have a **lower population density** than West Hartford as a whole and are below transit-supportive densities
- Both station areas have a **higher employment density** than West Hartford as a whole

Population Density per Square mile (2020)



Source: ESRI 2020 Population Estimates, based on a quarter mile buffer from the center of each business district
Population Density for Flatbush Avenue Station Area and West Farms includes area outside of West Hartford

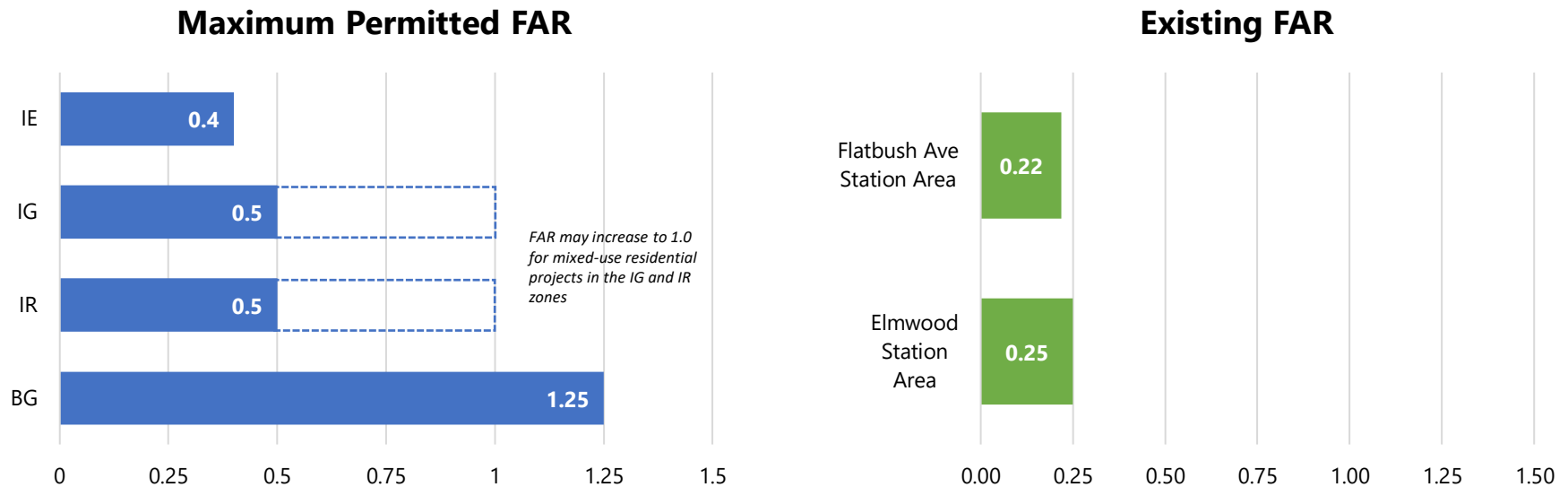
Employment Density per Square mile (2020)



Source: ESRI 2020 Estimates, based on a quarter mile buffer from the center of each business district
Employment Density for Flatbush Avenue Station Area and West Farms includes area outside of West Hartford

Existing Conditions: Density

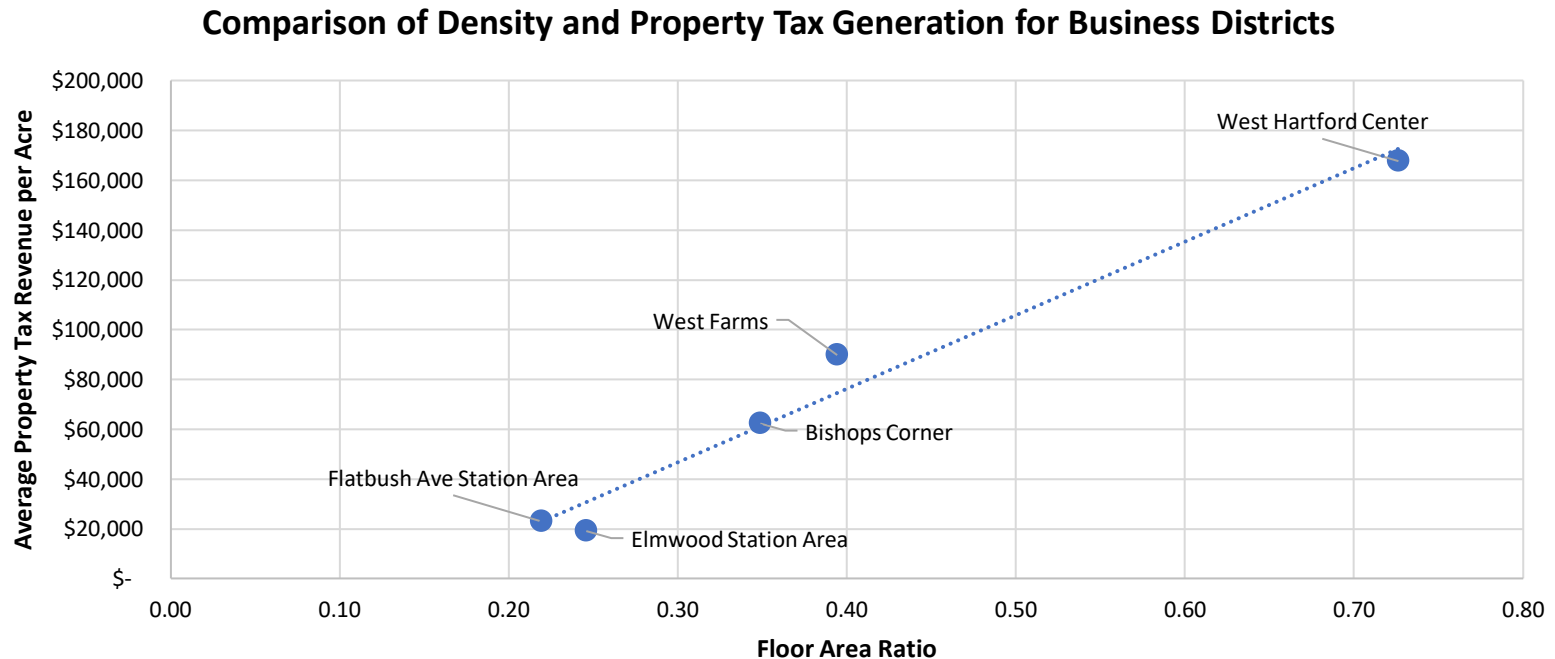
Floor-area-ratio (FAR) is one of the primary zoning tools used to regulate density.



- Maximum Permitted FAR ranges from 0.4 in the IE zone to 1.25 in the BG zone
- Existing FAR is substantially lower than zoning maximums at 0.22 for the Flatbush Avenue Station Area and 0.25 for the Elmwood Station Area
- Maximum residential densities in the BG, IR, and IG zones is 1 unit per 1,000 s.f. of lot area
- Building height and parking are two of the other zoning tools to regulate density
- **No minimum density requirements**

Existing Conditions: Density

Greater FAR = Greater property tax revenue generated per acre



Property tax revenue generation based on assessed land and building values provided by the West Hartford Assessor

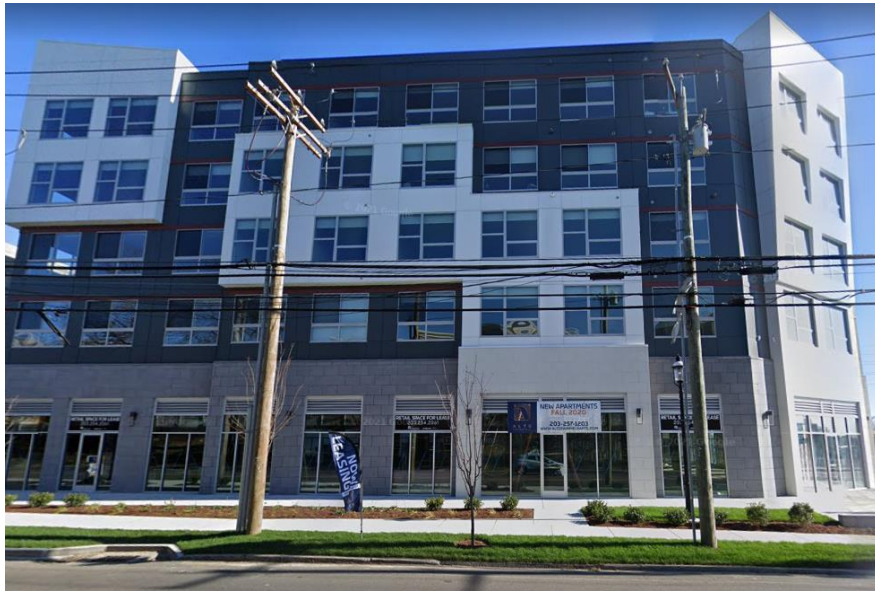
- Greater density also aligns with greater population and employment density

Diversity

Diversity – diverse mix of land uses that creates vibrant live, work, play opportunities. Mix of uses within and between sites.

Active ground floors

Uses that generate activity at different times of day

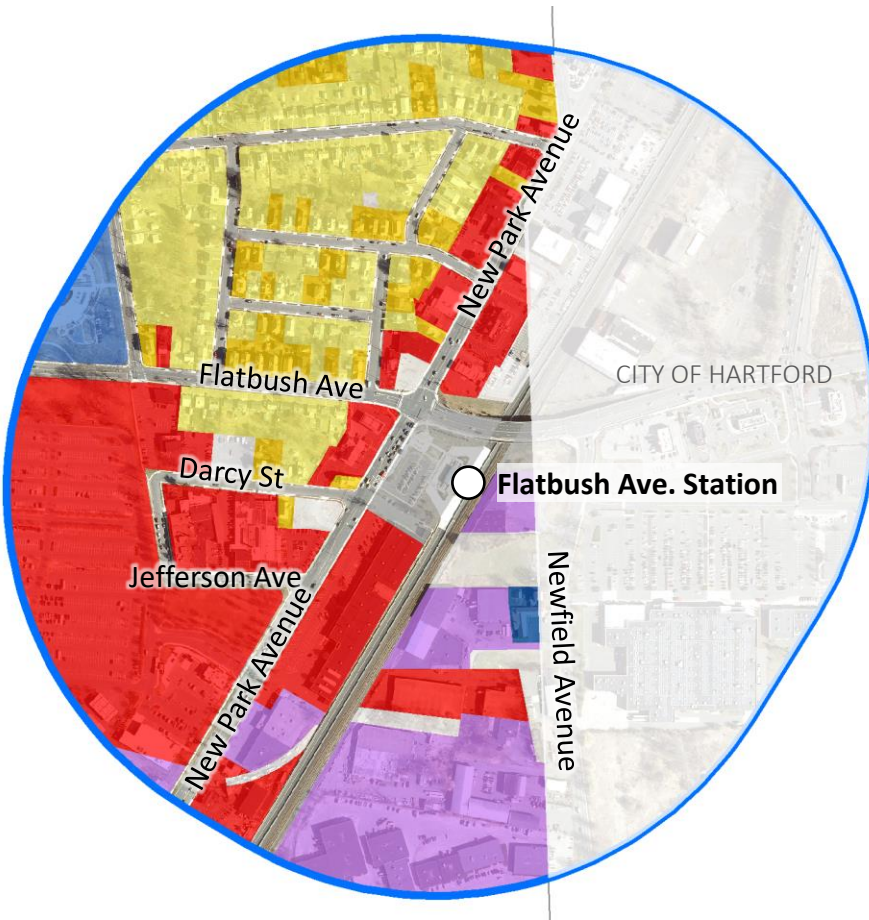


Case study: Fairfield Metro – Fairfield, CT



Case Study: Bay Street Station – Montclair, NJ

Existing Conditions: Diversity (Land Use)

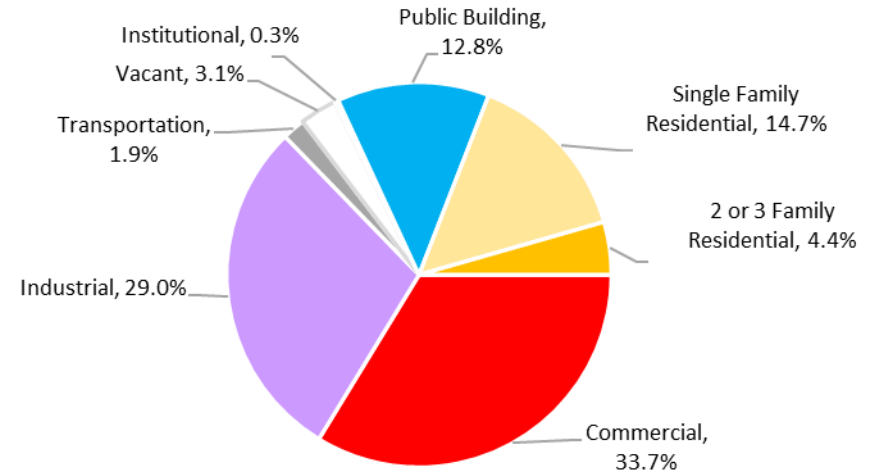


■ Institutional
■ Public Building
■ Commercial
■ Industrial
■ Open Space
■ Residential - Single Family
■ Residential - Two or Three Family
■ Multi-Family Residential
■ Transportation/ROW
■ Vacant

Source: Town of West Hartford Assessor

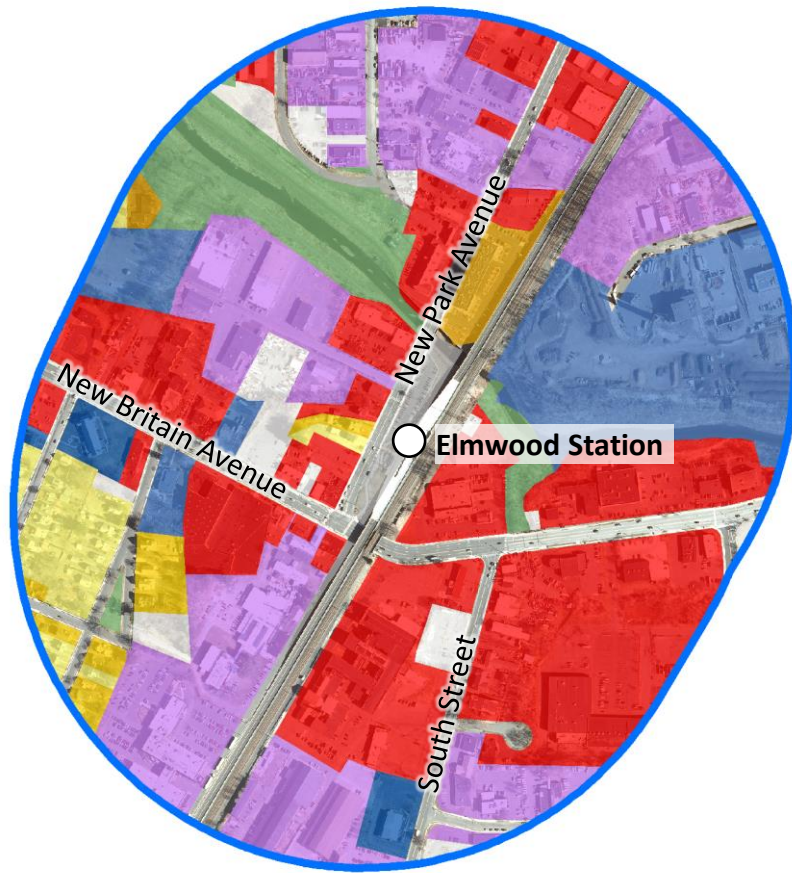
Only includes West Hartford portion of the Station Area

Existing Land Use: Flatbush Avenue



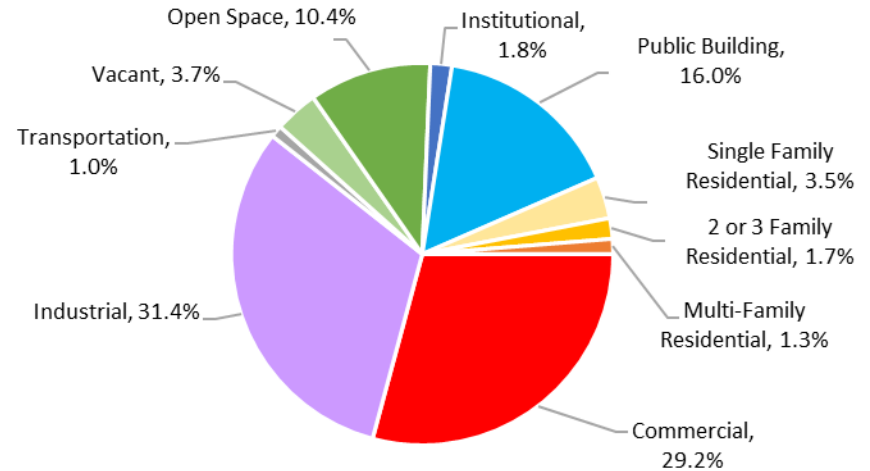
- Mix of transit-supportive and non-transit-supportive land uses
- Commercial retail focus on New Park Ave.
- Industrial uses in the Newfield Avenue corridor
- Multi-family residential uses are limited, although dense neighborhood north of Flatbush Ave.
- Limited vacant land (redevelopment focus)

Existing Conditions: Diversity (Land Use)



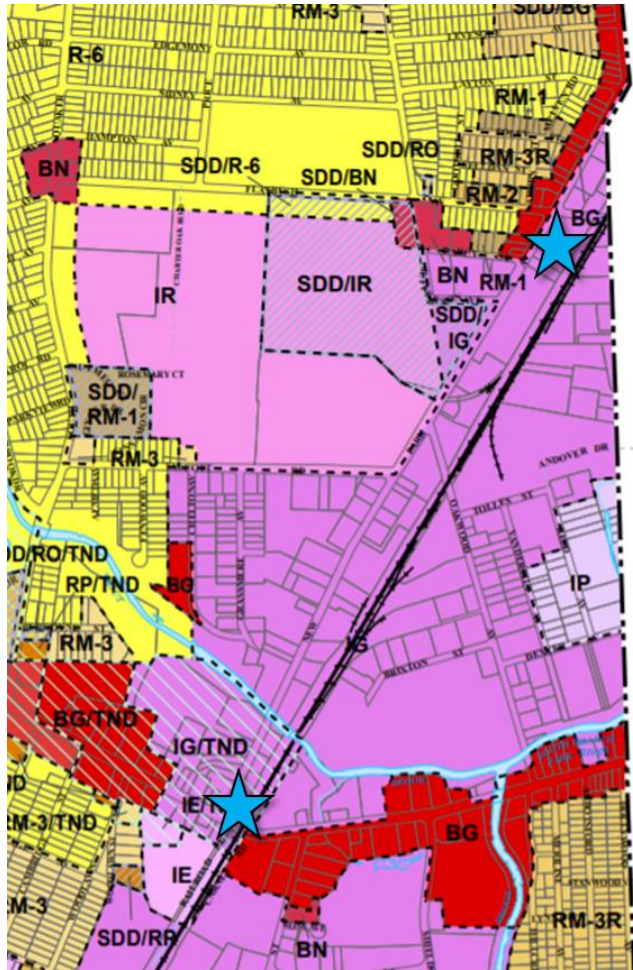
Source: Town of West Hartford Assessor

Existing Land Use: Elmwood



- Mix of transit-supportive and non-transit-supportive land uses
- Commercial focus on New Britain Avenue.
- New Park Avenue a commercial and industrial mix
- Multi-family residential uses are limited
- Limited vacant land (redevelopment focus)

Existing Conditions: Diversity (Zoning)



Transit-Supportive Uses	BG	IG	IR	IE
Single-Family Housing	-	-	-	-
Multi-Family Housing	B	B	B	-
Office	B	B	B	B
Research Laboratories	B	B	B	B
Banks	B	B	B	B
Retail	B	B	B	B
Restaurants	B	B	B	B
Personal Services	B	B	B	B
Hotel	B	B	B	-
Theater	A	A	A	-
Food Truck Park	-	A	-	-

Automotive Uses	BG	IG	IR	IE
Car Wash	A	B	B	B
Motor Vehicle Sales, Service, & Gas Stations	B	B	B	-
Vehicle Intensive Businesses	-	A	A	A
Car Rental Agency	B	B	B	B

Industrial Uses	BG	IG	IR	IE
Wholesaling and Warehousing	B	B	B	B
Industrial or Manufacturing Use	B	B	B	B
Outdoor Storage (excluding junk yards)	-	B	B	B
Junk Yards	-	B	B	-
Contractor Yards	-	A	A	-
Manufacture of Alcohol	-	B	B	B

A = Permitted use subject to issuance of a building and/or zoning permit and subject to § 177-42A.

B = Permitted use subject to issuance of a building and/or zoning permit and subject to § 177-42B.

- Existing study area zoning permits a range of transit-supportive and non-transit-supportive uses

Design

Design - compact, pedestrian-oriented development that generates activity and supports transit ridership. Design elements include:

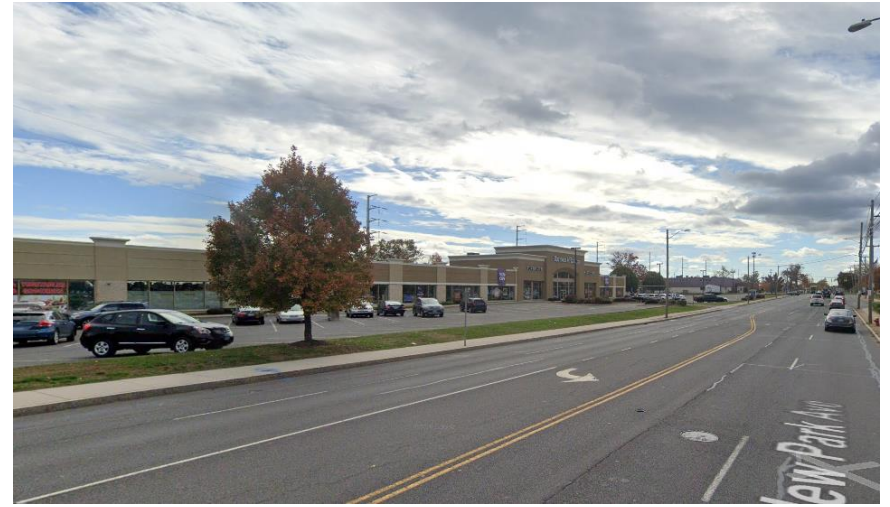
Buildings – building placement, architectural design, fenestration, context sensitive massing and scale.

Site – building wall, setbacks, well designed parking areas, landscaping, screening

Public Realm – Compact blocks, sidewalks, bike lanes, streetscapes, slow traffic speeds, well defined public spaces

Existing Conditions: Design

Flatbush Avenue

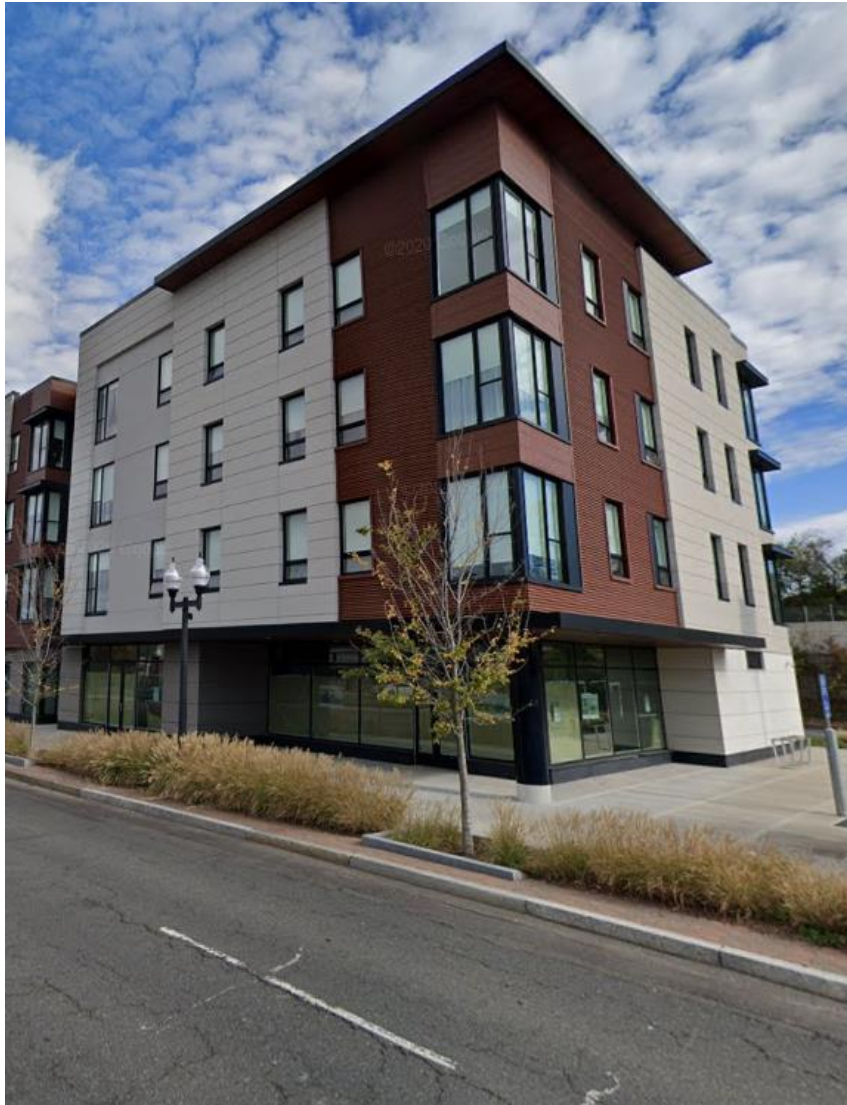


Existing Conditions: Design

Elmwood



Existing Conditions: Design (Zoning)

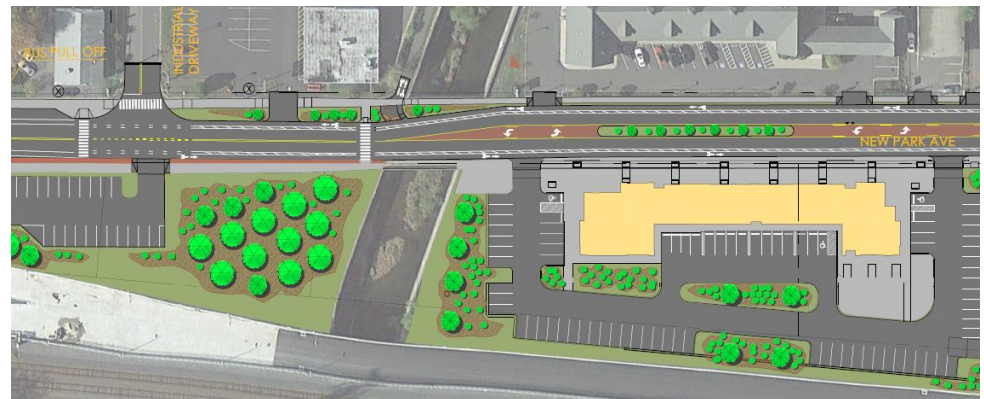
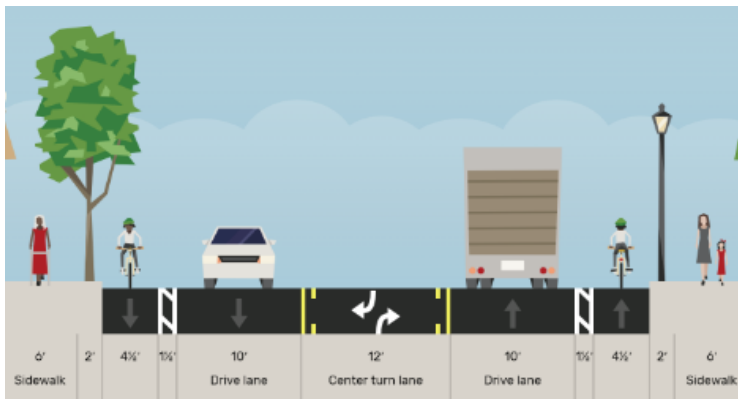


- **Existing zoning enables both transit-supportive and auto-oriented design in most of the corridor**
 - Minimal design requirements
 - Parking requirements are the same as other areas of West Hartford, including areas that lack access to transit
- Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) overlay district requires transit-supportive design on New Britain Avenue and southern New Park Avenue
 - Buildings placed close to the street
 - Architectural design regulations
 - Lower parking requirements

Existing Conditions: Design (Public Realm)

New Park Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project

- The project will enhance New Park Avenue for all users between New Britain Avenue and Oakwood Avenue. Project elements include: decorative streetlights, buffered bike lanes, pocket parks, landscaped medians, street trees, wayfinding signage, enhanced mid-block crosswalks, and traffic signal improvements.
- In between major intersections, the roadway will be resurfaced and reduced from four travel lanes to three: one travel lane in each direction and a center two-way left turn lane.
- Survey and design have begun, with an expected construction start of late-2022.
- The approximate construction cost is \$3.8 million, grant funding (\$3.7 million) and matching Town funds (\$100k).



Preliminary Survey Results

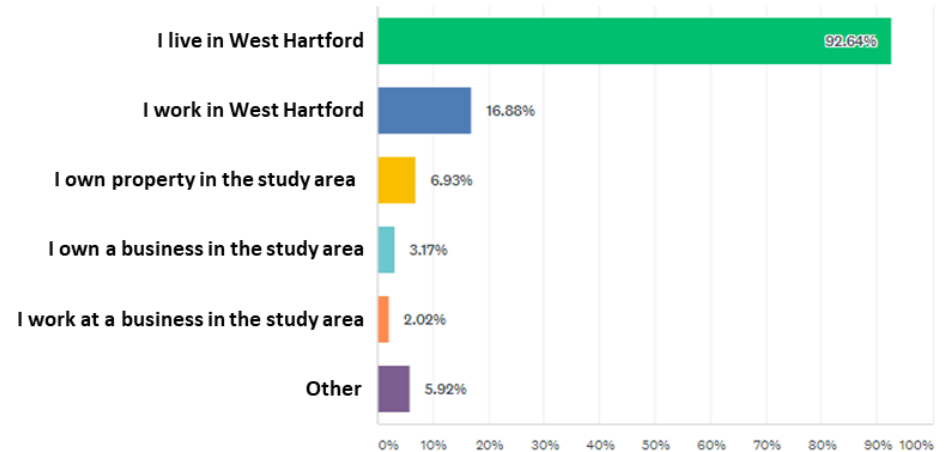
- Launched a survey in late April to gather information on:
 - Station Area usage
 - Perceptions of the quality of the existing built environment and supportive amenities
 - Preferences towards future opportunities in the areas
- **693 responses as of May 24th**

Survey is still live – if you haven't taken the survey, please visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WestHartfordTOD>

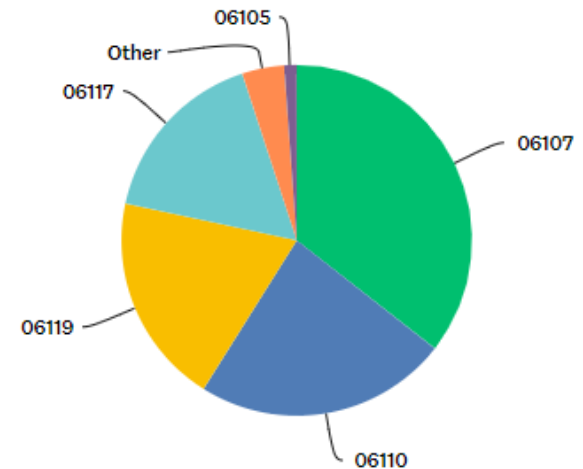
About the Respondents

- 93% live in West Hartford
- 17% work in West Hartford
- 7% own property in the Study Area
- Highest turnout among residents age 65 years old and over
- About 23% reside in the Study Area zip code (06110)

What best describes your interest in this project?

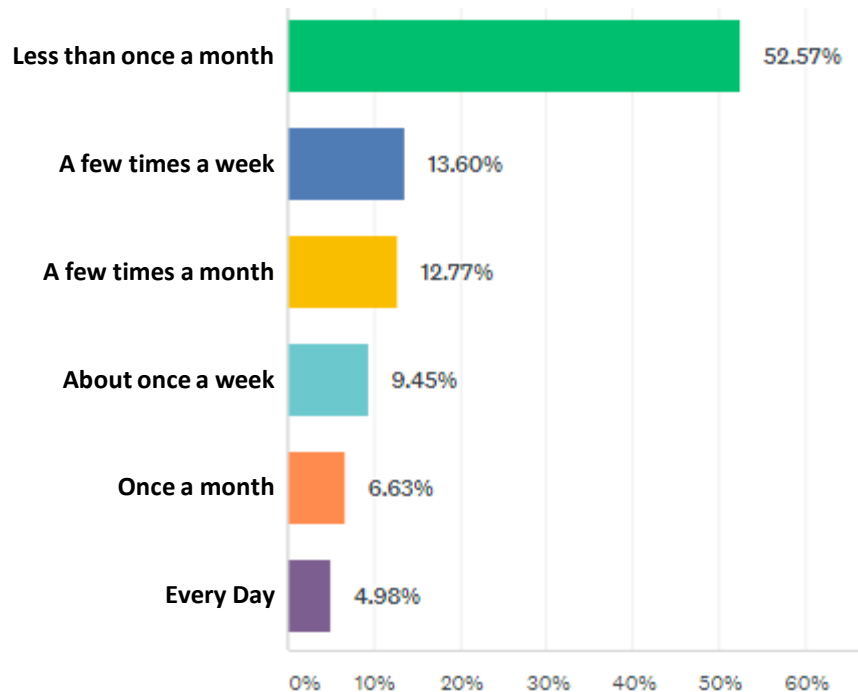


In which zip code do you currently reside in?

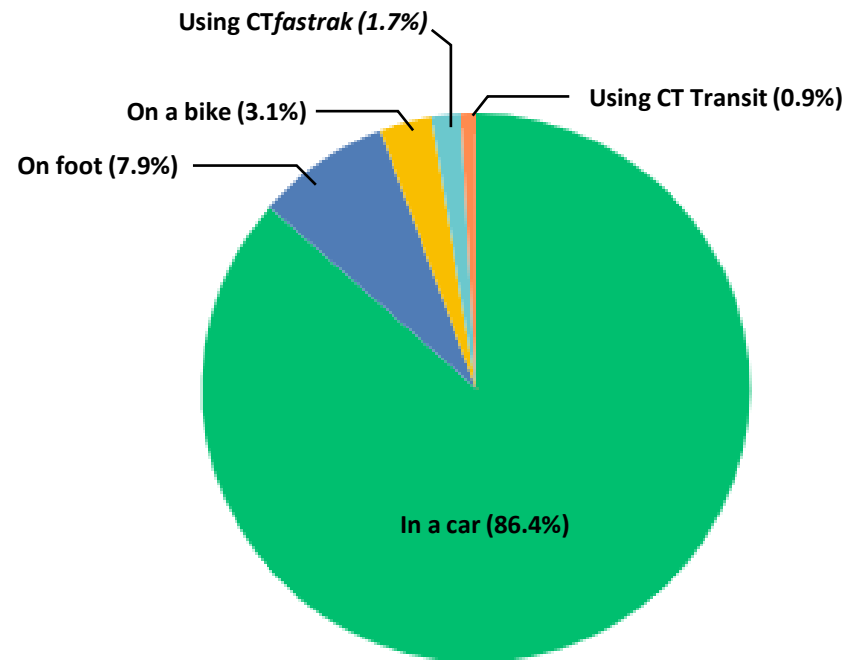


About the Respondents

How often do you visit the Flatbush Avenue or Elmwood Station Areas?



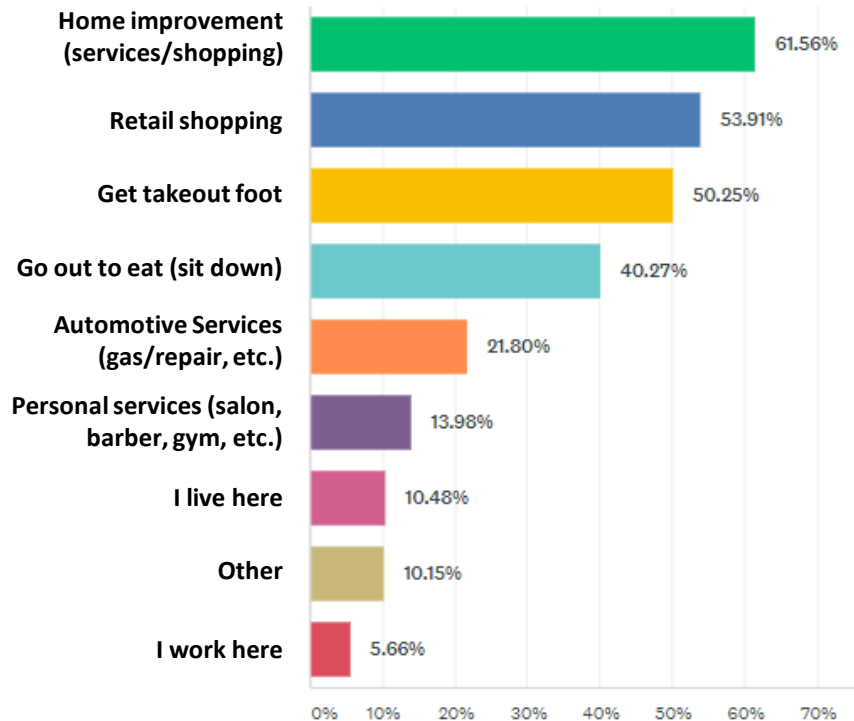
When you visit the Station Areas today, how do you usually get there?



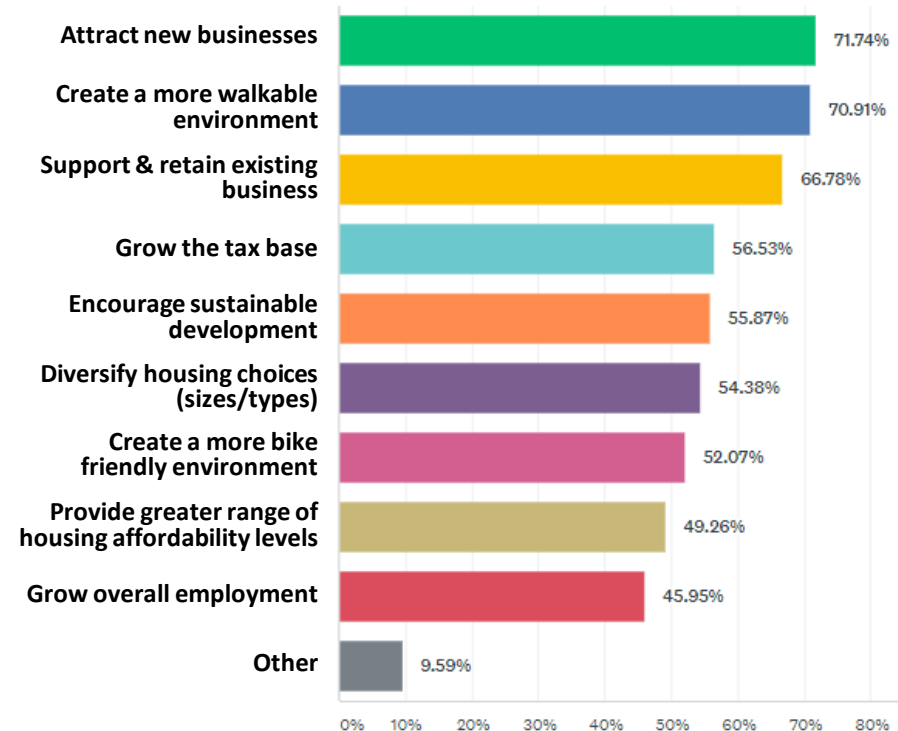
- Majority of respondents (53%) visit infrequently (less than once a month)
- Vast majority of respondents (86.4%) get to the station areas by car today

Perceptions and Opportunities

What types of activities do you do in the Station Areas today?



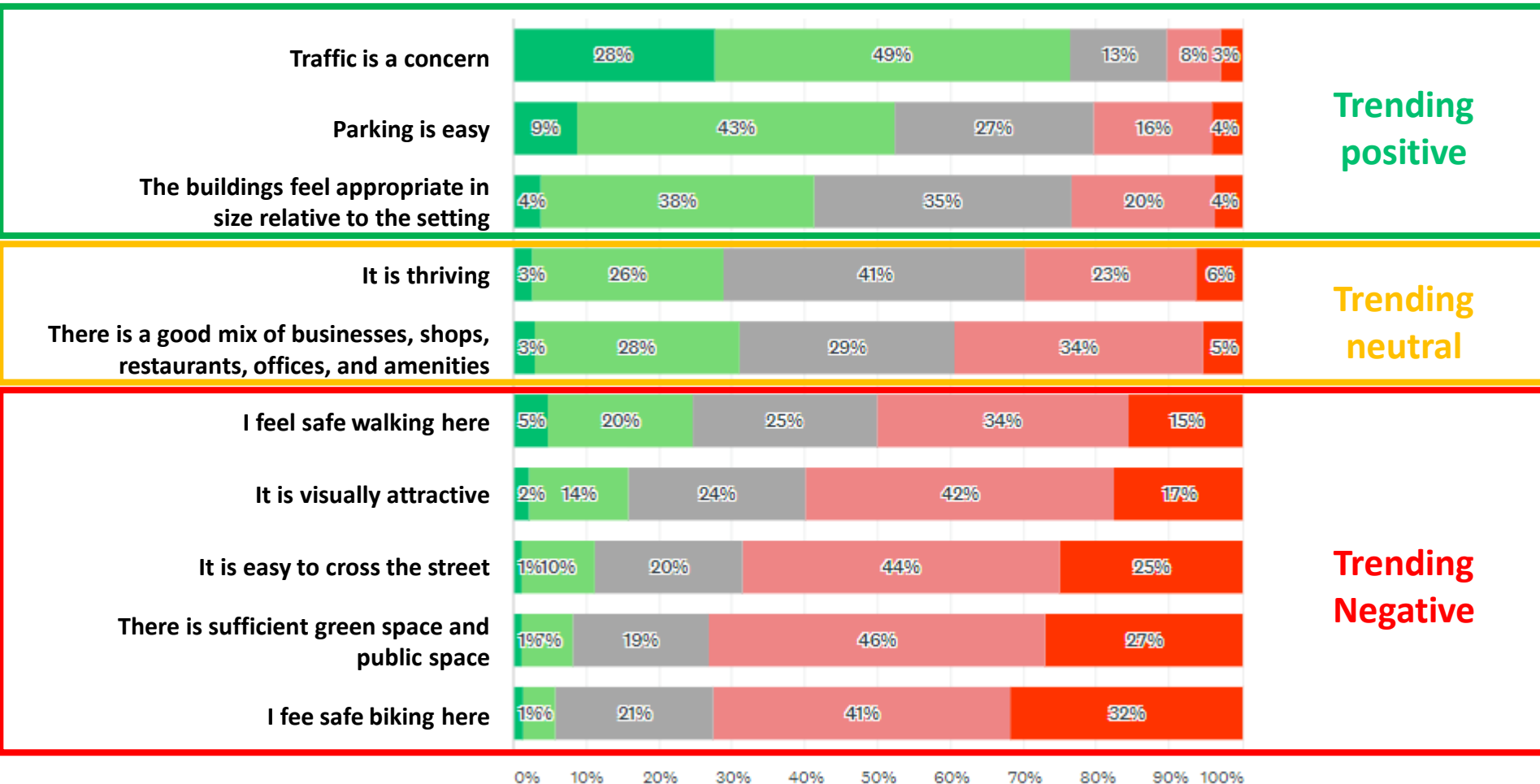
What opportunities do you see in the Flatbush Avenue or Elmwood Station Areas?



- Respondents most frequently visit to Station Areas for home improvement services and shopping (62%), retail shopping (54%), and takeout food (50%)
- Attracting new businesses (72%), creating a more walkable environment (71%), and supporting & retaining existing businesses (67%) identified as top opportunities

Flatbush Avenue Station Area: Perceptions

Strongly Agree ← → Strongly Disagree



Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Flatbush Avenue Station Area: Visual Preferences

Which maximum building height do you think is most appropriate for the Flatbush Avenue Station Area?

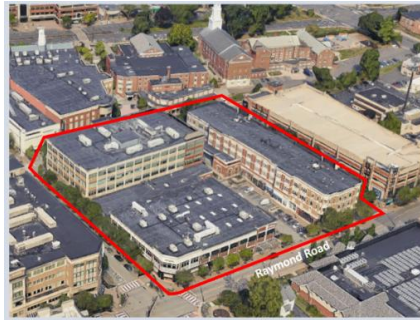


- About 57% of respondents indicated that 3 or 4 stories was the most appropriate maximum building height in the Elmwood Station Area

Flatbush Avenue Station Area: Visual Preferences

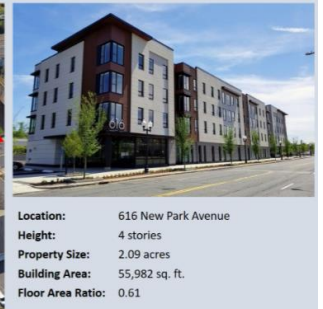
Is this density too dense, not dense enough, or about right for the Flatbush Avenue Station Area?

58%
about
the right
density



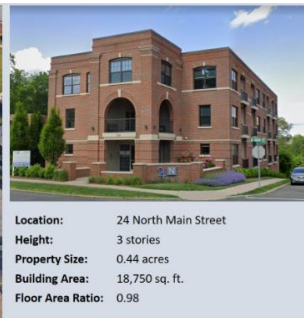
Location: 75 Isham Road (Blue Back Square)
Height: 2 to 4 stories
Property Size: 2.32 acres
Building Area: 293,463 sq. ft.
Floor Area Ratio: 2.90

67%
about
the right
density



Location: 616 New Park Avenue
Height: 4 stories
Property Size: 2.09 acres
Building Area: 55,982 sq. ft.
Floor Area Ratio: 0.61

63%
about
the right
density



Location: 24 North Main Street
Height: 3 stories
Property Size: 0.44 acres
Building Area: 18,750 sq. ft.
Floor Area Ratio: 0.98

56% not
dense
enough



Location: 668 Farmington Avenue
Height: 1 story
Property Size: 1.40 acres
Building Area: 14,820 sq. ft.
Floor Area Ratio: 0.24

Flatbush Avenue Station Area: Visual Preferences

Which type of site design do you think is most appropriate for the Flatbush Avenue Station Area?

25%



A - Building placed close to street

32%



B - Building set back from street with landscaped buffer

11%



C - Building set back from street with parking in front

29%



D - Building set back from street with public space in front

3% of respondents indicated no preference

Flatbush Avenue Station Area: Visual Preferences

Which type of parking configuration do you think is most appropriate for the Flatbush Avenue Station Area?

10%



A – Parking in Front of Building

51%



B – Parking in Rear of Building

12%



C – Parking on Side of Building

19%

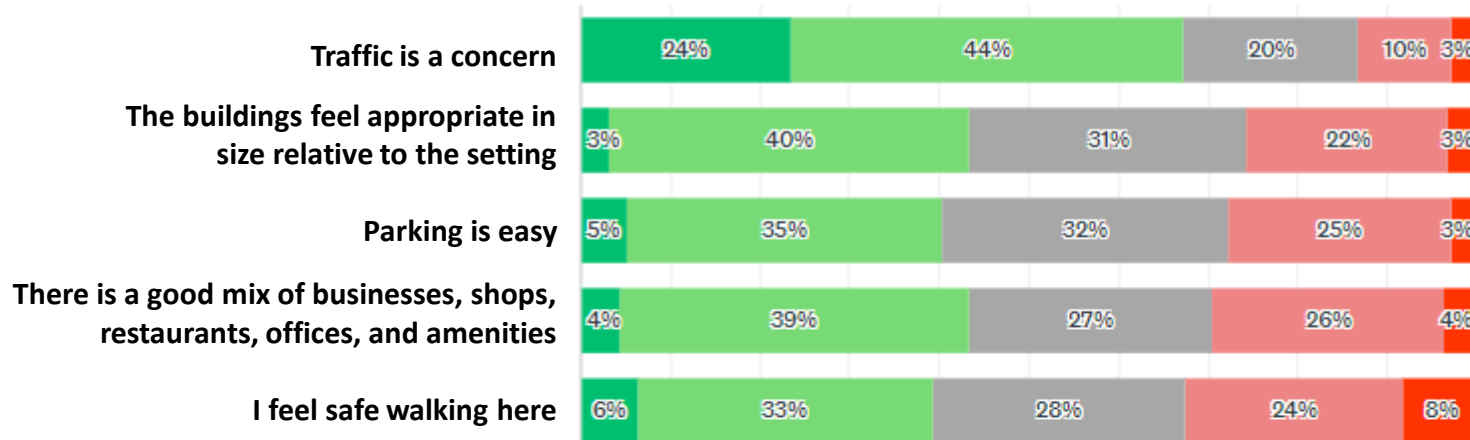


D – Shared Parking Off-Site

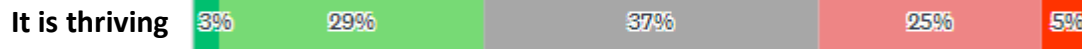
8% of respondents indicated no preference

Elmwood Station Area: Perceptions

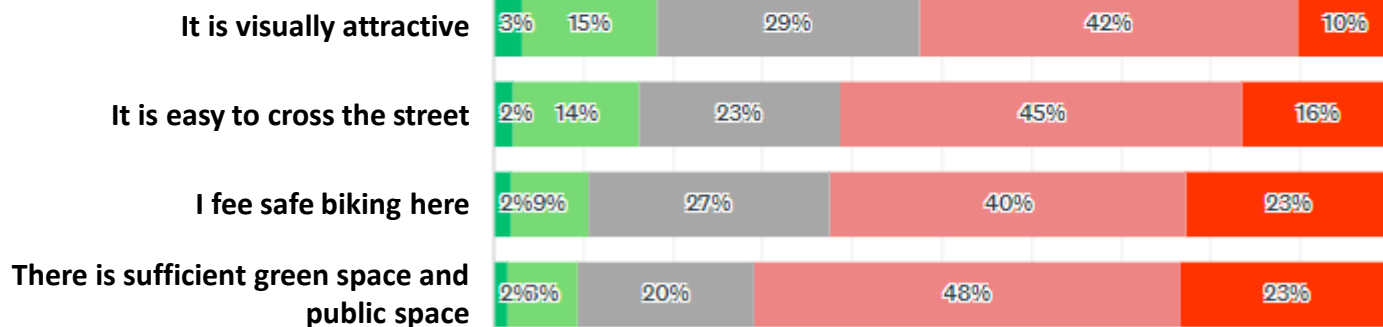
Strongly Agree ← → Strongly Disagree



Trending positive



Trending neutral



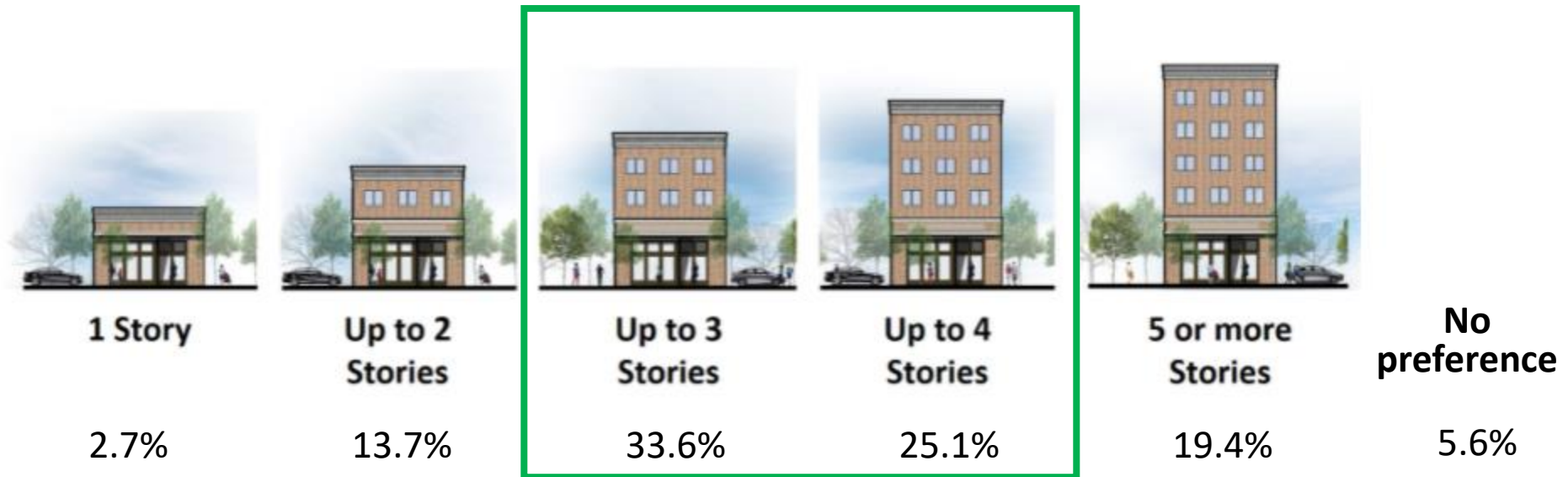
Trending Negative

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Elmwood Station Area: Visual Preferences

Which maximum building height do you think is most appropriate for the Elmwood Station Area?

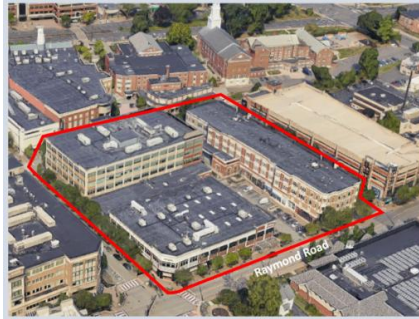


- About 59% of respondents indicated that 3 or 4 stories was the most appropriate maximum building height in the Elmwood Station Area

Elmwood Station Area: Visual Preferences

Is this density too dense, not dense enough, or about right for the Elmwood Station Area?

50%
about
the right
density



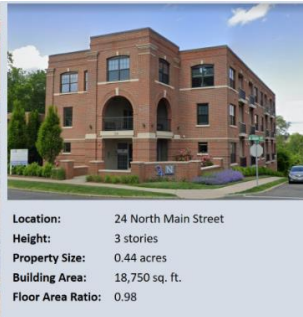
Location: 75 Isham Road (Blue Back Square)
Height: 2 to 4 stories
Property Size: 2.32 acres
Building Area: 293,463 sq. ft.
Floor Area Ratio: 2.90

62%
about
the right
density



Location: 616 New Park Avenue
Height: 4 stories
Property Size: 2.09 acres
Building Area: 55,982 sq. ft.
Floor Area Ratio: 0.61

64%
about
the right
density



Location: 24 North Main Street
Height: 3 stories
Property Size: 0.44 acres
Building Area: 18,750 sq. ft.
Floor Area Ratio: 0.98

52% not
dense
enough



Location: 668 Farmington Avenue
Height: 1 story
Property Size: 1.40 acres
Building Area: 14,820 sq. ft.
Floor Area Ratio: 0.24

Elmwood Station Area: Visual Preferences

Which type of site design do you think is most appropriate for the Elmwood Station Area?

25%



A - Building placed close to street

36%



B - Building set back from street with landscaped buffer

8%



C - Building set back from street with parking in front

27%



D - Building set back from street with public space in front

3% of respondents indicated no preference

Elmwood Station Area: Visual Preferences

Which type of parking configuration do you think is most appropriate for the Elmwood Station Area?

10%



A – Parking in Front of Building

51%



B – Parking in Rear of Building

12%



C – Parking on Side of Building

20%



D – Shared Parking Off-Site

7% of respondents indicated no preference

Interactive Exercises

We're going to use interactive polling during this workshop. You will need access to a new web browser tab. Let's get started.

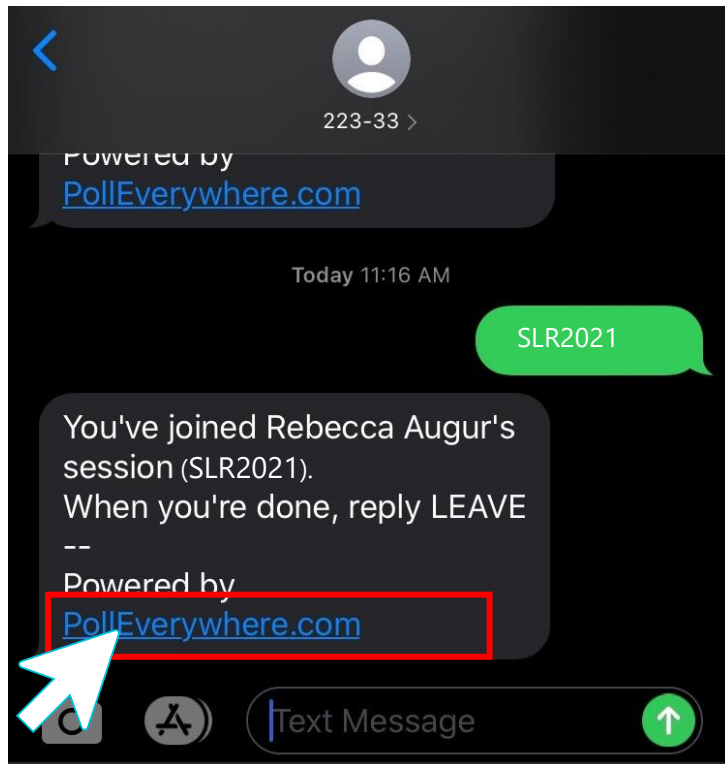
If joining on your web browser (open a new tab)

Go to: PolEv.com/SLR2021

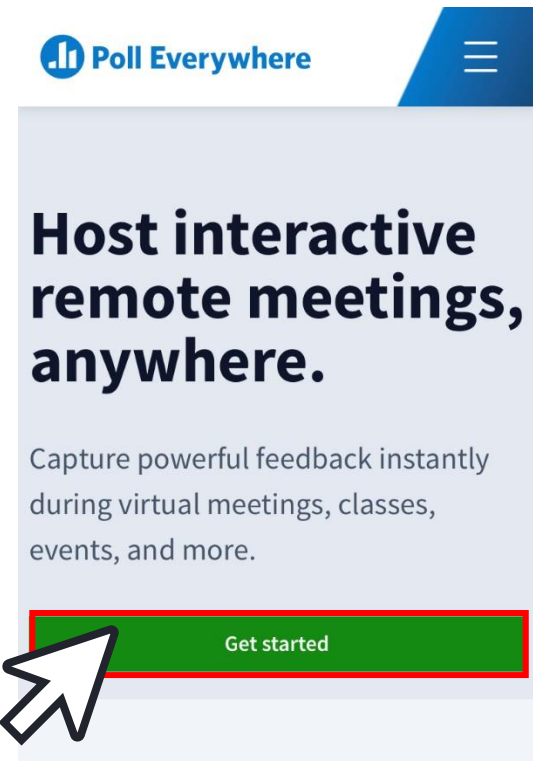
Interactive Exercises

If Joining by Phone

1.) Text: SLR2021 to 22333



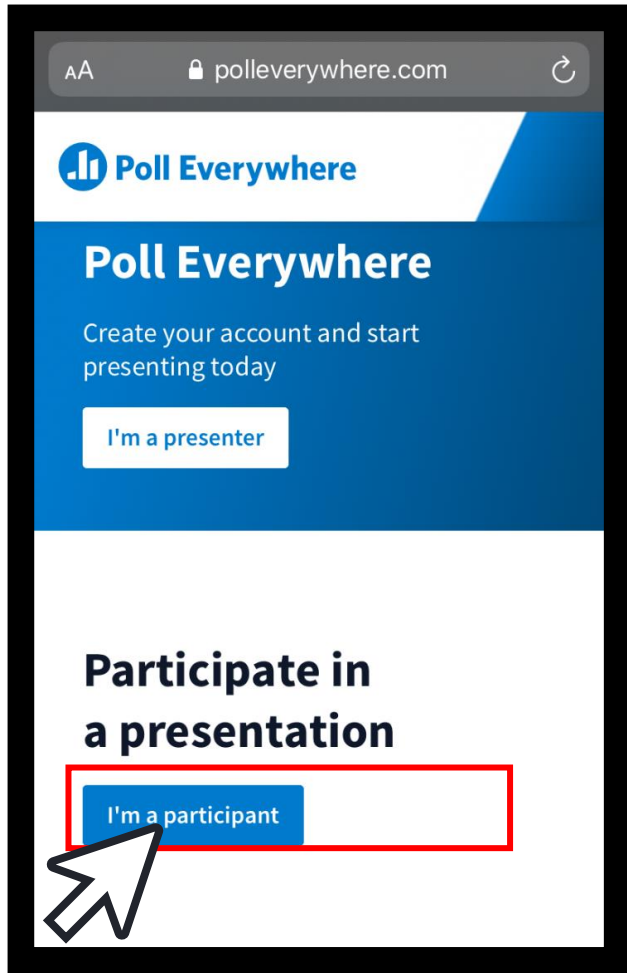
2.) Click on the link



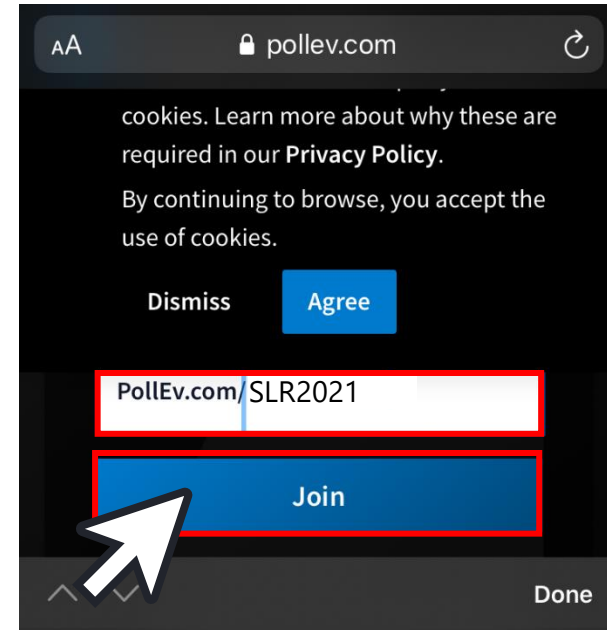
3.) Click "Get Started"

Interactive Exercises

If Joining by Phone



4.) Click “I’m a participant”



5.) Type SLR2021 after the backslash and hit “Join”

Which football team is best?

New England Patriots

New York Giants

New York Jets

Tampa Bay Buccaneers

What is football?

What do you see as the top three planning or land use issues in the TOD station areas?

**You are visiting the Flatbush Avenue station
area 10 years from now. What do you see?**

You are visiting the Elmwood station area 10 years from now. What do you see?

How open are you to growth and change in the TOD station areas?

I support radical change and growth in these areas

These areas should grow and change slowly and thoughtfully over time

I am not open to growth or change. These areas are fine as they are today

West Hartford should support higher density development in the TOD station areas

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

West Hartford should discourage land uses in the TOD station areas that are not supportive of TOD

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

West Hartford should more strongly regulate building and site design in the TOD station areas

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

West Hartford should reduce parking requirements in the TOD station areas

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

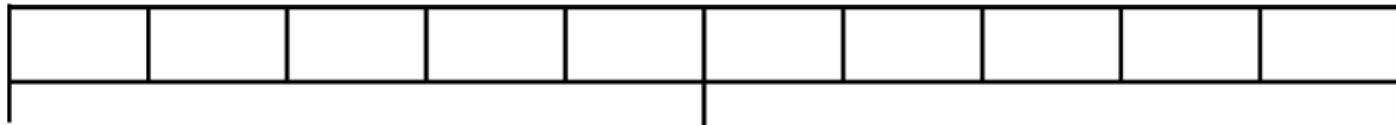
Strongly Disagree

What is your desired land use mix in the TOD station areas?

Click on the scale showing your preferred land use split in the TOD Station Areas



Residential
Focus



Evenly split



Business
Focus

Where would you prioritize TOD?

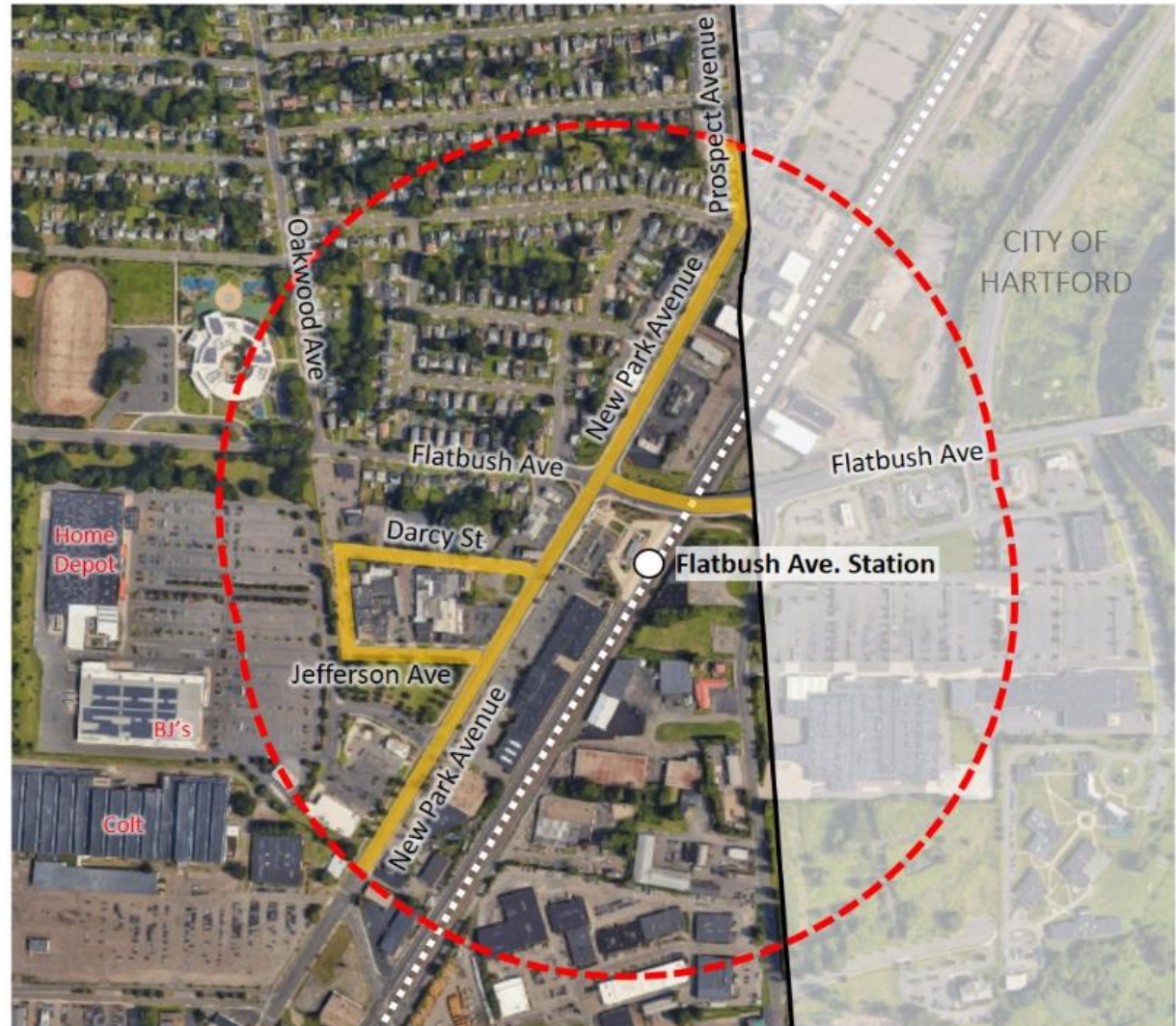
Flatbush Avenue Station Area



Quarter
mile buffer



Primary mixed-use
streets within
Station Area



Start the presentation to see live content. For screen share software, share the entire screen. Get help at pollev.com/app

Where would you prioritize TOD?

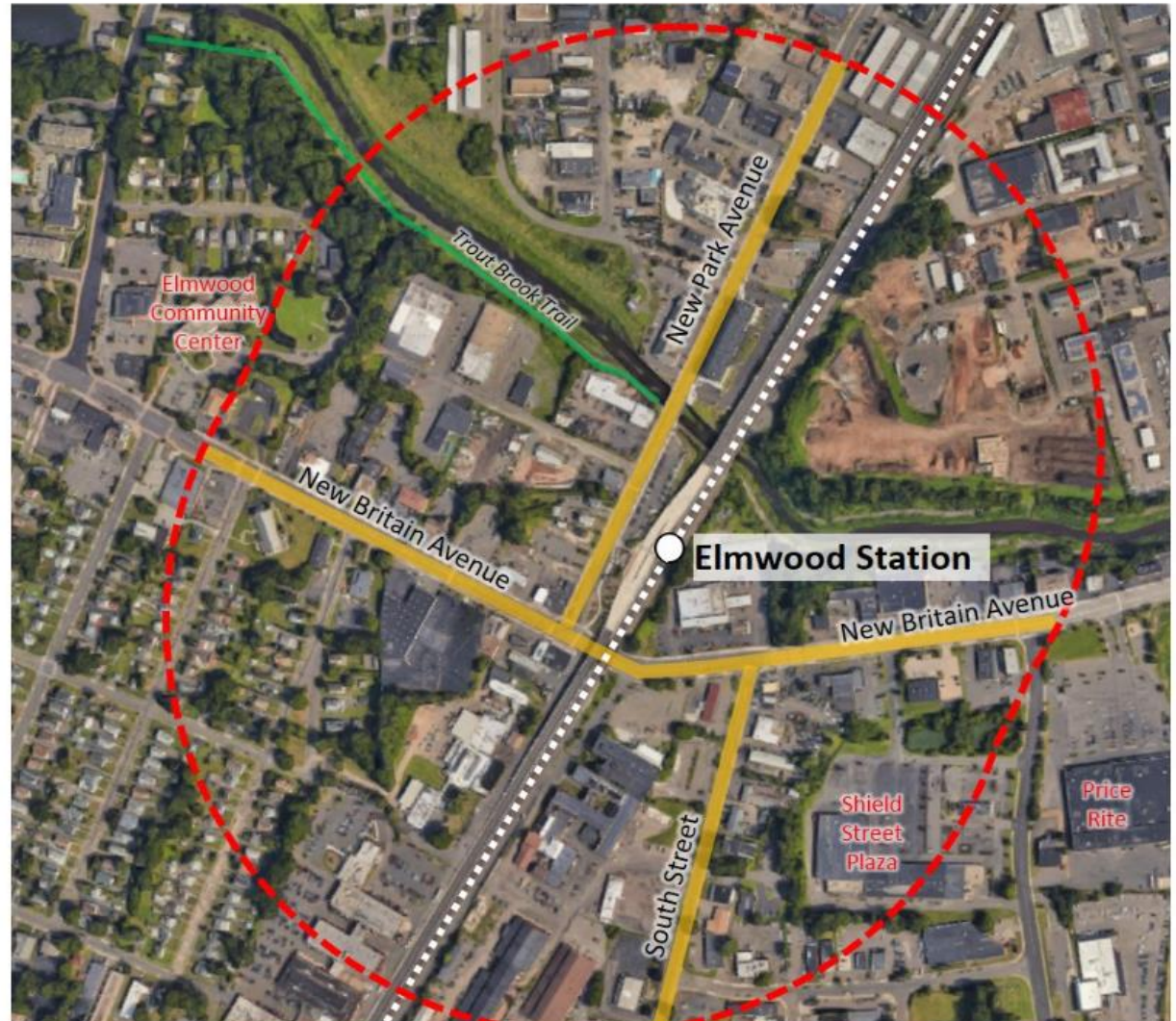
Elmwood Station Area



Quarter
mile buffer



Primary mixed-use
streets within
Station Area



Start the presentation to see live content. For screen share software, share the entire screen. Get help at pollev.com/app

Recap of Feedback Tonight

If you have any additional questions or comments, please put them in the chat



Next Steps

Monitor Changes to State Legislation (ongoing)

June – Summary report of outreach findings

June – Evaluate possible ordinance amendments

July – Refine possible ordinance amendments

August – Report back to Town Council