

# Traffic and parking solutions proposed for downtown Norwich

---

Proposed solutions to the problem of traffic flow:

- Make some one-way streets two-way, such as Bath, Franklin and Chestnut streets.
- Reverse the direction of Main Street to lead into downtown rather than out.
- Reverse the direction of Broadway and add vertical parking along it.
- Reverse the direction of Cliff Street.
- Reverse Church Street or make it two-way.
- Address the question of the fork near La Stella.
- Develop a comprehensive plan for downtown.
- Put a rotary in front of City Hall, at Franklin Square and in front of Dunkin' Donuts.
- Replace "unfriendly" stoplights with stop signs or rotaries.
- Close Chelsea Harbor Drive and build additional parking in that space; make Water Street two-way.
- Consider pedestrian traffic.
- Build a pedestrian bridge over Chelsea Harbor Drive.
- Determine which streets can be made two-way while still maintaining parking spaces.
- Deal with the issue of business owners and employees parking on streets.
- Develop mass transit alternatives.
- Have remote parking lots for those who work downtown, with shuttles between the lots and downtown.
- Pursue methods through which trolley "lookalikes" might be purchased for downtown mass transit.
- Move the Viaduct to the other side of the river, reclaiming prime real estate on the waterfront.
- Build walkway from downtown to waterfront.

Proposed solutions to the problem of parking:

- Better signs: clear, easy to understand, to prevent confusion for visitors.
- Customer friendly.
- Better enforcement of parking laws.
- Analysis of available parking.
- Establish criteria for new parking structure.
- Parking should be close to people's destinations.
- Look at traffic flow in conjunction with parking.
- Develop a plan for residential parking in downtown.
- Tell consultants what we want the end result to be.

 [Email this story](#)

Originally published Wednesday, April 14, 2004

*Downtown Parking Assessment  
March 2004*

In order to more effectively identify existing conditions and future parking requirements, the Downtown was divided into the following three sub-areas:

- Washington Square to Courthouse Square
- Courthouse Square to Franklin Square
- Franklin Square to Burnham Square

Data regarding the square footage of buildings was derived from either the current assessors records and/or the City of Norwich Downtown Historic Structures rating publication. Information regarding the current inventory of public parking was obtained from the Parking Commission Administrator. Potential uses (retail, office, restaurant & residential) are based upon rehabilitation of current building inventory consistent with the goals and objectives of the following plans:

- Plan of Conservation and Development
- Downtown Plan of Development
- Redevelopment Plan
- Harbor Management Plan
- Main Street Program
- Yale Urban Design Group
- Downtown NRZ
- Chelsea Advocates Vision Plan

The most significant impact on parking downtown will be the total displacement of public parking in the Washington to Courthouse Square sub-area upon occupancy of the Mercantile Exchange building. When this occurs, additional pressure will be placed upon a severely limited public parking inventory in remaining sub-areas.

Washington Square to Courthouse Square

In the short-term, this sub-area will be in most need of additional parking. All off-street parking has currently been dedicated to the Mercantile, excepting for a small private lot shared by the Credit Union and prior Veterans Center Building and the private lot at Thames Plaza.

At the present time, the occupants of the Mercantile are interested in securing an additional 30-35 spaces in the Brown Park lot. Currently, 40 of 74 spaces are leased and the remainder (34) are metered 2 hour public spaces. If in fact the limited public parking at Brown Park is dedicated to the Mercantile, the only available public parking in this sub-area during regular business hours will consist of a very limited number of time restricted on-street spaces and 42 metered spaces in the Market Street parking garage.

In light of the fact that all of the available parking in this sub-area is dedicated or will be used by tenants/clients of the Mercantile during the work-week, vacant space and currently occupied buildings have been included in the future needs analysis.

Building Inventory

Flatiron	13,000 sq.ft.	retail/office 1 <sup>st</sup> floor, residential above	31 spaces
Heritage Center	22,000 sq.ft.	retail/office/assembly	50 spaces
60 Main St.	5,000 sq.ft.	retail/office	17 spaces
71 Main St.	2,500 sq.ft.	retail/office	8 spaces
Rockwell Bldg.	10,500 sq.ft.	retail/office	34 spaces
94-100 Main St.	3,500 sq.ft.	retail/office/residential	10 spaces
97-105 Main St.	8,162 sq.ft.	retail/office/residential	18 spaces
104-110 Main St.	7,441 sq.ft.	retail/office/residential	17 spaces

Total square footage sub-area #1                      72,103

Anticipated parking demand                      185 spaces

*Courthouse Square to Franklin Square*

As individuals are displaced from sub-area # 1 and/or vacant space is rehabilitated, additional demands will be placed upon the limited amount of public parking facilities in this section of the downtown. The Market Street garage contains a total of 199 spaces, 156 of which are leased. The 42 remaining spaces are metered (time restricted) and currently available to the public. One would anticipate that the remaining public spaces would be leased to displaced downtown employees, as demand intensifies. There is very limited on-street parking available. Vacant space and the potential shortfall in the number of spaces for the Wauregan are included in the inventory of this sub-area.

*Building Inventory*

128-130 Main St.	8,484 sq.ft.	retail/office/residential	17 spaces
Reid & Hughes	28,882 sq.ft.	retail/office/residential	40 spaces
28 Court House	6,436 sq.ft.	office	21 spaces
*Wauregan Hotel	63,000 sq.ft.	office/retail/residential	50 spaces
59 Broadway	3,766 sq.ft.	office/retail/residential	12 spaces

\* This number is the potential shortfall, over and above the number of spaces being provided in the proposed Wauregan parking structure.

<i>Total square footage sub-area # 2</i>	<i>110,568</i>
<i>Anticipated parking demand including Wauregan</i>	<i>149 spaces</i>
<i>Anticipated parking demand without Wauregan</i>	<i>99 spaces</i>

*Franklin Square to Burnham Square*

This area contains the largest inventory of public parking. Not including the very limited number of time restricted on-street spaces, the total number of public spaces is 370, of which 281 are reserved. The remaining 89 spaces are metered and scattered in four different locations.

As in sub-area II, displacement of existing public parking in the Washington and Courthouse Square area will certainly impact this area in the short-term as demands are placed on the remaining limited number of public spaces. Long-term, the primary factor impacting public parking requirements in this area is anticipated to be the expansion of Otis Library. At this time, only vacant space and the Railroad Station property have been used in the analysis of this sub-area.

**Building Inventory**

Thayer Building	37,968 sq.ft.	retail/office/residential	70 spaces
Beit Building	10,220 sq.ft.	retail/office/residential	25 spaces
206-224 Main St.	18,000 sq.ft.	retail/office/residential	40 spaces
Alice Building	9,894 sq.ft.	retail/office/residential	20 spaces
* Railroad Station	10,839 sq.ft.	retail/office/restaurant	40 spaces

\* Included in anticipation of future redevelopment

<b><i>Total square footage sub-area # 3</i></b>	<b>86,921</b>
<b><i>Anticipated parking demand including Railroad Station</i></b>	<b>195 spaces</b>
<b><i>Anticipated parking demand without Railroad Station</i></b>	<b>155 spaces</b>

**Totals for all sub-areas**

<b><i>Square footage</i></b>	<b>269,592</b>
<b><i>Anticipated parking demand including Wauregan &amp; Railroad Station</i></b>	<b>529 spaces</b>
<b><i>Anticipated parking demand without Wauregan &amp; Railroad Station</i></b>	<b>439 spaces</b>