

III. IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of “the New Farmington Avenue” is based on several assumptions:

Implementation will occur in phases, as funding and “block by block” consensus is achieved, beginning with short-term improvements and experiments (see section below) that could be accomplished in 2002;

As a long-term project, on-going staff capacity is absolutely essential to the transformation of Farmington Avenue. This is important because of the wide range of tasks required to implement the plan – promoting it to funders, seeking funding itself, etc.

There will be a continued need for planning and design assistance, and while the PPS team proposes to maintain a leadership role to assure that concepts are translated into effective designs, local design and engineering assistance will be needed.

An on-going maintenance and management plan must be created with the final design plans, and a Special Services District created which is “interlocked” in some way with FAJC.

This section begins with an overview of implementation strategies, including the first steps that FAJC should undertake in implementing various components of the plan. Following this section, cost estimates are provided for the street’s reconstruction as well as a list of short-term improvements that can be accomplished relatively quickly.

STRATEGIES

Organization and Management

- *Transform FAJC.* While it is an effective body for communication and cooperation, the Farmington Avenue Joint Committee (FAJC) must now consider becoming an on-going non-profit organization that will both complete the planning and design process and assure its implementation. To do this, it will require a staff: at least a full or mostly full time director and a part-time secretary/accountant.

A dream that comes only once is oftenest only an idle accident, and hasn't any message, but the recurrent dream is quite another matter--oftener than not it has come on business.

Mark Twain

Three Thousand Years Among the Microbes

Common sense is seeing things as they are; and doing things as they ought to be.

Harriet Beecher Stowe

- *Create a Special Services District.* This will require its own planning process (which FAJC can coordinate with retailers and FABD) to convince property owners, most notably Aetna (whose property must be included if it is to work), of its value. Funders of capital construction are going to want to know that there is a maintenance plan in place to take care of improvements after construction. The SSD can also support and integrate the activities of FABD and address the myriad retail recruitment, promotion, and marketing issues facing Asylum Hill and the West End. FAJC should consider how to coordinate closely with the SSD, possibly through interlocking boards and a shared staff.

First Steps:

1. Start the legal process to make FAJC a non-profit corporation.
2. Secure first year funding for first-year staffing.
3. Develop the planning process for establishing an SSD.

Funding/Fundraising for Capital Improvements

- *Promote and disseminate the plan.* The final report should be widely distributed as a first step in the plan to fundraise for its implementation. It is an opportunity to meet with potential funders and strategize about sources and implementation opportunities. Marketing material featuring the vision for the avenue should be distributed to the general public.
- *Coordinate with existing funded projects (Busway, Circulator, Westside Access).* Money is out there for construction for these projects, and that should be kept in mind, in addition to coordinating on technical planning issues.
- *Solicit grants from public and private sources.* It is highly unlikely that there will be only one source of construction funds for the project. FAJC should anticipate from the beginning that (1) construction will be phased as resources become available and property owners reach consensus over design details; (2) this process will require assistance by an ongoing design team; and (3) multiple sources of funds will be required that will in fact leverage other funds.

ORDER OF MAGNITUDE COST ESTIMATE					
FARMINGTON AVENUE ESTIMATE					
DESCRIPTIONS	ITEM NO.	QUANTITY		UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
Superpave 9.5mm (Top Course)	406441	6224	M.T.	60.00	\$ 373,440
Superpave 12.5mm (Base course)	406442	3553	M.T.	46.50	\$ 165,215
Milling (0.01 - 3.00 Inches)	406280	35191	S.M.	5.00	\$ 175,955
Subbase	212004	13673	C.M.	28.00	\$ 382,844
Bituminous Concrete Sidewalk	922500	2176	C.M.	46.00	\$ 100,096
Concrete Curbing	811001	10000	M.	80.00	\$ 800,000
4" White Type I Epoxy resin Pav't Marking	1209801	12192	M	0.82	\$ 9,997
4" Yellow Type I Epoxy resin Pav't Marking	1209801	6096	M	0.82	\$ 4,999
Epoxy Resin Pavement Markings symbols & Legend	1209810	150	S.M.	1.00	\$ 150
Saw cutting	601923	51000	M.	10.00	\$ 510,000
Paint (Red)		3457	S.M.	1.50	\$ 5,186
Bricks		20500	S.M.	80.00	\$ 1,640,000
Trees	-	325	EA.	300.00	\$ 97,500
Establishing Turf	-	141810	S.M.	3.00	\$ 425,430
Unclassified Excavations	-	31000	C.M.	25.00	\$ 775,000
Bus Shelter		19	EA.	25000.00	\$ 475,000
Lighting	-	293	EA.	2100.00	\$ 615,300
Trash Receptacle	-	75	EA.	540.00	\$ 40,500
Bike Racks	-	30	EA.	859.00	\$ 25,770
Benches	-	55	EA.	599.00	\$ 32,945
SUBTOTAL					\$ 6,655,326
Maintenance Of Traffic				0.03	\$ 199,660
Mobilization				0.08	\$ 532,426
Construction Staking				0.01	\$ 66,553
Contingency				0.25	\$ 1,663,832
Drainage				0.08	\$ 532,426
Utilities				0.03	\$ 199,660
TOTAL					\$ 9,849,883
Total Survey Cost for Entire Project Limits of Farmington Ave.				100000.00	\$ 100,000
				SAY	\$10,000,000
Engineering Fee (Base on ConnDot estimating guidelines)		12% + 5%		0.17	\$1,700,000
TOTAL				SAY	\$12,000,000

FIGURE 1.

First Steps:

1. Make a splashy announcement. The “New Farmington Avenue” should be kicked off with a promotional event.
2. Make a special effort to disseminate the plan to potential funders as well as to property owners and businesses.
3. Secure planning funds for design development and planning issues (such as rezoning).

Design Development

- *Secure adoption of concept plan.* The Commission on the City Plan and the City Council should adopt the concept plan with the assumption that the concepts will be evolved during design development. This will give the concept plan the stature that it needs. Other groups, such as CRCOG, CT Transit, etc. could be approached as well for their endorsement.
- *Conduct “block by block” public outreach & consensus building.* Just as funding will be incremental, FAJC should assume – as has been the case with other local projects like Riverfront Recapture – that the construction will also be phased, beginning with short term improvements. Consensus on a block by block basis will have to be reached during this phase as a precursor to construction. Consensus within the larger community will have to be maintained as well.
- *Retain design and planning consultants.* While PPS and its sub consultants will propose to remain involved to assure that the concepts are carried through into the design, local consultants more readily available for meetings, etc. should be retained. PPS and its current sub consultants can help refine concepts, revise the zoning ordinance, complete final traffic engineering, and oversee the design process as well.
- *Acquire property or establish joint access agreements/easements.* This will be a major focus of the planning consultants as well as the FAJC. Some legal advice may be required as well.
- *Revise zoning ordinance.* Revising the zoning for Farmington Avenue can be done by consultants working closely with the city. This should be done early, as it will help give the concept plan authority, encouraging property owners to cooperate.

- *Create parking management plan.* This will be an issue which will come up in the joint access agreement process: will the city or will private owners manage parking in the side access areas and/or in the consolidated lots to the rear of properties?
- *Seek approvals and coordinate with government entities/ environment reviews.* This will be needed for funding as well as approvals for design development and construction.
- *Develop maintenance plan.* Again, this issue of maintaining improvements – through as Special Services District – is important, and will help to guide the level of landscaping and other design improvements.

First Steps:

1. Secure adoption of the plan by the City Council and others.
2. Begin discussions with property owners on blocks where there is already a project in process (like the Colonial Theater and Mark Twain House) or where owners seem more committed.
3. Begin revision of the zoning code, using a consultant.

Final Design and Engineering

- *Plan and implement short-term improvements / experiments.* This is critical to the plan's success. Many of the elements can be experimented with, such as the three lane section, additional crosswalks, signal changes, etc. Other owners (such as the library retail owner and Colonial Theater) will be constructing improvements in the next year, and they should become models for future spaces. As experiments, they also allow features to be modified prior to permanent construction.
- *Complete final engineering - Surveys (Utilities) and Traffic Planning.* The details that were not part of the concept phase will have to be worked out.
- *Complete final design (Phased).* Construction can be phased and one of the challenges will be to assure that the avenue functions as a whole even though only sec-

tions are implemented at any one time. Phasing will be determined based in part on resources and property owner consensus, as well as seasonal and technical issues.

- *Oversee construction process.* As construction proceeds, it is important to mitigate its impacts on businesses and residents – as well as motorists and pedestrians.

First Steps:

1. Implement short term improvements
2. Develop a conceptual phasing plan and approach.

Commercial Revitalization/Business Development Strategies

- *Undertake deliberate retail positioning in Asylum Hill, the West End and the East Gateway.* Efforts to promote the themes of these three areas are essential to leasing efforts.
- *Establish business recruitment program.* Working with private brokers – supplementing their work on properties that are more difficult to lease or do not command very high rents – this program will seek to recruit businesses to vacant and underutilized spaces on the avenue.
- *Establish façade & signage program.* Augmenting the city's successful program, a lower cost program with modest changes done on a voluntary basis for facades not requiring major rehabilitation will be suggested. Workshops, technical assistance, and design standards are typically part of such programs and can be implemented immediately.
- *Establish maintenance program.* This will involve formally implementing the maintenance plan developed during the final design process. In the short term, maintenance should be increased on the avenue.
- *Establish security program.* This will involve working with the Hartford Police continuing and enhancing on-going efforts.

First Steps:

1. Work with specific properties (i.e., the Hastings Conference Center, CTRC, Cheese & Stuff, etc.) to bring in appropriate quality tenants (Starbucks Coffee's, a new Roo Bar tenant, etc.) that sets the tone for the "theming" of the avenue and gives a basis for marketing to new tenants.
2. Develop an initial recruitment program, such as a data base on vacant spaces / soft sites; look in comparable business districts elsewhere in the metropolitan area for successful independents which might be interested in another location; compile a list of potential "targets" (chains and franchises, local business colleges, current businesses looking to expand, etc.)
3. Augment the façade program with workshops, technical assistance, and design standards.

COST ESTIMATES

The total "order of magnitude" cost for the capital improvements presented in this plan is estimated at approximately \$12,000,000 including reconstruction costs for the avenue, new amenities (such as lighting, benches, landscaping), professional fees, as well as costs for such items as maintenance of traffic. This figure also includes a large contingency amount (\$1.6 million) and some costs for utilities (\$200,000); a more detailed study of utilities needs to be done, however, as part of the next phase of work. In addition, budget for major public space or public art enhancements (for example, a sculpture at the Woodland roundabout) is not included in this budget.

An itemized budget is shown in Figure 1 page 89.

SHORT-TERM IMPROVEMENTS

Short-term, low-cost improvements are a good way of testing the re-design concept. They allow for changes to be evaluated before long-term changes have been introduced. In addition, short-term improvements are a great way to keep the momentum going, involve the community, and give people confidence that change is happening and that their ideas matter. Certain projects, such as the Colonial Theater and Prospect Financial Services are already under way, and they should be used as pilots to test proposed changes and evaluate results.



Road re-stripping before and after. Woodmere, OH.

Street Design Features

- Re-stripe roadway as a three lane shifting section for the full length of Farmington (constructing bus laybys, the actual proposed design cannot be tested in some locations.) This should include striping central turn lane, medians, and bike lanes.
- Test proposed changes for the East Gateway area, such as lane modifications and reconfiguration.

Streetscape & Placemaking

Bus stops

- Introduce new bus stop signs.
- Encourage businesses to provide amenities (i.e., adopt-a-bench) at bus stops, or in front of stores.
- Encourage residents/neighborhood association to provide amenities at bus stops.

Crosswalks

- Stripe crosswalks at locations where new crosswalks (including raised crosswalks) are proposed.
- Extend traffic signals timing for intersections where signals available, and make signals concurrent with traffic (rather than push button).

Parking

- Enforce existing regulations for illegal on-street parking.
- Change parking regulations to conform to restriping of the avenue – allowing or eliminating parking where appropriate.
- Provide new lights in existing rear parking lots.
- Possibly add parking to city-owned site in East Gateway.

Signage

- Use art grants to create new banners/signage with local artist involvement.
- Banner contest for kids.

- Work with Hartford Proud and Beautiful to install new directional signs.
- Work with The Mark Twain House and Stowe Center to upgrade signs and landscaping.

Beautification

- Clean-up/redesign existing landscaped areas (for example, in front the public library.)
- Remove walls, hedges and shrubs where appropriate (including between stores.)
- Use plant and flower baskets/planters in retail areas and in areas with proposed pedestrian amenities.
- Improve landscaping.
- Install artist-designed fence at city-owned site in East Gateway.
- Encourage clean-up by business owners on a regular basis.
- Organize community clean-up event in the spring.
- Re-landscape area around “gateway tree” at Prospect Avenue and install a new “Welcome to Hartford and Farmington Avenue” sign.

Short term/test events

- Street festival.
- Farmers market.
- Spring event/concert at Clemens Green.
- Temporary vending in front of Aetna.

FUNDING SOURCES

The funding of the New Farmington Avenue can be expected to come from multiple sources. The establishment of the Farmington Avenue Joint Committee as an ongoing stewardship organization is critical to establish the credibility of the fundraising effort, which has proven to be a successful formula in other Hartford efforts, such as Riverfront Recapture and the Bushnell Park Foundation. In the case of the riverfront, the obstacles to implementation were even greater, but the result of consistent effort ultimately made fundraising easier as monies from multiple sources were able to match each other over time.

The following are funding sources that should be considered for the project:

City of Hartford. There are potentially multiple sources of funds from the city that could be solicited. A Hartford city bond issue, currently on hold, could be a potential source for major capital funds. The city also gets federal funds through CCROG for street and transportation projects on a regular basis. At a smaller level, the city has a tree planting program and can re-stripe streets and adjust traffic signals through regular city programs.

State of Connecticut. The state can also generate funds that are administered through the Department of Community Economic Development. (This must go through the state legislature.) Connecticut DOT also has a transportation enhancement program mandated under the federal TEA-21 transportation grant program; however, there is a lot of competition for these limited funds. Transportation advocacy groups are currently planning to lobby the upcoming legislative session for a traffic calming grant program to be administered by ConnDOT.

Foundations and corporations. While it is unlikely that foundations and corporations would fund capital improvements (except perhaps for their own properties, in the case of corporations), they should be approached for “soft activities” related to capital improvements, such as planning and design consultant fees, as well as on-going administrative support for FAJC. In addition, support for activities such as a festival in Clemens Green and a lower cost façade program and/or workshop could be supported by foundations and corporations. Lower costs and short-term improvements may also be a possibility. Knox Parks Foundation has a tree planting program, for example. Currently, planted medians are maintained by Public Works (though not very well), so perhaps these spaces might ultimately be considered to be “park spaces” as well.

Property owners and non-profit corporations. Clearly, property and business owners – who will benefit from the reconstruction of the avenue – should be approached to participate in a financial capacity as well. This could include improvements to both the property (rear parking lots, front areas) as well as building structures themselves (including signs). Residential property owners like Intown Management and individual condominiums should also be approached. The Mark Twain House, which is involved in a major capital upgrading, should devote some resources to enhancing the Farmington Avenue frontage of their facility. Finally, The Colonial Theater Renaissance Corporation has state funds not only to renovate the Colonial Theater but for site acquisition and capital improvements in the West End.

Transit improvements. ConnDOT has committed to improve bus service on Farmington Avenue as part of the Hartford West Major Investment Study. They should be approached, in cooperation with CT Transit and the Hartford Transit District's Downtown Circulator, especially given the apparent scaling back of the Westside Access improvements. The Circulator will be building bus stops on Farmington Avenue already. In addition, a future busway station at Union Station directly impacts Farmington Avenue; planning funds from corporations and foundations for a study of this station have already been solicited.

APPENDIX

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE REPORT

ADT	Average Daily Traffic
AHRA	Asylum Hill Revitalization Association
B2, B3, B4	Business zoning districts
CBD	Central Business District
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
ConnDOT	Connecticut Department of Transportation
CRCOG	Capitol Region Council of Governments
CTRC	Colonial Theater Renaissance Corporation
FABD	Farmington Avenue Business District
FAJC	Farmington Avenue Joint Committee
F.A.R	Floor Area Ratio
GHTD	Greater Hartford Transit District
ING	Financial services corporation
LOS	Level of Service
NOFA	North of Farmington Avenue
NRZ	Neighborhood Revitalization Zone
PPS	Project for Public Spaces
R01, R02	Residential/Office zoning districts
R5-R8	Residential zoning districts
SOFA	South of Farmington Avenue
SSD	Special Services District
TEA-21	Transportation Enhancement Act
WECA	West End Civic Association