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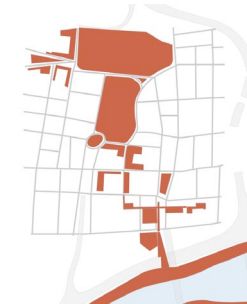
## Hartford's Walkways of Innovation



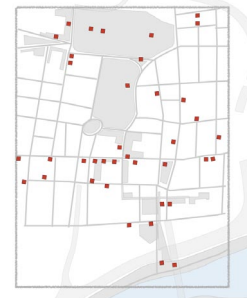
**HARTFORD'S STREET GRID IS IRREGULAR: CHARMING BUT CONFUSING**



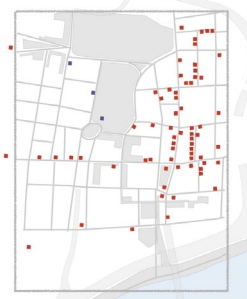
**THE IRREGULAR STREET GRID CREATES A "QUILT" OF IRREGULAR CITY BLOCKS**



**BETWEEN THE PARK AND THE RIVER ARE A WELL DEVELOPED SEQUENCE OF PUBLIC SPACES**



**CULTURAL DESTINATIONS ARE FAIRLY WELL DISTRIBUTED ACROSS THE QUILT**



**RESTAURANTS, BARS AND CAFES ARE LACKING IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE QUILT**



**DOWNTOWN IS EXCEPTIONALLY COMPACT: A GREAT ASSET FOR WALKABILITY**



**HARTFORD'S TWO GREAT NATURAL JEWELS ARE BUSHNELL PARK AND THE RIVERFRONT**



**THESE SPACES CREATE AN ALMOST CONTINUOUS "GREEN SEAM" FROM PARK TO RIVER**



**BUT PUBLIC PARKING IS HEAVILY WEIGHTED TO THE NORTH SIDE OF DOWNTOWN**



**BUSHNELL PARK, A GREAT ASSET BY DAY, ISOLATES THE BUSHNELL MEMORIAL AT NIGHT**



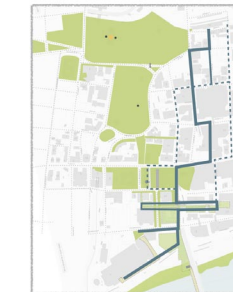
**What's an "iQuilt"?** Envisaged as a loose grid of park-to-river pedestrian routes, the iQuilt aims to weave together Hartford's key cultural sites and institutions around the theme of cultural innovation in order to promote economic growth and the redevelopment of the Capitol district. The Bushnell and The Greater Hartford Arts Council are co-leading the project, which will complement the ongoing state, city and private sector efforts to revitalize Hartford's economy and neighborhoods. Planning for the iQuilt project was funded in part by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, and a group of individual and corporate donors.

Hartford – unlike many American cities – enjoys a remarkably compact and clearly bounded downtown. Within the small square area of the iQuilt ( just over a half mile square) bounded by Buckingham/Charter Oak Avenue, I-84, and the Connecticut River, is a loose grid of north-south and east-west streets which, in map view, form a kind of charmingly irregular quilt. Within this quilt, almost all the key cultural destinations, including the Capitol, Bushnell Park, The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford Stage Company, the Old State House, and the new Connecticut Science Center, are within a 15 minute walk of each other. The iQuilt can also highlight other places of cultural interest which are off the beaten path or often overlooked. The iQuilt will make it easy and enjoyable to walk from one cultural asset to another, while linking them conceptually under a theme of cultural innovation – in science, art and human affairs.

Through the middle of the iQuilt is a nearly continuous east-to-west chain of landscaped parks, plazas, streets, bridges, and footpaths which form a "Green Seam" from the Connecticut River to Bushnell Park and the State Capitol. The Green Seam could become the major organizing thread of public space in downtown Hartford. It is nearly complete today. With the addition of a few missing links, the Green Seam could provide a highly understandable and walkable spine for downtown's primary cultural destinations. Hartford native Frederick Law Olmsted invented the strategy of linking landscaped spaces in cities, and Hartford - with its celebrated "Rain of Parks" - was one of the first American cities to realize Olmsted's vision. With the Green Seam, Hartford could be an innovator in public space once again. Its companion itinerary, The Red Thread, lies further to the south, and links together many special historical and cultural venues, while the Blue Belt runs further north, threading through the central business district. Visitors can choose one of the three itineraries depending on their interests and available time. Through extensions to adjacent neighborhoods, and integration with a planned network of local, regional and even national bikeways, the iQuilt can truly reconnect Hartford to its culture, its history of innovation, and its innovative strategies for the future.



**WALKING THE GREEN SEAM: HARTFORD'S GRAND TOUR**



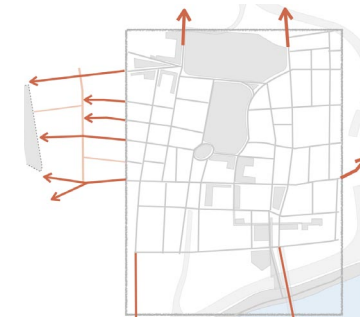
**WALKING THE BLUE BELT: BUSINESS & BEER**



**WALKING THE RED THREAD: CULTURE & COMMUNITY**



**WALKING SUPPORTED BY TRANSIT: A CIRCUIT LINE FOR THE IQUILT**



**KEY EXTENSIONS TO ADJOINING NEIGHBORHOODS AND VENUES**



**THE IQUILT AT THE HEART OF HARTFORD'S PROPOSED BIKE NETWORK**



**THE GREEN SEAM AS A SEGMENT OF THE EAST COAST GREENWAY**

Prepared by Suisman Urban Design  
(with Smith Edwards Architects)  
for the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts  
and The Greater Hartford Arts Council - June 2009



# PROJECTS

## Piecing Together Hartford's Cultural Landscape

The corner of Capitol and Trinity is the primary gateway to the State Capitol and the Bushnell's front door. This project improves pedestrian crosswalks, reduces asphalt, increases green space, and puts the magnificent bronze equestrian statue of Lafayette back in the center on a landscaped median with fountain.

**LAFAYETTE PLACE**.....



The restoration of Lafayette Place provides new space for an international art garden and entry plaza in front of the Bushnell along Trinity Street. Artful illumination makes it a beacon for pedestrians on Trinity Street approaching the Bushnell at night through Bushnell Park from Memorial Arch.

**INTERNATIONAL ART GARDEN**.....



This proposed public-private partnership would add an architecturally compatible restaurant and cafe pavilion to the main entrance facade of the State Office Building on Capitol Avenue. It would provide a much needed venue for state workers, for Bushnell patrons, and for the visitors to Hartford walking the iQuilt.

**CAFE LAFAYETTE**.....



The existing State-owned parking lot between Capitol and Buckingham would be retrofitted with "green infrastructure" funding. New "bio-swales", landscaping, and permeable paving would divert and clean water run-off; improve the streetscape on Buckingham, Capitol, Clinton, and West; and create a large new public space for concerts and festivals programmed by the Bushnell.

**CONNECTICUT SQUARE**.....



The City, MDC, and Bushnell Park Foundation would restore Horace Bushnell's lost vision of a riverine landscape at the center of Bushnell Park. Environmentally useful absorption ponds would create a line of water features with flowing water, with associated amenities for visitors, families and children. Special illumination would make the water especially attractive at night.

**WATER IN THE PARK**.....



As part of the flowing water project, five pedestrian bridges as shown in Horace Bushnell's original plan would be restored, creating gateways into the park, and observation points for flowing water. The illumination of these bridges is a key part of the strategy to guide pedestrians across the park at night, linking north and south downtown.

**FIVE BRIDGES**.....



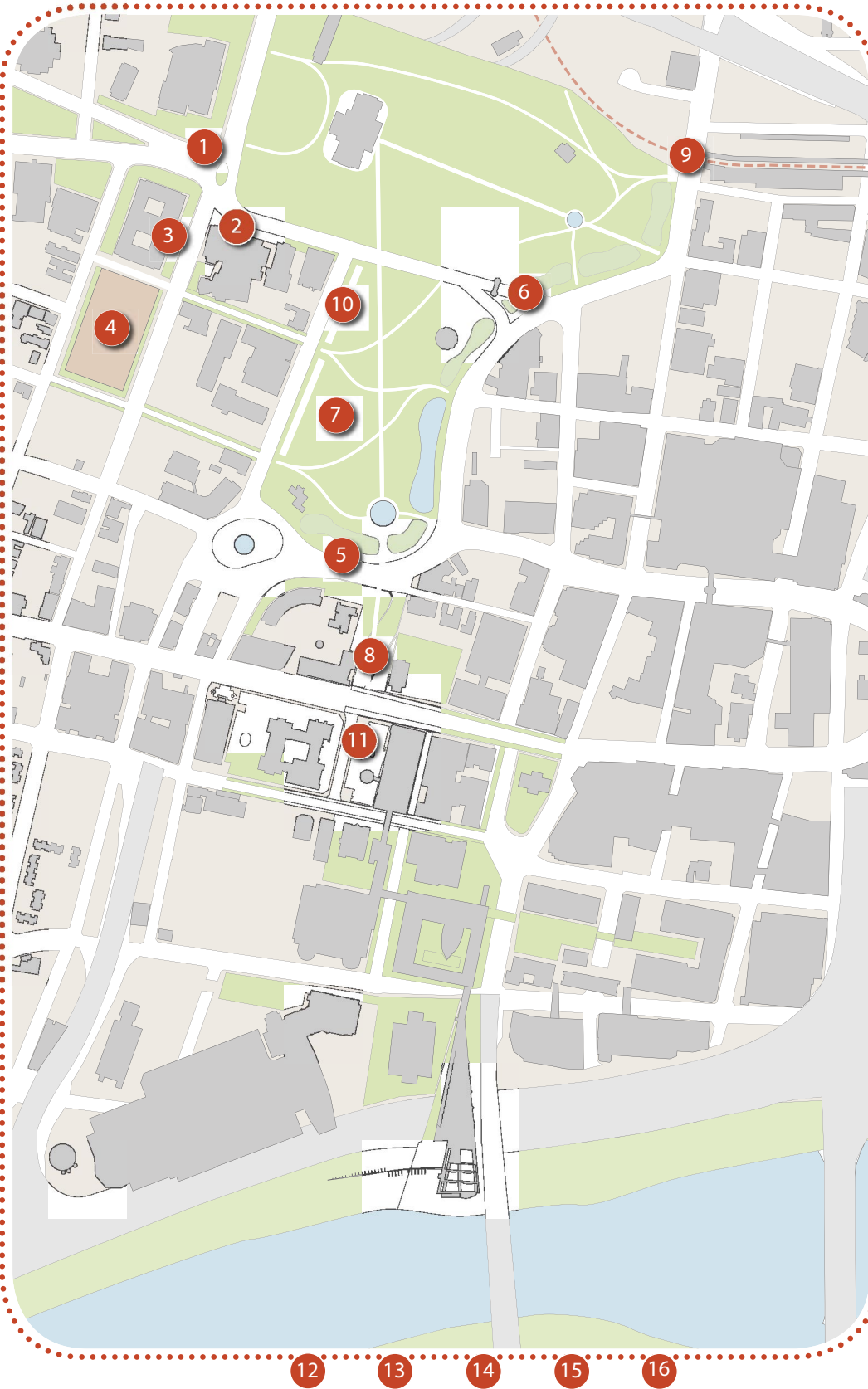
The lighting of the park bridges is an element of a larger illumination project to light the key paths of the iQuilt with special lighting and light-based artwork, including the illumination of adjacent buildings. In particular, the Green Seam would be continuously and specially lit from the Connecticut River to the State Capitol.

**LIGHTING THE PATHS**.....



This new park extension, water feature and gateway brings Bushnell Park to Main Street, and creates the very hub of the iQuilt at the corner of Gold and Main. With the Travelers, First Church, and the Atheneum, Bushnell Gate will provide an information center for visitors to Hartford and a starting point for iQuilt walking tours.

**BUSHNELL GATE ON MAIN**.....



**TRANSPORTATION LINKS**

This project recognizes Union Station's growing importance as an intermodal transportation hub, and a focal point of transit-oriented development. Improved bike and pedestrian links should tie Union Station to the key destinations on the iQuilt, with special attention to paths across Bushnell Park to major employment and entertainment destinations: the State offices and the Bushnell.



**THE PROMENADE**

Jacob Weidenmann's design for Bushnell Park had a "Promenade" parallel to Elm Street, and the double row of trees is still there. This project envisions a series of formal and informal places for walking and refreshment from the Pump House to the corner of Elm and Trinity. Downtown restaurants would be given incentives to create mobile outlets along the Promenade.



**TRAVELERS PLAZA**

This project would open up the corners of Travelers Plaza to better integrate it with the hub of the iQuilt. Because the Travelers tower serves as the pin of the wheel, a visit to the observation deck should be a central feature of the iQuilt experience. The umbrella theme can help (see #15). The Atheneum, and its cafe, should be part of a seamless public space.



**GREEN SEAM  
RED THREAD  
BLUE BELT**

These are the three walking itineraries of the iQuilt. The Green Seam is the iQuilt's landscaped spine, connecting the park to the river; the Red Thread creates a special tour of south downtown; the Blue Belt is the path through the heart of Hartford's business district. All three paths emphasize Hartford's focus on innovation - past, present and future.



**INNOVATIVE INFORMATION**

The iQuilt is not only about innovation; it should be innovative itself. The iQuilt's managing organization should constantly search for innovative ways to gather, organize, and convey information to residents and visitors, particularly using digital media: websites, blogs, GPS, experiential mapping, meetups. The iQuilt can offer the rental of specially programmed digital phones to enhance the walking experience.



**INNOVATIVE WAYFINDING**

The experience of moving around the iQuilt should not be left to chance. Walking surveys should reveal gaps and weaknesses, and lead to designs for improvements. Graphic information - signs, plaques, memorials, artwork - should be envisioned not only as static objects but as dynamic systems, creating a more interactive experience for pedestrians and bikers.



**INNOVATIVE COMFORT**

The oft-heard complaint that Hartford's weather is not conducive to walking and touring should be met head-on with innovative approaches used by many cities in difficult climates, from providing blankets at outdoor cafes to free umbrellas at hotels and restaurants. These are part of a management approach which focuses on enhancing the visitor's experience.



**INNOVATIVE INNOVATION**

How do you convey "innovation"? The iQuilt pathways should incorporate fresh and exciting ways to demonstrate Hartford's history and commitment to innovation in the arts, sciences, and human affairs. Interactive art, displays, signage, fountains, lighting should create an exceptional public experience that creates a powerful new image of Hartford.