

WASHINGTON STREET PUBLIC REALM PLAN Strategy for Implementation

CITY OF BOSTON

Thomas M. Menino, Mayor

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CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
THOMAS M. MENINO

June 5, 1996

Dear Fellow Citizen:

I am pleased to present to you my Administration's Six Point Strategy for the revitalization of the Washington Street area in Chinatown and the Downtown.

Washington Street from Kneeland Street to State Street is one of the most active and vibrant retail districts of any major City. Its role in the City's economy cannot be overemphasized. Our challenge is to build on the success of Downtown Crossing and expand the economic vitality of our City's historic Main Street to Tremont Street and beyond into the Theater District and Chinatown. To this end, I am proposing the following Six Point Strategy:

- *Invest in Streetscape Improvements and Activities*
- *Maintain Streetscape Improvements and Enforcement*
- *Enhance Public Safety*
- *Establish a Business Improvement District*
- *Market Business and Investment Opportunities*
- *Establish a Special Design Overlay District*

My goal is to ensure that these strategies are being implemented prior to the Holiday shopping and festivities season to improve the shopping experience for our City's residents and visitors, and for retail businesses.

The strength of this strategy lies in the cooperative efforts and the partnerships among the City, business associations and private property owners. Together, we can ensure the physical and economic vitality of our City.

I welcome your input into this plan for the Washington Street District.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Menino
Mayor of Boston

INTRODUCTION

In Colonial times Washington Street was Boston's main thoroughfare leading from the Old State House off the Shawmut Peninsula to the Roxbury mainland. As the bays and marshes around the Peninsula were filled to accommodate the City's growing space needs, Washington Street retained its prominent role and has remained Boston's principal commercial street -- Boston's Main Street -- through the centuries.

The focus of commercial activity in modern times has been retailing with a cluster of flagship department stores at the heart of the area at Washington and Summer Streets. Twenty years ago, Downtown Crossing was created here to give identity and cohesion to the City's main shopping area. Several streets were closed to automobiles and a pedestrian mall was created that was enlivened with banners, musicians, outdoor cafes and vendors. Parks and sitting areas welcomed people to this successful retail district. The Downtown Crossing Association, which includes a number of local merchants and property owners, had the foresight to see Washington Street as central to the City's growing retail economy.

It is now time to plan for the 21st Century and to take the steps to build on the success of Downtown Crossing with a view toward improving the District that surrounds it. The Washington Street District starts at City Hall and State Street in Government Center, extends down Washington Street to Kneeland Street in Chinatown and runs up to Tremont Street. The goal of this Washington Street Public Realm Plan is to make visual and functional improvements to enhance the District's attractiveness for economic growth. The plan focuses on the public realm -- the public spaces, the

activities that occur within them and the building walls that frame them. Taken together, these elements of the Public Realm enhance the area's vitality and lend a sense of legibility and cohesiveness that signals to the visitor that she or he is entering a special place.



Washington Street 1889

WASHINGTON STREET TODAY

Today Washington Street is the main spine of the District with a vibrant mix of retail, office, residential and cultural uses and activities. Its vitality is primarily due to its strategic central location. It is within walking distance of the State House, Boston City Hall, Government Center, the Boston Common and Public Garden, the New England Medical Center, and the Financial District. It is a short distance for City residents from Chinatown, Beacon Hill, the North End, Bay Village, and Back Bay and a convenient public transit ride for others. Tourists with destinations at Quincy Market or the waterfront and conventioners from the Back Bay are drawn to the flagship retail stores. The Theater District, several Freedom Trail sites and numerous restaurants are also destinations for visitors to this area. In addition, the area is well served by hotels, another source of visitors, within a short walking distance, including the Omni-Parker House, the Lafayette Swissotel, The Meridian Hotel, the Four Seasons Hotel, the Boston Harbor Hotel, and the Marriott Long Wharf Hotel.

Park Street Station, the hub of our public transportation system, is connected directly to Washington Street at the Downtown Crossing stop or via Winter Street. It is estimated that 37 percent of the area's shoppers arrive via the MBTA system.

Major New England Retail Center

The Downtown Crossing area is one of the busiest parts of the City with over 100,000 people passing through the area daily. Retail activity is paramount. The corner of Washington and Summer Streets has long been known as the 100 percent corner. Downtown Crossing is rated, according to the 1994 *Scarborough Report*, the third busiest shopping center in the entire state of

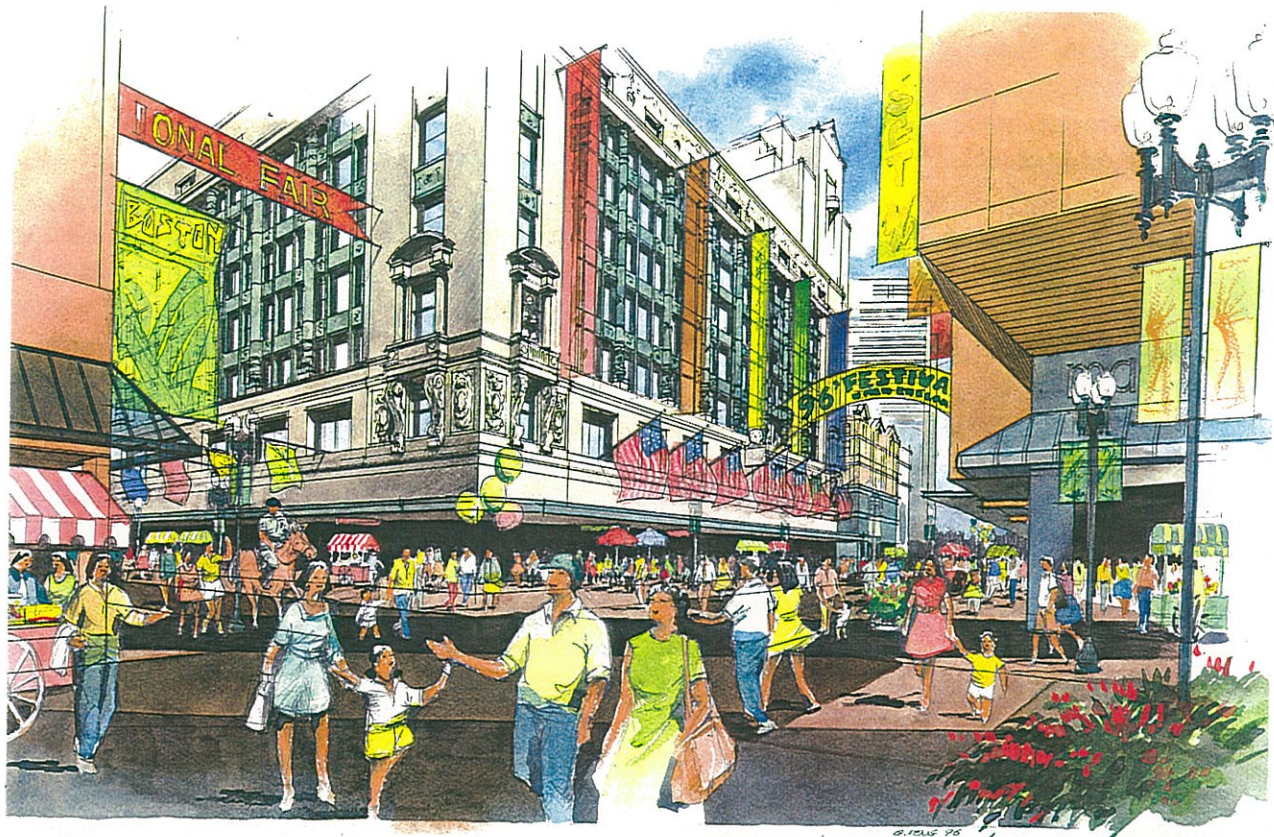
Massachusetts, after the Burlington Mall and Faneuil Hall Marketplace. The area sees 655,900 shoppers, or 20 percent of the greater metropolitan adult population, at least once every three months. There are some 300 stores in Downtown Crossing located in approximately 1,750,000 square feet of space.

The strength of the retail district lies in the number and variety of establishments providing goods and services to a range of income brackets. Washington Street is home to several large department stores, including Filene's, Filene's Basement, Macy's and Woolworth's, and large bookstores, including Barnes & Noble and Borders Books. An array of smaller retailers, specialty stores, and restaurants are also found on Washington Street as well as throughout the Ladder Block streets leading to Tremont Street, and on the streets leading to the Financial District.

At the lower end of Washington Street, adult entertainment uses have retreated in recent years due to market forces and have been replaced by over 40 small businesses. These new businesses, owned and operated primarily by Asian families serve the needs of the local Chinatown community as well as the broader Asian population.

New Retail Activity

Although the retail market nationally has displayed some weakness, the Washington Street District is experiencing bright spots of new retail activity. Two retail giants have recently chosen Washington Street for their new signature facilities. Loehmann's, which is building out 34,000 square feet of space and creating 100 new retail jobs, will open in the Fall of 1996. Borders Books, which occupies two floors at the corner of



Washington and School Streets opened this Spring, bringing new focus to the outdoor park at that corner. The Globe Corner Bookstore directly across from Borders is in the process of expanding, adding to the retail energy of on Washington Street. With these additions, the corner park can appropriately be referred to as Readers' Park. Other smaller retailers such as the HMV music store, Aldo Shoes and Lechter's kitchen accessories stores also have recently opened their doors.

Complementing the retail activities in this district are numerous restaurants of varying sizes. The restaurants range from small take-out shops oriented toward lunchtime shoppers, to the historic Jacob Wirth's in the Theater District, to the West Street Grille, to Locke-Ober's.

Adjoining Commercial Districts

Retail and restaurant activity on Washington Street draws from the high population of office workers in the area. While office use is not the primary use in the Washington Street District, it does include One Boston Place and One Beacon Street, and adjoins Boston's downtown office districts which employ over 300,000 people in a 2-1/2 square mile area. In the last two years, the City has absorbed nearly two million square feet of office space. The Downtown Class A vacancy rate is quite low at 8.4% -- the fourth best among the nation's largest cities. The newest large scale office development directly adjoins the district at 28 State Street where 600,000 square feet of space are under rehabilitation.

The Washington Street District also is central to numerous hotels with the Swissotel directly in the District and four

new hotels planned in the immediate vicinity of Washington Street. The 11-story building at 161 Devonshire Street is being converted to a 170-room hotel; a 350-room limited service hotel is planned for the Batterymarch Building; and two European style hotels are planned for 15 Beacon Street and 185 State Street.

Residential Concentration

Within a fifteen minute walk of Washington and State Streets are approximately 33,000 units of housing. The demand for residential space downtown is evidenced by the anticipated addition of 1,420 units, including new college dormitories. At 165 Tremont Street 95 market rate units are planned. In Chinatown, 41 elderly units are planned at Mei Wah Village and 81 new units have just been occupied at Oak Terrace. At Lowell Square, 187 units of housing are under construction. This residential population contributes to the success of the District by bringing 24-hour life and activity to the area.

Cultural and Institutional Activity

Washington Street serves as the major path to Boston's Cultural and Theater Districts. It is home to the Wang Center, the Colonial Theater, the Emerson Majestic Theater, the Wilbur Theater, and the Shubert Theater. In the Spring of 1995, Mayor Menino nominated three theaters on Washington Street -- the Opera House, the Modern Theater and the Paramount Theater, to the National Trust for Historic Preservation's list of America's eleven most endangered historic place. This April the National Trust, the Boston Preservation Alliance and the City of Boston sponsored the Boston Historic Theater Charette involving 120 participants whose objective was to establish reuse programs for these three landmark buildings. The results of the Charette, published on June 4, 1996, focused on four guiding principles: creating a sense of place

and community; focusing on a mix of use to restore property to the Theater District; coordinating reuse and phasing of development of the theaters with development in the Washington Street District; and, identifying a leadership entity to bring focus to the reuse task. These principles provide appropriate guidance for the Washington Street District as a whole.

Recently, Tremont Street has been identified by Beacon Hill and Back Bay colleges as an attractive expansion location for both academic buildings and dormitories, bringing additional activity and spending capacity into the area. Emerson College opened a 750-student dormitory last year at Tremont and Boylston Streets, and the college occupies three additional buildings for classrooms and administration. Suffolk University is opening a 274-room dormitory on Tremont Street in September 1996, and has a new law school under development at Tremont and Bromfield Street.

The District also adjoins one of Boston's leading medical institutions, the New England Medical Center, located at the lower end of Washington Street. NEMC employs 4,600 people and in 1995 served 18,878 in-patients and 406,012 out-patients.

Well Served by Public Transit

The public transit stations closest to Downtown Crossing are among the busiest in the rapid transit system. According to the MBTA's 1995 turnstile count, a total of 74,000 passengers enter the Downtown Crossing, Park Street, State Street and South Station terminals on a daily basis.

The MBTA recently has begun the design and planning of the Washington Street Transit project, which will connect Dudley Square with Downtown Crossing by means of an electric trolley bus serving

neighborhoods along the Washington Street Corridor.

Mayor Menino has urged the MBTA to begin the implementation of this project immediately. Reliable and permanent transit service is key to the revitalization of Washington Street both Downtown and in the neighborhoods of Chinatown, the South End and Roxbury.

The MBTA will start service on Washington Street at the same time that the South Boston Piers Transitway service to the World Trade Center begins. When service begins, the South Boston Transitway will be connected to the Washington Street transit line, providing an uninterrupted service on the same vehicle from Dudley Square through Downtown Crossing to the World Trade Center, with direct transfers to the rest of Boston's rapid transit system.

Public Realm Quality

One of the most important assets of Washington Street and its environs is the quality of and potential for enhancement of its public realm. It is the look and feel of the public spaces, the quality and design of the street furnishings, the activities of the street vendors and performers, the urban design quality of the park spaces and centers of activity, and the safety and comfort of the pedestrian that define the character of the public realm. The accessories of linear public spaces on Washington Street include pavers, benches, lights, signs, banners, trees, planters, trash containers, newspaper vending boxes, bollards and kiosks. They add comfort, animation, character and human scale to the public realm. The street zone is shaped by building facades and defined by the cornice line, forming the backdrop for the urban scene. The sky zone, or that area above the cornice line where architectural elements are seen at a distance against the

sky also can be both surprising and impressive views and help to contribute to the area's particular appeal.

The Washington Street District also is rich in historic resources. Each generation of Bostonians has worked to improve the city. Their craftsmanship, aesthetic values and ingenuity are reflected in the City's buildings, streets and parks. The work of these business people, citizens, architects and artisans are essential components of the public realm. This legacy provides Boston with meaningful ties to its past, a special identity and a valuable resource.

Planning for the public realm addresses protecting not only historically significant buildings like the Old State House and the Old South Meeting House, but also those smaller structures and buildings that may not be particularly noteworthy by themselves but that, in relation to other neighboring buildings, establish a cohesive historic district.

The area between the Boston Common and Washington Street known as the Ladder Blocks is just such a district. Bounded by Court, Washington, Tremont and West Streets, these small, connective blocks link the Common, Government Center and the retail districts together. The plan of the streets -- similar to a ladder -- was formed on the basis of English precedent from Boston's early settlement and has not been significantly altered. Because this area was spared in the Great Fire of 1872, the District includes early 19th-century brick residential buildings and mid-19th century granite commercial buildings, along with fine turn-of-the-century structures. Since the last half of the 19th century, the Ladder Blocks have been the center for the City's dry goods and clothing trade, and many buildings housed leading department and specialty stores.

ASSETS

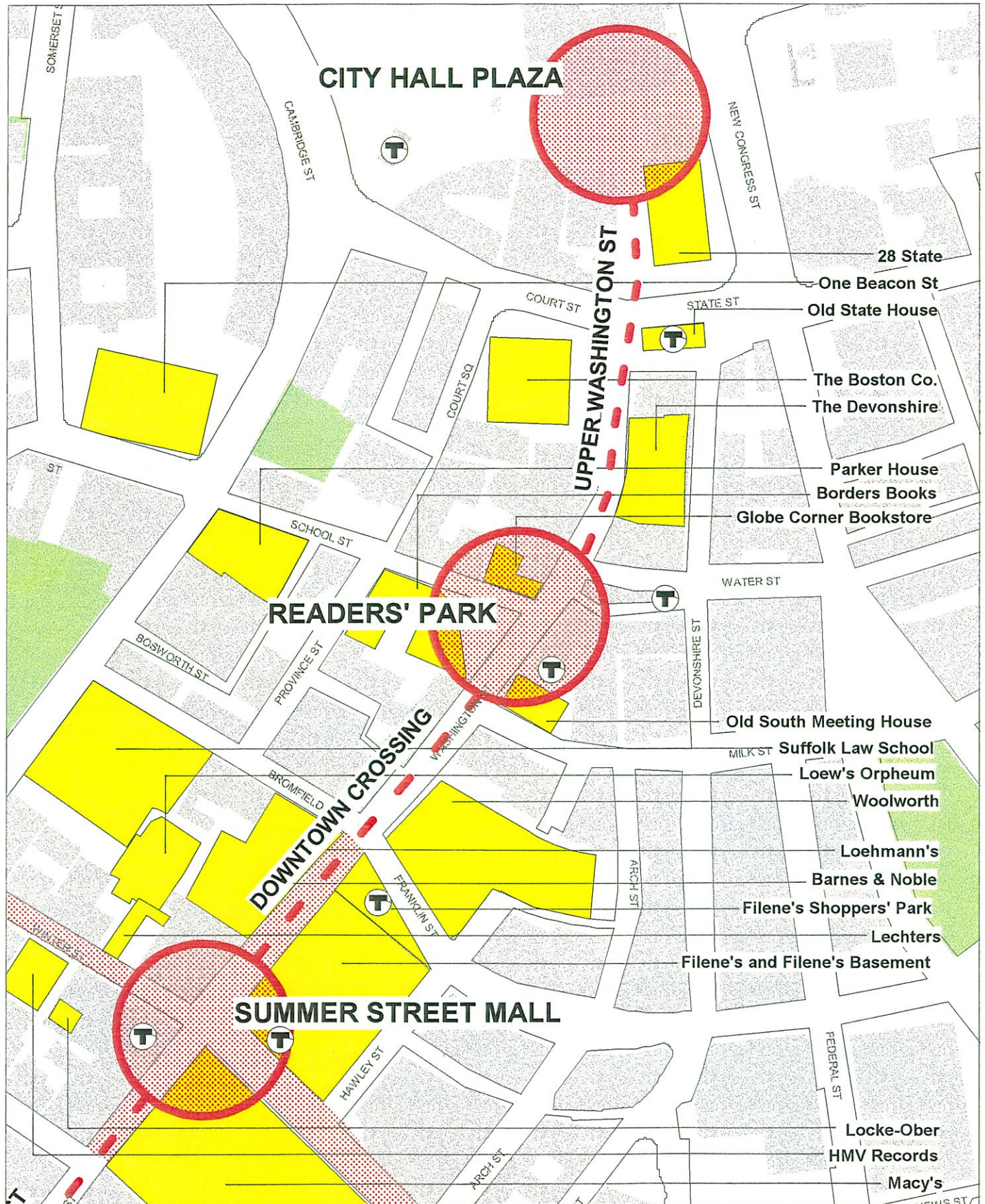
UPPER WASHINGTON STREET

- **Historic Resources:** Several sites attract visitors to the District including the Old State House, Globe Corner Bookstore, Old South Meeting House.
- **Hotels and Residential Buildings:** the Parker House Hotel and The Devonshire bring people to the District, providing a source of activity beyond the working day.
- **Commercial Office Buildings:** One Boston Place and the 28 State Street redevelopment, provide a source of shoppers and visitors to the District.
- **Successful retail:** Upper Washington Street has a successful retail environment that continues to attract new businesses, such as the newly-opened Borders Books.

DOWNTOWN CROSSING

- **Flagship Department Stores:** Traditionally, the heart of Boston's shopping district, Downtown Crossing is rated the third busiest shopping area in Massachusetts. It boasts stalwarts such as Filene's, Macy's, Woolworth's and Barnes & Noble, along with many newcomers, including Loehmann's, Lechters, and HMV Records.
- **Special Destinations:** Many people come to the District drawn by unique places, including historic and new restaurants, shops on the Ladder Blocks, and the adjacent Boston Common.
- **Student Activity:** The imminent construction of Suffolk University's new Law School will bring a new kind of activity to this area of the District. A student presence will bring an additional source of dollars into the District and contribute to pedestrian activity beyond the work day.
- **Significant Public Open Space:** The Summer Street Mall is one of the busiest places in the City, with benches, cafes, street musicians, and special events, it is the key space in Downtown Crossing.

ASSETS



ASSETS

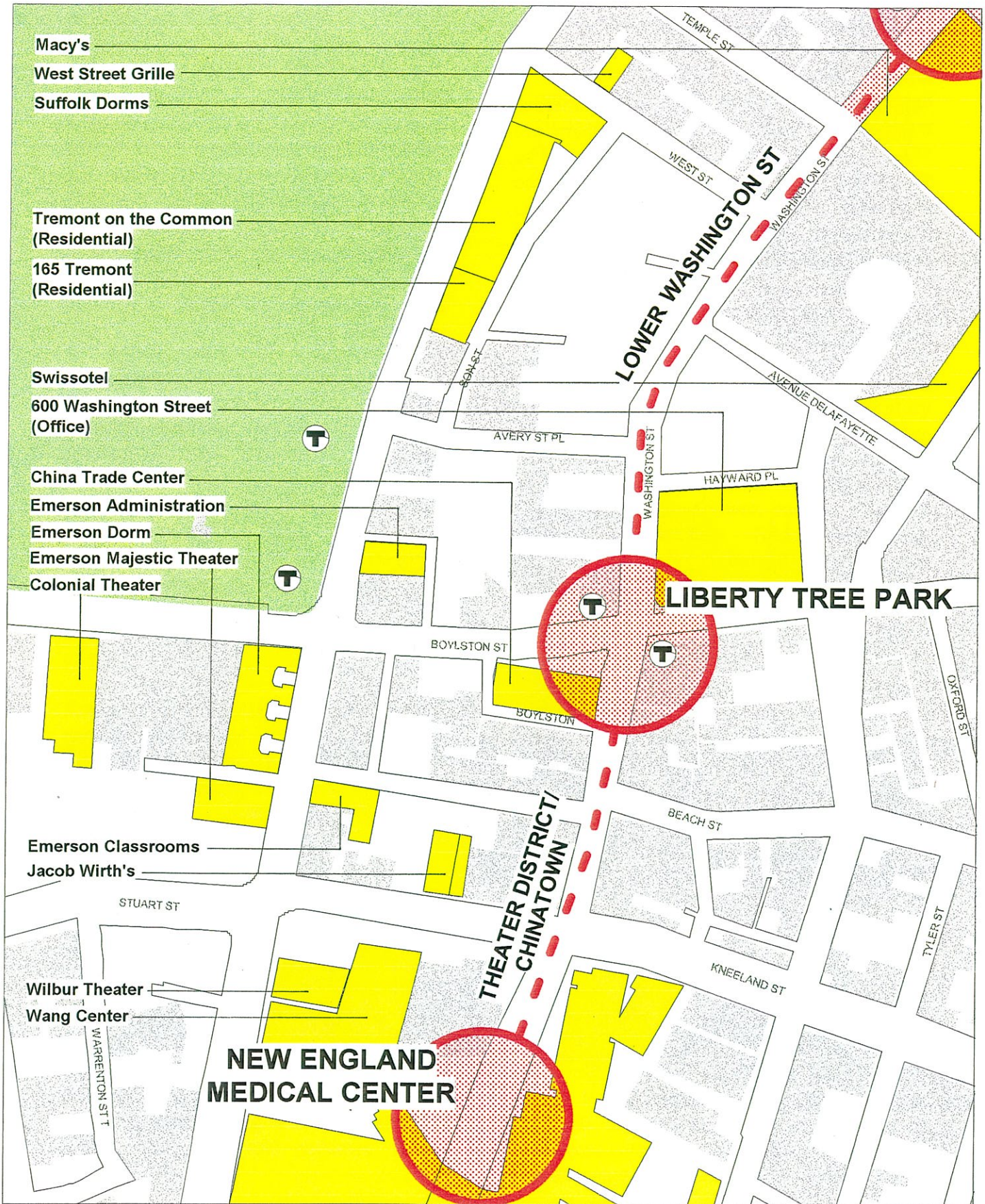
LOWER WASHINGTON STREET

- **Suffolk Dormitories:** Suffolk University has identified the Tremont Street/Lower Washington Street area as an expansion area for their campus, not only for academic buildings, but student dormitories as well. The presence of students living in the area is a key asset that will bring activity, new spending capacity, and new theater patrons to the area.
- **Hotels, Restaurants, Specialty Shopping:** Lower Washington Street contains visitor destinations such as the West Street Grille, the Swissotel Hotel and the China Trade Building.
- **Liberty Tree Park:** At the China Trade Building and opposite the historic Liberty Tree Building, the revitalization of this open space will create a key open space node that will be a significant asset to Lower Washington Street.
- **Residential Uses:** Tremont Street forms an edge to the Boston Common that has attracted residential developers to sites that provide beautiful parkside views.

THEATER DISTRICT/CHINATOWN

- **Emerson Dormitories, Classrooms, and Majestic Theater:** As with Suffolk, Emerson has created a significant academic presence within the Theater District with administration buildings, student dormitories, classrooms and the renovation of the historic Majestic Theater. Given Emerson's focus on the arts and theater, their presence in the Theater District is a key asset in revitalizing this area of the Washington Street District.
- **Cluster of Theaters.** The Colonial, the Wilbur, and the Wang Center are magnets that bring visitors to the area and a unique resource not found elsewhere in the metropolitan region.
- **New England Medical Center** is an anchor to the lower end of Washington Street District.
- **Chinatown's rich heritage,** present in the neighborhood's many historic buildings and street patterns, has helped to attract activity further into Washington Street.

ASSETS



OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

In spite of the Washington Street's numerous assets and successful economy, there are opportunities for improvement that should be embraced to realize the full potential of the District. The most obvious shortcomings are the several unused and undeveloped sites, including Lafayette Place Mall, the vacant parcels of Hayward Place, the former Sawyer parking site on Tremont Street, the deteriorated Liberty Tree building, and the vacant Opera House, Modern Theater and

Paramount Theater. These silent, deteriorated spaces seriously detract from the visual quality and economic life of the District. While redevelopment of these sites cannot be pushed beyond the boundaries dictated by the market, nonetheless overall improvements to the public realm of the district can enhance the marketability of these sites and attract additional economic investment.



Streetscape Improvements

The quality of the public realm throughout the District varies. The lower end of Washington Street and the Ladder Blocks have not had the level of attention and benefit of an organized plan that Downtown Crossing has had. However, even in Downtown Crossing there are signs of aging where street furniture has accreted and is cluttered and worn, signage is unattractive, and the banners intended to celebrate the district fall short of this goal.

A greater sense of cohesiveness and legibility needs to be achieved by addressing elements of the streetscape, such as paving, lighting, benches, banners, signs, trees, planters, trash receptacles, newspaper vending boxes, vendor carts, security grates and wall murals. The Downtown Crossing Association set the stage by creating a cohesive logo and color scheme for the pushcart vendors and banners. This type of cohesiveness should be extended and reinforced to give the district a greater sense of place.

Areas change over time and frequently experience periods of transition. For example, where demolition has occurred in advance of development, there are often blank building walls that detract from the public realm. This condition is an opportunity for improvement to create a pictorial mural that covers the blank wall and also suggests the character of the District. The mural at Newbury and Dartmouth Streets is a good example. Its suggestion of culture and cafe life highlights the nature of commercial Back Bay. Several facades in the Washington Street District could be the subject of interesting depictions that highlight shopping or the theater. The use of accent lighting also can enliven the District at night and enhance historic features.

The character and cohesiveness of a District also is maintained over time by enforcing a high standard of architectural design, typically achieved by a series of design guidelines that must be adhered to for either new development or renovation. The Washington Street District could be improved with higher design standards, particularly in the design and use of materials in building facades and commercial signage.

The Washington Street District is rich in historic and architecturally significant buildings and sites. In addition to individual landmarks, there are clusters of 19th-century brick or granite buildings that together give the District character, scale and context. These buildings are a resource -- the investment of manpower, energy, materials and craftsmanship from the past. Preservation of this building stock is not only a cultural and aesthetic concern, it is a critical element of Boston's economy as well. But these resources are often overshadowed among incompatible neighbors or are themselves hidden beneath fiberglass facades, large signs or other materials. A good example of the impact that can be achieved by highlighting an historic facade is 64 Franklin Street, a beautiful granite building that for years was covered by light blue panels. Its restoration has enriched the image of Franklin Street and emphasized the graceful curve of both the building and the street.

Enhanced Maintenance

The pedestrianization of Downtown Crossing has created a leisurely environment for strolling and outdoor eating. While this environment is an asset to the District with some 100,000 visitors per day, it also creates a high demand for maintenance that is different from other areas of the downtown. In this regard, it is more like Faneuil Hall



Marketplace. A typical downtown maintenance schedule is not sufficient for such an intensely used area. A greater level of trash removal, street cleaning, and paving repairs is necessary. In this regard, the private sector should join with the City in addressing maintenance issues.

Public Safety

Although Downtown Crossing has one of the lowest crime rates in the City, there is a perception that this area is not safe. Ironically, it appears that the presence of a police cruiser frequently parked at the center of Downtown Crossing may itself be a contributing factor to the perception of the area as unsafe. The Boston Police Department is committed to counter this perception. More foot patrols along the entirety of the corridor to discourage loitering are necessary. A centralized presence for the police department that reads as a visual asset and provides a comfortable environment for the pedestrian is needed. Details such as opaque security grates fixed to building exteriors also need to be addressed as they portray an image of the area needing to be locked up at night.

Private Sector Participation and Marketing

Areas like Downtown Crossing now compete with malls that are operated by a single management entity with aggressive marketing and customer relations. To improve the economic development potential of areas like the Washington Street District. Greater attention needs to be paid to the available economic development tools. One such tool that has been successful in cities around the country is the Business Improvement District (BID). In 1994 Massachusetts adopted a law allowing for the creation and operation of Business Improvement Districts in the

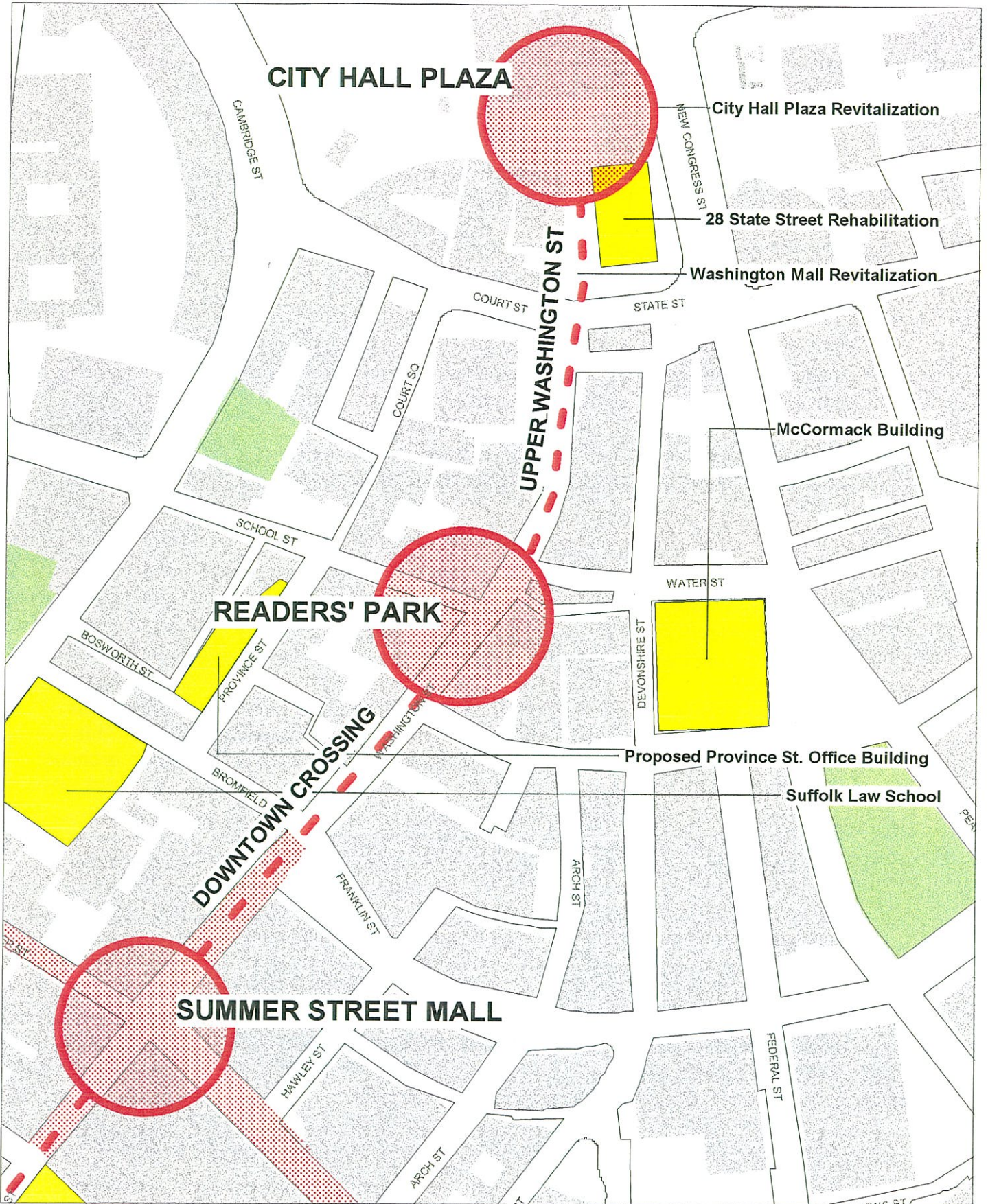
Commonwealth. A BID would provide for a focused and concentrated effort on the part of the private sector to retain the economic vitality and enhance economic opportunities in the Washington Street District. Improved marketing strategies must showcase the existing eclectic mix of uses; proximity to the restaurants and retail of both Chinatown and historic Faneuil Hall; and the opportunities for additional commercial or residential development.

OPPORTUNITIES

UPPER WASHINGTON STREET

- City Hall Plaza Revitalization: As defined in Mayor Menino's *Framework for Change*, the plaza is envisioned as a magnet for people every day, all day and year round. Improvements this summer will make the space more useable for both commercial and public functions. The Yo Yo Ma music garden, new MBTA headhouses, a visitors information center and a new hotel are all proposed. The increased activity generated by these improvements will have a positive impact on Washington Street.
- Washington Mall Revitalization: Redesign is now underway as part of the work at 28 State Street; new paving, landscaping, lighting, a fountain and sculpture will improve this important link between City Hall and Washington Street.
- Readers Park: Located between the Globe Corner Bookstore, the Old South Meetinghouse and the newly opened Borders Bookstore, this park will with a modest refurbishment, become one of the four key open space elements in the Washington Street District Plan.
- Province Street Office Building: The site of the Province Street Garage within the Ladder Blocks is proposed for a new office building.
- Suffolk Law School: Scheduled to begin construction in 1997 at 110-120 Tremont Street, this proposed 265,000 sq. ft. academic and administration building will bring an active student presence to the area.
- New paving and lighting will be installed throughout this portion of Washington Street

OPPORTUNITIES



OPPORTUNITIES

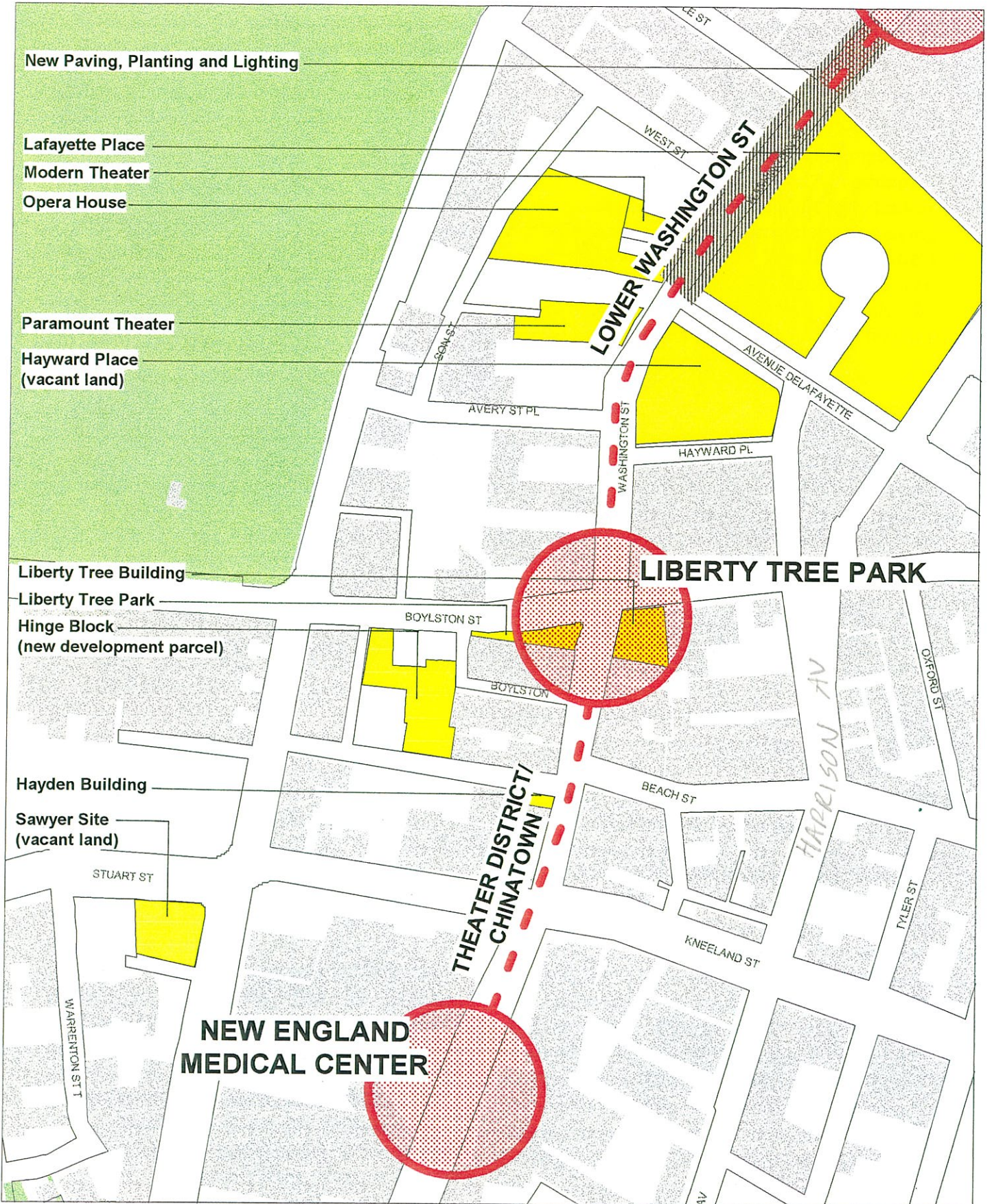
LOWER WASHINGTON STREET

- Lafayette Place: Chemical Bank has designated Amerimiar Enterprises as the developer of the site. The current proposal will provide entertainment related uses (a food court and cinema) to complement retail and underground parking.
- The Modern Theater, the Opera House and the Paramount Theater are the subject of a recently intensive effort investigating preservation and reuse scenarios.
- 163-167 Tremont Street: Tremont Towers condominiums is a proposed eighteen story residential development containing 95 units, ground level retail and 120 underground parking spaces.
- The Hayward Place development parcel on the corner of Washington and Avenue de Lafayette is the subject of an Request for Proposals with responses due to the BRA/EDIC by June 14, 1996.
- The former Commonwealth Center parcels, owned by Citicorp, contain 3.3 acres and has approvals for a mixed-use development with housing, retail, hotel and office.

THEATER DISTRICT/CHINATOWN

- Liberty Tree Park, where patriots gathered to protest British rule in the years before the Revolutionary War, will be rehabilitated by the City of Boston to serve as a more suitable forecourt for both the China Trade and Liberty Tree buildings.
- The Hayden Building, on the corner of Washington and LaGrange Streets has been beautifully restored by Historic Boston Inc. and is awaiting tenants. It is the only surviving commercial building in Boston designed by Trinity Church architect H.H. Richardson.
- The Hinge Block is a key parcel in the revitalization of both the Theater District/Chinatown and the southern end of Washington Street. The perimeter of the block contains a number of significant historic structures suitable for adaptive reuse. The interior is scheduled to support a variety of new uses that reflect the different character of the areas that surround it - retail, office, housing, cultural facilities and a major public area.
- The Sawyer site (parcel C-4) is adjacent to the Shubert Theater, contains about 32,000 square feet of vacant land and can accommodate office, housing and street level retail uses.
- Parcel 7A - adjacent to the Wilbur Theater, contains 5,787 square feet of vacant land. This parcel could be developed as a signature gateway building with ground floor retail and upper floor residential or office uses.

OPPORTUNITIES





SIX POINT IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

This document defines the framework for developing the Washington Street Public Realm Plan. The Plan will focus on six essential strategies for improving the public spaces and the activities in them. A properly conceived and designed public realm will contribute significantly to the social and economic health of Washington Street and its environs. In order for Washington Street to live up to its full potential, the Plan will incorporate physical improvements to the streetscape to provide a measure of continuity and legibility, to enhance the street's vitality, to safeguard the District's historic character, and to protect

those typically Boston eccentricities that make it unique among retail districts. The Plan also will focus on how the area functions, how it is maintained, and on the public's perception of how comfortable a place it is. Taken together, these physical and functional improvements will greatly enhance the marketability of Washington Street for new development, increased business activities, and renewed cultural uses. Washington Street can become the center of a more vibrant area with 24-hour life where people want to shop, enjoy cultural events, and live.

Over the next six months the details of the Washington Street Public Realm Plan will be defined. To carry out this planning stage, the City has allocated Capital Planning funds. Over \$8 million of public funding for streetscape improvements have been allocated, and the private sector will be asked to join the City in implementation of the Plan as described in the following implementation strategies.

I. Investment in Streetscape Improvements and Activities

- The Boston Redevelopment Authority and Department of Public Works will be responsible for design and preparation of a Streetscape Plan for Washington Street and the Ladder Blocks. Elements of the plan will include standards for paving, lighting, banners, signage, rubbish receptacles, news boxes, outdoor vendors, and security grates -- those details of the streetscape that cumulatively define the image of the District. Streetscape design improvements also will include updating of Readers' Park and Liberty Tree Park.
- The Boston Redevelopment Authority and Boston Landmarks Commission staff will develop an accent lighting plan for historic facades and doorways to celebrate and emphasize the historic character of the area and enliven the pedestrian's experience with interesting tableaux along the evening streetscape.
- Since its 1993 purchase of the China Trade Center the City has invested almost \$2 million in capital improvements in the building. By the Fall of September 1996 the City will upgrade the space in front of the building to create a park and install new banners and lighting at the China Trade Center. This will strengthen Washington Street in

Chinatown and help sustain the City's investment and the building's businesses.

- Within the next three years, the City, through the Public Works Department, will invest over \$8 million to implement street improvements on Washington Street, Tremont Street and the Ladder Blocks. This will complete the repaving and streetscape on Washington Street from State Street to Kneeland Street. Street improvements will include the installation of streetscape design features developed through this Plan.

The City has budgeted \$500,000 to implement the recently designed Freedom Trail improvements, which include new paving and signage and a permanent trail system that will enhance this district. The City's contribution will be matched by private donations .

- The Boston Redevelopment Authority, the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs and the arts community will explore funding sources for creation and painting of a mural on one or more building side facades exposed by demolition. Installed at key locations, a mural would create a focal point of interest and diminish the visual impact of vacant sites.
- The entertainment and cultural activities that occur within the public spaces are an integral part of the public realm. The City will work with businesses and the entertainment and arts community to develop a coordinated street activities program that responds to the high volume of pedestrian activity and enlivens the district throughout the day and evening, and the seasons.

II. Maintain Streetscape Improvements and Enforce Codes

- The Department of Public Works will immediately establish a weekly graffiti removal program from State Street to Kneeland Street and will provide three to four maintenance staff daily from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. for trash pick-up and removal. The Department also will step up code enforcement regarding building trash disposal.
- The Department of Public Works has just purchased two "Green Machines" one of which will be assigned to Washington Street. The Green Machine is a state-of-the-art vacuum and hot water cleaner for sidewalk and street paving. This equipment will provide for more efficient continuous cleaning of the public streets.

III. Enhance Public Safety

- The Boston Police Department will immediately implement a new policing program, removing the parked police vehicles from Downtown Crossing and providing foot patrols and mounted patrols in the District.
- A police kiosk at the intersection of Washington, Summer and Winter Streets will replace the parked police vehicles, creating a clear center for public safety officials in this area that is welcoming and hospitable to pedestrians.
- The Boston Transportation Department will establish new traffic directional signs to discourage unauthorized vehicles from intruding into the Downtown Crossing pedestrian area.
- The Police Department and Transportation Department will step-up

enforcement against unauthorized private and public vehicles that drive through the pedestrian zone.

IV. Establish a Business Improvement District

- The City will provide \$25,000 to be matched on at least a one-to-three basis by private contributions to conduct the initial planning and work necessary to establish a Business Improvement District (BID) in the Washington Street District.

The planning phase for the BID will involve coordination with property and business owners, definition of boundaries and fee parameters, creation of an agenda and business plan for the BID, and legal and technical work necessary to establish the BID. The agenda should address not only physical improvements and maintenance, but also marketing for a range of retail, cultural, entertainment and residential uses.

V. Market Business and Investment Opportunities

- The City will apply to the State to establish the "Midtown Economic Opportunity Area", which includes the Washington Street District. The principal incentives for investment involved in an EOA designation include a 5% write-off on state taxes and a 10% state tax deduction for the rehabilitation of abandoned buildings. In an EOA, the City can enter into tax agreements in addition to the traditional 121A agreements, including Tax Increment Financing and Special Tax Assessments.
- Working with the Downtown Crossing Association and other business and

property owners, the City will develop a marketing plan and brochure for investment in the Washington Street District.

- The Boston Redevelopment Authority has issued a Request for Proposals for Hayward Place in May 1996 and is actively pursuing development interest in this site and the Lafayette Mall site.

VI. Establish Special Design Overlay District

- The Boston Redevelopment Authority will petition the Zoning Commission to establish a Special Design Overlay District in the Washington Street District that would require design review of all building facade reconstruction and signage as well as of new construction. The Boston Redevelopment Authority will adopt design guidelines to be implemented through the Special Design Overlay District.

The guidelines will address facade designs and materials, and the details of lighting and signage. They also will look at details such as security grates which should be designed, where used, to be as inconspicuous as possible with maximum transparency.

- The Boston Redevelopment Authority will work with the Inspectional Services Department and property owners to identify illegal signage and develop strategies for replacement of inappropriate signs on active buildings.