

# New Haven Mill River Planning Initiative

# Agenda

**01 Overview: Study area, Goals of Study, Process & Timeline**

**02 Recap Previous Meeting : Previous Observations, Comment Card Summary**

**03 Summary of Key Findings**

**04 Emerging Themes and Concepts**



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**01 Overview: Study area, Goals of Study, Process & Timeline**

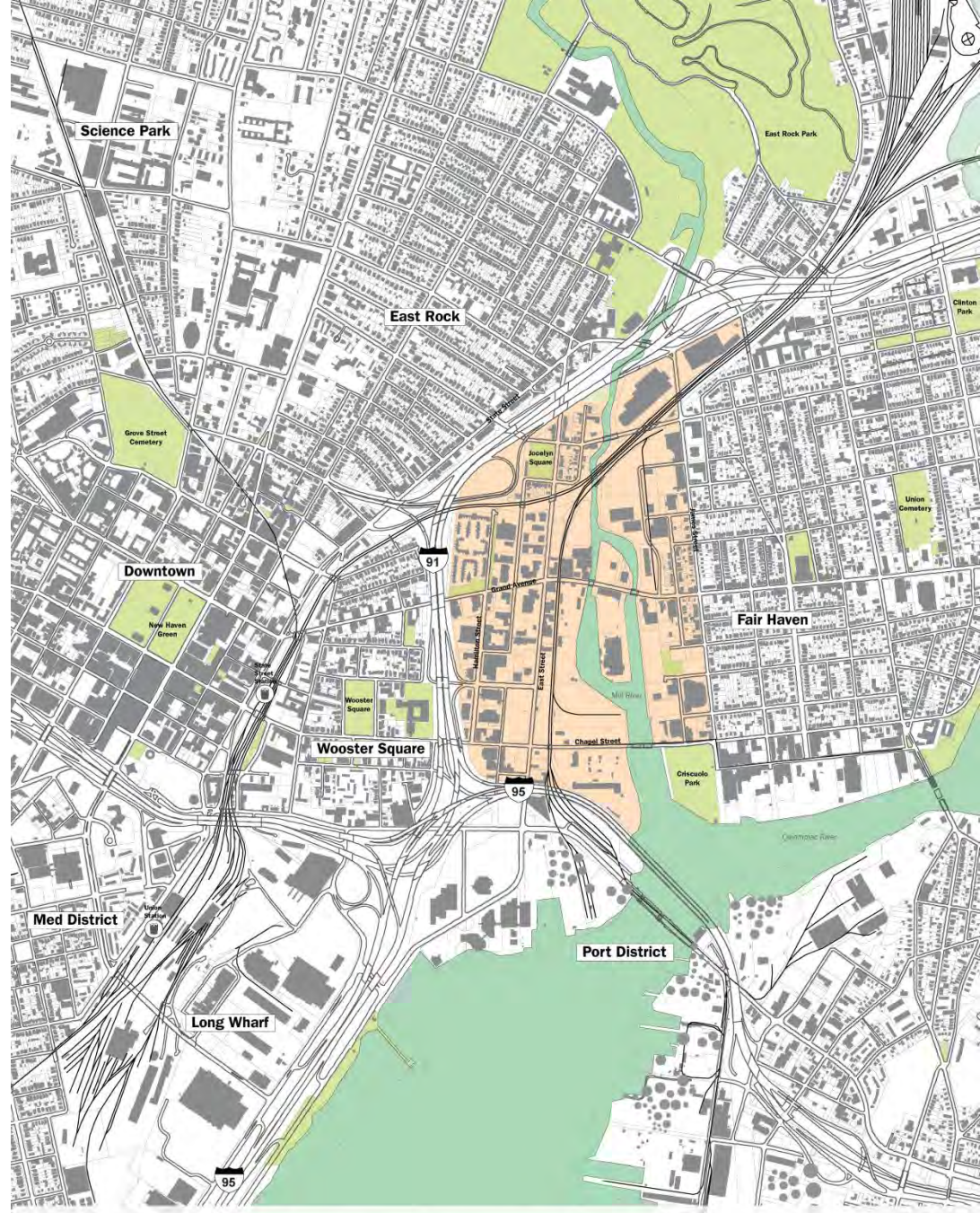
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# Study Area



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**Mill River District Study**  
(Project Boundaries Approximate)



# Study Area

Mill River “Proper” .... **109 acres**  
4,761,478 sf

Tail ..... **27 acres**  
1,194,700 sf

Island ..... **12 acres**  
519,537 sf

Fair Haven Edge..... **58 acres**  
2,525,160sf

**TOTAL**..... **206 acres**  
9,000,875 sf

New Haven Green.....**16 acres**  
705,130 sf



# Goals of Study

The Mill River District is a light industrial and mixed use district that is home to businesses engaged in food processing and distribution, precision manufacturing, design and construction support, specialty building supplies fabrication, and other diverse commercial enterprises.

These businesses employ approximately **3,000 people**, many whom reside in the city. With approximately **28%** underutilized and vacant land, we know we can grow more jobs!

**The city believes that these jobs and businesses are a key part of the vibrancy and success of New Haven!**

This study is committed to building on the entrepreneurial businesses and people that are already working to make the Mill River a great place to do business, and better integrate these businesses better into adjacent residential populations

# Goals of Study



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# Goals of Study

**1. Preserve + protect, and grow existing businesses, while fostering opportunities for future growth.**

**2. Consider needs of all community members, business and residents, and integrate into the long-term plan.**

**3. Build on the district's diversity of food manufacturing and distribution, construction and design support, as well as precision manufacturing.**

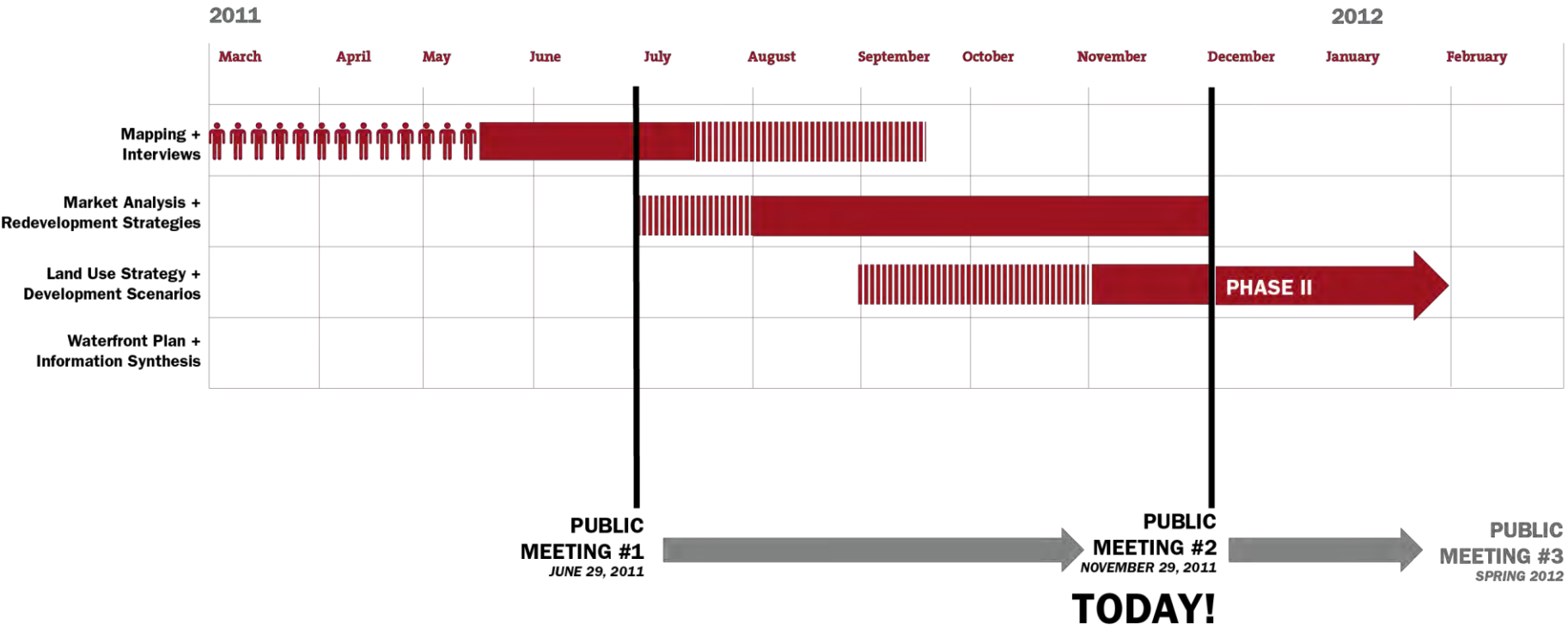
**4. Enhance the distinctive role that the Mill River serves in the overall economic health of the city.**

**5. Identify future district improvements and infrastructure to lower barriers to additional growth on underutilized parcels**

**6. Prepare design and development guidelines to enhance district character and provide a framework to further integrate district to the City.**



# Updated Process



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# Observations from First Meeting

- New Haven's **economy remained relatively stable during the recession** due to major jobs gains in the areas of healthcare and education offsetting losses in sectors like information and professional services
- Most of the **businesses in the Mill River are locally-owned entrepreneurial family companies**
- Much of Mill River lies within the **coastal management zone** presenting a range of issues from storm surge, flood plain and public access that **may influence development patterns**
- Mill River provides a location to **continue New Haven's tradition in manufacturing** and an opportunity to **build on some emerging strengths**



# Comment Cards!

## Mill River Planning Study

Martinez School, June 29, 2011

*You are invited to provide your input to the first step of the process for creating the future of the Mill River District. Please complete the front and back sides of this card.*

**Please circle the location of your residence or business:**

- 1 In the Mill River District
- 2 Near the District
- 3 Elsewhere

**Please circle the number that most accurately reflects your connection to the Mill River (You may circle more than one):**

- 1 Business Owner
- 2 Resident
- 3 Property Owner
- 4 Worker
- 5 I often do business there.
- 6 School
- 7 Other (please define) \_\_\_\_\_



# Comment Cards

**Please Use The Space Below To:**

List two positive and two negative attributes of the Mill River District.

List three ideas you have for the district. What most would you like to see happen or changed?

<p><b>Positive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Artisanal/creative MEDS</li> </ul> <p><b>Negative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wacky manufacturing issues</li> <li>Long term cost of parking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inventory available to residents additional (convenient) (costs last be better suited)</li> <li>Plan to deal with environmental issues (compart)</li> <li>Accommodate when walking distance</li> <li>gentle "safety zones"</li> </ul>
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Please leave this card on your chair following the meeting so it can be collected

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<p><b>POSITIVE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highway Access</li> </ul> <p><b>NEGATIVE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental Issues</li> <li>Clean up needed</li> <li>Safety Issues</li> </ul>	<p><b>WITH IN WALKING DISTANCE</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RESTORE RESTAURANTS</li> <li>MUCH BETTER LIGHTING</li> <li>INCENTIVE FOR LANDLORDS TO GET TENANTS</li> <li>REASON TO INVEST</li> <li>NEED TO KNOCK DOWN SOME BAD Bldgs (LD)</li> </ol>
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List three ideas you have for the district. What most would you like to see happen or changed?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Potential for ecological redevelopment + MIX use infill</li> <li>+ Potential for added value and a more livable community through development</li> <li>- control of site</li> <li>- Brown fields + costal management etc</li> </ul>	<p>I believe that through critically sectioning the existing infrastructures on the site a sustainable mixed use area could thrive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- redemptive watched</li> <li>- Integrate strategic mixed use zoning at a district level (new business)</li> <li>- create viable connective infrastructure to town center</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ bus + ROAD CONNECTIVITY</li> <li>- poor pedestrian "</li> <li>+ mix of building types + uses</li> <li>- vacancy + under utilization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- walk to work for nearby residents</li> <li>- improved air + soil + water quality</li> <li>- preserve historic bldgs</li> <li>- open to water - water dependent uses</li> <li>- zoning plan for district</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(+) jobs</li> <li>(+) New business</li> <li>(-) environment</li> <li>(-) traffic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the apartments on Grand St revamped -</li> <li>opportunities for inner city employment -</li> <li>variety of businesses -</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Pos.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vital Comm bldgs + bus.</li> <li>avail land to dev.</li> </ol> <p><b>neg.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>environmental issues</li> <li></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restoration of empty bldgs + houses.</li> <li>Preserve historical Bldgs</li> <li>employment Opperty.</li> </ol>
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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>power plant - opportunities</li> <li>existing businesses</li> </ol> <p><b>-</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>hard to get by bike/walk</li> <li>waterfront</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>connecting greenway + waterfront</li> <li>open docks at State street</li> <li>oyster beds + wetland restoration for bioremediation</li> <li>better zones along river</li> <li>Agriculture - vacant acreage and difficult to develop sites.</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to Highway + rail</li> <li>Local labor pool.</li> <li>Contaminated Sites</li> <li>Flood zone covers much of area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean-up the best sites - those close to highway/rail + those near companies that want to expand.</li> <li>Create industrial/research parks.</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water access</li> <li>Highway access</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Historical bldgs access limited</li> <li>Disinherited from waterfront development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>better public access</li> <li>filling of vacant lots</li> <li>Days/Night activity</li> <li>ecological restoration and public access</li> </ul>
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## Public Meeting #1 – public comments

### List two positive and two negative attributes of the Mill River District.

- **Positives:** *highway access, development sites and real estate opportunities, available labor pool, waterfront access, between two great neighborhoods, potential for added value, bus connectivity, mix of building types, jobs, power plant possibilities*
- **Negatives:** *environmental issues, flood zone, safety, site control, desolate area, coastal management zone, dirty, poor pedestrian connectivity, vacancy and underutilization, traffic, hard to travel by bike or foot, waterfront, disconnected from Wooster Square and Downtown, crime, building condition*

## Public Meeting Comments

### List three ideas you have for the district. What most would you like to see happen or changed?

*“Incentives to attract additional companies, environmental plan, “amenities” within walking distance, walk to work district, reduce parking on East Street, improve policing, shuttle to train station, better lighting, more public transport, new manufacturers, day AND night activity, ecological restoration, local food distribution and production, local food value added production, clean up best sites – those closest to highway/rail and those near companies that want to expand, create industrial research park, connect greenways, open docks at State Street, agriculture, bioremediation along buffer zones along river, restore empty buildings and houses, historic preservation, apartments on Grand Avenue revamped, employment opportunities, energy plan for district, mixed-use development around and including English Station, better restaurant/entertainment, recreational boating on the waterways, improved security, uninterrupted power, need to knock down some bad buildings...”*

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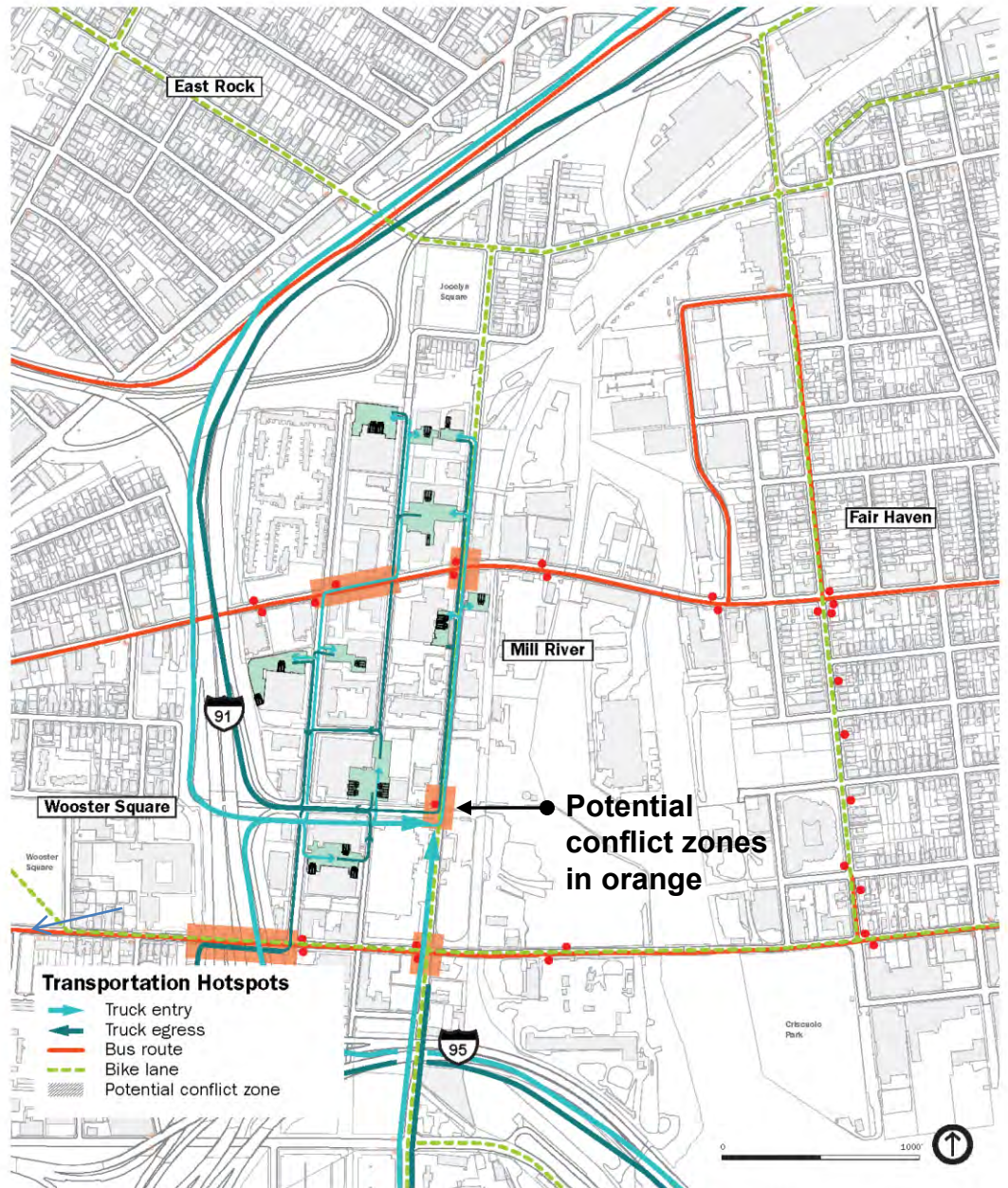


# Mill River Map Suite



# Transportation

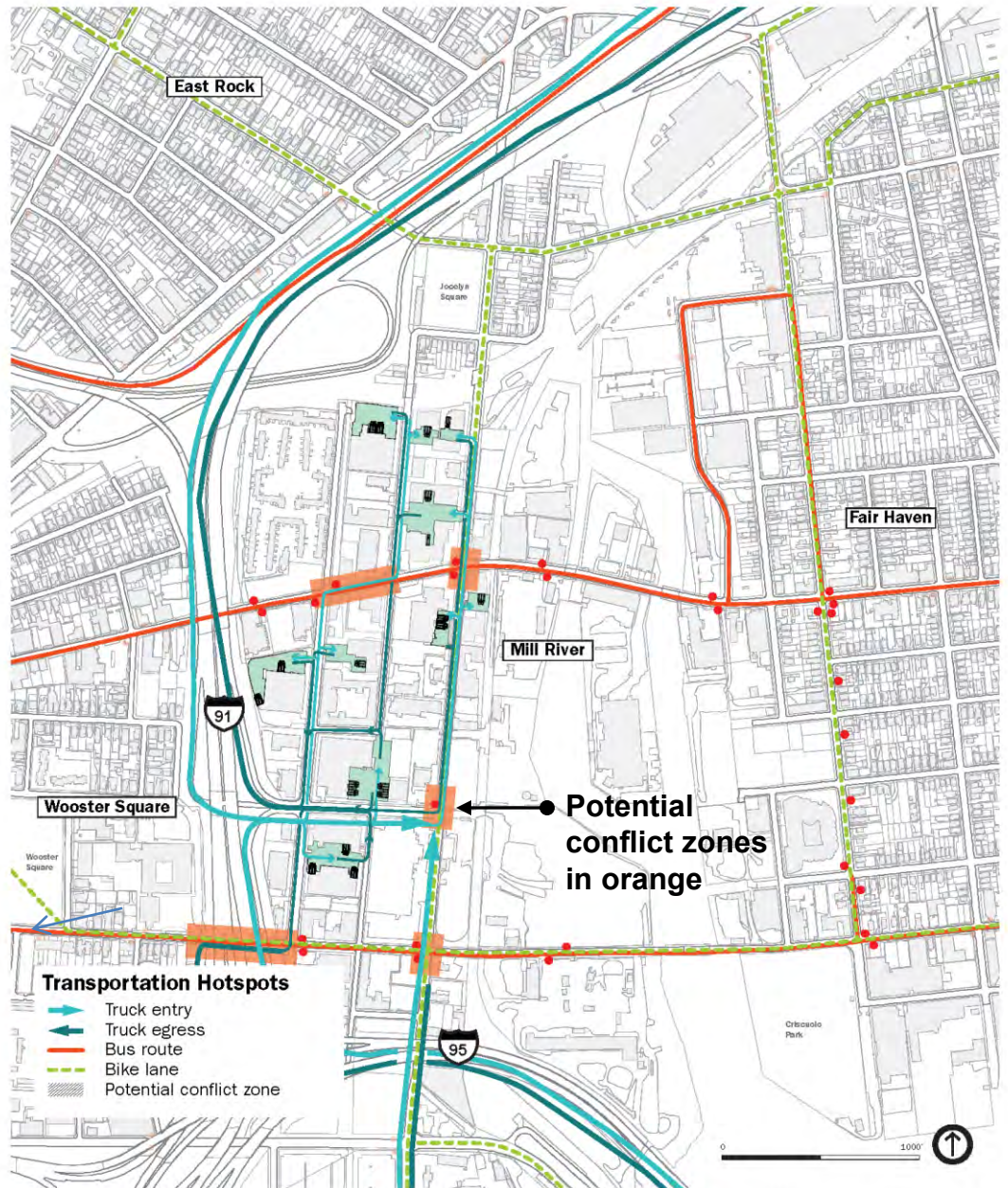
Businesses are located here because of the excellent transportation infrastructure. Any future redevelopment effort should leverage this advantage.



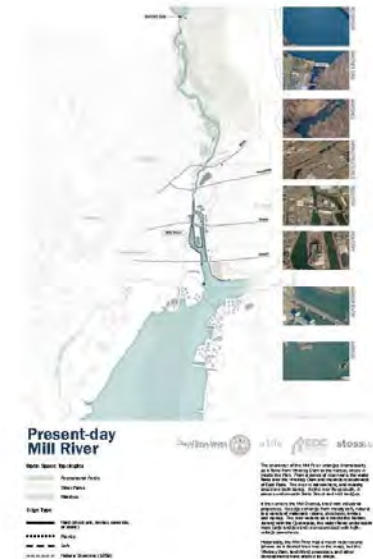
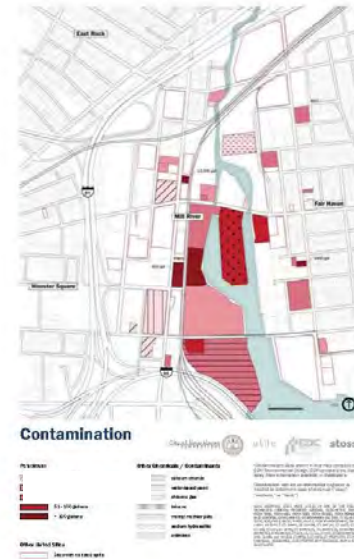
Sources: City of New Haven (2008), Nelson Nygaard, Utile (loading docks)

# Transportation

Appropriate safety, connectivity, and streetscape improvements for the community will improve the attractiveness of local amenities to help attract new industrial businesses in the future.



# Environmental Maps



# Present Day Mill River



(WHITNEY DAM BUILT 1860-1861)

source: City of New Haven (buildings + parks), Yale (marshes, water), Stoss (river edge types), CLEAR (DEM used to generate topographic lines), CT DEP (Dredged Channel), University of Connecticut - MAGIC (Connecticut 1859 Topography Layer used to map 1859 shoreline)

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**Overview:**  
Waterways, Historic and Present



# Open Space Typology



source: City of New Haven (buildings, paved areas/edge of pavement, parks, street trees), Yale (marshes, water), Stoss 2011 (river edge types), CT DEP (parks)

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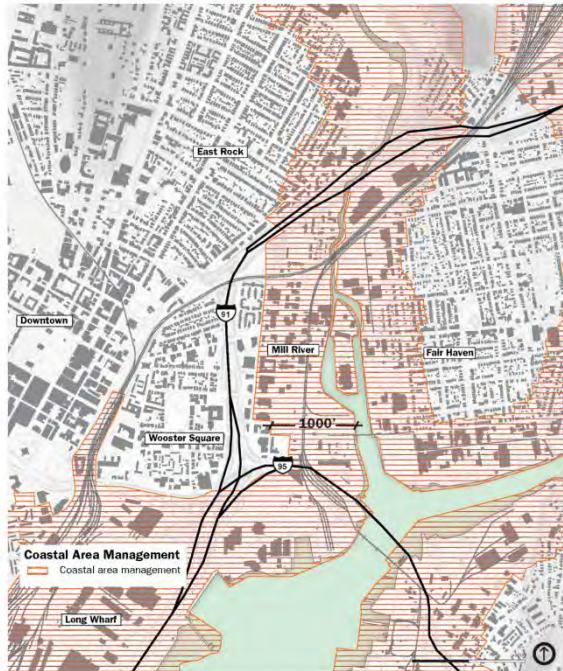


## Environmental: Open Space Typologies

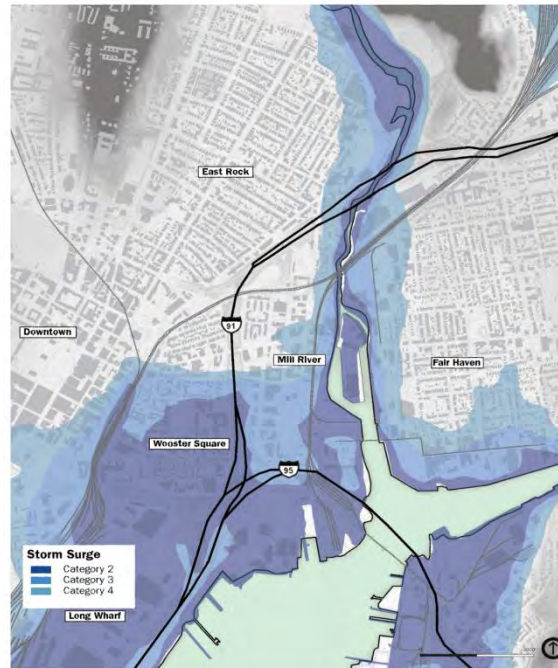


# Coastal Pressures

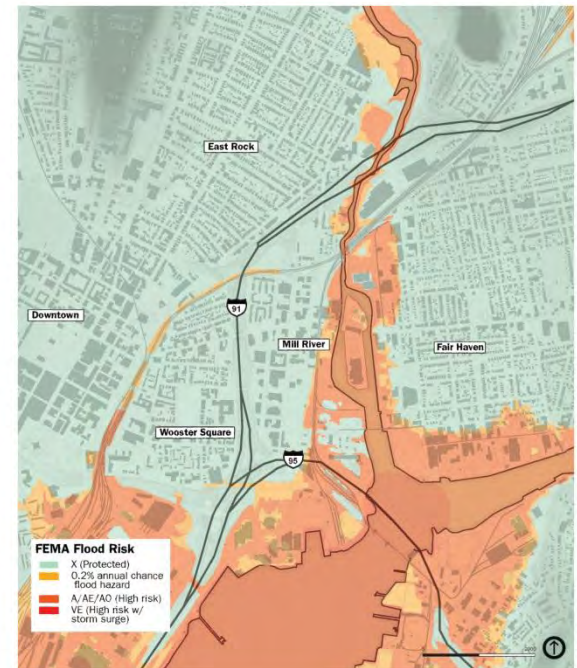
Coastal pressures of the district will shape its development.



**Environmental:**  
Coastal Area Management (CAM)



**Environmental:**  
FEMA SLOSH Zones

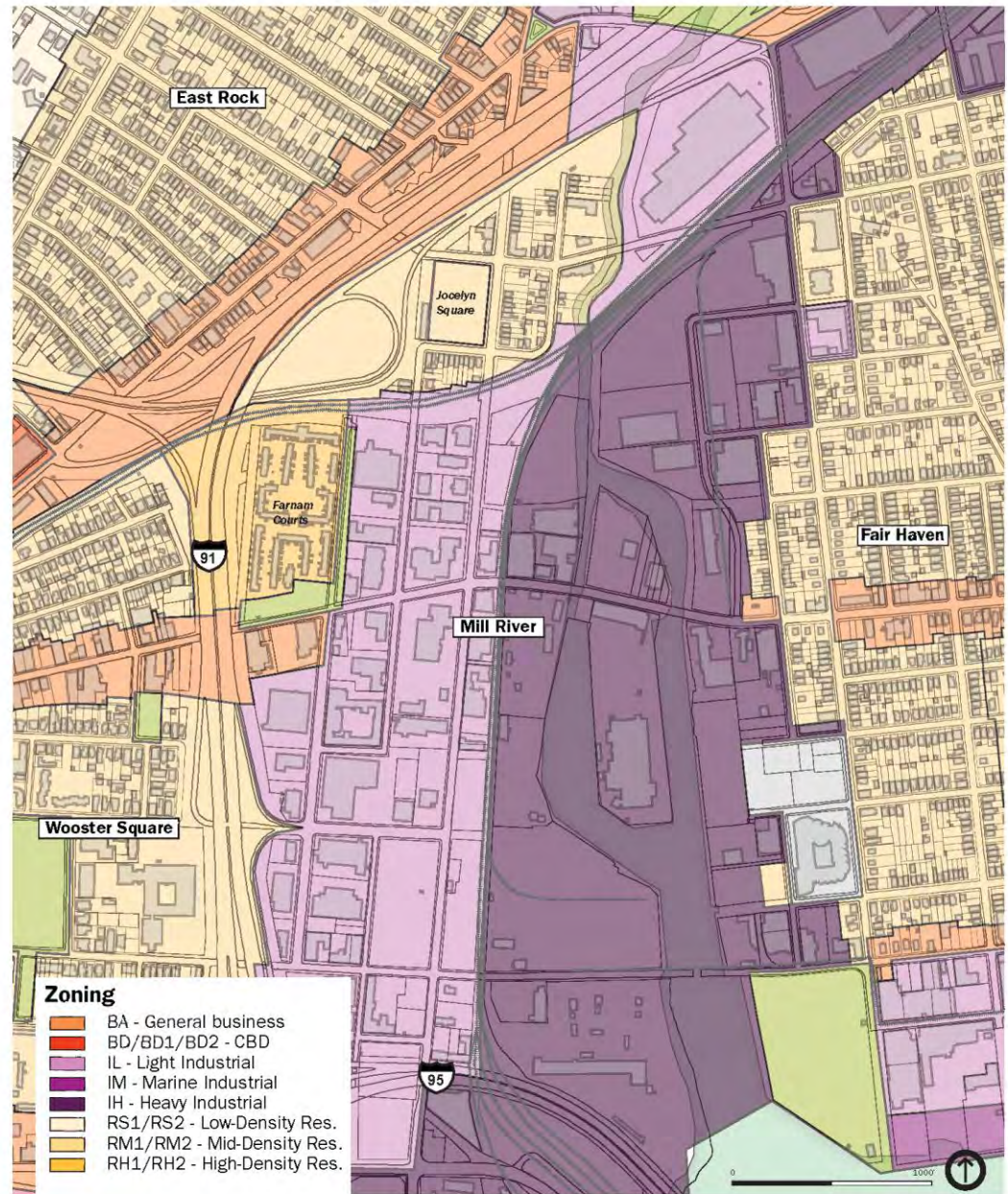


**Environmental:**  
FEMA Flood Zones



# Zoning and Land Use

Mill River represents 24% of New Haven's zoned industrial land



Source: City of New Haven (2008)

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Planning:  
Existing Zoning

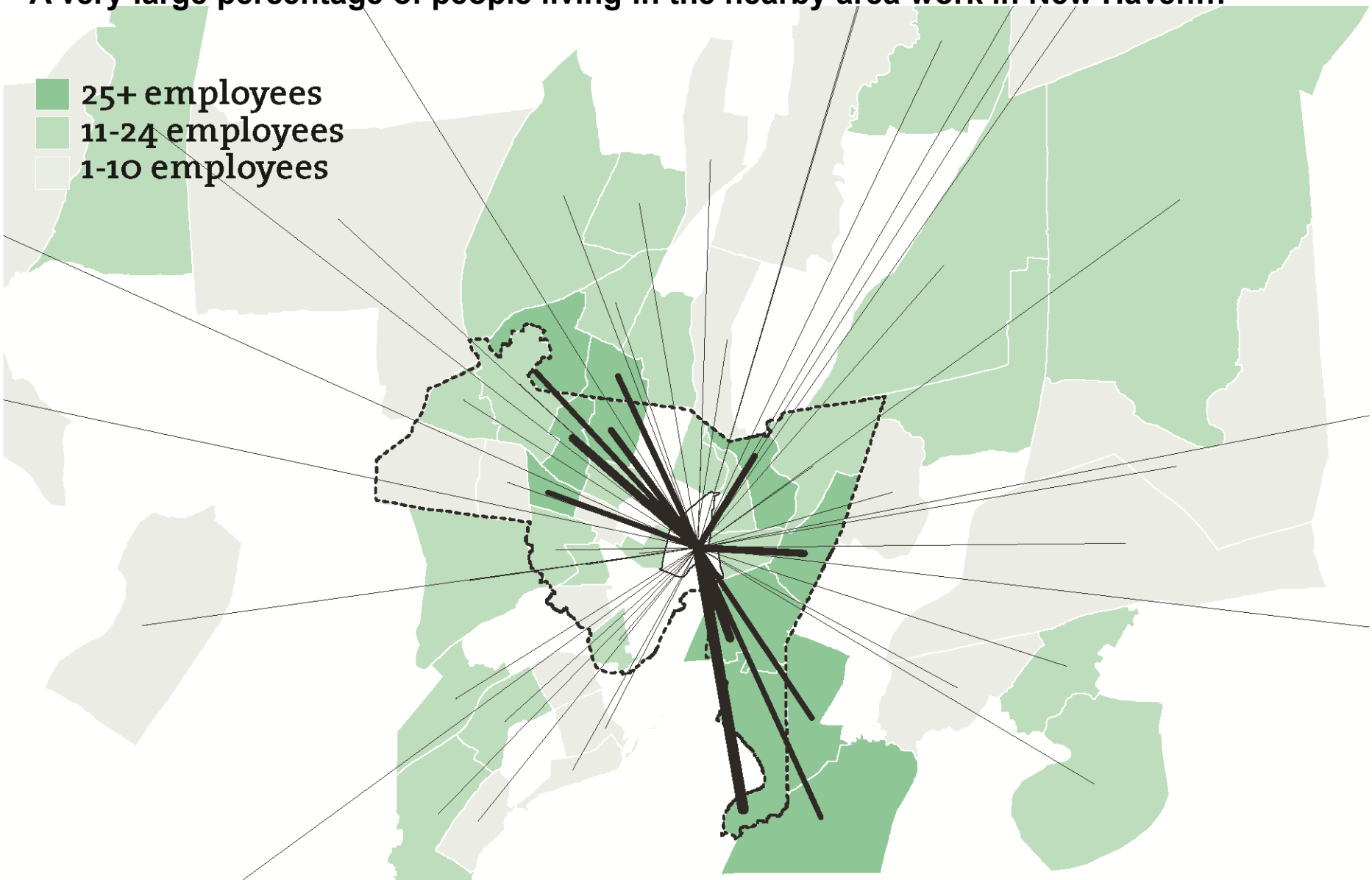




# New Haven Labor Shed by Census Tract

A very large percentage of people living in the nearby area work in New Haven...

- 25+ employees
- 11-24 employees
- 1-10 employees



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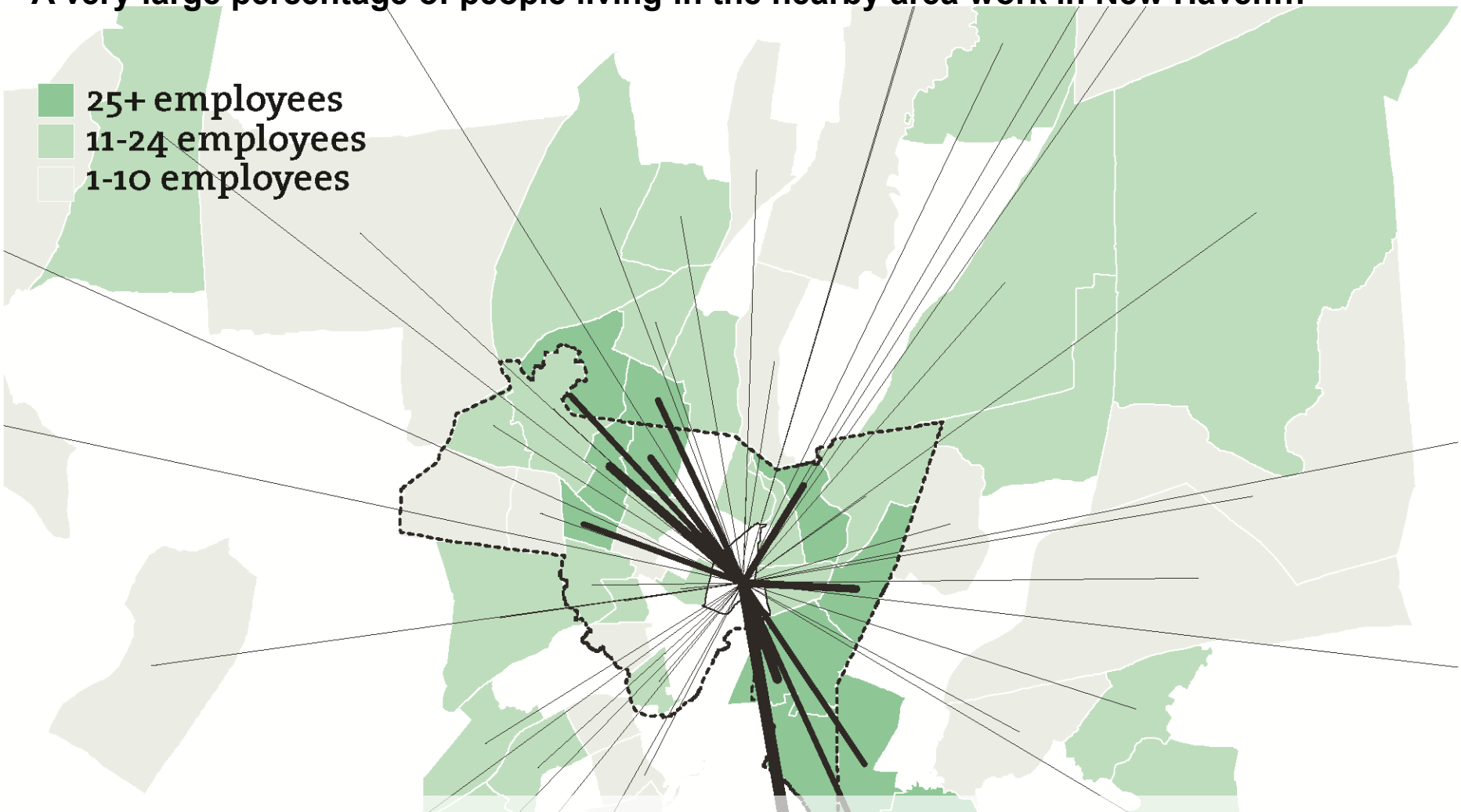


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**Which underscores the importance of Grand Avenue as a functioning East-West Connector for the City**

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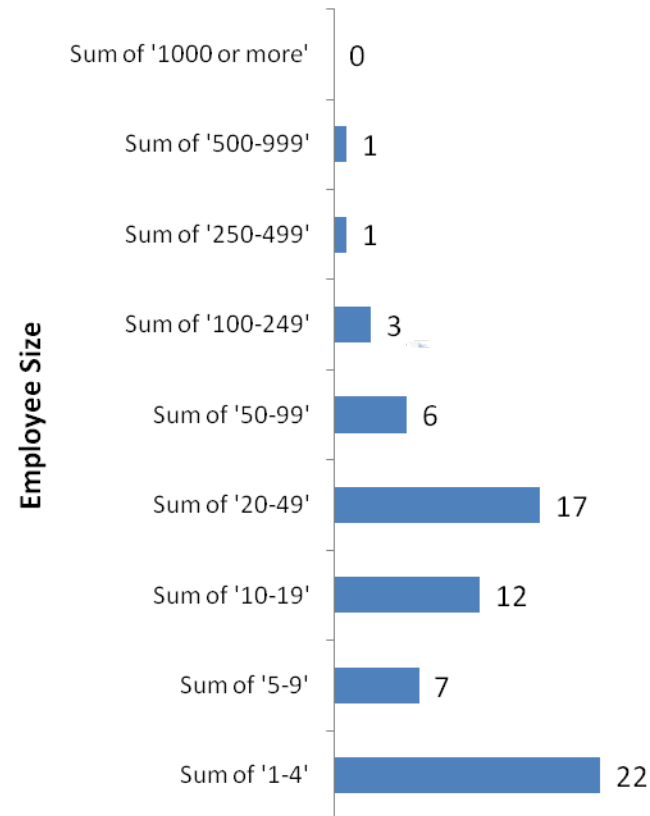
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# Manufacturing in New Haven

## New Haven's manufacturing base is dominated by small manufacturers

- According to federal and state statistics New Haven has 69 manufacturing businesses located within the city boundaries
- 42% of New Haven's manufacturing base is made up of companies with less than 10 employees

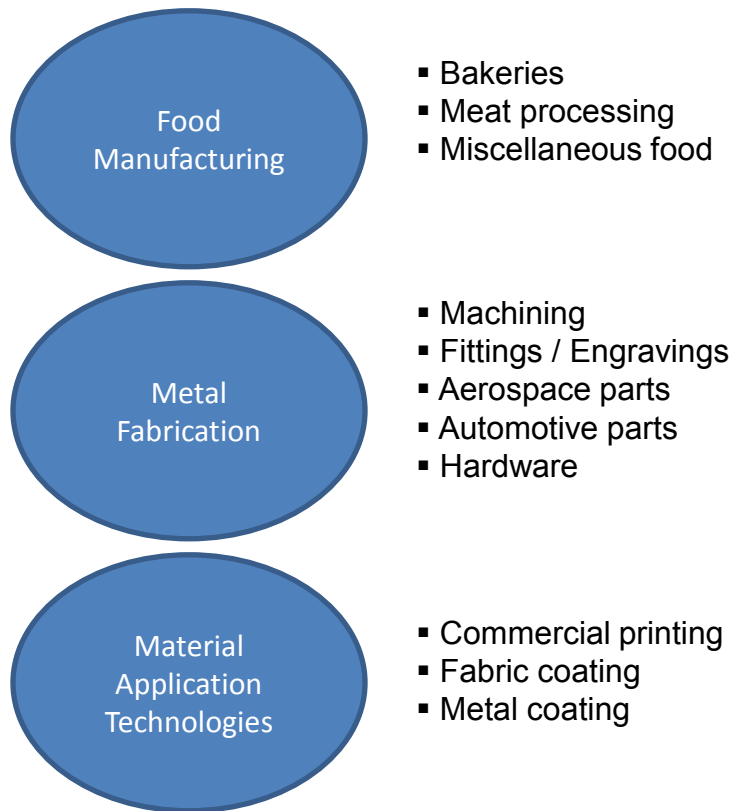
New Haven Manufacturing Employee Size Distribution



Source: County Business Patterns, 2010 (2008 data); NP analysis of zip code files

# Manufacturing in New Haven

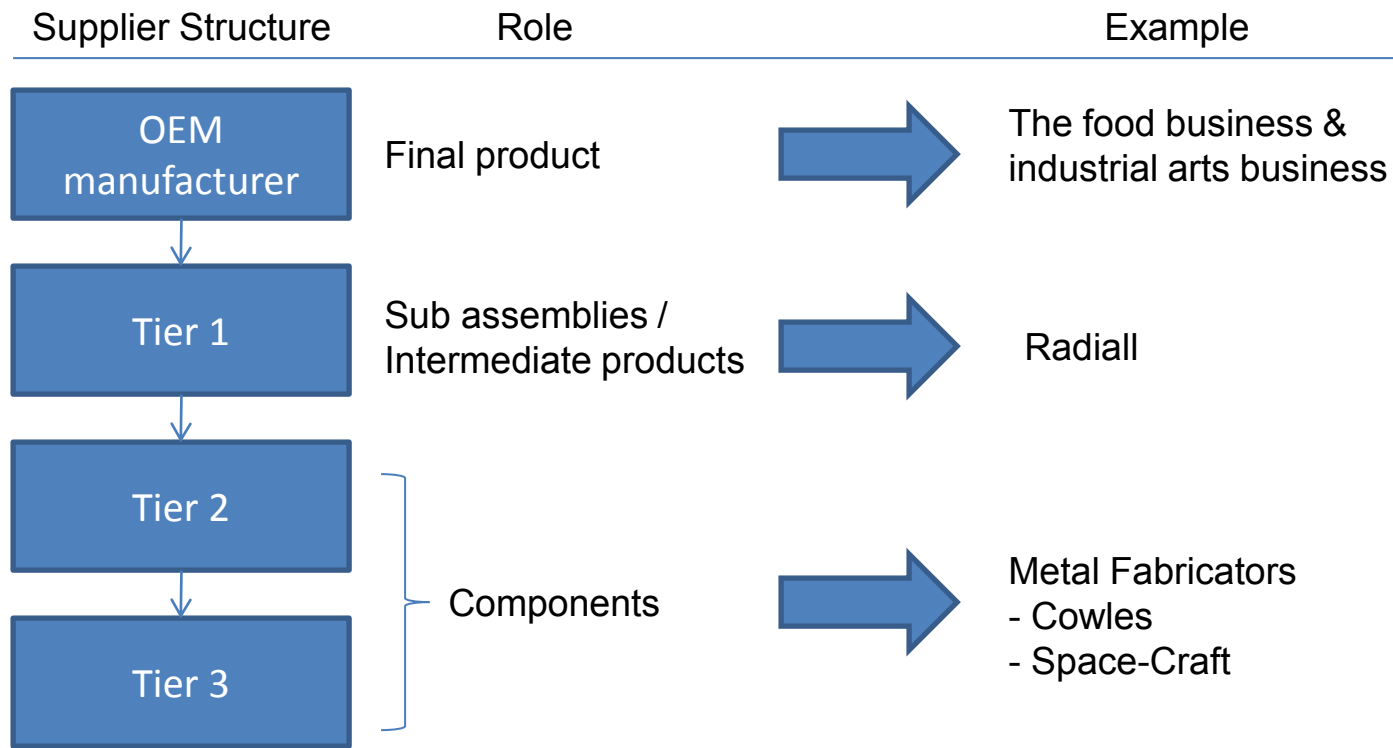
Most of the manufacturing sector can be organized into a series of major industrial groupings



**The level of interaction appears very limited from a supplier relationship perspective**

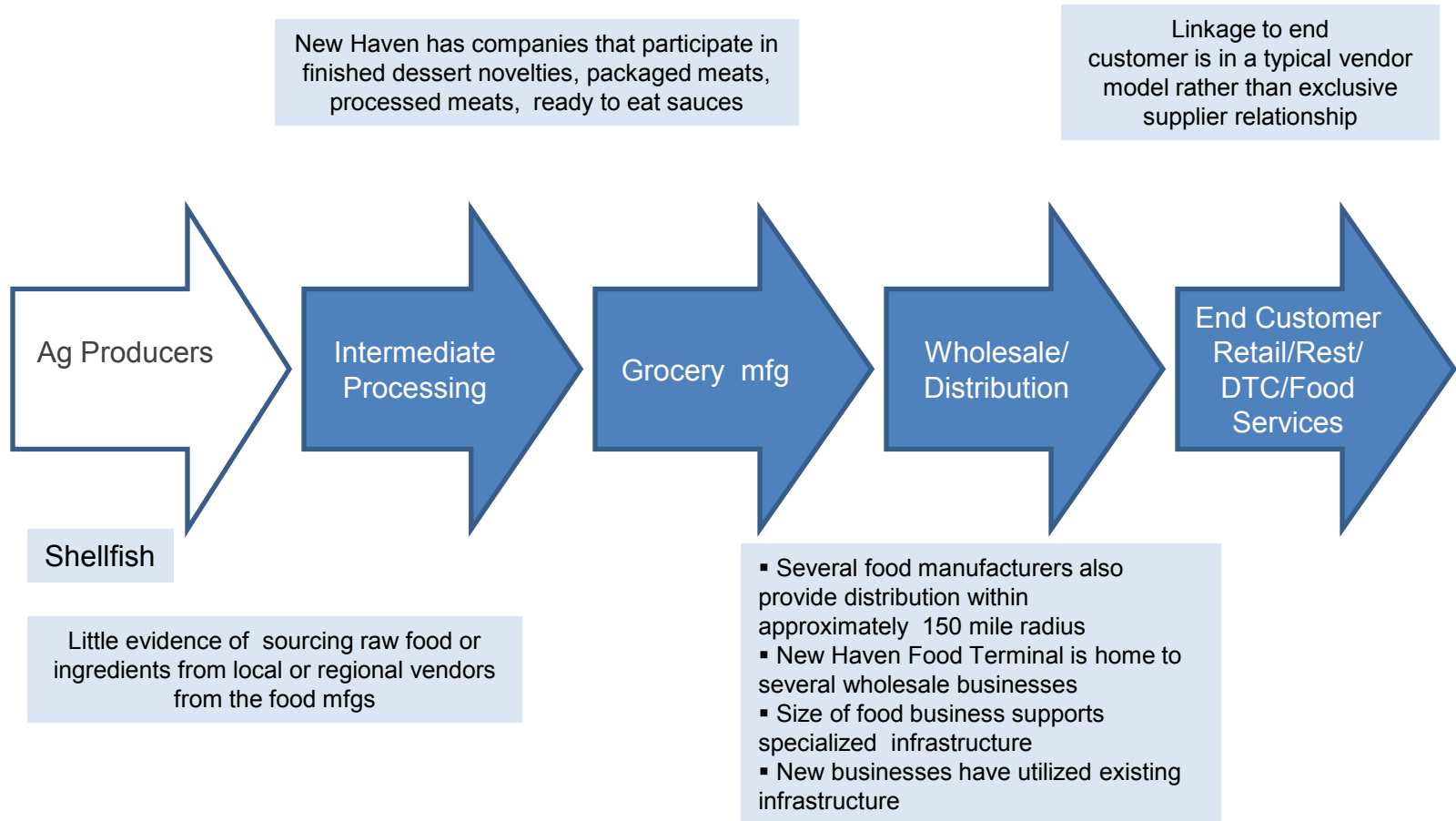
# Manufacturing in New Haven

## New Haven's manufacturing businesses span the supply chain



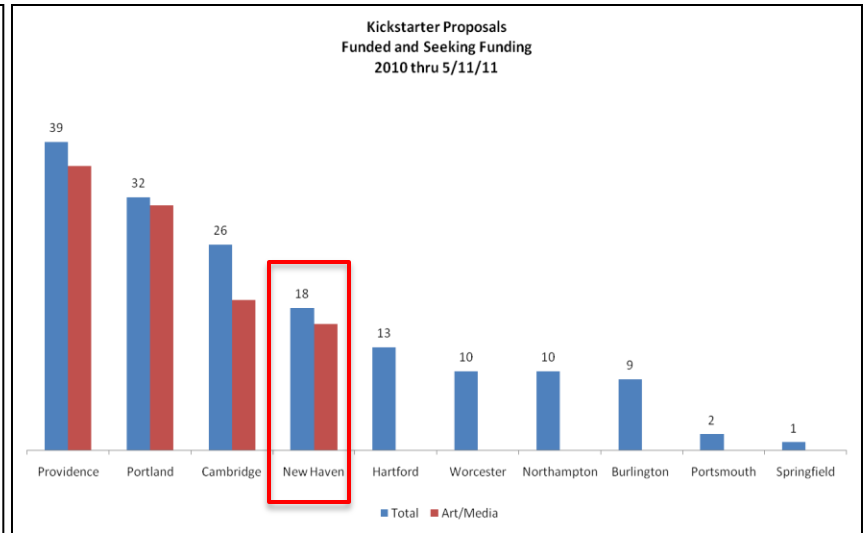
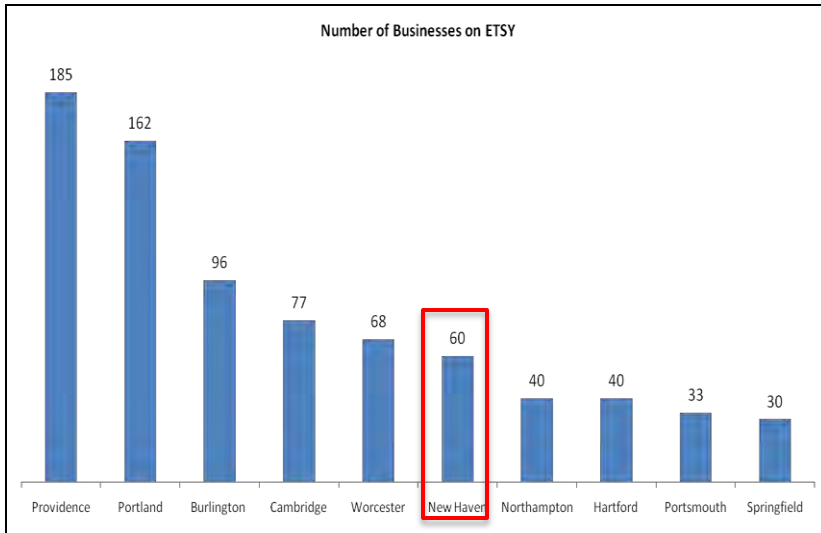
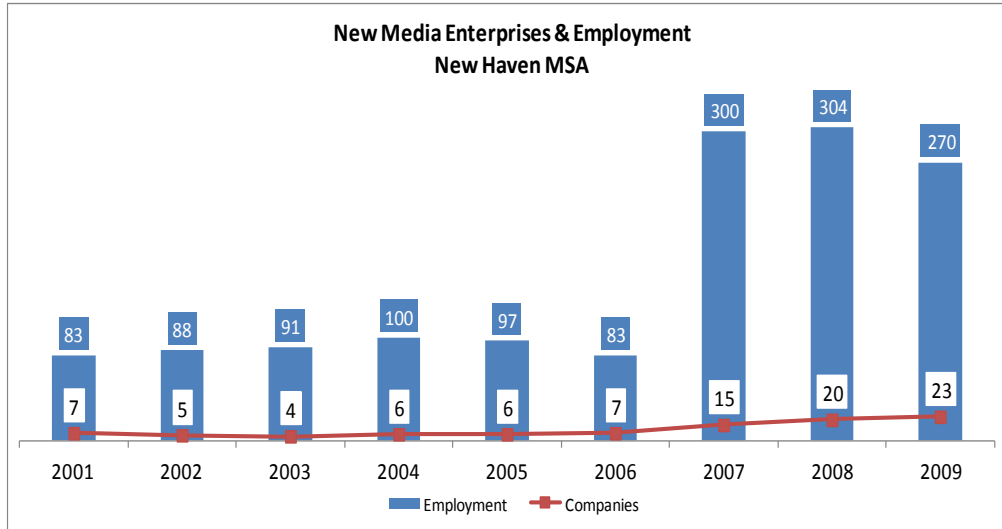
# Food Industry in New Haven

The New Haven food industry represents a cluster that spans the value chain but the linkage between the companies is indirect and not interdependent



# Creative Industry in New Haven

New Haven has a robust entrepreneurial “creative industries” segment



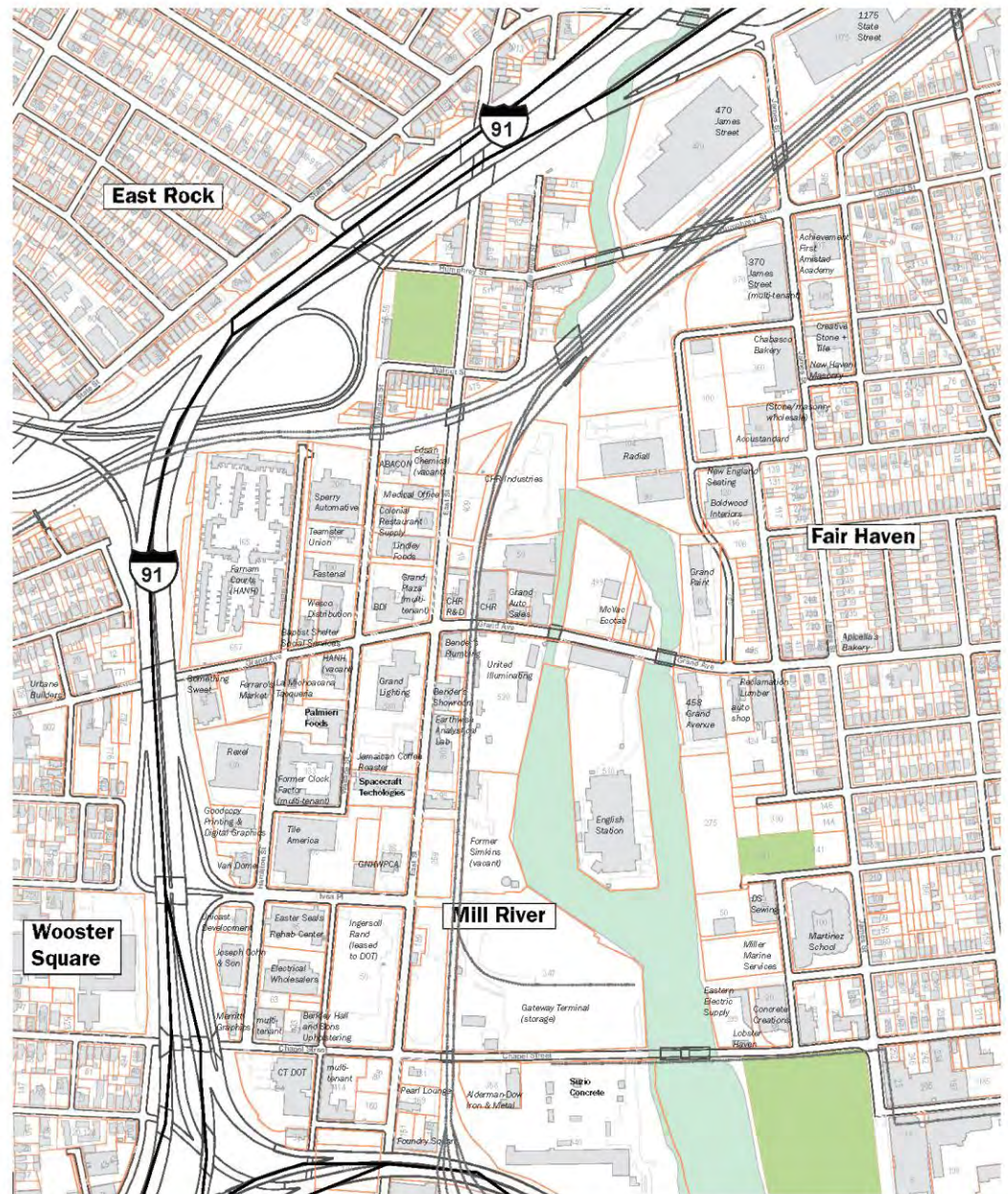
# Current Businesses in the Mill River

New Haven is home to over 50 existing thriving businesses, which employ more than 3,000 people.

Supporting these existing businesses, and learning more about their expansion needs is a critical part of this study.

Phase II will look at specific opportunities for businesses to expand, while simultaneously marketing underutilized or vacant parcels for redevelopment.

The emerging “identity” for Mill River is driven by the forces – both existing businesses and infrastructure – already in place.



Sources: Parcel Data (City of New Haven, 2008), Interviews and Field Research (2011)



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# Implications + Options for the Mill River

*New Haven is an economy in transition...*



*...with a number of economic opportunities that will require space and land to meet the unique needs of those business operations..*

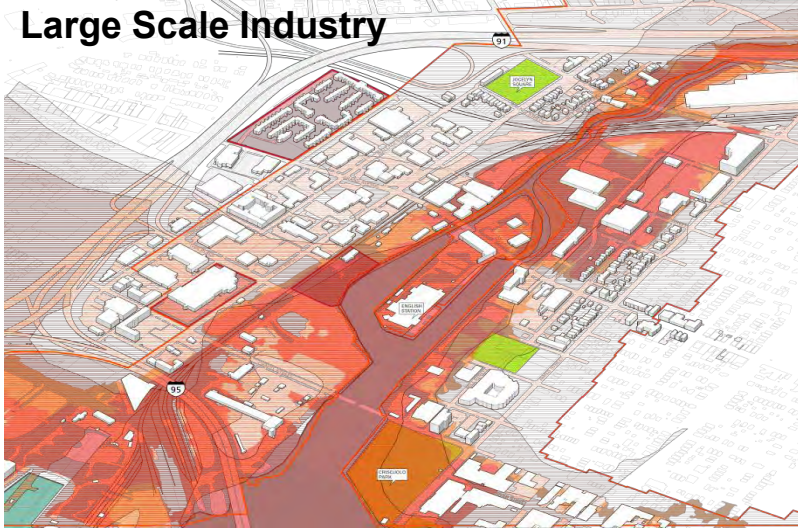


**Mill River is an existing economic center for the city, a source of employment for nearby residents and presents one of the last remaining places with large parcels of underdeveloped land able to capture the commercial and industrial economic opportunities emerging in the region.**

## Several Scenarios Tested

Several “what ifs” were considered to better understand development economics and site suitability, but may not be practical or desirable. Examples include:

### Large Scale Industry

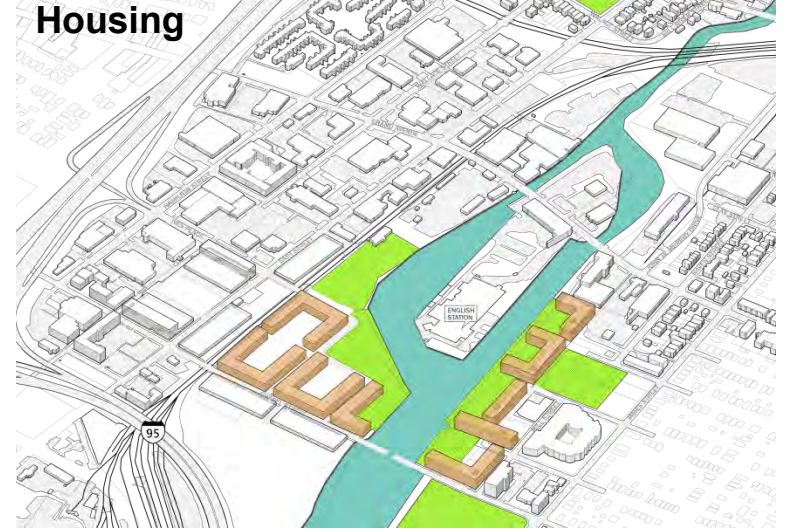


Manufacturing footprints of 70,000 – 100,000 sf were considered for the district.

Only one site is suitable for large scale manufacturing because it sits outside of the flood zone, but it is occupied by housing.

Utilization of other sites will require extensive fill to raise land levels or other forms of flood plain management and still may not be insurable.

### Housing



Housing unit developments between 398 to 880 units were considered for the district.

Site issues alone raise unit prices of housing by \$41k per unit requiring a break even price of \$300k per unit – a premium sales price in the New Haven market.

Would require relocation of some existing businesses and extensive buffering to minimize use conflicts.

# Strategies for the Mill River

The planning analysis, economic assessment and what if scenarios lead us to the following perspectives:

## Planning Parameters

*An uncertain economic recovery, excess available capacity in industrial real estate in the region leading to low property costs and continued tight credit markets*

*High development costs due to need to manage flood zone/storm surge risk for insurability/financing and potential clean up costs for some brownfield sites*

*The scale of the sites, the transportation infrastructure, existing building stock / land uses and relative lack of relocation options within New Haven*

*Successful existing businesses using the local labor force, rise of industrial & product entrepreneurs needing places to work, businesses that attract on-site customer visits, retail markets with opportunities for strengthening*

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## Implications

Jumpstarting development may require substantial public subsidy to close the “financing gap”

Focus on high cost sites first could drain available resources with limited impact on existing businesses

Large industrial development is outside of land capacity of the district without major site assembly and relocation

Residential real estate will likely require high price points putting pressure on industrial real estate costs

Classic mixed use runs the risk of substantial transportation and land use conflict

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## Strategy Considerations

**Enhancing the existing economic foundations of the district to build real estate values that close some of the “financing gap”**

**Mill River is a part of the land development portfolio for New Haven and should have uses that match its characteristics and not try to “force fit” opportunities**

**Leverage existing business successes and customer visits to build the district rather than create conflicts that impede their continued success**

# Programming Concepts for the Mill River

This combination leads us to the following concepts that seem practical and plausible for Mill River:

## Representative Opportunities for New Haven that are inspired by Mill River

Smaller Food Biz  
Industrial Arts  
Small Batch Manufacturing  
New Media / Creative  
Selected Retail

“New Haven  
Home  
Improvement  
Marketplace”



*Grand Paint*

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“Mill River  
Industrial  
Village”



*Grand Paint*



*Boldwood Interiors/  
New England Seating*



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*Boldwood Interiors/  
New England Seating*

“New Haven  
Mercantile  
Food Hub”

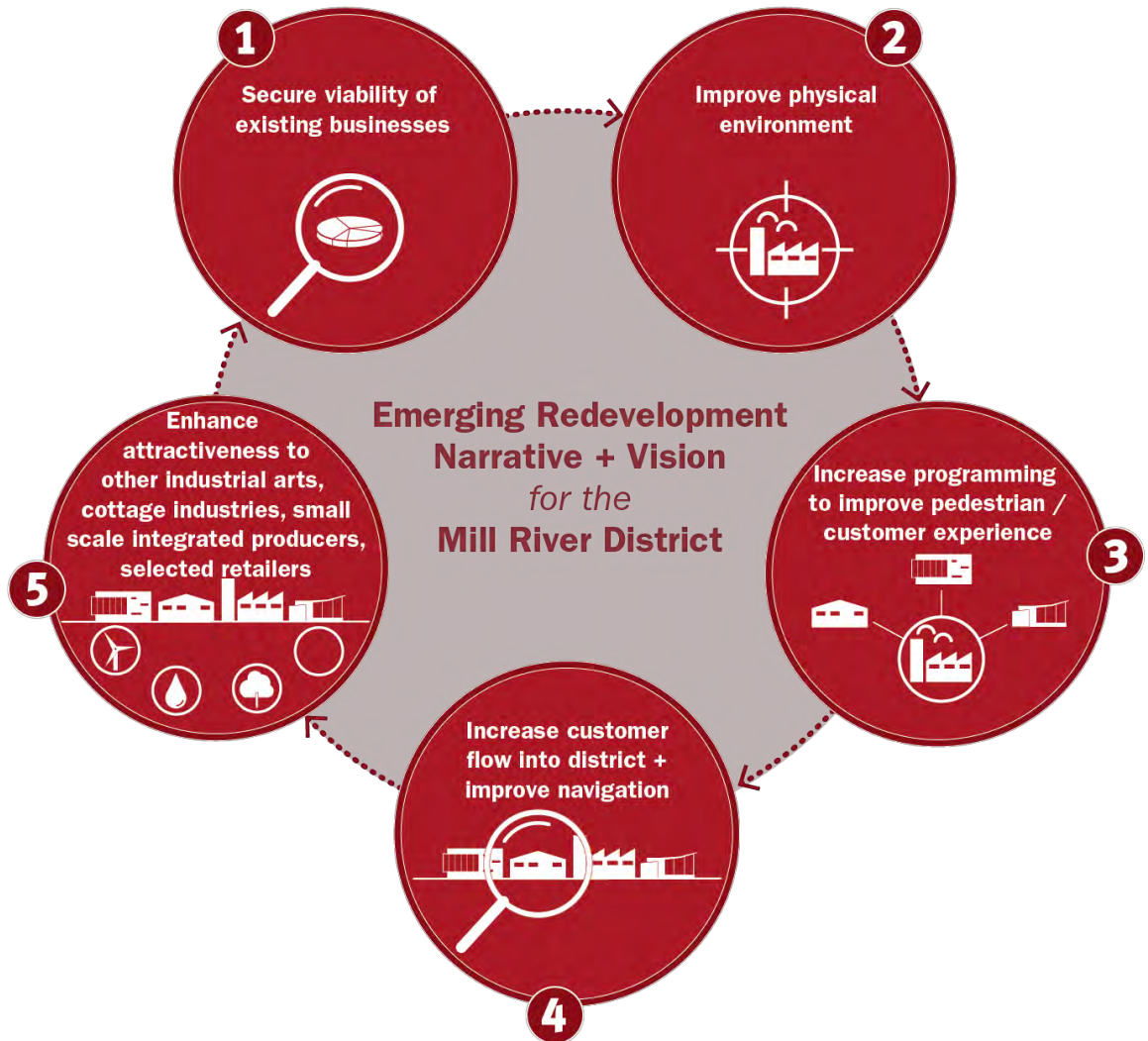


*Palmieri Foods*

# An Integrated Vision Building on What Exists

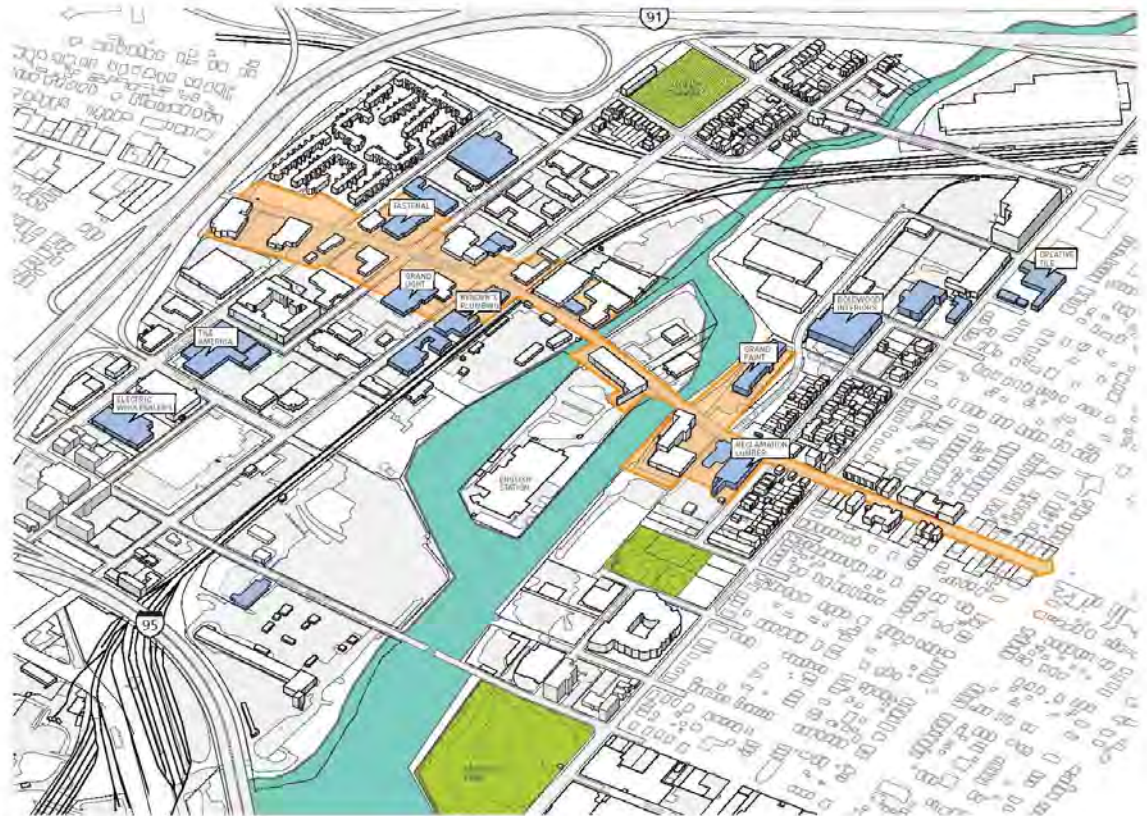
The emerging redevelopment vision is to set off a chain of events that will:

- Enable redevelopment of the more complicated parcels
- Reduce potential subsidies required for site improvements
- Enhance job creation opportunities accessible to ALL New Haven residents.



# Concept #1: Home Improvement Marketplace

- Pedestrian-friendly retail environment built around home improvement & interior design.
  - Existing businesses represent 1.5 times the revenue and offer substantially more products than a typical Home Depot.
- Interim programming like cart / kiosk marketplaces for underutilized sites.



# Concept #1: Home Improvement Marketplace

More specifically, the home improvement marketplace provides an example of what we hope to accomplish for the district



## Concept #2: Industrial Village

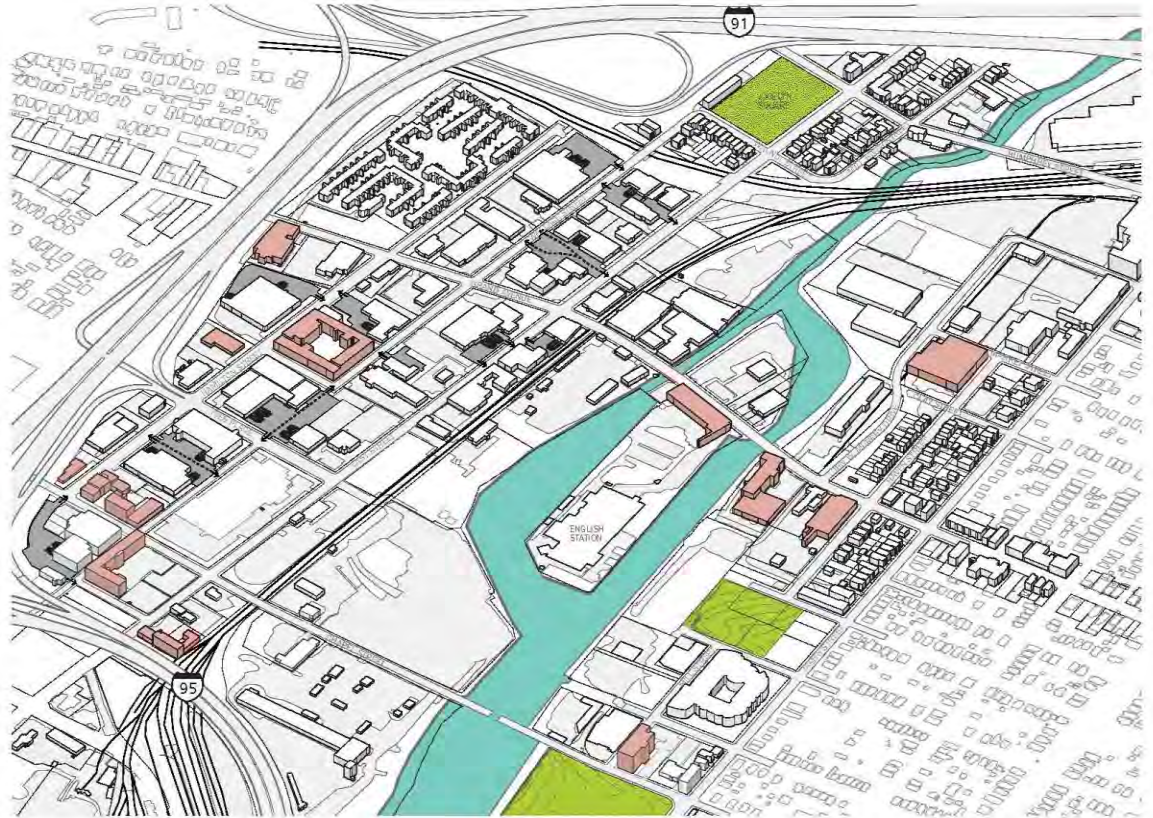
- Small scale manufacturing & assembly
- Retail front ends supporting integrated consumer product manufacturing
- Live-work environment
- Designated manufacturing zones with buffer strategies
- “Tech shop” factory incubator training academy



Louisville glass factory and retail



Industrial arts center



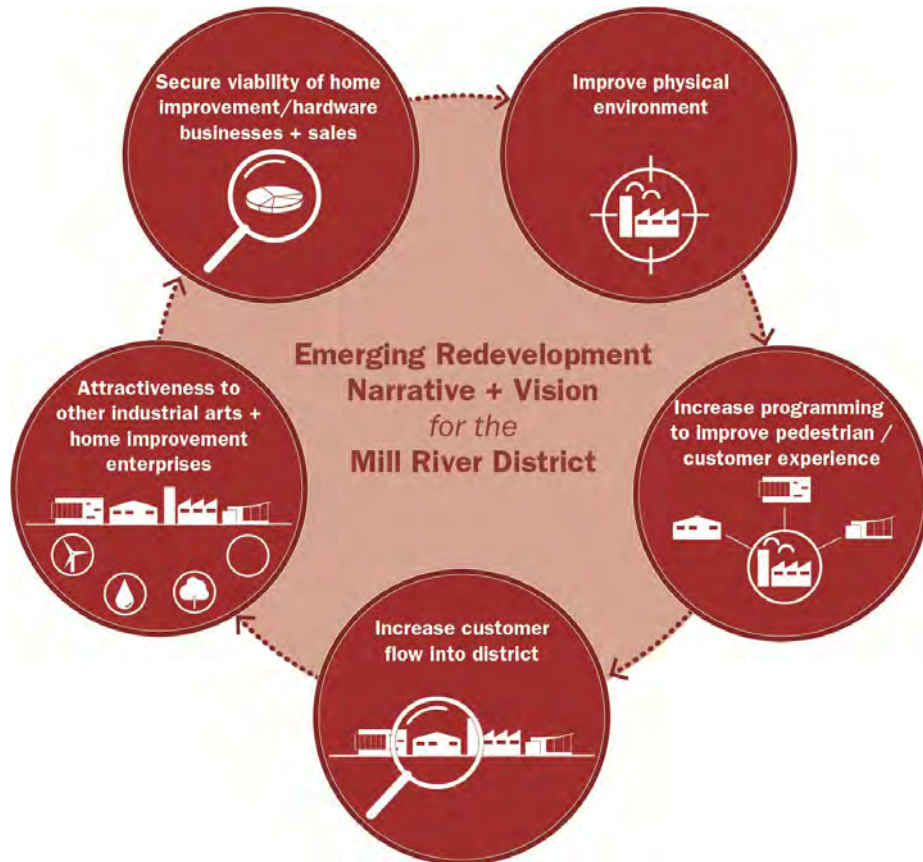
# Concept #3: Mercantile Food Hub

- Growing, processing, distributing and retailing food products
- Urban greenhouses and potential interim uses
- Local food market to address \$154 million in unmet demand for grocery products



# Not One Theme: Mutually Reinforcing Vision

## HOME IMPROVEMENT MARKETPLACE

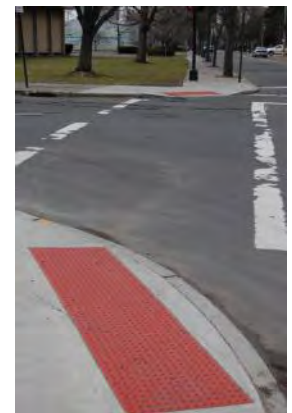


## INTERRELATIONSHIPS TO CONCEPTS

- A mutually reinforcing vision allows for any concept to serve as the catalyst rather than picking a single winner
- Multiple themes will generate greater diversity of job opportunities
- Increased customer presence and activity draws investor interest
- A live-work environment supports the attractiveness for cottage industries and typical live-work models utilize adaptive reuse of existing buildings in the district which improves the physical environment
- Mercantile Food Hub clearly contributes to the increased programming and customer flow as well as utilizes the draw of customers into the area for the home improvement businesses
- A food hub that better connects supply chain for manufacturers
- A food hub increases the livability of the area increasing the viability of a live-work environment

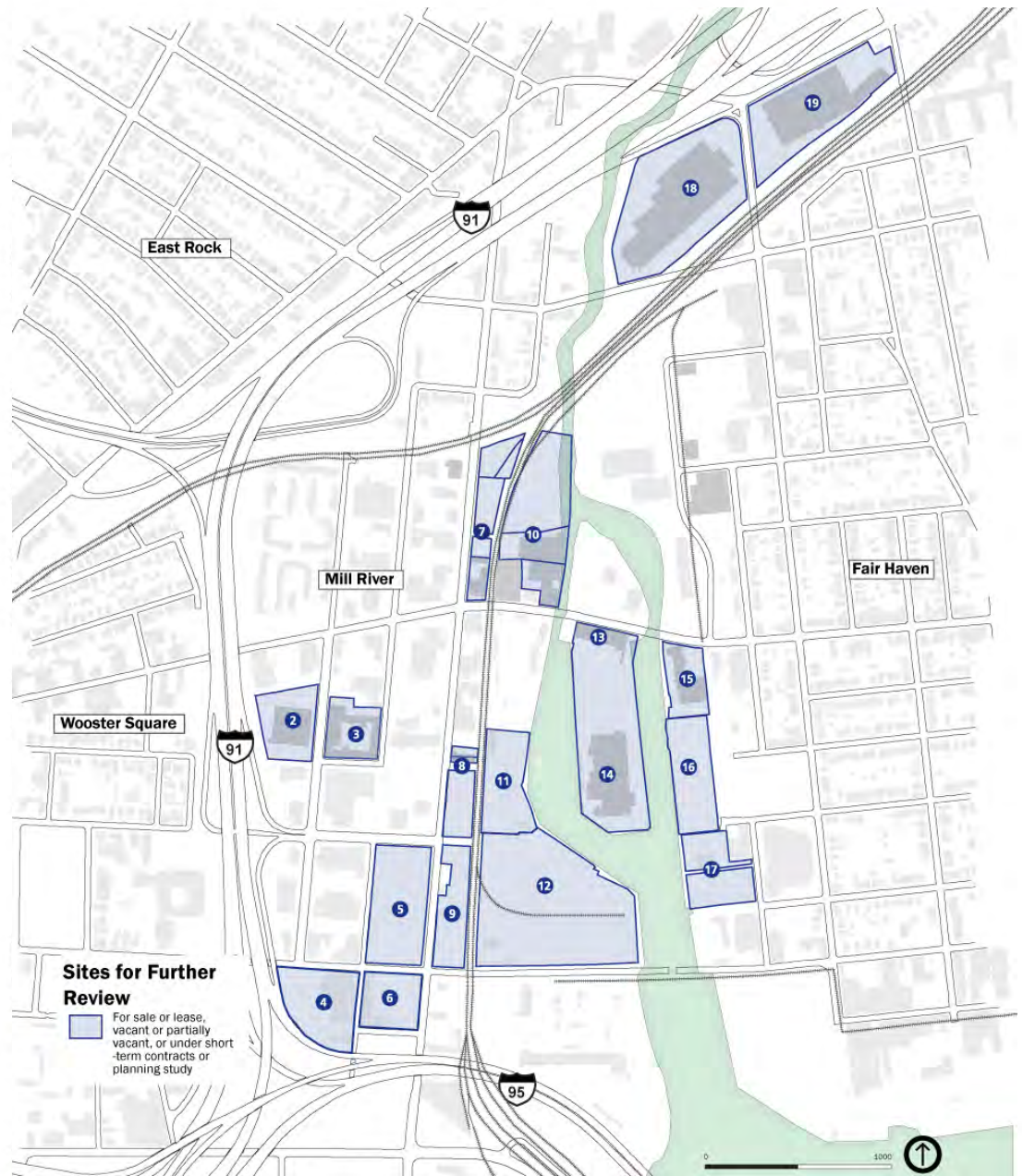
## Phase II Scope

- Testing development scenarios for the concepts to assess the potential scale of the vision and its impact on the District
- Finding the balance of using the waterfront as a public and aesthetic amenity while protecting its important maritime role, as required by the City's coastal management program
- Envisioning the new environment with graphic representations of pedestrian approaches, alternative programming models, and building types
- Recommending a set of enabling tools, policies and practices to allow versions of the concepts to emerge as they are ready and as the market takes hold





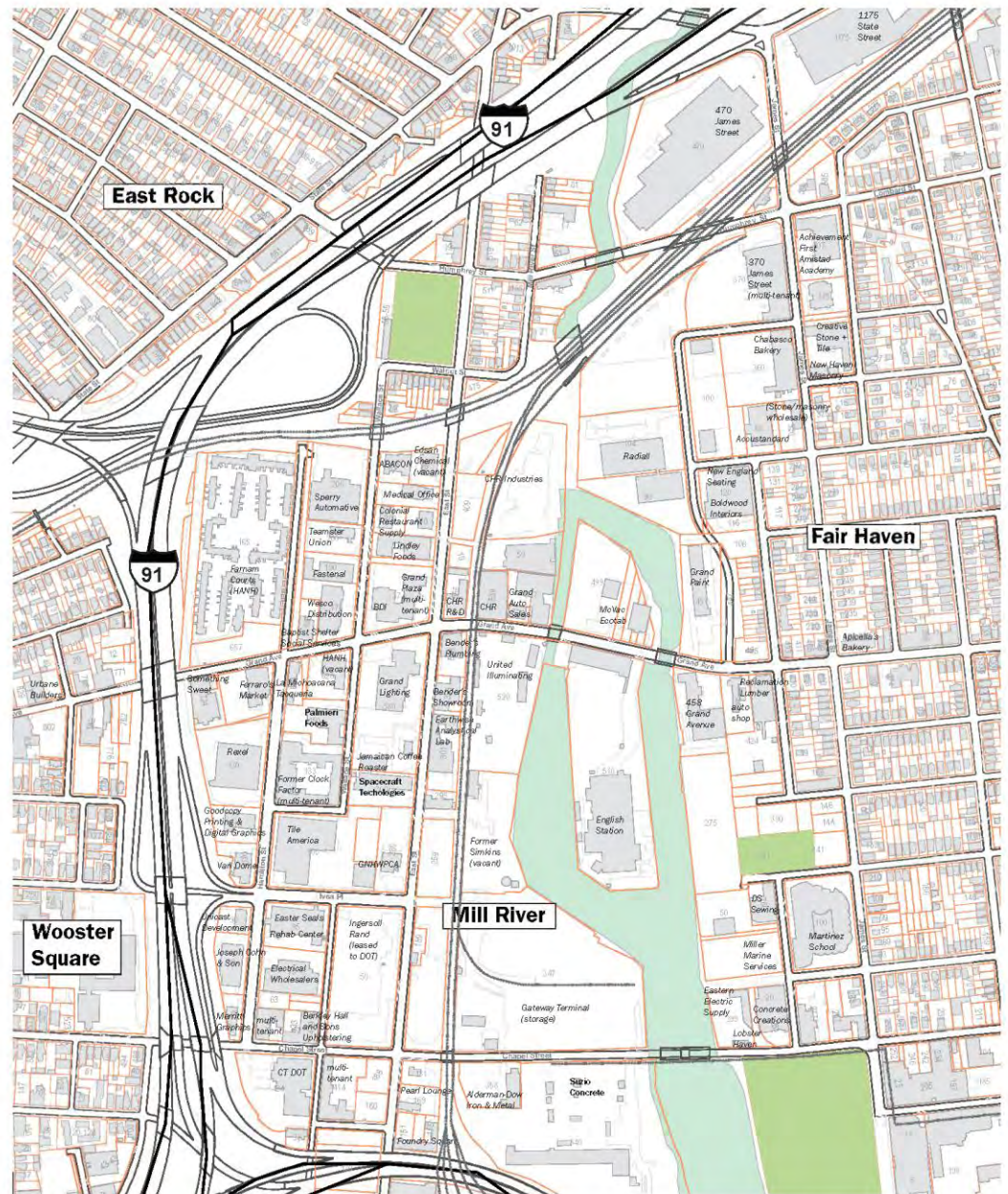
# Phase II: Sites for Further Review



Source: City of New Haven, EDC, Utile, Ninigret Partners Field Research

# Discussion + Questions

## Thank you!



Sources: Parcel Data (City of New Haven, 2008), Interviews and Field Research (2011)