



MCKENNA

Memorandum

TO: City Council Members, Planning Commission Members and Nicol Pulluam, City Manager
City of Hartford

FROM: Donovan Smith, AICP Principal Planner
Hillary Taylor, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: **Summary of Public Open House**

DATE: July 18, 2025

A summary of the public open house that took place on July 16, 2025 Thank you to everyone for their participation during the public open house on July 16th. The open house took place between 6:00pm and 8:00pm and was attended by eight- ten (8-10) community members. Below you will find a summary of the open house comments made by community members.

BIG IDEA BOARD

1. Fire Demolition insurance.
2. Lower taxes or tax incentives
3. Jobs industry
4. Redevelop underutilized lots and buildings.
5. Council term limits
6. Tax free zone
7. Art
8. For 250-year anniversary of America have a big 4th of July celebration
9. Improve welcome signs
10. Mixed-use downtown Housing on 2/3rd level commercial retail on street level
11. Set up something to celebrate America's 250th anniversary
12. Develop empty lots within the city for housing
13. Redevelopment sites
14. Single family duplex housing infill

ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Strengths

- Long-time homeowners and residents
- Railroad and I-94



- Schools
- Small Niche Community
- Red Arrow Highway and I-94
- Fire Department
- Close to bigger cities and lakes
- Affordable
- Close tight knit community

Weaknesses

- Demolishing developable property
- Noisy refrigerated rail cars
- Public involvement – lack community input communication
- Blight
- High taxes
- Too many roads in disrepair

Opportunities

- Grant/loan opportunities for Downtown – MEDC
- Police enforce the ordinance
- Open building for new business opportunities
- Train control ordinance
- Downtown
- Park south of Red Arrow
- Historical area homes
- Street improvements
- Speedway race track
- Support Home based businesses
- Development
- Updating Law and Ordinance – New Master Plan
- Parks and Recreation Plan
- Redevelop County Land Bank properties

Threats

- City fund demolitions
- Speed controls on South Center
- Decreasing home values



- Homeless
- Budget \$ funding
- Need more money

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Housing and Neighborhoods – opportunities for improvement

- Rehabilitation of some buildings and properties
- Consistent ordinance enforcement – blight elimination
- Remove blight in residential and downtown
- Grants housing rehabilitation affordability MEDC MSHDA

Transportation and mobility - opportunities for improvement

- Water tower signage needs to be updated
- Signage for Entry to Hartford and Downtown
- Consistent signage
- Signage
- Walking
- Sidewalk to South Center
- More safe sidewalks and good roads
- Sidewalk repairs
- Road Improvements

Parks, Natural Systems, and Resiliency – opportunities for improvement

- Improve down by the river like Watervilet did with a canoe rental
- Add more parks
- Add more trees
- Need playground in the same area as the library
- Art in the park

Economic Development and Business Support - opportunities for improvement

- Job creation
- If there was a nursing home/senior center create jobs
- City and Township plan together for bigger and better
- MEDC downtown revitalization
- Be nice
- Economic incentives and Brownfields
- Capacity for economic development and business attraction



Community Character - opportunities for improvement

- A large mural with the Paw Paw river and fruit on it on the corner building
- Add more festivals
- Façade grants

Environmental Sustainability and Resilience - opportunities for improvement

- Grant to remove old pipes water
- Trees on Main and Center

Community Engagement and Equity - opportunities for improvement

- A number of churches in our area – youth grants
- Talk to locals at the school
- Community calendar with all the activities
- Art

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Large-sized single-family housing (more than 2,500 square feet)

More	2
Less	3
Right Amount	0

Medium-sized single-family housing (1,500 – 2,500 square feet)

More	1
Less	2
Right Amount	0

Small-sized single-family housing (less than 1,500 square feet)

More	4
Less	1
Right Amount	0

Duplexes

More	3
Less	1
Right Amount	0

Triplexes

More	2
Less	2
Right Amount	0

Quadplexes

More	1
Less	3
Right Amount	0

**Attached Townhouses or Row Houses**

More 2
Less 1
Right Amount 0

Apartments

More 1
Less 3
Right Amount 0

Senior Living facilities

More 3
Less 0
Right Amount 0

Downtown apartments/flats

More 4
Less 2
Right Amount 0

Accessory Dwelling (grandparent flat, etc)

More 5
Less 2
Right Amount 0

Short Term Rentals/Seasonal Housing

More 4
Less 1
Right Amount 0