



# I-84 Danbury Project



Winter 2023 Newsletter

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I-84 Danbury Project



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WINTER 2023

## How Do I Get There?

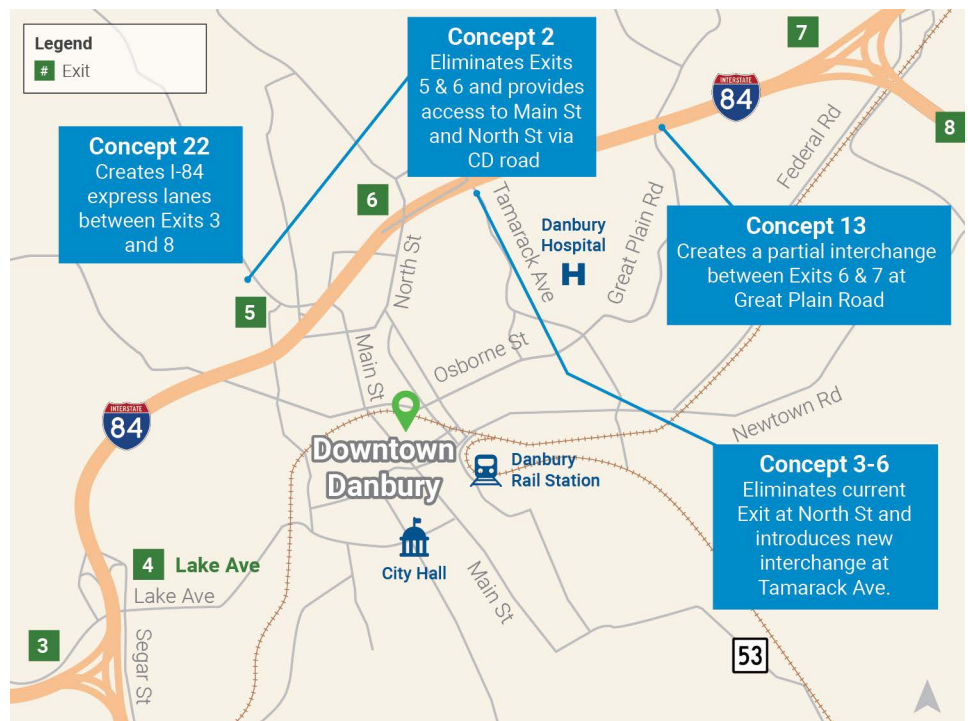
### How Getting Around Danbury Will Change Under Various Concepts

The "How Do I Get There?" series shows readers how they may get to a major destination in Danbury via various concepts. We will be featuring different concepts and different destinations over the next few newsletters to help readers visualize the different concepts impacts to their commute. In this issue, we will be looking at travel to downtown Danbury.

**Concept 22** creates express lanes on I-84 in both directions in the median section between Interchanges 3 and 8 to improve congestion and mobility. This concept also replaces all left exits with right hand exits.

**Concept 3-6** improves access to Danbury Hospital and downtown through a series of improvements in the center section of the corridor. All variations improve access to the hospital and downtown via Tamarack Avenue. North Street interchange is eliminated and is replaced with an interchange on Tamarack Avenue, which will be slightly shifted.

**Concept 13** provides a new partial interchange on I-84 at Great Plain Road between Interchanges 6 and 7 in the center section of the corridor. This interchange will improve access between I-84 and the Danbury Hospital for points west of the Hospital.



**Concept 2** constructs eastbound and westbound collector distributor (CD) roads in the center section of the corridor. Improved access to downtown will be provided via CD road connections to Main Street, Madison Avenue, North Street and Tamarack Avenue. A CD road is a type of road that parallels and connects the main travel lanes of a highway and local state frontage roads or entrance ramp.

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# How Do I Get There? \_\_\_\_\_ Downtown Danbury

<b>Origin: Points North</b>		<b>Directions to Downtown Danbury via I-84 Westbound</b> From Route 7 / Route 202 / Route 37			
Location Examples: New Fairfield Brookfield New Milford North Canaan		<b>Concept 2</b>	<b>Concept 3-6</b>	<b>Concept 13</b>	<b>Concept 22</b>
		» Instead of Exit 5, follow CD road to new exit on Tamarack Ave » Take North St to points downtown	» This concept causes no change to current travel downtown.	» This concept causes no change to current travel downtown.	» Take Route 7 exit to access the local interchanges. Route 7 provides local connections and is on the right separated by a barrier with I-84.
<b>Origin: Points South</b>		<b>Directions to Downtown Danbury via I-84 Eastbound</b> From Route 7 / I-684			
Location Examples: Ridgefield New Canaan Greenwich White Plains, NY		<b>Concept 2</b>	<b>Concept 3-6</b>	<b>Concept 13</b>	<b>Concept 22</b>
		» Instead of using Exit 5, take new exit on Main Street via CD road » Turn right on Main St	» This concept causes no change to current travel downtown.	» This concept causes no change to current travel downtown.	» Take Route 7 exit to access the local interchanges. Route 7 provides local connections and is on the right separated by a barrier with I-84.
<b>Origin: Points East</b>		<b>Directions to Downtown Danbury via I-84 Westbound</b> From Route 67 / Route 25			
Location Examples: Newtown Oxford Beacon Falls New Haven Waterbury		<b>Concept 2</b>	<b>Concept 3-6</b>	<b>Concept 13</b>	<b>Concept 22</b>
		» Instead of Exit 5, follow CD road to new exit on Tamarack Ave » Take North St to points downtown	» This concept causes no change to current travel downtown.	» This concept causes no change to current travel downtown.	» Take Route 7 exit to access the local interchanges. Route 7 provides local connections and is on the right separated by a barrier with I-84.
<b>Origin: Points West</b>		<b>Directions to Downtown Danbury via I-84 Eastbound</b> From Route 7 / I-684			
Location Examples: Brewster, NY Lake Carmel, NY Putnam Valley, NY		<b>Concept 2</b>	<b>Concept 3-6</b>	<b>Concept 13</b>	<b>Concept 22</b>
		» Instead of using Exit 5, take new exit on Main Street via CD road » Turn right on Main St	» This concept causes no change to current travel downtown.	» This concept causes no change to current travel downtown.	» Take Route 7 exit to access the local interchanges. Route 7 provides local connections and is on the right separated by a barrier with I-84.



# Local Spotlight: Lazaro Chavez

## CityCenter Danbury Manager

Lazaro Chavez is the new manager of the CityCenter Danbury, a non-profit organization tasked with sustaining and developing the downtown business district and bringing life and energy into the City. Vida, or life in Spanish, is a word common in Chavez's vocabulary. Chavez has lived multiple lives, as an air traffic controller, ballroom dancer, and events coordinator. In this life, as the manager for CityCenter, he has a vision for the future of Danbury, and the energy to bring it to life.

Chavez is of Dominican and Cuban descent, grew up in the city and suburbs of New York, and made his way to Danbury to teach dance. As a ballroom dance instructor, he has interacted with people of diverse backgrounds in Danbury, all of them coming together for one purpose – to feel the energy and life of dance. With his new role at CityCenter, he takes the same energy to accomplish a similar goal: bring the Danbury community together through revitalizing downtown.

The CityCenter of Danbury has five major strategies to revitalize the area: improving safety and security, enhancing cleanliness throughout the city, building community through arts and aesthetics, supporting business development, and drawing people together through community events.

Chavez sees Danbury as a city that has something for everyone from families to college students to young professionals. By enhancing the feeling of security in the city, more people will be comfortable walking the streets of downtown Danbury. CityCenter is installing camera systems throughout different parts of the city, including at the Danbury CityCenter Green. They are also implementing an ambassador program where designated members of the community act as friendly faces to help visitors for any questions during their visit.

Danbury has the potential to thrive off its 89,000 residents from diverse backgrounds. Danbury [ranks as the number 10](#) most diverse city in the U.S., but in the category of small cities, Danbury ranks as number three - ahead of Norwalk, CT and New Rochelle, NY. One way to showcase this diversity is through supporting business development.

The CityCenter provides assistance to existing businesses with interior and exterior improvements and find ways to attract new businesses to the area. It won't be just any business,

**“Improved on and off ramps, more road space, and investment in public transit would make traveling to downtown more convenient.”**

*Lazaro Chavez, CityCenter Danbury Manager*



Lazaro Chavez, CityCenter Danbury's new manager.

Chavez says, “It needs to be a variety of businesses to help have fluidity of life, energy, and movement in downtown. You’ll have a nice coffee shop here, and maybe there’s a nice store over here, and then an attractive gift shop, and then a gym.”

While supporting local businesses, CityCenter also wants to focus on improving walkability and increasing foot traffic in downtown. Likewise, the I-84 Danbury Project is considering various concepts, both highway and non-highway improvements that would increase access to downtown, helping support Chavez's vision. Chavez observed that residents avoid traveling to downtown because of the bottlenecks on the highway, especially coming from I-684 in New York. “Improved on and off ramps, more road space, and investment in public transit would make traveling to downtown more convenient,” says Chavez.

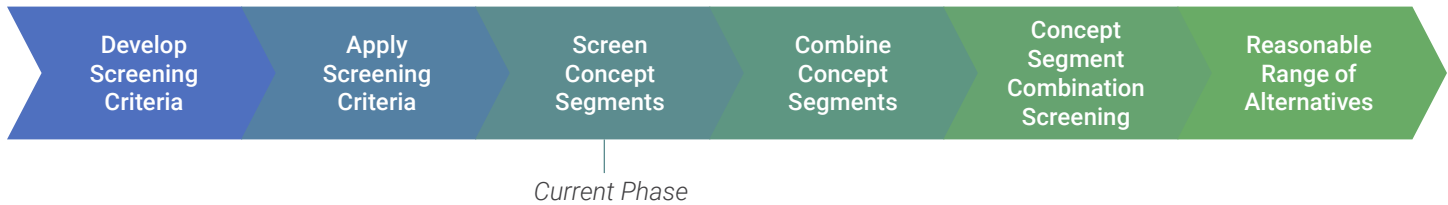
Outdoor events are a wonderful way to bring communities together. They can be a way to celebrate and uplift the CityCenter's goals of cleanliness, safety, arts, and business development. Chavez has seen that residents are more eager to be outside after spending so much time indoors because of the pandemic. Organizing outdoor events gives residents from all parts of the city and surrounding towns the chance to meet one another, get to know downtown, and support new businesses. The HARTtransit Pulse Point Bus station is an easy way to travel to the heart of the city. There is also ample street parking and an affordable parking garage for out-of-town commuters.

The CityCenter believes that reducing congestion on highways and improving mobility on Danbury local roads are critical for a thriving downtown. Chavez is excited to spur economic development, mobility, and access in Danbury.



# Concept Screening Process

## How to Get from 20+ to Just a Few Concepts



Concepts developed by the I-84 Danbury Project team are evaluated through a comprehensive screening process. This helps ensure that the I-84 corridor meets the study purpose of reducing congestion and improving the mobility of people and goods in greater Danbury. The project team is currently in the process of developing and screening many concepts!

In addition to meeting the study purpose, the screening process helps ensure that potential concepts don't cause unjustifiable environmental impacts, are financially feasible, and constructible. All concepts are vetted carefully through screening criteria to ensure best outcomes.

Various engineering considerations evaluate a concept's ability to reduce congestion and improve mobility, as well as its performance relative to cost, schedule, and construction disruption. Congestion improvement, which can be measured by the reduction in peak hour delay is influenced by a number of geometric factors. These factors include the distances between interchanges, the continuity of highway without changing lanes, the ability to maintain a consistent speed throughout the corridor, and elements that do not meet current design standards, such as left hand ramps and curves with insufficient radii. Mobility considerations include access to Danbury Hospital, access to businesses on North Street and Downtown, and the potential to improve local network connectivity.

Environmental considerations evaluate each concept based on its potential impact to neighborhoods. These include people that have been historically underrepresented in the planning

process, effect on community cohesion the need for the acquisition of property for construction, and the impact to historic or other sensitive properties. These considerations also include a concept's potential impact on wetlands and streams, floodplains, and other critical natural resources.

Following the concept screening process, these concepts will be combined into concept segment combinations which will be screened to form the reasonable range of alternatives for further environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This process will be undertaken in coordination with the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) and the public.



## Get Involved!

- 👉 Attend a meeting
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