# Center Street: Initial findings & recommendations

## Findings

1. Speeding is not a systemic issue on Center Street (though isolated incidents of speeding were recorded and could be reduced through traffic calming)
2. Traffic volumes are low, especially travelling east on the portion between the FCHT and Factory Square
3. Travel lane widths are excessively wide for the traffic volume and sampled speeds
4. The Farmington Canal Heritage Trail attracts a significant number of visitors that could be customers at downtown businesses

## Recommendations

CCRPA recommends proceeding with a more thorough study of options. Given the observed constraints on Center St, the following are CCRPA's recommendations:

1. **Add parking to the south side of Center St**: This could easily be accomplished along the two eastern portions of the street with few impacts and should be considered as a short to long term option. To accommodate delivery trucks, a no parking except for deliveries period could be instituted. This would narrow Center St and further discourage speeding.
2. **Create a bike master plan for Southington**: A comprehensive approach to bicycle planning should be undertaken by the town. This approach would look at the entirety of the town and would provide a more integrated and functional environment for cyclists.

## Recommendations for future study

1. **Make the entirety of Center St a one-way**: Following more study, (including business outreach) the town should consider making all of Center St (from the trail to Center Ct) a one-way street. This would open up rarely used road real-estate that could provide more parking or accommodate a future bike lane. Existing traffic patterns do not support a two-way street for this short section of road.
2. **Install a two-way bicycle track**: A two-way bicycle track should be installed along Center St. It is not advisable right now, due to the bulb-out at Liberty St. Removing this bulb-out would permit a 8-10' wide bicycle track. A bicycle track would allow safe and convenient access from the FCHT to downtown businesses. A cycle track could possibly be accommodated with more intensive engineering and technological solutions (such as bicycle signals and more controlled intersections).
3. **Install a network of bicycle lanes throughout town as part of Southington's road maintenance program**: At this time, a one-way bicycle lane travelling west along Center St would provide little benefit. It would not permit safe and convenient travel from the FCHT to downtown businesses. It could be part of a larger bike lane network. Southington's recent decision to create a long-term road maintenance plan presents an opportunity. By creating a bike plan now, bike lane painting could become part of future resurfacing projects, saving considerable time and money.

The following pages discuss these findings in more detail. CCRPA would be happy to assist the town with any of these recommendations.

# Center Street: Existing conditions

## Overview

Center St is a one-way street from Center Ct to N Liberty St, where it changes to a two-way street; the entire length of the street had formerly carried two-way traffic. Parking is allowed on the North side of the street. Traffic calming measures such as a bulb-out and brick crosswalks were installed as part of a downtown revitalization project.

## Benefits

- The one-way portion simplifies the intersection at Center Ct and Main St
- The overly wide street allows delivery trucks to park temporarily, while still accommodating automobile traffic
- The two-way portion allows access to businesses on the south side of Center St
- Provides 25 parking spaces

## Issues

- Overly wide street may encourage speeding (data does not support this assertion)
- Twenty foot travel lanes are an inefficient use of real estate
- Intersection at N Liberty St is confusing

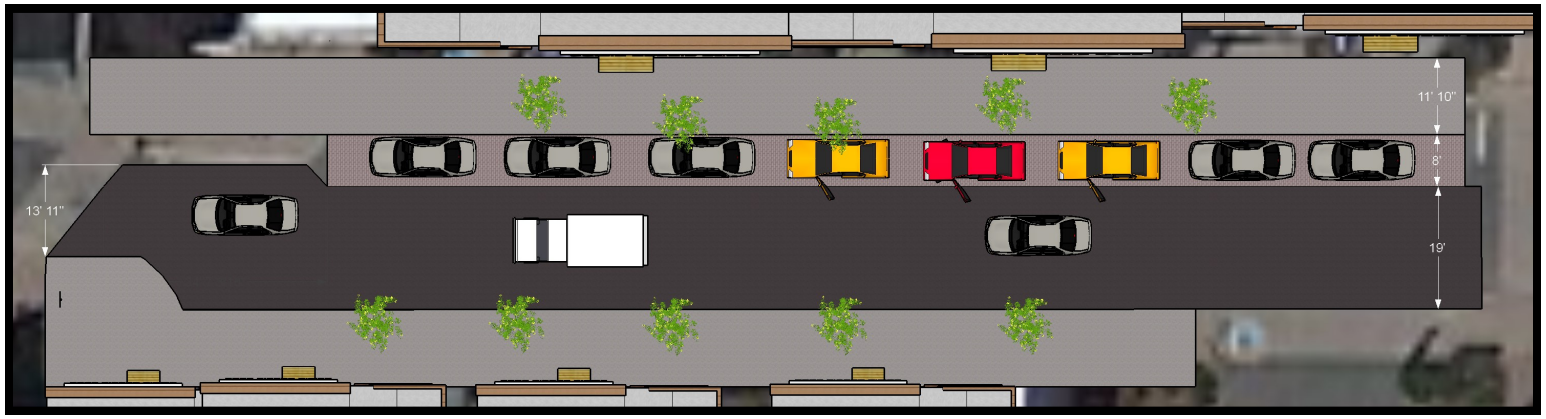
# Center

### Center Ct to Center Place

One-way travelling west-ward. Parking on the north side. 20 foot travel lane.

### Center Place to N Liberty

One-way travelling west-ward. Parking on the north side. 20 foot travel lane. Bulb -out at N Liberty St.




### N Liberty to Factory Square

Two-way street. Parking on the north side.

# Center Street: Traffic data

## Traffic Volumes

CCRPA conducted a traffic study of Center St, the results were as follows:

- Traffic volumes in Southington's center are low (around 2,000 ADT).
- Center St, the main road through the center: 2,500 ADT
- Factory Square, which skirts around the north-western perimeter (possibly used to avoid Route 10): 2,500 ADT
- Where Factory Square meets with Center St: 5,000 ADT
- Center Ct, Liberty St, and N Liberty St, which provide internal circulation: 1,000 to 2,000 ADT
- Traffic counts indicate a Friday & Saturday night crowd. (Additional data available in Excel and PowerPoint files.)

Major roads surrounding the center experience much greater traffic volumes. Route 10 to the east has 15,000 ADT; Columbus Ave to the south has 5,500 ADT. (Both are also two-lane roads, with Route 10 also having turn lanes.)

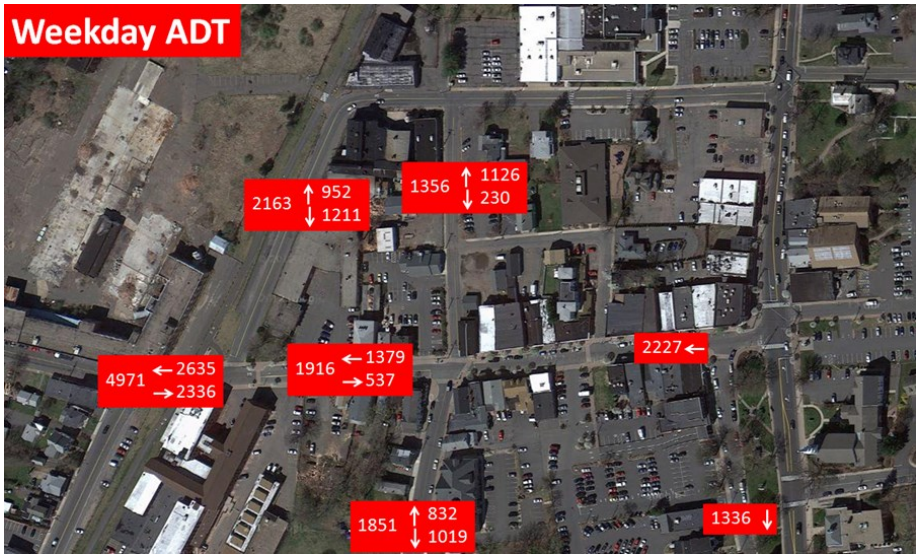
## Traffic Speeds

- The 85th percentile for vehicle speeds on most roads is 25 mph
- On Factory Square, the 85th percentile speed is 30 mph
    - Expected relatively higher due to road's design and relative lack of development
- Near the FCHT, the 85th percentile speed is 21 mph
    - Expected relatively lower due to curve, limited sight lines, and ped/bike activity

## Bike/Ped traffic

Sidewalks:

- North side of Center St between Center Ct and Center Pl: 382 ADP
- South side of Center St between Center Ct and Center Pl: 256 ADP
- West of Parking Lot: 185 ADP
- Peak traffic during lunch on weekdays, dinner to evening on Friday




and Saturday

Farmington Canal Heritage Trail (at Center St) (bikes/pedestrians):

- Daily average: 1,518
- Weekly average: 10,625
- Annual average (estimate): 418,239

A significant amount of foot/bike traffic is generated by the multi-use trail. Counts indicate that an opportunity exists to draw more of it downtown.

# Center Street: With double-sided parking

## Overview

Center St would be modified to allow parking on both sides. The section between Factory Square and N Liberty would be converted to one-way traffic, mirroring the rest of Center St. Parking on the south side of Center St would be "delivery" only during specified hours to accommodate restaurant deliveries.

## Benefits

- Eliminates confusion at N Liberty St.
- Calms traffic by visually narrowing the street
- Provides additional parking at little additional cost (gain of 20 spots)
- Accommodates delivery vehicles

## Issues

- Does nothing for bicyclists (possibly makes the environment worse)

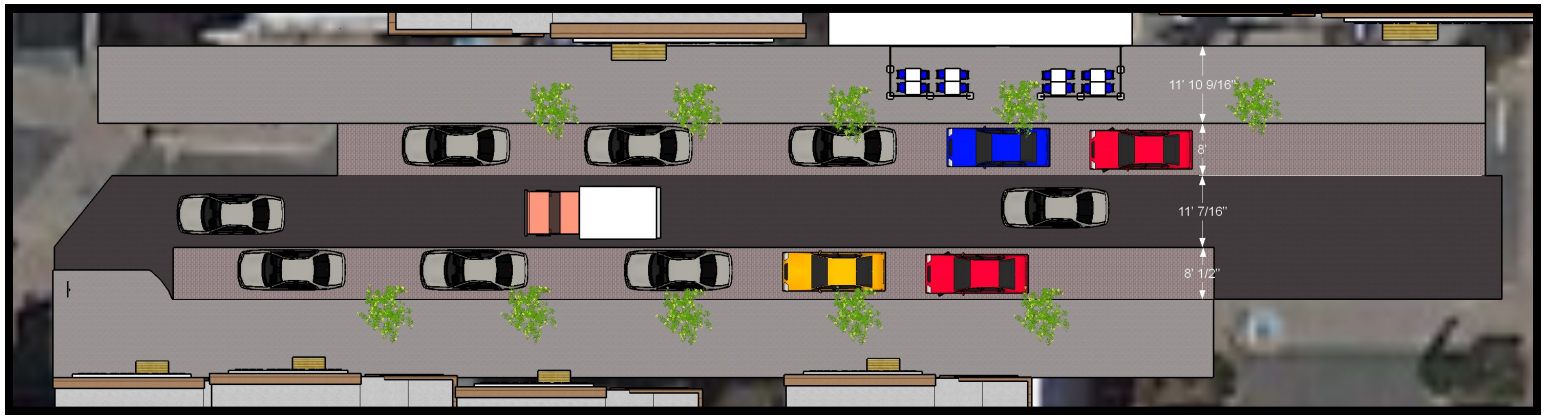
# Center

### Center Ct to Center Place

Parking added to south side of the street: gain of 8 spaces.

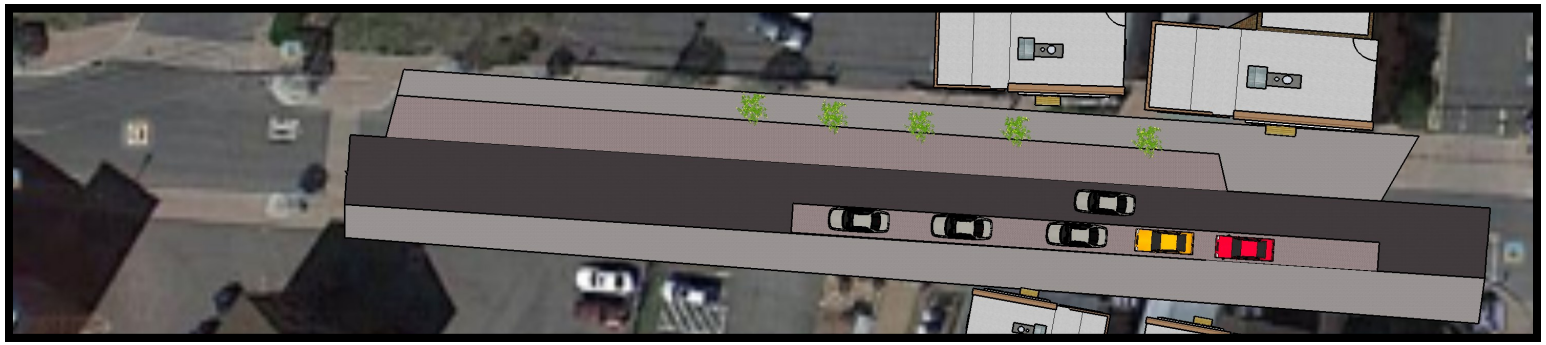
### Center Place to N Liberty

Parking added to south side of the street; gain of 8 spaces.




### N Liberty to Factory Square

Converted to one-way west flowing traffic. Parking added to south side; gain of 6 spaces.



# Double-sided parking compared to existing conditions

# Center Street: With bicycle track

## Overview

A two-way cycle track would be installed along Center St.  Center St between Factory Square and N Liberty St would  become one-way. Signage would be installed at the trail to direct bicycle traffic and advertise downtown businesses. Truck deliveries would be allowed to park in the cycle track during specified delivery hours (to be determined) for no more than 30 minutes at a time.

The bulb-out at N Liberty St would need to be removed to permit two-way bicycle traffic. This could be costly and will require more study.

## Benefits

- Eliminates confusion at N Liberty St.
- Calms traffic by visually narrowing the street
- Encourages trail users to visit downtown
- Creates a safer cyclist environment
- Preserves deliver truck access

## Issues

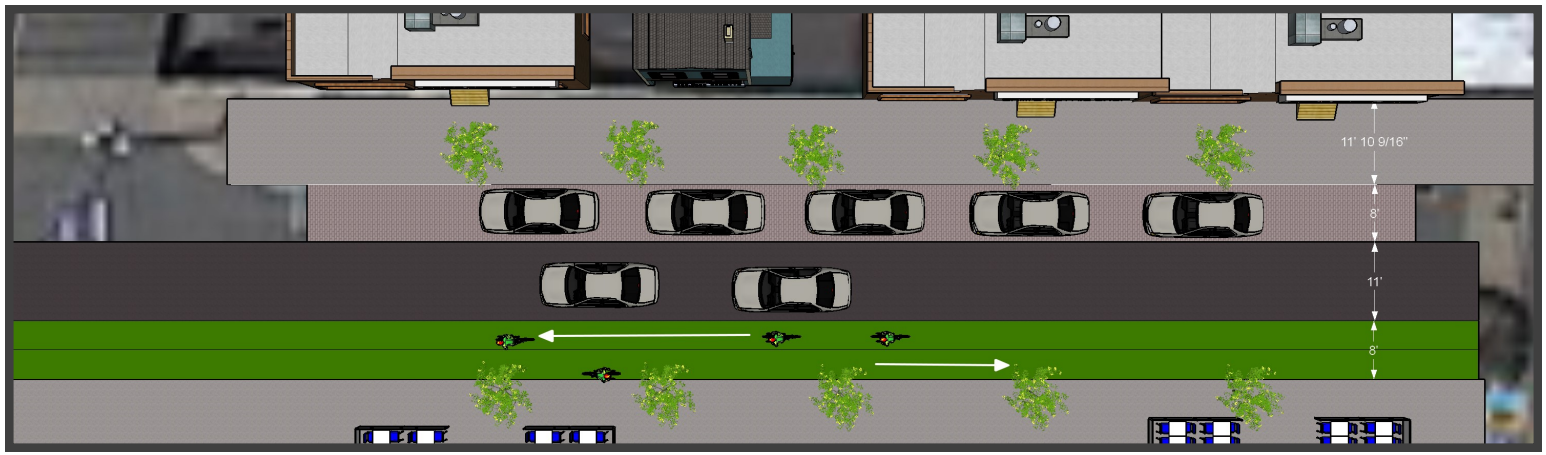
- Bulb-out at N Liberty St narrows the street, constricting bicycle traffic (should be removed)
- Limits parking access on south side of Center St between Factory Square and N Liberty St.

# Center

### Center Ct to Center Place

Travel lane reduced to 11 feet.

Two-way cycle track installed (8 feet in width).

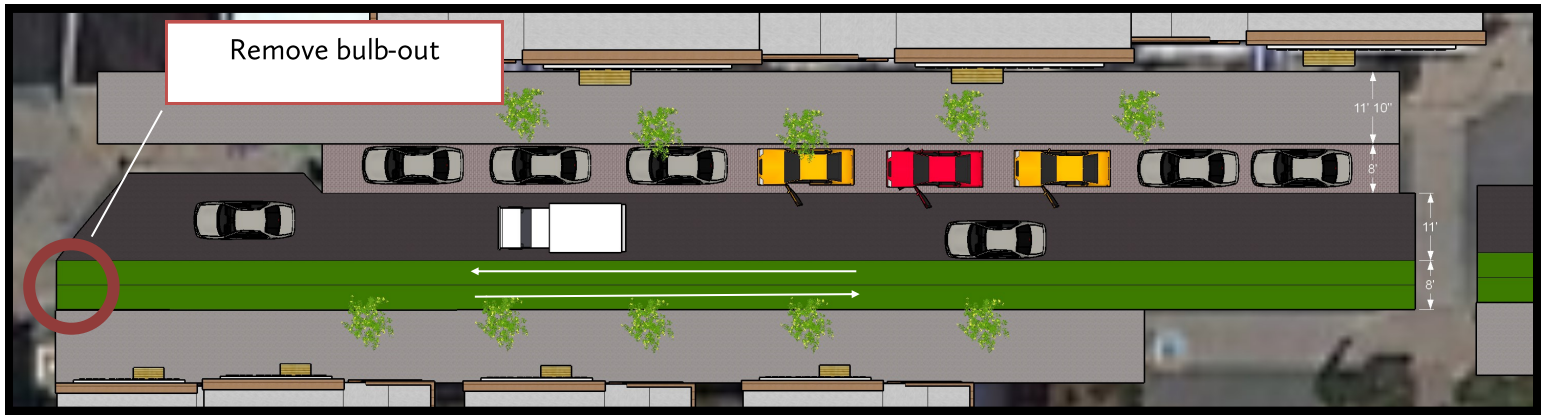



### Center Place to N Liberty

Travel lane reduced to 11 feet.

Two-way cycle track installed (8 feet in width).

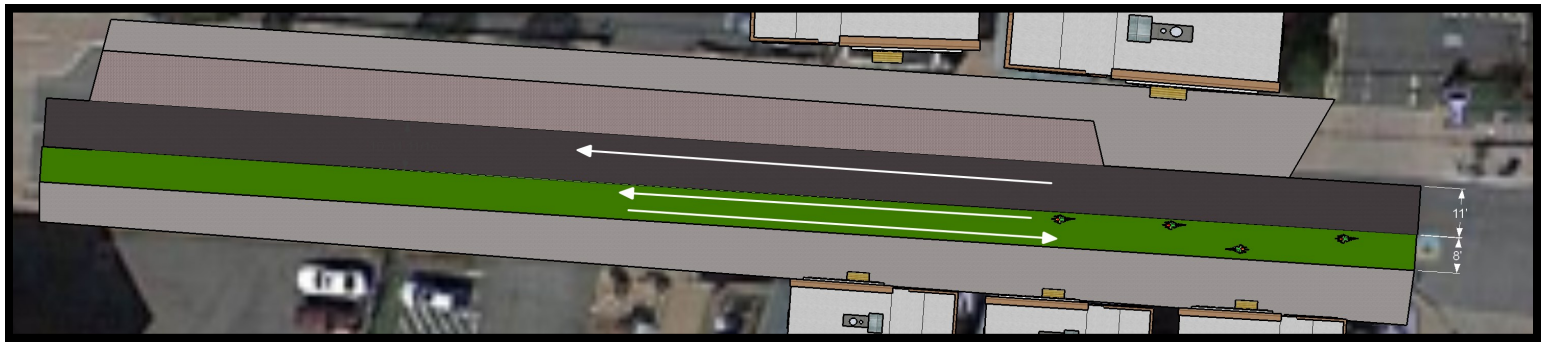
Bulb-out at N Liberty removed.




### N Liberty to Factory Square

Street converted to one-way travel.

Two-way cycle track installed (8 feet in width).



# Bicycle track compared to existing conditions

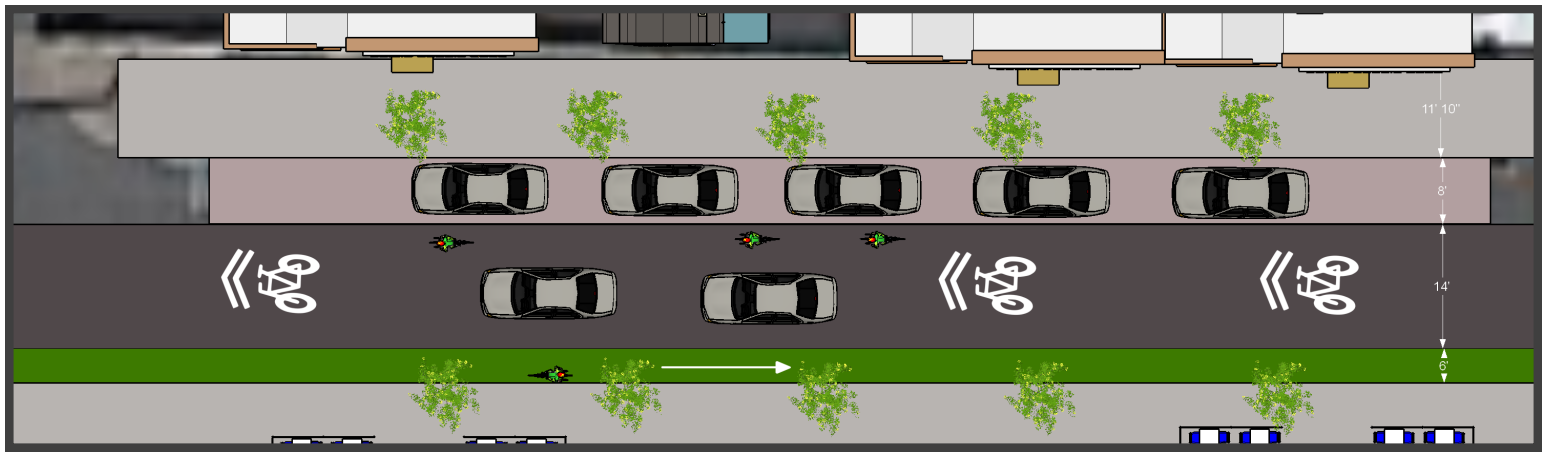
# Center

## Center Ct to Center Place

Travel lane reduced to 14 feet.

One-way cycle track installed (6 feet in width).

“Sharrows” painted in travel lane.



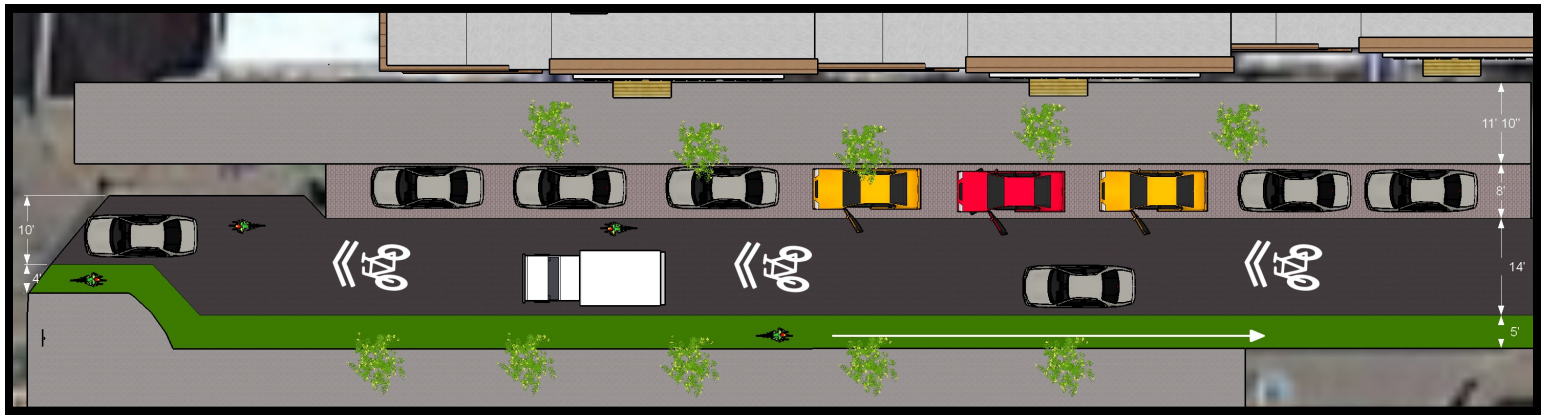

## Center Place to N Liberty

Travel lane reduced to 14 feet.

One-way cycle track installed (6 feet in width).

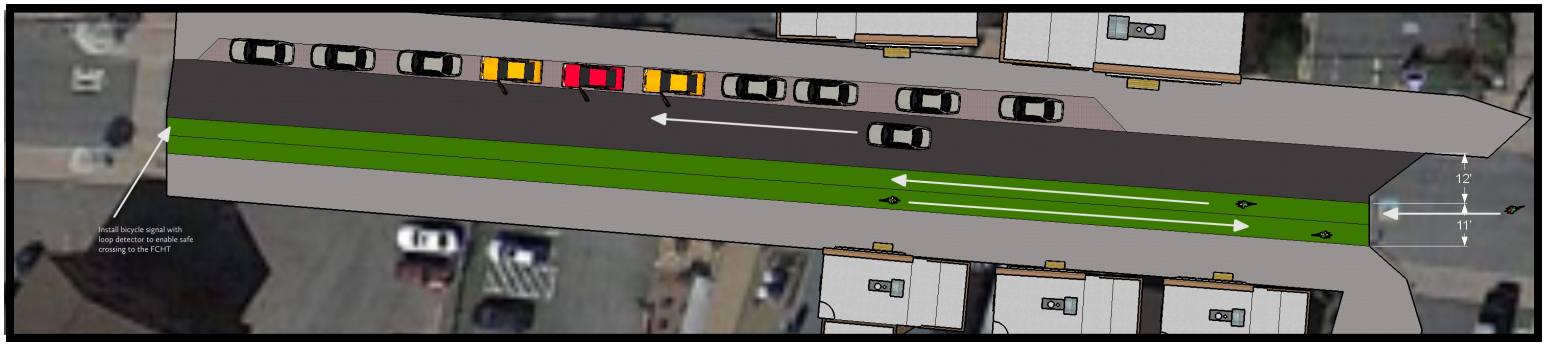
“Sharrows” painted in travel lane.

Bulb-out remains




## N Liberty to Factory Square

Street converted to one-way travel.

Travel lane reduced to 12 feet.

Two-way cycle track installed (11 feet in width).