

Public Hearing before the Legislation Committee  
Of the New Haven Board of Alders  
May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026

# ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT TO ALLOW CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN THE IL DISTRICT



# Lost in New Haven

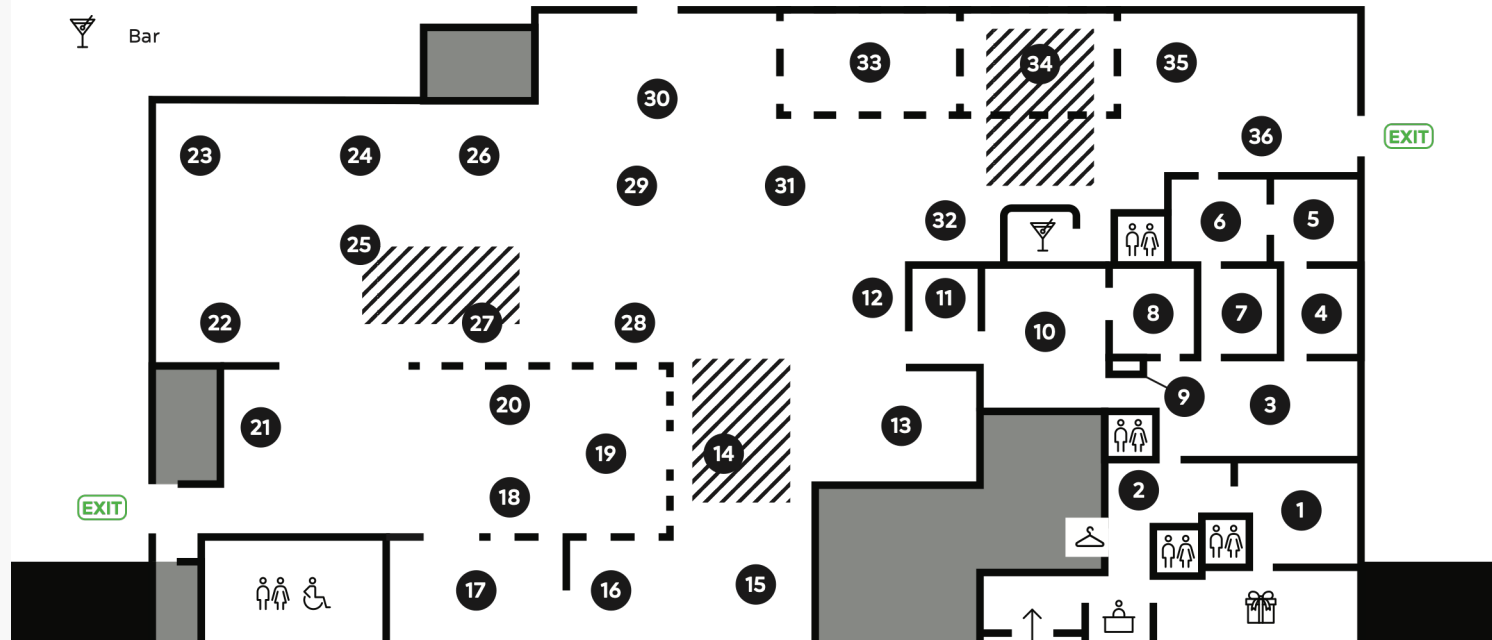
Engages you with immersive exhibits spanning all cultures, interactivity, and tangible artifacts to present our shared American story within one city, New Haven, from its settlement in 1638 through our modern age.



# Exhibit Map

- ↑ Main Entrance
- ♿ Restroom
- EXIT Emergency Exits
- 🍸 Bar
- 👤 Check-in
- 👕 Cloakroom
- 🎁 Giftshop
- 🪑 Seating Areas

# GET LOST. LOST IN NEW HAVEN™



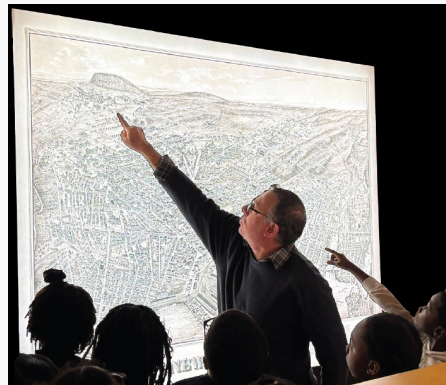
## EXHIBITS

- 1: Art Gallery
- 2: Settlement maps & histories
- 3: Bicycles; **Clocks**; Carriages; The Green; Cemeteries
- 4: **Yale University**; Schools; **Frisbie pie tins**
- 5: Yale fence; Architecture; NXTHVN
- 6: **A.C. Gilbert**; Kickapoo Medicine Co.
- 7: Stoneware; Industry Invoices
- 8: Banks; Currency; **Amos Doolittle**
- 9: **Benedict Arnold**; **Noah Webster**; Powderhouse Day
- 10: **Lanson & Long Wharf**; East Rock; **Paul Sperry**; Lighthouse

- 11: Sargent's; **Charles Goodyear**; **British invasion of 1779**
- 12: Cigars; Connecticut broadleaf tobacco
- 13: **Toad's Place**, Cafe 9, **Cutler's Records**, Nightlife
- 14: Firehouse 12, **The Arena**, WPLR
- 15: Newspapers & Printing
- 16: 1st Switchboard; Industrial Fuels; Toys
- 17: Acme Moving & Furniture
- 18: **Shubert Theatre**; Drama; Men's fashion; Photography
- 19: **May Day**; Protest literature
- 20: Jewelers; Dept. Stores; Women's fashion
- 21: **Días de los Muertos** parade puppets
- 22: Yale Boat House; Yale Peabody Museum
- 23: **The Amistad**; New York City

- 24: Urbanism; Archeology; **Legacies of Urban Renewal**
- 25: **Silly Putty**
- 26: Parks Department; **Columbus Monument**
- 27: Midcentury industry; Lender's Bagels; Starter
- 28: **Nighthawks**; Ravens; **New Haven Coliseum**
- 29: **Lincoln Tree**; Time Capsule
- 30: 19th Century Historic Elevators
- 31: 1835 Fire Pump; NHFD
- 32: **Louis' Lunch**; Pubs & Eateries; **Anchor**
- 33: NHPD; **Adm. Foote**; **Ell Whitney**; **WWII**; Politics
- 34: Grocers' goods; Dairies; **Apizza**; Breweries; Soda
- 35: **Hotel Taft**; NY, NH, H Railroad; Tweed Airport
- 36: Oysters; 1848 Sharpie Boat

# Where students discover our history



# Student Tours



It's more than a museum;  
it's a cultural hub





BUILDING LOST IN NEW HAVEN  
REQUIRES A LOT OF HEAVY LIFTING.

# Planned Expansion to 60 Hamilton Street

- Adding Second Story
- 11,500 s.f.
- Applied for DECD Community investment Fund Grant



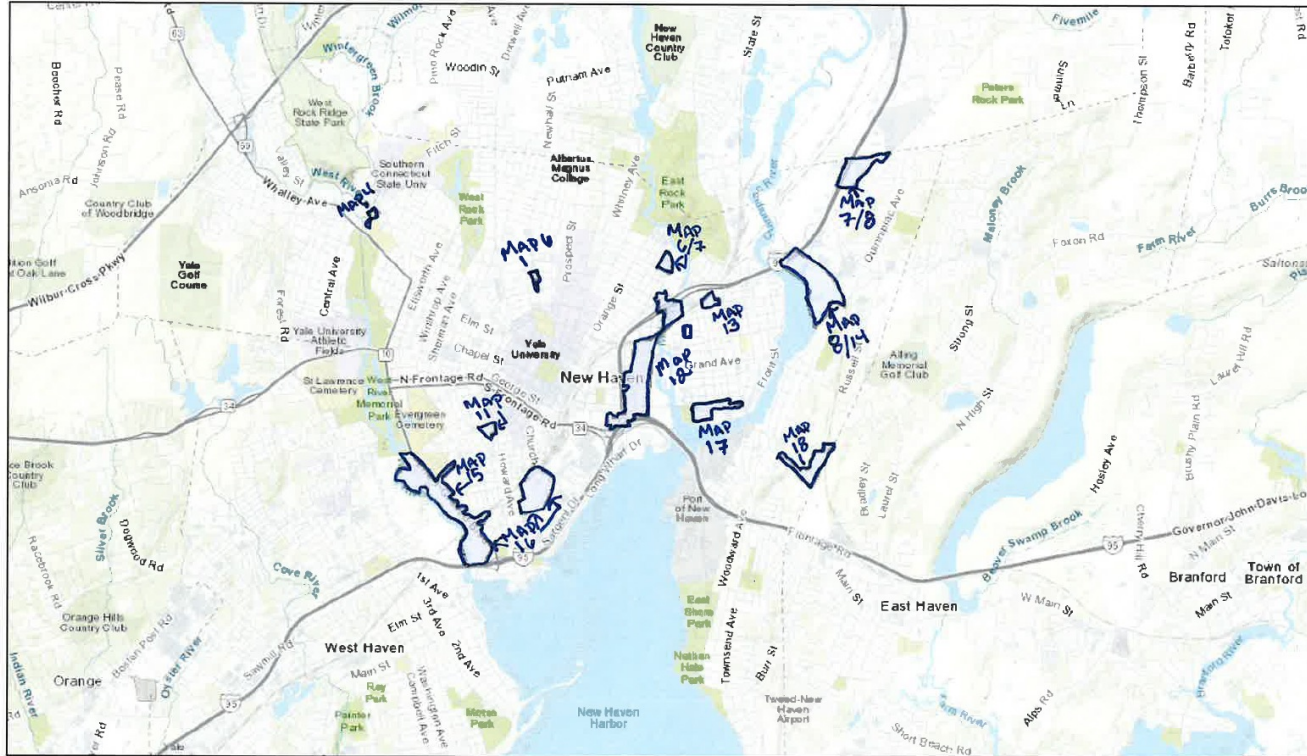


# Reason for Petition for Text Amendment

- Received a Use Variance for 80 Hamilton in 2021 to create museum
- Plan to expand to 60 Hamilton
- Need for certainty for funders and expansion plans that Museums are an allowed use in the IL zone
- Received another variance for 60 Hamilton, but it has been appealed

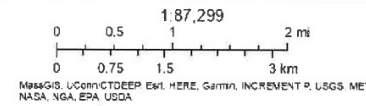
# Text Amendment will apply to all IL Zones


ArcGIS Web Map



- Map 6/7  
Personal Services /  
Restaurant
- Map 11  
Educational/Medical (2  
parcels)
- Map 14  
Wetlands/Nature Preserve
- Map 15  
Retail, Residential, and  
Restaurants
- Map 16  
No Use
- Map 18  
One House

4/22/2026, 5:47:08 PM





## Reasons Why Board should adopt this zoning text amendment

- Consistent with Vision 2034 goals
- Consistent with New Haven Cultural Equity Plan
- Consistent with Charter
- Supports Sound Economic and Cultural Development



# Vision 2034

New Haven's Comprehensive Plan



PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
ADOPTED OCTOBER 15TH, 2025

## Goal 1 increase support for and promotion of arts and culture in New Haven

Strong arts and culture initiative improve quality of life, contribute to mental well-being and create opportunities for education and workforce development



## Goal 3 Support the development of accessible and affordable space for arts and culture across the City. (p. 150)

*Few spaces exist in New Haven's neighborhoods or are available to small organizations or the public. Providing space that is available to a wider audience is important to improving access to opportunities in the arts and to improving equity in arts and culture.*

*Additionally, many spaces are not accessible to artists and patrons with disabilities and should be retrofitted to provide universal accessibility.*

Zoning Map Number	Residential Zones
4	RM-1
6	RM-2, RS-2, RH-2
7	RM-1, RM-2
8	RM-1
11	RM-2
12	RM-2, RH-2
13	RM-2
14	RM-1
15	RM-2
16	RM-2
18	RS-2

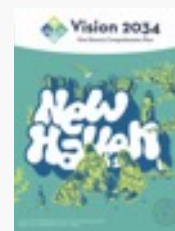
## Goal 3 Support the development of accessible and affordable space for arts and culture across the City. (p. 150)

### Strategy 3.2: Repurpose vacant and underutilized spaces for community use. (p. 150)

*There is vacant and underutilized space located across the City that could be used or converted for use for local artists.*

*This includes vacant and underutilized office and industrial space, institutional space, and retail space.*

*The City, through its Economic Development Administration, should work with property owners to make such space available to artists and arts and culture organizations through short-term rentals, leases, or purchase agreements.*



#### Underutilized Properties



33 Chestnut Street



1242 State Street

## **Goal 4: Make neighborhood commercial centers stronger and more vibrant.**

### *4.7 Increase integration of third spaces downtown and in neighborhood commercial centers.*

Third spaces, such as cafes, libraries, art studios, parks, and community centers play a vital role in fostering social connections, civic engagement, and overall well-being in a community. They serve as informal gathering places where people can interact outside of home, work, or school, helping to build a sense of belonging and social cohesion.

## **Goal 5: Embrace storytelling to build community and share culture**

### *5.5 Document and tell New Haven's story from diverse and multicultural perspectives.*

The City should use the storytelling platforms and spaces ...to make that information available to the community in an engaging way. The City should also work towards developing a comprehensive digital map of significant cultural places across New Haven ...to ensure that the history of marginalized groups is reflected.



# Cultural Equity Plan

Goal: to expand footprint of cultural institutions to every corner of the City

- Concentration of cultural activities in the downtown away from concentrations of Black/Brown communities
- Provide opportunities for Black and Brown residents to enjoy the arts that the City has to offer
- IL zones are in Fair Haven, the Hill, Wooster Square – allowing museums, libraries and art galleries will further this goal
- Repurpose Vacant and underutilized industrial buildings for community use, including use for local artists

5

Support neighborhood gathering spaces and events.



CITY OF  
NEW HAVEN

## CULTURAL EQUITY PLAN

20  
22

# Text Change is Consistent with Mixed Use Nature that the IL Districts have become

Number of Uses Allowed As of Right in the IL District – not just industrial uses, BOA deems compatible

*e.g. Food stores, pharmacies, barbershops, beauty parlors, gyms, restaurants, stores selling furniture, china, antiques, banks, offices, music and dancing schools, day care centers*

<b>Uses (Other Than Industrial Uses)</b> <b><u>Permitted As of Right in the IL Zone under Section 42, Table 3 – Use Table</u></b>
<b>C. Sale of Food, Drink &amp; Pharmaceuticals</b>
STORE SELLING ITS GOODS PREDOMINANTLY AT RETAIL ON PREMISES, AS FOLLOWS:
Retail Bakery
Pharmacy or Cosmetic store, including sale of goods and services customarily incidental thereto
Food specialty store, including but not limited to following lines: Eggs, fish, meat (excluding slaughtering and eviscerating), poultry (excluding slaughtering), fruits, nuts, candy, teas, coffee, confection, dairy products, health foods, vegetables.
Grocery, Delicatessen, Supermarket or other store carrying a variety of food and related good
<b>D. Personal Services</b>
Barber shop, beauty shop, reducing salon
Laundry, cleaner, dyer, clothing storage establishment (all, including pick-up station), or self-service laundromat, all performing services entirely for retail trade on premises
Health clubs, gyms, personal training, with associated classes
Vocational, trade or business school
<b>E. Eating, Drinking Places &amp; Entertainment</b>
EATING AND DRINKING PLACES
Establishment selling food for immediate consumption on or off premises (excluding drive-in and drive-through establishments).
Restaurant, as defined in Article I, <a href="#">Section 1</a> , selling or serving alcoholic beverages for immediate consumption on or off premises, including accessory entertainment, or permitting immediate consumption of alcoholic beverages on or off premises, including accessory entertainment

(See full list in notebook)

# Non-Industrial Uses in IL District

East Rock Center  
Nicoll St in IL Zone

Office Spaces / Connecticut / New Haven / 285 Nicoll St, New Haven, CT 06511



# Cultural Uses Already in the IL District

*No incompatibility with neighboring uses*

## 333 East St Gallery

Was light manufacturing, Built in 1900, IL Zone, Taxable



## Erector Square

315 Peck Street, Numerous artist studios

IL Zone abutting residential areas, Fully taxable

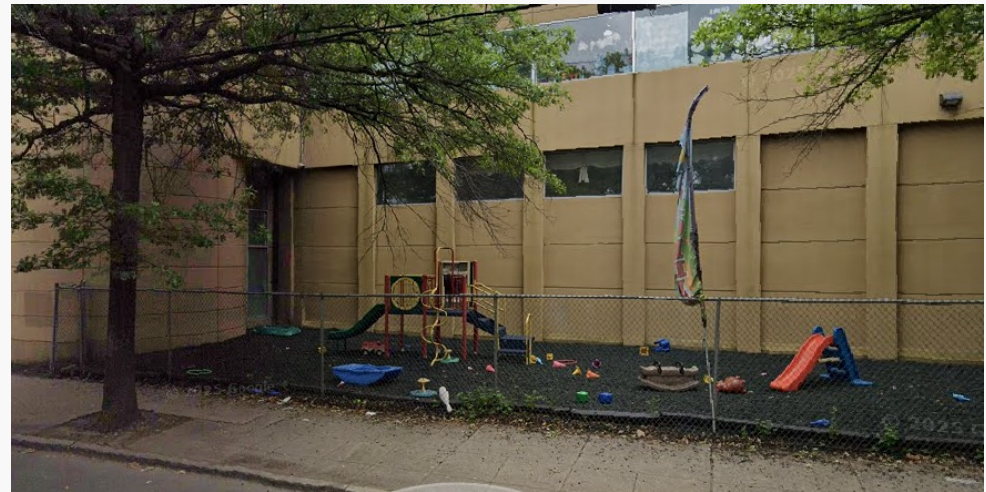


# Museum Use that Children visit is not incompatible with the IL District

*BOA has recognized that activities that children re participate in are consistent with the IL District*

- Daycares
- Dancing Schools
- Music Schools
- Gyms – marital arts

First Steps Learning Center, Hamilton Street IL Zone



**Uses Involving Children Permitted As-of-Right in the IL Zones**

NAME	AGES	ADDRESS
Children's Aiko		315 Peck Street
Music Haven	First Grade through Senior in High School	315 Peck Street
Sarah Kennedy Ballet for Young People	3 – 16	315 Peck Street
<u>Kidz</u> Tyme Learning Center	6 weeks to 12	560 Ella T. Grasso Blvd.
First <u>Step Child</u> Care and Learning Center	6 weeks – 5 Before and After School Programs 5 – 13 In excess of 150 children	95 Hamilton Street
Precious Little People Daycare	6 weeks – 5	95 Hamilton Street
World Champion Taekwondo	Little Tigers, Children and Teens	285 Nicoll Street
First <u>Step Child</u> Care and Learning Center or affiliate	Daycare 300 children	184 and 196 Chapel Street-former abandoned warehouses ( <u>H.B. Bigelow &amp; Company</u> -184 Chapel Street, built in 1965; totaling 13,260 sf) and <u>Lynn Ladder &amp; Scaffolding Company</u> -196 Chapel Street; 3 buildings built in 1870, 1918 and 1956; totaling 39,000 sf)

Vision 2034  
Future land use  
map  
( p. 183)

**Land Use Categories**

- Medium-Density Residential
- Coastal Mixed-Use





**No complaints with respect to adjacent uses in the IL Districts where cultural institutions exist**

Zeneli brothers, owner of property adjacent to Lost In New Haven, are not opposing the text change. They agree that both uses can co-exist.

Erector Square has positive relationship with neighbors.

# Museums, Art Galleries and Libraries will not be taking over spaces that would otherwise be devoted to light industrial uses

*Very little demand for warehouse manufacturing space*

## Letter from Hope Chavez, Arts Council of Greater New Haven

The challenge we face in our Light Industrial (IL) zones is not a clash of sectors, but an issue of vacancy and unrealized potential. IL zones in New Haven provide ample opportunities for solving numerous economic and cultural challenges for the City. These buildings are not meeting the modern needs for manufacturing and warehousing, so they remain empty, non-revenue generating, and deteriorating. We can change that with this policy.

## Email from Helen Rosenberg, City Economic Development

I have not received many requests for manufacturing or distribution space in the city over the past several years unlike 20-35 years ago when I would receive a few a month. I attend the monthly Real Estate Commercial Investment Division meetings and haven't noticed a lot of industrial space needs announced.

I can't see any problem having a museum located next to an IL use. Most IL activities would be contained within the building and there would be no risk to children attending a children's museum.

## Letter from John Wareck, Real Estate Broker

As a commercial real estate owner and broker, I have learned that repurposing old industrial space, which can no longer be used for modern industrial due to its low-ceiling heights, lack of docks, lack of modern HVAC, lack of electrical service, and lack of scale, is an essential task if we hope to breath life into semi-abandoned neighborhoods. Supporting LINH's needs is a rare multi-generational opportunity to accomplish that.

# Non-University Museums, Art Galleries and Libraries do not have a major impact on the taxable grand list

- Most art galleries rent spaces and their landlords pay taxes
- Museums might own their properties but new museums are a rarity
- Lost in New Haven is the first new museum in New Haven in close to 41 years.
- Cultural Institutions contribute to the economy in spending (restaurants, shopping), creating jobs, staying overnight in hotels, tourism – millions of dollars
- Many cultural institutions are in rented spaces and paying taxes
- Cultural activities bring substantial revenues
- Cultural Center has been crucial to make the City an attractive location for new renters and retirees

### Non-University Museums, Art Galleries & Libraries

<u>Museums</u>	<u>Founded</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Tenant(s)</u>	<u>Owner Pays Taxes</u>	<u>Amount of Taxes Paid: 7-1-25/1-1-26</u>
Lost in New Haven	2020	80 Hamilton Street	Lost in New Haven, Inc.	No	No	N/A
New Haven Museum	1862	114 Whitney Avenue	New Haven Colony Historical Society	No	No	N/A
CT Children's Museum	1973	22 Wall Street	CT Children's Museum Inc.	No	No (acquired from an entity that did not pay taxes)	N/A
Blessed Michael McGivney Pilgrimage Center	1982	1 State Street	Knights of Columbus Museum, Inc.	No	No (acquired from an entity that did not pay taxes)	N/A
Ethnic Heritage Center	1988	270 Fitch Street	Ethnic Heritage Center of New Haven, Inc.	Yes	No (Owner SCSU)	N/A
<b><u>Art Galleries</u></b>						
Kehler Liddell Gallery	2003	873 Whalley Avenue	Arlow LLC	Yes	Yes	\$20,285.10 – leases portion of building
Ely Center of Contemporary Art	2016	162 James Street (Temporary Location)	City Seed Inc.	Yes	No	N/A
City Gallery	2003	994 State Street	990 State Street Associates LLC	Yes	Yes	\$33,465.58 – leases portion of building
NXTHVN	2018	169 Henry Street	169 Henry Street LLC	Yes	Yes	\$67,597.56 - leases portion of building
Erector Square (Studios & Galleries)	1967	315 Peck Street (IL Zone)	Erector Square LLC	Yes	Yes	\$85,228.36 – leases portion of buildings
333 East Street Gallery	2026	333 East Street (IL Zone)	Halprin Jack A Inc.	Yes	Yes	\$29,011.40– leases portion of building
<b><u>Libraries</u></b>						
The Institute Library	1826	847 Chapel Street	851 Chapel Street Associates LLC	Yes	Yes	\$24,806.04 – leases portion of building

**Museums, Art Galleries and Libraries that are Tenants in Properties that Pay Taxes**

<b><u>Art Galleries</u></b>	<b><u>Founded</u></b>	<b><u>Address</u></b>	<b><u>Owner</u></b>	<b><u>Tenant</u></b>	<b><u>Owners Pay Taxes</u></b>	<b><u>Taxes</u></b>
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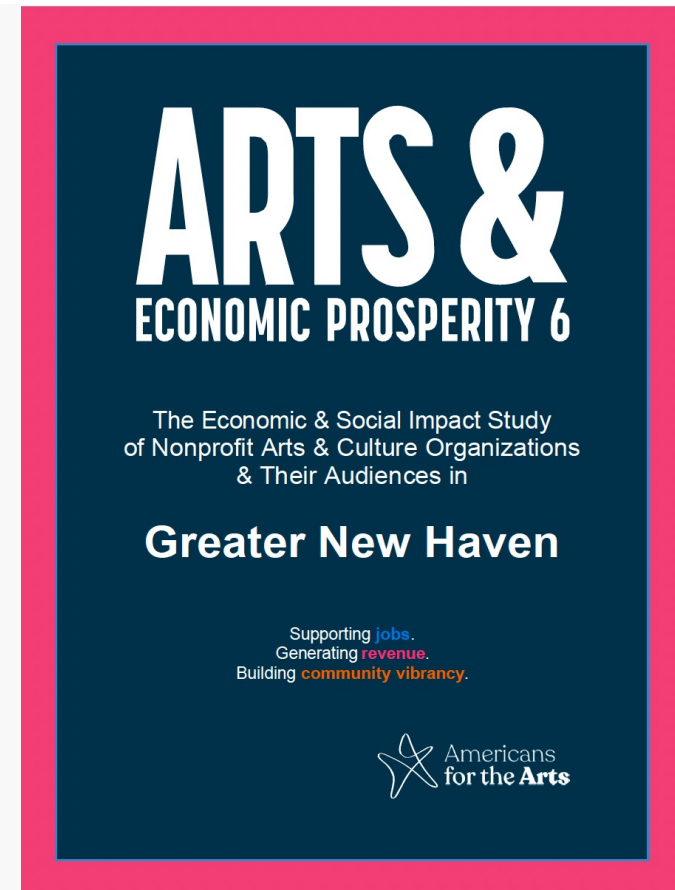
# Arts and Culture of the New Haven – An Economic Engine

New Haven has a dynamic and diverse arts and cultural scene that is integral to the City’s identity and economic vitality contributing to New Haven

*“New Haven's arts sector generated \$143.4 million in economic activity during 2022 - \$118.3 million in spending by arts and culture organizations and an additional \$25.2 million in event-related expenditures.*


*That economic activity supported 2,402 jobs, provided \$112.8 million in personal income to residents, and generated \$34.2 million in tax revenue.”*

*Source: Americans for the Arts, Arts & Economic Prosperity 6, The Economic & Social Impact Study of Nonprofit Arts & Culture Organizations & Their Audiences in City of New Haven*



# City Plan Commission Findings (advisory report)

- Advances **Vision 2034 Comprehensive Plan**
  - *Reuse vacant buildings • Expand access to arts citywide*
- Cultural uses have **significantly lower impacts** than industrial uses
  - *No heavy truck traffic, noise, or emissions*
- Industrial buildings are **well-suited for reuse**
  - *Open floor plans • High ceilings • Flexible layouts*
- IL zones already allow similar large floor plan uses
  - *Gyms • Grocery stores • Dance and music schools*
- Cultural reuse is already working in New Haven
  - *Erector Square • NXTHVN*



## City Plan Commission finds that the text change complies with the Charter requirements:

- Uniform for each class of building 181 and 182
- Made in accordance with comprehensive plan – zoning ordinance
- Cultural activities allowed in every residential zone and in every business zone (BE need a special permit)
- Promotes health and general welfare
- Made with reasonable consideration as to the character of the proposed district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the City



## Conclusion

This is a **minor zoning text update** that supports reuse of vacant buildings, expands cultural access, and promotes the economic vitality of New Haven.

It also aligns with the City's Vision 2034 and Cultural Equity Plan.



THANK YOU