



CITY OF DANBURY

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
DANBURY, CONNECTICUT 06810

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TO: Hon. Mark D. Boughton
Members of the Common Council

FROM: James V. Bellano
Director, Office of Economic Development

DATE: December 29, 2004

RE: Monthly Report, December 2004

The Office of Economic Development (OED) leads marketing efforts to businesses interested in relocating to Danbury, and provides support services created to expand existing local businesses. A variety of assistance is available which has been designed to facilitate and stimulate the process of business and community development. OED is dedicated to providing Danbury with growth opportunities while incorporating diverse cultural, historical and natural resources within the city.

Consistent with its mission, the OED submits its monthly report for December, 2004.

Marketing and Promotion:

- Development of the marketing piece in the form of an interactive CD-ROM for a direct mail campaign targeted at recruiting businesses to Danbury is progressing.

I have been working with the Connecticut Economic Resource Center's (CERC) consultant on different designs for the CD. Also, I have asked Jessica Soriano to work with me on the project to provide content and photos specific to the city.

The remaining work on the project entails gathering information for the CD- a task that has been ongoing. Content, in the form of company/agency overview, contact person, address, phone, fax, website and email address are being confirmed for the numerous economic development resource providers that will be listed on the CD (see Attachment A for an example).

In addition, I am considering approaching individual companies that may be interested in sponsorship of specific pages on the CD. Sponsorship would further defray the costs of the project. However, given the time involved with verifying and creating content, solicitation of sponsorships with out additional administrative support may delay the project.

- The OED continues to respond to inquiries from the press and other media outlets on a regular basis. Attached is a piece from a recent issue of the Fairfield County Business Journal highlighting Danbury as part of an economic overview of the region (see Attachment B).

Strategic Economic Development:

- OED is in the process of applying to the US Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) to undertake a study known as a Strategic Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

A CEDS is required for a region to qualify for EDA assistance under its public works, economic adjustment, and most planning programs, and is a prerequisite for designation by EDA as an economic development district (EDD).

As reported last month, the cost of a CEDS is approximately \$50,000.00. The Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials has committed \$15,000.00 to the project. If approved, EDA's contribution would be approximately \$25,000.00. As mentioned above, NU is interested in participating, with a likely contribution of \$5,000.00. The balance will come in the form of in-kind contributions from OED's administration of the study.

Business Assistance:

- the development of a database of economic development information and contacts continues; however, it must be noted that without administrative staff, projects of this type are difficult to update and complete due to the time required to input data.
- OED regularly receives inquiries regarding various properties located in Danbury. Some are initial inquiries, some are confidential at this time. The OED treats each on a case-by-case basis, answering questions regarding available economic development assistance, or referring the inquiry to the appropriate party that may meet the needs of the inquiring client.

Other:

- continued meetings with members of the Danbury development and commercial brokerage community (ongoing process).
- continued meetings with state, regional, and other economic development officials and attendance at various statewide events and seminars (ongoing process).
- consistent with the mission of the OED, and in addition to any responsibilities to municipal boards and commissions, I also regularly attend meetings of the following organizations: Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board (WIB), City Center Danbury, Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce, Western Connecticut CID (commercial realtors/brokers), Housing Opportunities Committee (United Way of Northern Fairfield County).

ATTACHMENT A

Danbury, Connecticut



Why Come to Danbury?

Business Resources

Quality of Life

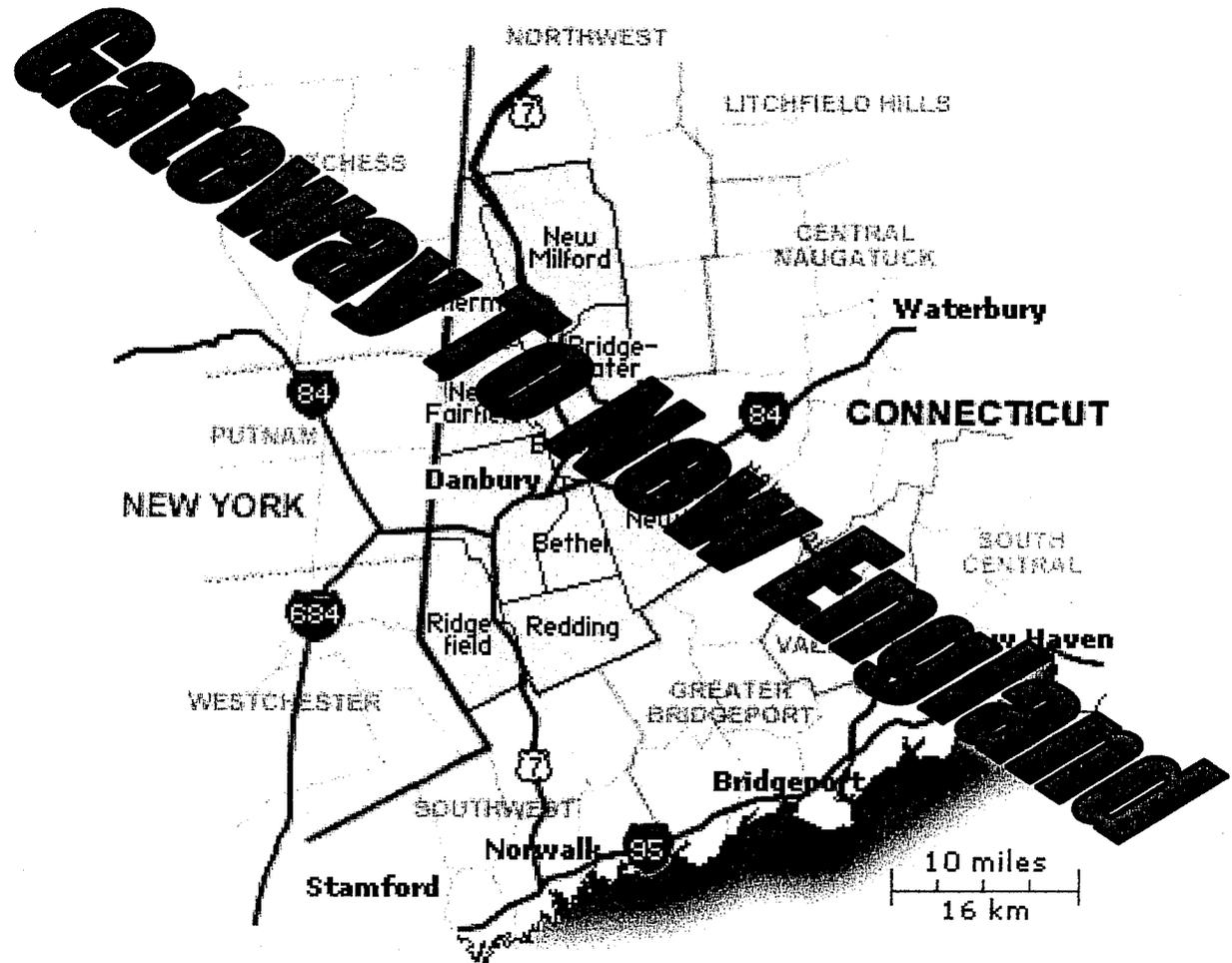
City Center

Transportation

Education

Sponsors

City of Danbury
Office of Economic Development
155 Deer Hill Avenue
Danbury, CT 06810
203-796-1649
www.xxxxxx.com





Transportation

Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials

State of Connecticut Department of Transportation

Housatonic Area Regional Transit

MetroPool

Metro-North Commuter Railroad

Danbury Municipal Airport

Bradley International Airport



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Housatonic Area Regional Transit (HART). HART is Greater Danbury's public transportation provider. It was founded in 1972, and currently operates a 15 Route system as well as Paratransit /Dial-a-Ride service (SweetHART). HART runs Bus-to-Rail shuttles, a trackless Trolley, Contract transit and maintenance services.

We provide service to the Greater Danbury Area and beyond, with connections to other transit providers in the NY and CT metro areas.

Contact HART:

62 Federal Road
Danbury, CT 06810
Tel: 203-744-4070
Fax: 203-744-0764

email: info@hartct.org
website: www.hartct.org

ATTACHMENT B

What's up in northern Fairfield County?

At a regional roundtable held in Danbury recently, Mayors Mark D. Boughton of Danbury, Dannel P. Malloy of Stamford, and Alex A. Knopp of Norwalk all put traffic congestion at the top of their list of woes.

For Danbury, both Interstate 84 and Route 7 are major issues. "I-84 is coming to a level of service that resembles I-95," Boughton told an audience of 200. Traffic on I-84 through Danbury is now at 25,000 vehicles per day, compared with 45,000 per day on I-95. "While plans exist for road widening and realigning interchanges for exits 1 through 11, only work at exit 5 has been completed," Boughton said. "Meanwhile, the city continues to gain in population and is now the seventh largest in the state."

Danbury would benefit from road widening from two lanes to four lanes on Route 7 north from Route 35 in Ridgefield to the I-84 interchange. Construction is now out to bid on the first phase at a cost of \$9.9 million and work on the southern section of highway will begin in 2005. Completion of the project is set for 2007 for an additional \$20.5 million. With rail travel a viable alternative to Route 7 linking Danbury to Norwalk and New York City, the state of the single-track diesel line is also an issue. According to James V. Bellano, Danbury's director for economic develop-

ment, the line still has a manual signaling system where the engineer calls ahead to make sure the line is clear. Jon Chew, executive director of the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials, said there are plans to upgrade the signaling system and extend the line to New Milford. At peak times, trains leave Danbury at 45-minute intervals, but take two hours to reach Grand Central Terminal. Most commuters drive to New York's Westchester County to take Metro-North trains to New York City.

Downtown Danbury development incentives

In October, Danbury initiated an incentives program to attract retail and market-rate housing into the city center. "Demand for housing is there," Bellano said. "We already have a mix of dining and entertainment along Ives Street and a reputation for interesting shops in the small ethnic stores along Main Street. Now, we need to draw in retail and market-rate housing." To do so, developers can expect to have a new tax rate deferred for up to seven years and property valuations frozen at their current levels. Bellano reports interest in several vacant parcels: 9 acres at the corner of Kennedy Avenue and Rose Street, once the site of the old Amphenol building and now proposed for mixed-use development; and the site of the old Danbury Lumber

Yard on Crosby Street. The city has recently condemned three properties on East Franklin Street and Main Street to create a site for a new police station.

Danbury continues to attract businesses located in lower Fairfield and Westchester counties. "Lower costs are driving them northward," Bellano said. Mannkind Corp., a biopharmaceutical company, currently in phase II clinical trials for an insulin system for the treatment of diabetes via inhaler, has relocated its research and development and manufacturing facility from Elmsford, N.Y., to 1 Casper St. in Danbury.

Ann's Place gets land donation

Ann's Place, a support organization for cancer patients funded entirely by charitable donations, has been given 4.1 acres on which to build an 8,000-square-foot facility and parking lot by the Woodlands Group II L.L.C., buyers of the 546-acre Union Carbide site in Danbury. The event was celebrated at a ceremony on Oct. 26, with officials and partners of Woodlands Group II present. The new site for Ann's Place is on Saw Mill River Road, off exit 1 on I-84 in Danbury, close to the Ridgefield border.

"We've been looking for property for quite some time," says Wilda Hayes, executive director of Ann's Place. "We could not have identified a more perfect place. This gift allows us to conserve our own resources

and direct funds toward the people who matter, those who need our help." Preliminary plans have already been granted approval by the Danbury Zoning Board of Appeals. However, the new site requires further steps and clarification from both the architects and city planners.

Ann's Place was founded in 1991 and receives referrals of approximately 1,000 cancer patients a year.

Georgetown development

Reddings's Zoning Commission has unanimously approved the master plan for Georgetown Land and Development Co. to develop 55-plus acres on the old Gilbert & Bennett Wire Mill property in Georgetown, following the principles of "smart growth" urban development where government and private-public partnerships come together to create sustainable communities rather than suburban sprawl. The plan calls for 416 residential units, a large parking structure, and 300,000 square feet of mixed-use commercial space and a performing arts center. In November, the developers applied for a brownfields remediation grant of \$200,000 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Tests indicate lead and zinc are present in the soil. These and other materials will be transported to the "lagoon" property area and capped.