

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY  
A CALL FOR A SUSTAINED REGIONAL TEAM EFFORT



Presented to:  
METROHARTFORD ALLIANCE

REPORT 3:  
METRO HARTFORD COMPREHENSIVE  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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Delivered to:



Final Report  
April 2006

Prepared by:



Long envied as a state of wealth, beauty, and innovation, Connecticut has experienced slow economic growth in recent years. The state's capital region, Metro Hartford, typifies the state's economic largesse. As the "Land of Steady Habits", the state and the Metro Hartford region have struggled to respond to changes in the world's economic landscape as has many of its competitors.

Advances in communication and technology, combined with free-market ideology, have given goods, services, and capital unprecedented mobility – a reality known as "economic globalization." The IMF defines globalization as "the growing economic interdependence of countries worldwide through increasing volume and variety of cross-border transactions in goods and services, freer international capital flows, and more rapid and widespread diffusion of technology."

Economic globalization is causing severe economic dislocation and instability in formerly healthy regions. Today, economic competitiveness is not measured against neighboring towns, states, or even countries. Metro Hartford is not only competing against New Haven, Providence, Boston, and New York; but it is also competing with Des Moines, Phoenix, Atlanta, and other cities across the world.

The facts show that Hartford is losing its competitiveness:

- Over the past 15 years, the non-farm employment in Connecticut has remained flat - the worst job stagnation in the country.
- Over the same time period, non-farm employment in the Hartford MSA declined by 6%, a loss of 36,100 jobs.
- According to the Milken Institute, Connecticut is the 5<sup>th</sup> most expensive state to do business and, according to Forbes, the Hartford MSA is the 31<sup>st</sup> most expensive metro area to do business (out of 150).
- Metro Hartford is losing its future workforce. In the Hartford MSA since 1990, the number of residents aged 25-44 has declined by 14%, compared to 4% growth on a national level.

These facts are not lost on the region's economic development leaders:

- "Connecticut has become an economic cul-de-sac."
- Metro Hartford is "a long-term loser in terms of job and population."
- "Connecticut is the slowest growing state in the slowest growing region of the U.S."
- "There is a lack of a sense of urgency around here."

In reaction to the many issues facing the Region's economy, a number of organizations, including the MetroHartford Alliance, have worked diligently to address some of the problems that have threatened the region's economic prosperity. Some of the most notable accomplishments:

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- Through the leadership of the MetroHartford Alliance and the active participation of many other allied agencies, this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy has developed to further support a more cooperative regional, approach to economic development, and make the region eligible for new sources of funding to help tackle some of the region's most serious and persistent problems.
  - The development of the Economic and Urban Design Strategy (Greenberg Plan) and the subsequent improvements in downtown (including the completion and opening of the Connecticut Convention Center, operation of the Star Shuttle, the eventual construction of some 3,000 residential units, the opening of Capital Community College, the redevelopment of the Hartford Civic Center have all been positive steps in efforts to revitalize downtown Hartford.
  - Though the efforts need to be better coordinated, there are abundant resources throughout the region that support entrepreneurs, including Central Connecticut State University's Community Business Resource Center for Entrepreneurial Start-Ups, mentoring and other business assistance programs offered by the Connecticut Technology Council, the Entrepreneurial Center at the University of Hartford, the Family Business Program at the University of Connecticut, and the Women's Business Development Center. Small business support resources include SCORE, and the SBA Information Center, and Small Business Development Centers operated by the state in West Hartford and in Enfield at Asnuntuck Community College. All of these resources should be harnessed to build a more coordinated support system for entrepreneurs and small businesses. The region is fortunate to have so many valuable support programs.
  - The community colleges in the region are an extremely valuable resource to the workforce development system. While most people readily recognize the value of the many major four-year colleges and universities in the Metro Hartford region, the community colleges are under-rated. The role of community and two-year colleges such as Capital Community College, Asnuntuck Community College, and Goodwin College in workforce and economic development should not be underestimated. These colleges have worked to fulfill the training needs of vital sectors of the regional economy, including the manufacturing sector and Insurance and Financial Service Cluster, with the speed and flexibility that businesses need in a globally competitive economy. Community colleges also provide services and resources to entrepreneurs.
  - The efforts of the Hartford Image Project have begun to have a positive effect on Hartford's image. The Rising Star campaign has received very positive reviews.
  - The MetroHartford Alliance has worked hard to create a positive image of the region in the minds of site selectors, through events such as the regional site selection tour the Alliance sponsored in 2005. That event gave site selectors a new perception about the Metro Hartford region and gave them an opportunity to learn about the region's positive aspects.

Organizations such as the MetroHartford Alliance have been working for years to improve the region's economic climate, and they have achieved many successes. The fact that there are still many

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challenges to tackle is a testament to the complexity of the problems the region faces, and not a reflection on the recent efforts of organizations such as the Alliance. The success of the Alliance and allied agencies will be critical to economic prosperity of the Metro Hartford region. This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is a continuation of the agenda the Alliance has worked on for several years. This CEDS will open the doors to more funding opportunities for economic development, which will allow the region to accomplish even more.

**This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is the culmination of a six-month planning process to chart a new economic course for the Metro Hartford region.**

This CEDS is the third and final report in this process. The **first report**, the **Community Assessment**, provided a thorough picture of the current situation in several areas that affect economic development: Business Climate, Education and Workforce Development, Quality of Life, Sites and Infrastructure, and Economic Development and Marketing. The picture the assessment painted was one of a region facing many challenges as well as a region that possesses much strength on which to build.

The **second report**, the **Target Industry Report**, detailed the target industries the Metro Hartford region should work to attract. The target industries recommended in that report are Advanced Security and Defense Manufacturing; Financial Services; Biotechnology; Logistics and Distribution; Clean Energy; and Health Services.

This **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy** provides the Metro Hartford region recommendations for improving its business climate, its education, and workforce development systems, its quality of life, its sites and infrastructure, and its economic development and marketing efforts.

Each recommendation in this strategy provides background on the problem the recommendation addresses, action steps that will help leaders in the region to implement the recommendation, the priority level of each recommendation, the primary and secondary implementers, the time frame in which the recommendation should be implemented, costs where they can be estimated, and the potential benefit of each recommendation.

Once the CEDS Advisory Committee adopts this strategy, it will be submitted to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the agency's approval. Once the strategy is approved, the Metro Hartford region will be eligible to apply for additional federal funds to help implement the recommendations in the report. Thus will begin the most important part of the entire process: the implementation phase.

***The success of any plan lies in how effectively it is implemented.*** Though the Metro Hartford region has conducted many previous studies and adopted many plans, this plan must be different. Leaders from across the region must be willing to commit resources to implementing this strategy and to hold themselves and others accountable for the plan's successful implementation. This commitment to success is the only way that the Metro Hartford region will finally be able to put itself on the road to sustainable economic prosperity.

**The purpose of this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is to call to action political, business, and civic leaders in Metro Hartford.** Over the past several years, the fundamental challenges to the state's region's economic health have been outlined in dozens of

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reports. In spite of the recent progress made on addressing some of these challenges, more work lies ahead. Community leaders from business, government, nonprofits, neighborhoods, and other communities in the region must find the will and the means to collaborate, to implement, and to be accountable for the region's greater economic success.

The fate of this plan will be different if the region's leaders choose to make it so. Throughout this plan, the reader will find several themes emerging regularly - themes that hold the keys to the plan's successful implementation and to the region's economic vitality. Those themes are:

- ***Collaboration.*** At a forum conducted in October 2005 on the state of economic affairs in Connecticut, one speaker cited a battle cry that is being used in the state of Maine but which is just as applicable to Connecticut and the Metro Hartford region: "Collaborate or Collapse." The well-known New England Yankee stoicism and stubborn sense of independence and self-reliance is deadly in this age of global economic competition. The terms "collaboration" and "regionalism" have been tossed around in the region for years, but have never taken root in matters of economic development. Much of this lack of collaboration and cooperation can be attributed to the state's tax structure, which forces individual communities to fight for every tax dollar they can get, and this makes cooperative efforts to attract companies to the larger region impractical and unrealistic. This has to change. One of the major priorities of the Metro Hartford Alliance, other organizations, and community leaders needs to be an effort to change the state's tax structure and to offer programs that improve the region's competitiveness.
- ***Marketing and Image Enhancement.*** Every piece of evidence we have found during this planning process has indicated that the region needs to further improve its image. For the most part, that means changing the region's negative image *among its own residents*. In focus groups, interviews, online surveys, reports, and news articles, the overriding message is that the residents of this region have a negative perception of the area, and this translates into a loss of hope and a loss of enthusiasm for making positive change for the Metro Hartford region. One steadfast rule in marketing is that if the seller does not believe in the product, no one else will either. That rule applies to cities and their economic development efforts as much as consumer products. Negative attitudes about a region are understandable when it has been through a prolonged period of economic stagnation or decline, but these attitudes are the surest way to drive away prospective industries. This report contains recommendations for building upon the recent efforts to market the region both internally (to its own residents) and externally (to the world). These efforts are high priority for the region, and can have the greatest potential impact of any of the recommendations in this report.
- ***Investment.*** Another prominent theme in this report is the need to invest in the region: to invest in a broken school system that does not graduate an adequate number of students and fails to produce the type of potential workforce that would be attractive to new industries; to invest in a workforce development system that is currently not prepared to produce the types of workers that are attractive to new industries; to invest in efforts to fix a tax structure that is choking the life out of the state's economy; to invest in improvements to the infrastructure, which will attract new companies to the area; and to invest in affordable housing for potential workers and their families. In short, leaders must invest in the future of the region, with the faith that all of these investments will pay off in a new, healthier, sustainable economy.

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- **Risk.** Connecticut, “The Land of Steady Habits,” has long been viewed as a state that does not deal well with change. Perhaps that is a result of the heritage of an area and a people that helped forge this country – a region that is still justifiably proud of its history. Perhaps it is a lasting legacy of being the “Insurance Capital of the U.S.,” the home to an industry that is based on aversion to risk. Whatever the reason, there is an inordinate focus on risk avoidance in the Metro Hartford region. In an era of global economic competition, where the competition is not merely Boston or New York but Shanghai and New Delhi, risk aversion can paralyze a region’s efforts to move forward, to turn economic retreat into advance. This should not suggest to any reader that we are recommending wild, unfocused, or unplanned risk. We are suggesting that the region’s leaders make calculated, strategic risks with a full understanding that there is no certainty of success but also an understanding of the potential rewards of taking those risks, and the certain detrimental effects that inaction would bring.
  - **Accountability.** Various organizations and consultants have conducted studies and developed plans of the Metro Hartford region over the past 10 to 15 years. In fact, the MetroHartford Alliance provided over 50 reports for AngelouEconomics to review in preparation for this project. However, for all of the studies and plans developed in that time, there has been only partial progress in addressing a variety of the major issues that were identified in those documents. This small progress does not appear to be due to a lack of effort or good faith, but to the difficulty in building a long-term, sustainable team effort that will hold everyone in the community – not just elected officials or the business community – accountable for implementing the plan and measuring progress. *That must change with this plan.* In this document, we recommend the creation of an economic development compact to be agreed to and signed by all of the participants in economic development efforts in the region. This compact will not only require participants to pledge their tangible support to implementing the recommendations detailed in this CEDS, but will also detail the type of results they can expect from the other participants in this effort. The compact will also commit participants to conduct an annual public accountability session to outline the accomplishments made in the past year that contribute to implementing this plan. Through a very public demonstration, community leaders will ensure that these recommendations are implemented and that all participants maintain their commitment to the plan’s success.

Throughout this plan, the reader will notice that each recommendation is given a priority number. This is not an indication that any particular recommendation is not important, but rather recognizes that some recommendations should be given the highest priority because they are absolutely vital to the region’s economic success. We realize that with limited resources, some recommendations will need to take precedence, and we have provided these priorities as a guide.

This plan presents 40 recommendations in five functional areas. However, there are six recommendations or sets of recommendations that should be considered the highest priority, and those recommendations should be given the greatest level of attention to help put the Metro Hartford region on the right economic track.

1. **Influence public policy to change factors affecting the cost and ease of doing business in Connecticut.** A poor business climate is one of the greatest stumbling blocks the MetroHartford region faces in becoming globally competitive and retaining and attracting businesses. The MetroHartford Alliance should step up its public policy efforts in conjunction with organizations such as the Connecticut Business and Industry Association to change the

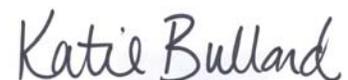
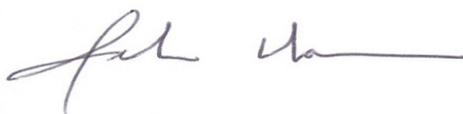
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state's tax structure, high costs of doing business, and inefficient development and permitting processes encountered at the state and local level.

2. **Build a stronger support system for entrepreneurs and small businesses.** The region already has some resources in place to support entrepreneurs and small businesses. However, those efforts will have to be ramped up significantly to help businesses get off the ground and thrive. Adequate access to capital will be imperative.
3. **Establish innovative programs to improve the performance of public K-12 education systems to make the City of Hartford and the Metro Hartford region globally competitive.** The K-12 public education systems in place in the City of Hartford and throughout the region will have to be improved if the region hopes to be competitive in the global economic marketplace. This strategy provides recommendations to not only help improve public education but also to involve businesses more heavily in efforts to train the next generation workforce beginning in high school.
4. **Develop housing policies and programs that promote affordable housing throughout the region.** Seventy seven percent of the region's housing is not affordable to low and moderate income households and prices are still rising much faster than wages. There is little affordable housing for entry-level workers and families looking to buy a "starter home." Affordable housing is an issue that can have a profound impact on the region's efforts to attract companies. If a company's employees cannot afford to live in the region, companies will look elsewhere to locate their next facility. The region must begin to address this problem now or lose out to more competitive regions.
5. **Continue to enhance and build a positive image for the Metro Hartford region.** There are efforts underway to improve the image of the Metro Hartford region. Those efforts need to be continued and enhanced. Efforts such as those of the Hartford Image Project should be continued and expanded to include all 34 towns in the region. There are a series of recommendations in this report to help make marketing of the region more effective and improve the perceptions about the region in other parts of the country.
6. **Establish a collective compact agreement to implement the recommendations in this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.** One of the most significant steps leaders in the Metro Hartford region can do is to develop an organized method to show their commitment and accountability to improving the economic health of the region is to establish an economic development compact. A compact is a public document that details the terms by which each of the organizations involved in the agreement will be accountable for the success of an economic development effort.

Some may believe that this message is too bleak and outlines an unnecessarily pessimistic view of the consequences of failure to act. Nothing could be further from the truth. Though the risks of inaction are real, the message in this plan is one of hope – a hope that with the appropriate amount of political will and positive action, the Metro Hartford region can change its economic fortunes and build a future that will ensure the preservation of the special characteristics of this area for generations to come.

It's time to get started.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### AngelouEconomics would like to thank:

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Todd Andrews                        | MetroHartford Alliance  |
| Ronald Angelo                       | State of Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development |
| Nancy S. Bader                      | Town of Marlborough   |
| George Bahamonde                    | United Way of the Capital Area                                      |
| Joseph Bronzino, Ph.D.              | BEACON Alliance   |
| Richard Brown                       | Urban League of Greater Hartford                                    |
| Jim Burke                           | Town of Windsor   |
| Deborah C. Davis                    | Town of Bloomfield  |
| Allyson Diana                       | Town of Stafford  |
| Robert Dunbar                       | Alphagraphics   |
| Kathleen Eagen                      | Town of Farmington  |
| Kevin Flaherty                      | Sovereign Bank  |
| Robert Flynn                        | IFS Cluster   |
| The Hon. Gordon J. Frassinelli, Jr. | Town of Stafford  |
| Matthew B. Galligan                 | Town of South Windsor   |
| Barbara Gilbert                     | Town of Rocky Hill  |
| Peter Gillespie                     | Town of Wethersfield  |
| Elliot A. Ginsberg                  | Office of Congressman John B. Larson                                |
| Peter Gioia                         | Connecticut Business & Industry Association                         |
| Michael Goman                       | Konover Development   |
| Oz Griebel                          | MetroHartford Alliance  |
| Linda Guzzo                         | Capital Community College   |
| Christopher Hartley                 | Saint Francis Hospital & Medical Center                             |
| Guy Hatch                           | Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology                          |
| Kevin Henry                         | MetroHartford Alliance  |
| Greta Johansson                     | U.S. Small Business Association                                     |
| Sandra Johnson                      | MetroHartford Alliance  |
| The Hon. David Kilbon               | Town of East Granby   |
| Kipen Kolesinskas                   | USDA  |
| The Hon. Tim Larson                 | Town of East Hartford   |
| Rebekah MacFarlane                  | Colt Gateway LLC  |

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|----------------------------|--|
| Paul Mayer                 | Central CT Regional Tourism District       |
| Paul Mazzaccaro            | Town of Hebron                             |
| Mark McGovern              | City of Hartford                           |
| Patrick McMahon            | Town of Suffield                           |
| The Hon. Dennis Milanovich | Town of Ellington                          |
| Richard Mullins            | Central Connecticut State University       |
| Matthew Nemerson           | Connecticut Technology Council             |
| John O'Toole               | Northeast Utilities                        |
| Neil Pade                  | Town of Vernon                             |
| Mark Pellegrini            | Town of Manchester                         |
| Kinson Perry               | SBC  |
| Tom Phillips               | Capital Workforce Partners                 |
| Karl Prewo                 | Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology |
| The Hon. Linda Roberts     | Town of East Windsor                       |
| Philip K. Schenck, Jr.     | Town of Avon                               |
| Laurence R. Shaffer        | Town of Vernon                             |
| Scott Shanley              | Town of Enfield                            |
| John Shemo                 | MetroHartford Alliance                     |
| Peter Souza                | Town of Windsor                            |
| Bob Sproat                 | Town of East Granby                        |
| Craig Stevenson            | Town of Cromwell                           |
| Cathy Teller               | Town of Bolton                             |
| Frederic E. Turkington     | Town of Canton                             |
| Patricia Wallace           | Archdiocese of Hartford                    |
| Raymond Warren             | Town of Enfield                            |
| Jeanne Webb-Chavez         | Town of Rocky Hill                         |
| Nadine Francis West        | MetroHartford Alliance                     |
| Susan Winkler              | The Hartford Financial Services Group      |
| Lyle Wray, Ph.D.           | Capitol Region Council of Governments      |
| Rita J. Zangari            | University of Connecticut                  |

Every plan must begin with a vision that will guide the community in its economic development endeavors and make this plan a reality. A proper vision is the foundation of all activities that will make the community better and drives every aspect of the plan. The vision below does not describe what Metro Hartford is today, but what it will become when this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is implemented.

**METRO HARTFORD REGION VISION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

*The Metro Hartford region will become a major destination for economic growth in New England and will position itself as a global center of excellence in targeted industries by creating a climate that grows existing businesses, attracts new businesses, creates a world-class workforce, maintains and builds an excellent quality of life, drives investment, and encourages collaboration among its communities to build economic prosperity for all.*

This vision emphasizes the importance of supporting the region’s existing businesses as well as attracting new ones. It also stresses the importance of developing a workforce that will attract target industry businesses. The region will use its quality of life to its advantage, appropriately invest, and collaborate rather than operate as independent communities in a way that will benefit all residents in the region.

**METRO HARTFORD REGION GOALS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

For the Metro Hartford region to attract target businesses, expand its existing businesses, stabilize and strengthen its tax base, and improve its overall quality of life, it must achieve these goals. The strategies and actions in this Plan flow directly from one of these five goals.

- **GOAL ONE: Business Climate**  
Create a business climate in the Metro Hartford region that supports the retention and expansion of existing businesses, supports entrepreneurs and small businesses, fosters diverse job opportunities, and attracts companies in the target industries (defense mfg., financial services, biotechnology, logistic & distribution, clean energy, & health services) that provide quality jobs.
- **GOAL TWO: Education & Workforce Development**  
Prepare the current and future workforce in the Metro Hartford region for better paying, quality jobs by strengthening the public education system, increasing the capabilities of the higher education system, and making the workforce education system more effective.
- **GOAL THREE: Quality of Life**  
Continue to preserve the high quality of life already present in the Metro Hartford region and improve quality of life elements most likely to attract

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young professionals and businesses among the recommended target industries.

- **GOAL FOUR: Sites & Infrastructure**

Ensure that sites and infrastructure in the Metro Hartford region are ready to meet the needs of businesses that want to expand or locate in the region.

- **GOAL FIVE: Economic Development & Marketing**

Increase the awareness of the Metro Hartford region, create a more positive image, and improve the effectiveness of economic development and marketing efforts through collaboration.

## Business Climate

**GOAL:** Create a business climate in the Metro Hartford region that supports the retention and expansion of existing businesses, supports entrepreneurs and small businesses, fosters diverse job opportunities, and attracts companies in the target industries (defense mfg., financial services, biotechnology, logistics & distribution, clean energy, and health services) that provide quality jobs.

The Metro Hartford region is an expensive place to do business. That is the general perception expressed among many audiences. As part of this planning process, AngelouEconomics conducted focus groups and interviews among business leaders and conducted two online surveys to obtain perceptions about the cost of doing business in the region. In focus groups, interviews, and surveys, participants shared the perception that the Metro Hartford region is an expensive place to do business, and cited high property and sales taxes, labor costs, health care costs, and workers' compensation costs, and the time and expense related to permitting and development.

The recommendations in this section are designed to address the negative aspects of the Metro Hartford region's business climate and make the region more competitive in the global economy.

### Business Climate Strategy One: Influence public policy to change factors affecting the cost and ease of doing business in Connecticut.

One of the biggest obstacles to economic growth the Metro Hartford region faces is the poor business climate in the State of Connecticut. The many examples of characteristics of that poor business climate include high property and sales taxes, high labor costs, high health care costs, high workers' compensation costs, and the time and expense related to permitting and development. A recent ranking of the costs of doing business conducted by Forbes' Magazine ranked the Hartford MSA 119 out of 150 metropolitan areas (with the #1 ranked metropolitan area being the least expensive to do business, and 150 being the most expensive place to do business). The poor business perception is not isolated to the Metro Hartford region or even Connecticut. A survey of site selectors on "Business Perceptions of New England" found that only 18% of site selectors said New England was friendly to business, and 58% cited cost as the primary reason not to expand in New England. Finally, "The Connecticut Economy" rated Connecticut as the 4th highest cost state to do business in 2003. Clearly, the Metro Hartford region faces challenges beyond its borders that will affect its ability to attract and retain businesses now and in the future.

To help change these factors creating a poor business climate, the MetroHartford Alliance must engage in an aggressive public policy campaign to begin changing the characteristics that created that poor business climate, including the policies and programs that have created an unfavorable tax structure,

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high business costs, and inefficient processes related to permitting, development, and business operations. Fortunately, there already exists an effective public policy effort that is conducted by the Connecticut Business and Industry Association. Organizations such as the MetroHartford Alliance need to step up and become more involved in those efforts and help bring together the resources of other regional organizations to help change public policy so that Connecticut and all of its regions become globally competitive.

The legislative agenda need not only focus on changing factors contributing to a poor business climate, but should also focus on improving the type of economic development tools available to the MetroHartford Alliance and other economic development organizations across the region and state. Such tools should include creation of an Economic Development District, improving the operation of the state economic development agency and its relationship with local and regional economic development organizations, and allowing creation of a regional sales tax levy dedicated to economic development, an effective tool used by many local economic development organizations across the country.

Though public policy changes of this magnitude will no doubt be difficult and require long-term efforts, they will pay off by making not only the MetroHartford region but also the entire state of Connecticut more competitive in the global economy.

Actions:

1. Conduct the competitive analysis recommended in Strategy Two to provide a baseline of information on business costs, tax structures and rates, incentives, and other factors that affect the State of Connecticut's ability to compete economically.
2. Use that analysis to develop a key list of issues that the region wants to focus on changing.
3. Develop a priority legislative agenda the region wants to push, and coordinate efforts to promote that agenda with organizations such as the Connecticut Business and Industry Association.
4. The agenda should include the uncompetitive tax structures in the region and the state, the high cost of doing business, and additional economic development incentives such as a regional sales tax levy dedicated to economic development.
5. Conduct a public education campaign to inform businesses, residents, policy makers, and others about the importance of the issues on the agenda and the importance of addressing them to make the State of Connecticut more economically competitive.

Priority One

Primary Implementers: CBIA, CERC

Secondary Implementers: Metro Hartford Alliance, CRCOG, Chambers of Commerce, IFS Cluster, Northeast Utilities

Timeframe: September 2006 & Ongoing

Cost: \$50,000 (amount will vary depending on scope of public policy effort)

Benefit: Will make the region and the state globally competitive

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## Business Climate Strategy Two: Conduct a competitive analysis of the business climate in the State of Connecticut and comparison states.

Before business, community, and political leaders in the Metro Hartford region can begin to become more competitive with other regions, they must have an idea of how Metro Hartford compares to the competition. The Community Assessment conducted as part of this planning process was a good first step in determining where the region ranks relative to competitive regions, but it is only the first step. Since the business climate is affected mainly by the tax structure and policies put in place by state government, a competitive analysis must be conducted comparing the State of Connecticut and states with which it most often competes for business. The analysis must be comprehensive, comparing Metro Hartford on a variety of issues, including the overall tax structure, its tax rates, regulatory environment, and comparative costs of doing business such as workers' compensation rates, unemployment insurance rates, general insurance rates, regulations, and any other costs related to business operations. The analysis can then be used to begin the process of making changes to make Metro Hartford more competitive in attracting and retaining businesses to the region.

### Actions:

1. Compare the business climates of Connecticut and other states in areas such as tax structure, tax rates, and regulatory issues.
2. Include a comparison of incentives that states use to attract target industries.
3. Consider a regional sales tax levy dedicated to economic development, research how other regions use a dedicated sales tax levy and how such a levy has worked to improve the economic development efforts of other states and regions, and determine how such a levy might work in regions throughout Connecticut.
4. Based on information obtained through the comparisons, develop a series of recommendations to make the State of Connecticut competitive with other states.
5. Consult with organizations such as CERC, the University of Connecticut, and CBIA during this analysis, and employ their resources to conduct the analysis whenever possible.
6. Develop an education campaign to inform elected officials at the local, state and federal levels on the region's and the state's overall competitive standing.
7. Develop a legislative package to fix problems such as uncompetitive tax structure, costs of doing business, and incentives.
8. Work with state legislators from the Metro Hartford region to have the legislation introduced in the next legislative session.
9. Initiate a lobbying effort to push for passage of the legislation.

### Priority One

Primary Implementers: CBIA, CERC, State of Connecticut

Secondary Implementers: MetroHartford Alliance

Timeframe: September '06 – August '07

Cost: \$75,000 - \$100,000

Benefit: Provides leaders in the Metro Hartford region with data to understand the region's relative competitive position and the tools to improve that position

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### Business Climate Strategy Three: Build a stronger support system for entrepreneurs and small businesses.

A critical aspect of building sustainable economic competitiveness is building a strong support network that will encourage entrepreneurs to create new businesses and help small businesses to thrive. The stimulation of entrepreneurship through the formation and development of new commercial businesses and social enterprises can play a key role in employing underutilized resources in the distressed areas of the region.

Entrepreneurs are economic engines of the community. They are employers, people who mobilize economic resources and stimulate further economic activity because of their efforts, and serve as stabilizing factors in a community. They provide several major benefits:

- They create jobs at relatively low capital cost, especially in the fast growing service sector.
- They serve as a source of innovation in products, services, and techniques.
- They provide a productive outlet for the energies of enterprising and energetic people.
- They develop a pool of skilled workers who serve as the basis of industrial expansion.
- They contribute to the increased participation of all communities in the economic activities of a region.
- They serve an important social function by creating new career opportunities, fast upward social mobility, and in many instances preserve a set of community values.

The State of Connecticut is the historic home of many major economic innovations and entrepreneurs. There are already many efforts underway to support entrepreneurs. Efforts include a wealth of business incubators operated at Rentschler Field and the University of Connecticut, Central Connecticut State University's ITBD Business Incubation Program, and the Connecticut Business Incubator Network, with six incubators across the state. There are also programs in place to assist entrepreneurs with information, education, and other resources, including CCSU's Community Business Resource Center for Entrepreneurial Start-Ups, mentoring and other business assistance programs offered by the Connecticut Technology Council, the Entrepreneurial Center at the University of Hartford, the Family Business Program and the Office of Technology Commercialization at the University of Connecticut, and the Women's Business Development Center. Additionally, there are programs targeted at informing youth about careers in the region and telling them how to prepare for those careers, including the Teacher Enhancement Program at Central Connecticut State University, the Youth Entrepreneurial Program sponsored by TD Banknorth, the Summer Youth Program, and the Disengaged Youth Program sponsored by the New Britain Chamber of Commerce, CCSU's ITBD program, and the OIC. There are also resources available to provide general business assistance, including SCORE, and the SBA Information Center, and Small Business Development Centers operated by the state in West Hartford and in Enfield at Asnuntuck Community College. All of these efforts are important and should be continued and expanded. But the scope of the entrepreneurial and small business support efforts will have to be ramped up to reach the level supported by other states and universities. The Metro Hartford region needs to capitalize on the state's entrepreneurial roots and encourage and reward risk-taking that is crucial to entrepreneurial efforts.

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The creation of seed funds is also critical. Venture capitalists cannot replace the need for early stage seed funding needed as a precursor to attracting later stage venture funding. Program funding must be provided for every stage of the innovative life cycle.

Actions:

1. Better leverage the efforts already underway in the Metro Hartford region to assist entrepreneurs and small businesses. Develop an information clearinghouse on the MetroHartford Alliance website with links and information about every entrepreneurial and small business assistance program in the region. Involve representatives of all the entrepreneurial and small business assistance programs in this effort.
2. Expand entrepreneurial and small business assistance efforts as necessary to include services for all types of businesses operating in the region.
3. Enhance the efforts and scope of the Small Business Development Center already in operation in Hartford.
4. Improve access to early-stage venture capital and other funding resources by supporting the Innovative Network concept and promoting a new angel investor network in the region potentially at the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technologies, working with the region's banks to market existing regional loan programs, providing local banks with resources that educate them on the best way to support small and start up companies, and working to have the state establish an early-stage venture capital fund.

**Priority One**

Primary Implementers: DECD, Connecticut Technology Council

Secondary Implementers: MetroHartford Alliance, Small Business Development Center, all entrepreneurial assistance centers in the region, Connecticut Department Economic and Community Development, Connecticut Development Authority, Connecticut Innovations, Connecticut Center for Advanced Technologies

Timeframe: September 2006

Cost: \$10,000 annually

Benefit: Will build the support system necessary to encourage business creation and growth

**Business Climate Strategy Four: Provide discounts on building permit fees, tap fees, inspection fees, and any other fees related to the development process for target industries, depending on the number of jobs created and the amount of capital investment involved.**

As the Metro Hartford region moves forward in its efforts to attract the target industries recommended in a previous report as part of this process, there are many improvements communities in the region will need to make to prepare for those industries. Most of the industries will also have to go through the development process in the community or communities in which they are building their facilities. Communities in the region should work to make the development process as efficient and inexpensive as possible. To achieve this, all of the communities in the region should put together schedules of specific discounted rates for all of the fees related to the development process for companies in a target industry and tie the provision of these discounted rates to the number of jobs and amount of capital investment a company might provide to a community.

Actions:

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1. All communities should be encouraged to foster the growth of targeted industries by reducing permit, tap, and inspection fees as an incentive to recruit businesses.
  2. These discounts should also be available to developers who are targeting the six target industries we have identified with spec development projects.
  3. Discounted fees should be reclaimed if lease agreements in the spec development are made with businesses in industries other than the six targets.

#### Priority One

Primary Implementers: CRCOG

Secondary Implementers: Regional Economic Development Forum (REDF)

Timeframe: Beginning September 2006 and ongoing

Cost: Cannot be determined. Depends on the discounts offered.

Benefit: Should result in more favorable business climate and improved tax revenues from expanded or new businesses.

### **Business Climate Strategy Five: Implement a strategy of business development and support aimed at minority businesses.**

A common theme running through many of the studies and plans conducted on the Metro Hartford region during the 1990's and in this decade is the focus on racial and ethnic tensions in Metro Hartford. The Millennium Report focuses on these tensions as well, and recommends that the region "Begin the process of eradicating racial and ethnic prejudice within the region" by sponsoring internal, regional, and local "Conversations on Race, Ethnicity, and Culture" in partnership with the national work being undertaken and sponsored by Aetna. This recommendation recognized the economic and social impacts that racial and ethnic divisions have on the region as well as the benefits to the region of capitalizing on the region's racial and ethnic diversity.

The region has benefited from its racial and ethnic diversity. For example, the presence of the many four-year colleges and universities, as well as the two-year degree granting public and private community colleges, brings a very diverse student population to the region, and those students contribute greatly to the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the region. One example of this is Capital Community College, which is the most diverse of the state's community colleges.

Metro Hartford now needs to build on the racial and ethnic diversity of the region and use it as a valuable component in rebuilding the economic health of the region. One of the most effective ways to build on the value of diversity is to support the growth of minority businesses throughout the region.

There are several organizations already working to support the establishment and growth of minority businesses in the region, including the Business LINC, the Spanish American Merchants' Association, HEDCO, URBANK, and the Community Business Resource Center for Entrepreneurs. Bank of America also has a special loan program targeted at minority businesses. These efforts need to continue and be coordinated and expanded to help minority businesses become an even more significant part of the business community in the Metro Hartford region.

#### Actions:

1. Continue to expand existing programs that support the establishment and growth of minority businesses. These efforts should include connecting minority business owners

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- with incubators and mentoring programs that can help support and nurture their companies in the early stages as well as links with early-stage venture capital.
  2. Conduct seminars at least annually for minority entrepreneurs on topics such as finding and gaining access to venture capital and dealing with issues unique to establishing and growing minority businesses.
  3. Build on efforts of private banks to lend money to minority entrepreneurs and businesses to provide early-stage venture capital funding network that entrepreneurs need to get their businesses started.

#### Priority Two

Primary Implementers: Business LINC, City of Hartford

Secondary Implementers: Spanish American Merchants' Association and other merchant's associations, HEDCO, URBANK, Bank of America, Hartford Chamber of Commerce

Timeframe: June 2007

Cost: To be determined

Benefit: Will encourage and support the growth of minority businesses in the Metro Hartford region and ensure that all racial and ethnic groups share in the region's economic growth

#### Business Climate Strategy Six: Continue and expand downtown and neighborhood revitalization efforts.

Downtown Hartford revitalization has been a pressing issue in the region for quite some time. Downtown improvement was a major issue addressed in the Millennium Project, which recommended implementing a comprehensive and strategic approach to strengthening downtown Hartford. While efforts to promote activity downtown had achieved some success by the time of the Millennium study, they had not been able to generate the level of activity needed to change the perception that downtown "shuts down" after 5 PM on weekdays and on weekends.

As a result of the recommendation in the Millennium Plan, participants in the Millennium Project organized an oversight group and developed a RFP for a downtown urban design plan even as the planning process was being conducted to move along downtown revitalization as quickly as possible. As a result of that RFP process, Ken Greenberg, an expert in urban revitalization, was hired to develop an action strategy that prepares downtown Hartford for new development. The action strategy encourages small and medium-scale projects that can spur more development and economic activity downtown, and help spur economic investment and activity in Hartford's neighborhoods in connection with revitalization downtown. One of the key recommendations of the plan is the Circuit Line, a set of high-priority activities that centers on Bushnell Park and brings in reinvestment to build new residential development, streetscape and transit improvements (including a shuttle transit line) that begins rebuilding downtown and spurs further investment.

Other developments downtown have had major impacts on downtown Hartford since the Millennium Project was completed. The completion and opening of the new Connecticut Convention Center is designed to bring conventions and other events to downtown Hartford and spur tourism not only in Hartford but to other communities in the Metro Hartford region. The continued development of arts and culture venues in downtown Hartford will provide high-quality entertainment to Hartford and draw people and the economic activity they generate to downtown Hartford after 5 PM on weekdays and on weekends. The presence and growth of Capital Community College has played an important role in the

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revitalization of downtown. Finally, the residential development that has been occurring downtown promises to bring people downtown to live, work, and shop, spurring further economic growth. About 1,600 new residential units are being developed downtown, and 3,000 units are envisioned. The mayor and the City of Hartford strongly support these efforts and understand the importance of this development in the future of Hartford, as well as to the Metro Hartford region as a whole.

Various initiatives have been undertaken to revitalize downtown and close-in neighborhoods. For example, the Star Shuttle, a new mass transit service that transports passengers to various points downtown, is operational, and Connecticut Center for Science and Exploration will be a major attraction both to residents and tourists. Other efforts to improve downtown include renovation of the Hartford Hilton and construction of the Marriot Hotel. Improvements in nearby neighborhoods that have begun their economic revitalization include completion and opening of a retail shopping center in the Uptown Neighborhood, opening Charter Oak Place in the Southwest Neighborhood, and development of a project in the South Green Neighborhood, a neighborhood adjacent to the Latino business district. These efforts to revitalize neighborhoods near downtown will not only help to improve the economy in these areas, but will also help to make these neighborhoods safer and attractive places to live and work, which will complement downtown revitalization and tourism.

This downtown revitalization must continue and expand along the city's major arterials that emanate from downtown and into the adjoining neighborhoods. It must involve development of retail and commercial in addition to the residential, hotel, and convention center developments that have gained such great momentum in the past five years.

Actions:

1. Continue implementing the recommendations and completing the projects recommended in the Economic and Urban Design Strategy.
2. Continue supporting and investing in large mixed use developments in and around downtown Hartford, in the same style as Colt Gateway, Hartford 21, 18 Temple Street, and the planned developments of Downtown West and Downtown North.
3. Support and invest in retail where possible to make existing residential development more attractive and to better serve workers in office space downtown.
4. Establish a Business Improvement District for Downtown.
5. Implement the Hartford Design Center as recommended in the Economic & Urban Design Strategy.
6. Establish a strategy to encourage investment along the city's major arterials and into adjoining neighborhoods.

Priority One

Primary Implementers: City of Hartford, Private developers, MetroHartford Alliance

Secondary Implementers: Hartford Chamber of Commerce

Timeframe: Ongoing

Cost: Cannot be determined. Depends on type and magnitude of development.

Benefit: Will make downtown Hartford vibrant again, bring economic activity back downtown, and energize economic development activities throughout the Metro Hartford region.

## Education & Workforce Development

**GOAL:** Prepare the current and future workforce in the Metro Hartford region for high-impact, quality jobs by strengthening the public education system, increasing the capabilities of the higher education system, and making the workforce education system more effective.

The Metro Hartford region has many strengths going for it in the area of workforce and development. Those strengths include a generally high level of educational attainment in many parts of the region, availability of a large pool of skilled labor, particularly in management and professional occupations, and a large number of colleges and universities in close proximity.

However, the region also has several serious weaknesses that must be addressed. Those include an ineffective school system in the City of Hartford, a lack of understanding or knowledge regarding the resources provided by the region's community colleges to workforce development, underutilization of the community college system into the workforce development system, and an ineffective workforce development system that is not ready to prepare the workforce to take jobs in target industries.

### Education & Workforce Strategy One: Build on the Mayor's efforts to improve the P-12 education system performance and increase participation in higher education by creating a Hartford Compact.

The ability of public school systems to prepare students for college is an important factor when businesses decide where to locate. Although overall educational attainment is high in the Metro Hartford region, the city of Hartford lags the rest of the region. Business leaders in the region do not view Hartford public schools very favorably, because there is a perception that they are not preparing students to enter either college or the workforce. For example, dropout rates at Hartford High School significantly exceed regional and national averages. In addition, 40% of all Hartford residents do not have a high school diploma.

An effective public school system builds the foundation of a successful workforce for the Metro Hartford region. Regardless of whether residents enter the workforce immediately after high school graduation or pursue college or technical degrees, they must first have the basic skills provided by an effective P-12 public school system.

Hartford needs to take steps not just to improve its school system, but also to create a school system that is world-class. This is not simply a challenge facing the local school system in Hartford. The nation's public school systems are under ever-increasing pressure to do a more effective job in preparing students to succeed in the working world and in the world of higher education. For decades, political leaders, educational leaders, and parents have decried the failure of public schools to equip

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students with the knowledge and skills necessary to survive after high school graduation and succeed in the working world.

While recognizing that Hartford public schools need to improve their performance, it is also important to recognize current efforts underway to improve the schools and build on those efforts. Hartford's mayor, Eddie Perez, has laid out an ambitious agenda to improve the city's public schools. His strategies have included:

- Development of a "Passport to Success" initiative in 2003 focused on helping children who enter kindergarten are prepared to learn and succeed;
- Convening a group of childhood education experts in 2004 to develop a strategy to "chart a new course for the city to strengthen early childhood policy and services," which resulted in the Hartford Blueprint for Young Children: Delivering the Promise of Success in 2005;
- Establishment in 2005 of a Cabinet for Young Children, a vehicle for the city government, the school system, the community, and families to work together to "be accountable for a child's development," and advise the Mayor and other public officials in setting policies affecting young children;
- Investing \$800 million in the public school system to build new schools;
- Revamping high school curriculum;
- Working with private and parochial secondary schools to make sure they participate and share in the goals of improving student performance, increasing graduation rates, increasing the number of students going on to college, and increasing the college graduation rate; and
- Convening a Blue Ribbon Commission on Higher Education in 2004 and charging it with the goals of increasing by 25 percent the number of Hartford students who go on to higher education, increase the graduation rate of Hartford residents who attend four-year colleges, and attract more college graduates from four-year institutions to remain, live, and work in Hartford. All of these goals are to be met by 2009.

These strategies are vital to the improvement of the Hartford public school system. However, because the City of Hartford makes up only a portion of the larger region (comprising less than 15 percent of the metropolitan region's population) the city's efforts need to be part of an expanded effort that involves the entire region. The effort should require an ongoing commitment from the region's employers, the Mayor, city government, the school system, colleges and universities, community organizations, and any other organizations committed to improving the public education system. This should be modeled after one of the most successful public education improvement initiatives in the country: the Boston Compact.

The Boston Compact was established in 1982 to correct serious problems in the Boston public school system: low scores on required standardized academic tests, low student attendance rates, and high dropout rates, and low percentages of graduates attending college. The business community and the

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Boston Private Industry Council spearheaded the formation of the compact and secured the participation of the school district, the City of Boston, Boston-area colleges and universities, and other community partners. The compact has been renewed three times since 1982, most recently in 2000, and has resulted in a variety of initiatives that have increased graduation rates, decreased dropout rates and resulted in more Boston public school graduates going on to college. **(Please see Appendix 3 for more details on the Boston Compact.)**

The most important and distinctive feature of the Boston Compact was a true community effort that brought together all community leaders with a stake in improving public education and required participants to publicly commit significant resources in exchange for demanding that the school system improve the performance of students. This meant that each partner in the Compact would publicly proclaim the improvements is expected in the public education system, and also publicly proclaim the resources it would commit to ensure that public education succeeded in Boston. Those commitments would be revisited on an annual basis to determine whether they had been honored. The partners in the Compact also tracked the progress in achieving the goals and strategies designed to improve public education. No longer was the school system alone responsible for fixing its problems – everyone in the community had a stake in schools' success, and everyone was held publicly accountable for that success.

The Boston Compact offers several valuable lessons to other communities and regions seeking to make dramatic improvements in their public school systems:

- **Each partner in the compact must be willing and able to commit resources and expect to share in the benefits the compact produces.** The partners involved in a compact have a right to expect certain results, but they must also commit significant resources to making the compact a success. The effectiveness of a compact lies in the mutual commitment and accountability of each of its partners.
- **To give the compact time to produce positive results, compact partners must be willing to make long-term commitments that outlast any political, economic or other situations.** Despite economic and political setbacks that have occurred over the 22-year period since the Boston Compact was started, for example, local leaders have not abandoned the effort. The commitment the community made in 1982 kept its central goal: ensuring that future generations succeed in education, in the working world, and in life.
- **The compact and those who commit to it must be flexible enough to make changes to address changing conditions.** The Boston Compact began with a simple but profound goal: to improve the performance of public school students, move more students into college, and provide them jobs in return for high performance. While those goals have remained part of the compact's efforts, they have expanded to include preparation of the next generation of educators. In addition, accountability measures have been refined over time. A compact should be flexible enough to adjust and improve as circumstances change and the system evolves.
- **The success of an educational compact depends on establishment of clear, measurable, publicly stated goals.** Commitment to the compact is easier to maintain and grow when there is a system to measure programs. When accountability is assured,

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partners remain committed to the compact even in the face of political or economic challenges.

The same model can be used successfully in Metro Hartford. The efforts of the Mayor, the Hartford Public School System, and other community leaders are important first steps. The establishment of an educational compact will help continue and expand those efforts in a focused, coordinated manner, and ensure that revamping the public education system in Hartford becomes the entire community's concern.

Actions:

1. The Mayor's education strategies should serve as the foundation for the Compact's goals, and the performance measures set forth for those strategies should be used to determine the Compact's progress and success.
2. Determine the key partners of the Compact, using those involved in the Mayor's education strategies as the core of the group.
3. The Boston Compact should be used as the model for establishing the Hartford Compact.
4. Each partner in the Compact should identify the resources it will contribute, the commitment it will make to the Compact's success, and the outcomes it expects to see accomplished.
5. The Compact should set its overall goals along with outcome measurements to determine its effectiveness at reaching those goals.
6. The Compact partners should establish an annual schedule for publicly reviewing the progress the Compact has achieved, comparing the resources originally committed to the resources actually provided by each partner, and determining whether progress or success has been achieved in meeting each partner's expectations of public school performance.

Priority One

Primary Implementer: Mayor's Office, City of Hartford, Hartford School District

Secondary Implementer: MetroHartford Alliance

Timeframe: Beginning immediately

Cost: Cannot be estimated. Depends on the level of commitment and resources dedicated by each partner in the Compact.

Benefit: Improve the public school system in Hartford and tie business, government, school systems, and community organizations directly to the overarching goal of public school improvement.

**Education & Workforce Development Strategy Two: Establish an innovative program to improve the performance of public K-12 education systems that will make the City of Hartford and the Metro Hartford region globally competitive.**

The region should also establish a program to further help high school students prepare for higher education and the world of work, while more closely linking businesses with the public school system. The **Center for Advanced Research and Technology (CART)** is such as program, created to match the curriculum and instructional strategies of high schools to the needs of a competitive economy.

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CART is one of the most far-reaching efforts at improving secondary public education ever developed in the United States. Created jointly by the Fresno and Clovis Unified School Districts in California, CART is a charter school designed to improve the public education system and prepare students for higher education and participation in the workforce.

CART was created in 2000 to collaborate with businesses and community agencies to educate students in an atmosphere using a variety of curricular disciplines. The program is organized to prepare students to work in four career clusters: Professional Sciences, Engineering, Advanced Communications, and Global Economics. Students work in career-specific laboratories to complete industry-based projects and receive advanced academic credit for English, science, math, and technology. All classes at CART are college preparatory, and satisfy all academic requirements of the California State University and University of California systems.

CART is designed for eleventh and twelfth grade students from 18 high schools in the Clovis and Fresno Unified School Districts, who attend half-day classes at the CART facility. Courses are taught in laboratories by teams of instructors from both education and business. The CART program has allowed both school districts to make systemic change in public education in the San Joaquin Valley.

The goals of CART are to:

- Give students the opportunity to obtain entry-level technological positions, industry standard certification, and/or university admission so they can obtain degrees in high-technology industries;
- Collaborate with local, state, national, and global businesses, public and private institutions, and higher education institutions to offer coursework that responds to the changing needs of business and industry, and to provide CART students with the sophisticated technology environments that meet industry standards;
- Establish curriculum that combines basic, critical academic standards with business and industry projects that allows participating students to move successfully beyond high school into the world of work and higher education;
- Bring together a staff with the vision, skills, and knowledge to teach students academics combined with a good mix of business principles that will allow them to succeed in higher education and the world of work;
- Engage students in their education in a way that makes them interested and committed to life-long learning;
- Increase student achievement through the combined application of academics, personal attention, real world projects experiences, and choice of career path exposure; and
- Improve student understanding of the “real world” by giving every first-year student an opportunity to “shadow” someone in a career field they are interested in, and giving every second-year student an internship so they can spend a longer period of time learning about the professional fields in which they are interested.

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If leaders in the Metro Hartford region want to study an example a little closer to home than the CART program that captures many of the same elements as the CART program, they need look no further than two programs in or near the region. One such effort is the Institute of Technology and Business Development (ITBD) at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain. One of the programs ITBD operates is the Community Business Development Center, which was established to “provide business education for individuals from Connecticut to oversee community-related training programs,” including a program called the FHITEC Summer Youth Training Program. In the FHITEC program, 42 students from the New Britain School District receive training in six areas over a six-week period during the summer: biosciences, engineering, healthcare, education, financial services, and information technology. In addition to the training they receive in the program, they also are allowed to engage in “job shadowing” to see how jobs in these fields are performed. In summer 2005, companies participating in the program and allowing job shadowing were TD Banknorth Connecticut, Hospital for Special Care, Community Mental Health, Inc. EMS, Grove Hill Medical Center, Central Connecticut State University, International Plating, VRSim, Inc. Design by Analysis, and Precision Engineering.

Though the program is only for a six-week period over the summer (compared to the CART program, which operates for the entire school year and has a larger enrollment), FHITEC components should be used and built upon to put together a program similar to it and the CART effort.

Capital Community College in Hartford also operates a Summer Youth Program with Hartford Public Schools, which provides Certified Nurse Aide Certification and Customer Service Certification to high school juniors and seniors. Students in these programs have the option of earning college credit for the courses they take. The program, which has been in operation for more than five years, trains over 60 students each summer, providing them with job skills, helps prepare them for the workforce, and introduces them to higher education and the importance it can play in their lives. Capital Community College also offers the Certified Nurse Aide program during the school year at Weaver High School, as well as offering the program to the Job Corp. Capital Community College also has a “Bridge to Success” program providing college transition courses for individuals completing their GED. All of these programs contain elements that should be incorporated into this comprehensive effort.

Establishing a program with elements of CART, FHITEC, and the programs offered by Capital Community College in Hartford would be an effective way not only to improve the performance of high school students and prepare them for college and the world of work, but would also forge a direct link between the educational systems in the area and target industries, meeting the needs of both.

Actions:

1. Check the Center for Advanced Research and Technology’s website, [www.cart.org](http://www.cart.org), to get more information on the center’s history, participating partners, and other key information on establishing the CART effort.
2. Visit with representatives of Central Connecticut State University, ITBD, and the FHITEC program to learn more about FHITEC and see how it can be built upon.
3. Visit with representatives of a.) Capital Community College to learn more about its Certified Nurse Aide Certification and Customer Service Certification programs and b.) Asnuntuck Community College. Precision Machining Training Program and see how they can be built upon.

4. In establishing the program, make sure its mission and goals conform to the Mayor's goals of improving public school performance, increasing the percentage of students going on to college, and increasing the percentage of students graduating from college.
5. Determine the type of companies (existing companies already part of one of the recommended target industries) that have an interest in creating a "pipeline" to potential workers for their industry.
6. Begin discussions with a group of targeted companies in one of the target industries to determine the types of skills workers need in their industry.
7. Bring together representatives of the region's school systems, four-year colleges and universities, two-year degree granting public and private community colleges, and the targeted companies to begin discussions on the curriculum that should be offered in the CART program. Give this group the responsibility for developing the CART curriculum.
8. Develop the curriculum that satisfies the needs of one target industry as a pilot project, and begin operation of CART for that one target industry. Once that program is in operation and working well, begin development of curriculum for other target industries with the assistance of companies representing those industries.

#### Priority One

Primary Implementer: Capital Workforce Partners, four-year colleges and universities in the region, all two-year degree granting public and private community colleges

Secondary Implementer: MetroHartford Alliance, School districts in the Metro Hartford region, local businesses.

Timeframe: September 2006-August 2007 to develop program; Initiate in September 2007

Cost: \$1.5 - \$2 million

Benefit: Improve the public school system in Hartford and the Metro Hartford region, introduce students to skills needed in target industries, and forge a direct link between the public education systems and target industries in the region.

### Education & Workforce Development Strategy Three: Support workforce development and education programs that train workers in skills most demanded by target industries.

Capital Workforce Partners should focus its resources on providing programs that not only meet the training needs of existing employers, but also should focus on programs that can train workers in skills that will be most valuable to employers in target industries.

#### Actions:

1. Learn the skill requirements of target industries by reviewing the *Target Industry Analysis Report* and by participating in the employer summit meetings.
2. Develop new programs or modify existing ones to meet the training needs of target industry employers.
3. Follow up annually with target industry employers to determine any changes to employee training needs due to changing industry requirements.

#### Priority Two

Primary Implementer: Capital Workforce Partners

Secondary Implementer: Regional employers, CBIA

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Timeframe: Beginning March 2006

Cost: Cannot be determined. Depends on number of clients in programs, duration of programs, and other factors.

Benefit: Ensures that target industries will have employees with skills they need

### **Education & Workforce Development Strategy Four: Organize and conduct summit meetings with employers to find out what types of training they need for their employees and find out what types of new skills are required for work in their industries.**

Employers in the region believe the workforce development system is not currently prepared to provide the region's workers with skills they need to fill jobs in high-tech industries. Because employers' workforce needs change rapidly with technological improvements and increased competition, they need to have responsive workforce training programs that can adjust quickly to changing needs. Conducting regular summit meetings between workforce development providers and industry representatives is an effective way to ensure that industries have employees with the skills they need despite rapidly changing skill needs.

#### Actions:

1. Capital Workforce Partners coordinates a series of summit meetings with employers, particularly those in target industries, to obtain input on the skills their workers need to meet industry expectations.
2. The summit meetings should include not only the employers and representatives of Capital Workforce Partners, but also representatives of workforce development programs offered by other organizations and representatives of four-year colleges and universities as well as two-year degree granting private and public community colleges.
3. After obtaining employer input, Capital Workforce Partners summarizes the results of the summit meetings and shares the information with other workforce development providers, employers, four-year colleges and universities, and two-year degree granting private and public community colleges.
4. Workforce development providers should tailor their training programs to reflect any changing employer needs.

#### Priority Two

Primary Implementer: Capital Workforce Partners

Secondary Implementer: Four-year colleges and universities, two-year degree granting private and public community colleges, regional employers CBIA

Timeframe: September 2006

Cost: Staff time

Benefit: Will improve workforce development providers' ability to meet employer needs.

### **Education & Workforce Development Strategy Five: Integrate the region's 2-year degree granting private and public community colleges into workforce development efforts more effectively.**

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Business leaders in the region do not view community colleges favorably, because there is a perception that they are not providing the training and education to produce an effective workforce. In fact, one interviewee summarized the perception well when he said, “Community colleges are treated as second class institutions” in the region. This may stem from the fact that there are so many major four-year colleges and universities in the region and throughout New England, and community colleges are viewed as only institutions of last resort whose students are not “good enough” to get admitted to a prestigious college or university.

However, this perception is a false one. Other states have found that effective community college programs can provide great benefit in generating economic growth. In fact, many precision manufacturing and technology intensive companies have found community colleges are better suited and more adaptable to change than universities for educating the technicians needed to operate and repair machinery.

There have been efforts underway in the Metro Hartford region to involve community colleges in workforce development efforts, specifically involving them in the work of Capital Workforce Partners. For example, three community college presidents sit on the CWP Board of Directors and two sit on Board steering committees (the Performance Management and Service Provision Steering Committees). Community colleges also participate as voting members in the One Stop Operating Consortium. The community colleges help direct policy on how employment services are delivered at the six Connecticut Works One Stop Center in the North Central Region. The deans and presidents of four community colleges in the Metro Hartford region also meet on a quarterly basis with the CWP senior operations staff to maintain open communication, solve problems, and initiate new projects of grants for economic and workforce development in the region. These meetings have yielded positive results. Two examples of this are: the establishment of a jointly shared recruiter position, which can assist job seekers with more Individual Training Accounts and lead to Associate Degree options and more career options; and CWP’s Bridges to Allied Health Care Training initiative, which helps prepare health care professionals by assisting entry-level health care workers in obtaining preparatory training so they can succeed in formal certificate and degree programs.

A good example of an effective initiative in the Metro Hartford region in which a community college has played a prominent role in preparing workers for a vital industry sector is the work of Capital Community College with the Insurance and Financial Services (IFS) Cluster. The college has worked with IFS and gathered input from individual businesses to develop the Customer Service Institute of Connecticut (CSIC), the Information Technology Education Center of Connecticut (ITECC), and the Center for Insurance, Finance, and Real Estate, all of which help prepare people with the skills they need to fill jobs in the IFS Cluster. The college has also obtained two H1B grants valued in excess of \$3 million to support IFS industries with high-end information technology training, and initiated another grant application awaiting funding approval.

Yet, there are other ways community colleges can be integrated more effectively into the workforce development system in the Metro Hartford region. A national model worth further investigation is North Carolina’s New and Expanding Industry Training Program (NEIT). NEIT supports free training projects for approximately 200 companies and 20,000 trainees per year. NEIT is not only the oldest customized training program in the United States, it’s also the national pacesetter. Offered through North Carolina’s 58 community colleges, NEIT has been ranked the nation’s number one worker training program. In order to qualify for the program, companies must create 12 or more new jobs in a North Carolina community in a given year that fall into one of the following categories: manufacturing, technology,

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distribution, customer service, or air courier service. The training services provided through the program are diverse, and may include elements such as customized curriculum and training media development, temporary training facilities, pre-employment orientation and training, technical and performance skills training, and reimbursement for specific company instructional expenses.

The Metro Hartford region should incorporate its community colleges into the workforce development system in a similar manner. Community colleges can be a vital partner in efforts to prepare the region's workers for jobs in target industries.

Actions:

1. Explore the North Carolina NEIT model as a prototype for the role the Metro Hartford region's community college can play in workforce development
2. Include all two-year degree granting public and private community colleges in the workforce summits conducted between workforce development providers, higher education institutions, and the business community.
3. Develop and conduct a marketing campaign to businesses in the Metro Hartford region to ensure that those businesses are aware of the types of workforce development and education programs community colleges have and the important role they play in workforce development efforts.

**Priority Two**

**Primary Implementer:** CWP, Representatives of two year degree granting public and private community colleges, Higher Education Consortium

**Secondary Implementer:** Representatives of businesses in the region, MetroHartford Alliance, CBIA

**Timeframe:** Beginning March 2007

**Cost:** Unknown until further research conducted

**Benefit:** Tremendous economic and social benefit to region

### **Education & Workforce Development Strategy Six: Strengthen research and development functions and funding at colleges and universities in the Metro Hartford Region.**

The lack of ability of colleges and universities in the region to conduct research and development is a major concern. Many companies, particularly high tech companies, are attracted to regions that have colleges and universities with research and development capabilities, which are an important component in turning research into marketable products. Although the state of Connecticut has higher than average per capita R&D expenditures, the majority of funding is allocated to Yale University. These funds do not make their way back to the Metro Hartford region. Additionally, 65% of Connecticut's academic R&D is focused on life sciences, not technology or engineering. Connecticut's ranking for patent activity has declined from 12<sup>th</sup> in 2000 to 17<sup>th</sup> in 2002. The region's colleges and universities must enhance their research and development capabilities, and focus more funding into the fields of technology and engineering.

Actions:

1. Organize meetings between representatives of the colleges and universities in the region and representatives of industries in the region and develop a plan for research and development programs that are most needed by industries to commercialize products or

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processes. Determine which existing research programs most closely fit the research needs of industries and match those programs and industries for research and development purposes.

2. Enlist support from state legislators from the region and the governor's office to seek state funding to support research and development programs at the region's colleges and universities.

#### Priority Three

Primary Implementer: Higher Education Consortium, representatives of region's businesses, State of Connecticut, DECD, CII, CDA, Federal Government.

Secondary Implementer: MetroHartford Alliance, CBIA, CTC

Timeframe: Beginning October 2007

Cost: Cannot be determined

Benefit: Will improve research and development capacity of colleges and universities to foster growth in targeted industries.

### Education & Workforce Development Strategy Seven: Develop an education campaign to inform employers and potential workers of workforce development programs available in the Metro Hartford region.

Many employers and workers in the Metro Hartford region are not aware of workforce development programs that are available to them. This was evidenced by the fact that representatives of employers in the region participating in focus groups were not aware of the programs provided by Capital Workforce Partners, the region's workforce development provider. These programs should play an important role in preparing the Metro Hartford region's workforce for jobs that will be available in target industries.

#### Actions:

1. Capital Workforce Partners coordinates collection of information about all workforce development programs in the Metro Hartford region and the populations they serve.
2. Capital Workforce Partners puts the information on its website.
3. Capital Workforce Partners provides the information to area employers for inclusion in their employee newsletters and for use by their human resources departments.
4. Capital Workforce Partners should continue working with Capital Community College to place a portal office of the One Stop Center at the college to assist employers, employees, and students in a convenient and central location.
5. Conduct a marketing campaign among businesses in the Metro Hartford region to ensure that they are aware of workforce development programs available to them.

#### Priority Three

Primary Implementer: Capital Workforce Partners

Secondary Implementer: Employers in the region, MetroHartford Alliance

Timeframe: Beginning June 2007

Cost: \$50,000 - \$100,000

Benefit: Will make employers in the region aware of workforce development programs available to them and their employees.

## Quality of Life

**GOAL:** Continue to preserve the high quality of life already present in the Metro Hartford region and improve quality of life elements most likely to attract young professionals and businesses among the recommended target industries.

**The Metro Hartford region should cultivate a robust “quality of life”, with a variety of amenities and entertainment venues that are promoted both internally and externally. The most successful economic development regions in the global economy contain strong quality of life amenities. These amenities can serve as an attraction for young, skilled professionals, businesses, citizens, tourists, seniors, and families.**

The recommendations offered within this section are aimed at maintaining and improving the quality of life for three audiences: **current residents, young professionals, and target industry companies/existing industries**. Each of these groups desire and are attracted to locations with good healthcare, quality housing, safety, ample parks and green space, artistic and cultural amenities, vibrant downtowns, and environmental cleanliness.

By investing in quality of life amenities, the region will also be able to target specific businesses. This will generate additional revenue and achieve synergistic returns in economic development.

Quality of Life development should portray a certain image of the region, and certainly one that is appealing to executives and other business decision makers, and the attractions should showcase the region's creativity and focus on its unique assets. New England is well known for its high quality of life. Metro Hartford is no exception, and has many related strengths to build upon, including:

- Significant arts and cultural presence
- High quality of life rankings
- Connecticut River Riverfront
- Abundance of theaters, museums and other performing art venues
- Smaller cities in the region give the area a “small town appeal” with big city venues nearby
- Safe, stable, affluent communities throughout the region
- Generally lower cost of living relative to other Northeastern cities, though lack of affordable housing is a major challenge

The Metro Hartford region has a unique opportunity to improve upon its quality of life and to expand upon its existing assets.

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## Quality of Life Strategy One: Develop affordable housing policies and programs for the entire MetroHartford Region.

Affordable housing is a major factor affecting economic development. High housing prices limit housing options for workers and their families, which can affect a company's decision on where it wants to locate facilities. High housing prices also affect a region's ability to attract and retain entry-level employees, which again can affect a company's location decision. A recently released report titled *A Crisis in the Making: The Need For Affordable Housing in Connecticut* states clearly, "Connecticut's capacity for economic growth is directly linked to its ability to attract and retain a quality workforce. The rapidly increasing cost of housing, however, threatens the ability of vital skilled employees to live in Connecticut, and to build the economic future of the state."

Seventy seven percent of the region's housing is not affordable to low and moderate income households and prices are still rising much faster than wages. In fact, the City of Hartford has one of the lowest home ownership rates in the country, at 25%. Increases in home ownership rates in the country have been outlined by community development corporations as the primary means to stabilize neighborhoods, increase real estate values, stimulate local business development, and reduce crime.

Affordable housing is made a more difficult goal because of the State of Connecticut's tax structure, which encourages communities to make lot sizes larger to maximize the tax revenue available from residential lots. Larger lot sizes means that the cost of homes is much higher, which works against attempts to provide more affordable housing options.

Not only does Connecticut and the Metro Hartford region need to increase home ownership rates, but they also need to ensure that there is adequate available rental housing as well. Many entry-level workers especially need affordable rental housing while they prepare to buy a home. The more affordable housing options available to workers, the more likely they are to remain in the region. Affordable housing, both rental units and purchased homes, are also a critical factor in attracting and retaining young professionals.

The Mayor has taken several steps to address the affordable housing problem and increase homeownership rates, including establishment of the Mayor's Task Force on Housing, increasing the number of homeowners in the City of Hartford, leveraging federal housing money to help minority first-time homeowners purchasing their first homes, and providing bilingual homeownership courses through the city's library system to help people understand the financial requirements of purchasing a home.

Although the Metro Hartford region is a wealthy region, the wealth is concentrated in suburban towns surrounding the City of Hartford. As a catalyst to improving the region's economic health, and enticing activity and investment in the city that will benefit the entire region, home ownership programs must be a focus of regional efforts.

Homes in the Metro Hartford region are more expensive relative to income than they are in the U.S. and all but one of the comparable cities (Providence was not as expensive. Comparisons included Milwaukee, Charlotte, Springfield, and Albany).

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Actions:

1. Reinstate the regional housing compact that existed in the region several years ago. Develop a long-term strategy to provide affordable housing for the short and long term vitality of the city and the region.
2. Encourage the development of mixed-use, diverse housing accommodations in the City not unlike the efforts of the City of Chicago. Various incentives could be structured for developers who provide the most overall benefit to this mixed-use philosophy.
3. Determine state and federal entities that might provide grants for conducting a needs assessment throughout the region.
4. Host town hall meetings to understand the needs of residents in the city and region.
5. Determine best practices of other similar cities that have alleviated such difficulties. Some might include the City of Chicago and Oklahoma City.
6. Continue efforts to re-develop blighted areas that are currently the responsibility of the City of Hartford's Department of Development Services, as well as housing rehabilitation through the City of Hartford Housing Division.

**Priority One**

Primary Implementers: CRCOG, City And Town Officials, Mayor's Task Force On Housing

Secondary Implementers: Private Sector, MetroHartford Alliance, Federal Agencies involved in affordable housing, Greater Hartford Association of Realtors

Timeframe: Immediate And On Going

Cost: Staff Time, Unknown Due To Implementation Strategies That Will Be Selected

Benefit: Long Term Quality Of Life Benefit, Improved Image, Housing Opportunities for all

**Quality of Life Strategy Two: Metro Hartford should expand its efforts to attract and retain professionals age 25-44 to the region.**

The efforts of MetroHartford to attract and retain the coveted demographic of professionals between 25-44 should be expanded. A younger, talented workforce will make the region more competitive for attracting, retaining, and growing target industry companies.

While effective efforts are underway, including: the corporate intern/young professional committee which organizes programs for over 1,000 interns during the summer; the Hartford-Springfield Economic Partnership's Graduate Retention Project; and the development of the [www.internhere.com](http://www.internhere.com) website; we still recommend that a strategic plan or strategic goals should be developed for this activity to attract and retain this valuable talent. This will be a key asset for business retention and business attraction to the region.

The establishment of HYPE is an important step in attracting young professionals, but the efforts of the organization should be combined with other regional efforts committed to the same goal. For example, Leadership Greater Hartford sponsors two programs targeted to young professionals: OnTrack Hartford and Hartford Encounter. These programs target corporate interns to introduce them to Hartford and entice them to remain in the area after their internships are complete. All efforts targeted at young professionals should be coordinated to ensure the each program is more effective in accomplishing its goals.

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Actions:

1. Continue to develop HYPE, the young professionals' networking group, to provide a platform for this demographic to share ideas, learn from one another, establish business and client relationships, and advance in their careers. Work in partnership with Leadership Greater Hartford's OnTrack Hartford and Hartford Encounter, as well as any other organizations whose mission includes attracting and retaining young professionals to the region, to maximize the effectiveness of these efforts.
2. Establish a mentor program and invite retired executives to speak and coach young professionals and vice versa.
3. Have a "special topic" breakfast seminar and invite local business leaders, potential mentors, young professionals, entrepreneurs, investors, and others to speak. Special topics may include entrepreneur success stories, target industry business accomplishments, etc.
4. Develop, write, and produce a weblog for the young professionals group.
5. Continue to maintain and build information on the Hartford.com website of interest to this target group, including after-hours entertainment, shopping venues, educational opportunities, sports, etc.
6. Encourage the Senior Human Resources Task Force to develop a program for human resource directors of the major corporations throughout the region to interact with young professionals so they could learn exactly what interests young professionals.
7. As an incentive for young professionals to become involved in the young professionals network, offer discount cards for membership. Encourage businesses to donate discounts, products, tickets, or other items of interest to young professionals.
8. Incorporate additional promotional activities, such as e-newsletters, direct mailers, and advertising to attract their interest.
9. Approach companies, particularly those in the engineering, healthcare, banking and finance, and biosciences fields about opening their workplaces to youth programs.
10. Ask local businesses to support "interest" clubs such as an arts group, specialized outdoor recreation, wine tasting or making, gourmet clubs.
11. Work with alumni programs at the University of Connecticut, University of Hartford, Central Connecticut State University, Trinity University, St. Joseph's College, and two-year degree granting public and private community colleges to recruit alumni back to the area by hosting alumni receptions during sporting events, including articles in alumni newsletters about MetroHartford activities and keep them apprised of regional activities throughout the year.
12. Create a place for young professionals to network as members on civic boards, other economic development efforts/councils. Engage them and actively recruit them to participate.
13. Work to increase the affordable housing stock in the region, both homes for purchase and rental units, so that the region is more attractive to young professionals as a place to live and work.

Priority One

Primary Implementers: MetroHartford Alliance, HYPE

Secondary Implementers: Regions business, colleges and universities in the region

Timeframe: On-Going

Cost: Staff Time, Dependent On Tasks

Benefit: Marketing & Attracting, Workforce, Quality Of Life

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### Quality of Life Strategy Three: Support and expand the strong arts base and arts community in the Metro Hartford region.

As the Metro Hartford economy rebounds and continues to grow, the interest and support for the arts and cultural activity has increased and will continue to do so. However, as with most arts and cultural organizations, funds and support are always needed and in demand. With the completion and opening of the new Connecticut Convention Center, which will bring conventions and other events to downtown, tourism will be an important focus. Visitors should be presented with a variety of cultural and arts amenities and activities. It is even more important that programs and activities are developed in the downtown area beyond the 5 pm timeframe. These should be expanded so the visitor, resident, or key decision maker is offered a vibrant 24/7 experience rather than one that “rolls up the sidewalks at dusk”. The Alliance should also consider, along with City leadership, developing a citywide arts and cultural activities long-term strategy. Finally, funding for promotion of the arts community and cultural activities should be considered as a separate goal. Funding for the operations of the convention center can be critical to its overall success for the region and the state.

#### Actions:

1. Consider developing a city or region wide arts and cultural activities long-term strategy, to include support services for those employed in the arts community.
2. Continue to promote the arts community in the marketing efforts by the Alliance and support the marketing efforts of the arts community.
3. Should the Alliance choose to participate in funding any efforts for the arts, consideration should be given to expanding these activities beyond the arts and cultural activities in the Downtown area and throughout the region.
4. Consider the scope of projects that should be included for funding based on input from the arts committee and other art and culturally related organizations.
5. Develop progressive events and activities throughout the year that are sponsored and organized by the different towns represented in the MetroHartford Alliance. Each community should host various concerts/events/festivals based on their respective assets/heritage/culture. Build collaboration and support as a region to organize and assist, or plan for a yearlong strategy for the region to ensure that there are many different activities offered.
6. Work with Central Connecticut State University’s Geography Department and its Hospitality and Tourism Studies Program to conduct an assessment of the regional economic impacts of entertainment venues and recommendations on methods to improve the ability of such venues to draw customers.

#### Priority Two

Primary Implementers: Greater Hartford Arts Council

Secondary Implementers: MetroHartford Alliance/Private Sector

Timeframe: On-Going

Cost: Unknown

Benefit: Intangible, Quality Of Life Improvement

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## Quality of Life Strategy Four: Expand retail, recreational, and entertainment venues throughout downtown Hartford.

While there has been an increase in construction activity downtown, there is very little new commercial space under construction. The convention center has been a major public investment, and developers have begun to build housing units downtown where abandoned and decaying buildings once stood. However, there is still little retail or other amenities downtown to make the area attractive for potential residents.

One of the chief issues regarding quality of life in the downtown area is the lack of adequate retail establishments and restaurants. The high level of disposable income and the lack of restaurants in close proximity to many of Metro Hartford's 's major employers create excellent opportunities for retailers and restaurateurs. Workers at established businesses do not have a large variety of ethnic restaurants where they can have lunch or retail shops where they can shop on their lunch breaks or after work. If downtown Hartford wants to attract target businesses, it will have to develop retail and restaurant options. Retail establishments and restaurants that are attractive to young professionals would also help attract that demographic to the area.

While Hartford has taken important steps to prepare for new development by commissioning a downtown development plan and streamlined its development efforts through the creation of the Development Services Department, and vital economic activity has occurred, more should be done to encourage the development of retail establishments to promote a 24/7 downtown. There is a need for more retail, recreational and entertainment amenities in Hartford and if not expanded, could become a significant deterrent to attracting new businesses, young professionals and existing businesses. While the development of lofts and condominiums has been successful, the lack of retail entertainment and recreational amenities could threaten or thwart that continued success.

Successful communities are those that also have attracted and retained establishments such as specialized food stores, cafes, bookstores, high end retail outlets, theatres, ball parks, designated entertainment districts, diverse restaurants, and other specialized shops.

### Actions:

1. Conduct an analysis of retail spending patterns and projections for the city and surrounding communities.
  - a. The analysis should include a feasibility study of new location opportunities for retail establishments and restaurants.
  - b. The study should be updated on an annual basis.
2. Develop a retail taskforce to determine the type of retail establishments that are important. Develop a strategy for the types of venues needed for retail, entertainment, and recreational activities.
  - a. This market research should be used to highlight the attractiveness of the area to national retail companies and restaurants, and the complete data should be provided by economic development organizations to any retail establishment or restaurant considering operations in the city.
  - b. Identify smaller, specialized food stores such as Whole Foods markets and define a strategy for attracting them.
3. Develop similar activities for other retail and recreational activities.

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4. Build needed infrastructure as part of the overall strategy, such as parking garages, to ensure visitors, residents and businesses can adequately enjoy these activities
  5. Work in tandem with the young professionals groups and arts/cultural committees to further define what is most desired.
  6. Explore opportunities for incentives for local retail boutiques or restaurants to locate downtown, such as low interest loans, attractive lease rates, promotions, etc.
  7. Continue public policy advocacy efforts to change state policy, laws, and regulations so the state provides incentives to encourage retail, recreational, and entertainment venues in downtown Hartford.

**Priority Two**

**Primary Implementers:** Hartford Chamber of Commerce, Hartford Development Services Department

**Secondary Implementers:** Private Sector Developers, Retail Brokers

**Timeframe:** On-Going as residential units are opened downtown

**Cost:** Unknown Until Study Parameters Identified, Scope Determined

**Benefit:** Quality Of Life, Marketing & Attraction

## Sites & Infrastructure

**GOAL:** Ensure that sites and infrastructure in the Metro Hartford region are ready to meet the needs of businesses that want to expand or locate in the region.

**The Metro Hartford region is well positioned to offer businesses the strong infrastructure they need to operate successfully in the region. Some of its strongest infrastructure features include strategic location between Boston and New York, its location on the I-91 corridor, the presence of Bradley International Airport, and the region's reputation as a center of both "wired" and "wireless" internet capabilities.**

However, there are also some infrastructure challenges that need to be addressed. There is a shortage of sites that are ready for a company to build upon. There is a shortage of affordable parking spaces and structures downtown to accommodate all of the traffic that comes to downtown Hartford. There are few transatlantic passenger flights available to and from Bradley International Airport, and air cargo needs to be increased. There is no commuter rail between Hartford and New York City. Commercial rail capacity needs to be improved significantly.

All of these infrastructure issues will have to be addressed to make the Metro Hartford economically competitive.

### **Sites & Infrastructure Strategy One: Increase the number of ready-to-build sites available for businesses.**

One concern among many participants in this planning process is that many of the sites that might be available to target industries for development are not "shovel-ready" – that is, these sites are not ready for development because they are not hooked into utilities, not zoned appropriately, or in some way not ready to be used immediately. Given the intense competition for business site locations, the better prepared sites around the Metro Hartford region are, the more competitive the region will be in attracting businesses.

#### Actions:

1. Conduct a complete inventory of every significant vacant parcel and brownfield site of land that might be used for a business location to determine whether it is capable of being connected to basic infrastructure, including water, sewer, electricity, telecommunications, and any other basic services. Also note how the parcel is zoned and whether it is zoned appropriately for use by target industries.
2. The inventory should note any parcels of land that cannot readily be connected to basic infrastructure, and determine how it could be made ready to hook up to services.

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3. Work to prepare those vacant parcels and brownfield sites so they can be hooked up to services to make them more attractive to potential businesses seeking business locations.
  4. Create a grant program that can fund efforts to make sites shovel-ready.

#### Priority One

Primary Implementer: Local governments in region, CRCOG, CERC, Northeast Utilities

Secondary Implementer: MetroHartford Alliance, private developers

Timeframe: June '06 – Ongoing

Cost: \$100,000 - \$200,000

Benefit: The region will be better prepared to attract potential target businesses

### Sites & Infrastructure Strategy Two: Expand transatlantic passenger flights to and from Bradley International Airport.

Bradley International Airport is ranked as one of the top 10 fastest growing airports in the United States. It has over 230 flights per day and is home to 10 major airlines, 6 regional airlines, and 10 air cargo carriers. The airport is a major regional asset, one that the Connecticut Department of Transportation has recognized through an investment of \$236 million in major infrastructure improvements. One drawback, however, is that Bradley currently has no transatlantic passenger flights. It is a situation state and community leaders have been working to remedy for years. The State of Connecticut has offered a \$500,000 incentive to any carrier that establishes transatlantic flights. This incentive is being offered on a first come, first serves basis. The incentive money can be used as a rebate towards airline terminal building rentals, landing fees, and aircraft parking fees. A spokesperson with Bradley has indicated that talks are under way with several carriers. These efforts should continue. Not only would these flights make the region more attractive to industries doing business in other parts of the world, but also it would generate additional jobs as well as additional fees from carriers.

#### Actions:

1. Continue efforts to secure a carrier for transatlantic flights to and from Bradley International Airport.

#### Priority One

Primary Implementer: Bradley International Airport

Secondary Implementer: Transatlantic flight carriers

Timeframe: Ongoing

Cost: Cost of incentives (\$500,000)

Benefit: Attraction of companies doing businesses overseas, additional revenues and jobs for airport

### Sites & Infrastructure Strategy Three: Better connect the Metro Hartford region to other cities by initiating efforts to create commuter rail service between the Springfield-Metro Hartford region, New Haven, and New York City.

One major impediment to economic development in the region is the lack of commuter rail service between the Springfield-Metro Hartford region, New Haven, and New York City. Some residents of the

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region work in areas closer to New York City, and would continue to live (and spend their tax dollars) in Metro Hartford if there was an easy way to commute between the two cities. It would also make the area more attractive to target industries whose employees might want to live closer to New York City but work in the Metro Hartford region. The former head of United Technologies, one of the major companies in the region, said that the lack of commuter rail was the single greatest barrier to economic development in the region. Though it is something that the region has tried and failed to do for years, efforts to establish commuter rail service should continue.

Actions:

1. Continue efforts to establish commuter rail service between Springfield-Metro Hartford, New Haven, and New York City.
2. Make establishment of commuter rail service a priority legislative goal in both the state legislature and in Congress.
3. Include a connection to and from Bradley International Airport as part of the commuter rail line.

**Priority One**

Primary Implementer: CRCOG, Connecticut Transportation Strategy Board, Connecticut Department of Transportation, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (Springfield, Massachusetts)

Secondary Implementer: Region's state legislative and federal congressional delegations

Timeframe: Ongoing

Cost: Cannot be determined

Benefit: Would allow residents who work in and around New York City to continue to live in the Metro Hartford region. Would create better labor connectivity and make the region more attractive to target industries whose employees might choose to live closer to New York City, access to and from Bradley would be enhanced.

**Sites & Infrastructure Strategy Four: Create a development corporation to coordinate efforts on regional public purpose real estate development projects.**

One of the recommendations in the Millennium Report addressed the difficulty of developing real estate projects that are too complex for an individual municipal government to deal with or involve multiple municipal governments and therefore make conflicts difficult to resolve. The report recommended the creation of a nonprofit development corporation to undertake public purpose real estate development projects. The report pointed out, "There is no regional nonprofit organization that has the capacity to actually undertake a major development project." Such an organization is even more important in situations where projects are too complex or do not generate the type of profits private developers need to justify projects. This recommendation was never implemented.

An existing organization can be tapped for this purpose. For example, the Capital City Economic Development Authority (CCEDA) could act as the regional development corporation if its scope of authority were extended beyond the City of Hartford.

Actions:

1. Consider expanding the scope of authority of CCEDA by giving it the charge of implementing regional or multi-jurisdictional development projects. The corporation should either be staffed or retain consultants with private real estate experience so the

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- corporation has the experience necessary to negotiate and carry these projects through to completion.
2. The corporation provides technical assistance to neighborhood-based and local groups involved in real estate development projects

#### Priority Three

Primary Implementer: MetroHartford Alliance

Secondary Implementer: Municipal governments from around the region

Timeframe: June 2007

Cost: Cannot be determined.

Benefit: Will move large public purpose projects along at a faster rate than having individual communities move them.

### Sites & Infrastructure Strategy Five: Improve the commercial rail infrastructure of the region.

The region already has commercial rail lines running through it, but many of these rails are old and have not been updated. For example, the rails do not have the capacity to handle double-stacked freight cars, a feature that is attractive to many industries that might choose to locate in the region and ship their products out of the area.

#### Actions:

1. Conduct an assessment of the commercial rail infrastructure in the Metro Hartford region to determine its capacity and readiness to handle the increased weight and volume of rail shipments.
2. Improve the capacity of the rail system in the area to handle commercial freight shipments.
3. Connect commercial rail lines to New Haven and /or Bridgeport deep-water port.

#### Priority Two

Primary Implementer: Rail systems in the Metro Hartford region, Connecticut Transportation Strategy Board, CRCOG, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (Springfield, Massachusetts)

Secondary Implementer: Individual municipalities in the Metro Hartford region

Timeframe: April 2007 and ongoing

Cost: Cannot be determined

Benefit: Will make the region more attractive to industries that ship and receive products in and out of the region.

### Sites & Infrastructure Strategy Six: Increase the amount of parking facilities strategically located downtown.

Lack of affordable parking is a major problem in downtown Hartford, and has been one of the reasons that companies such as ING have cited for moving their headquarters out of Hartford into East Hartford. There are parking lots downtown, but they sit on valuable land that could be used for other development purposes. There is at least one parking garage project under way currently, but there

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should be a concerted effort to provide more affordable parking facilities downtown. This feature will make downtown Hartford more attractive to companies who could bring thousand of employees back to downtown.

Actions:

1. Continue efforts to create more parking options in and around downtown, with consideration given to cost, location, and safety.
2. Analyze economic and demographic trends when making decisions about the need for increased parking facilities, including differences in parking needs for residential and commercial uses and the effects increases in telecommuting might have on the number of employees needing parking spaces in the downtown area.

Priority Two

Primary Implementer: City of Hartford/ Hartford Parking Authority

Secondary Implementer: Private developers

Timeframe: April 2007 and ongoing

Cost: Cannot be determined

Benefit: Will help attract /retain companies to downtown Hartford and encourage after hours and weekend leisure activity.

### Sites & Infrastructure Strategy Seven: Expand freight operations at Bradley International Airport.

Once Bradley secures a transatlantic passenger carrier, this could open the door to expand the already robust cargo operations at the airport. There is already an international cargo carrier that flies between Bradley and Europe. Bradley should seek to attract international cargo operations into and out of the airport.

Actions:

1. Create a master plan for the properties surrounding Bradley to support Air Freight Operations.
2. Expand on international air cargo operations to Europe by working to secure carriers to other continents.
3. Explore options to expand and better utilize Foreign Trade Zone.

Priority Two

Primary Implementer: Bradley International Airport

Secondary Implementer: Domestic and Transatlantic flight carriers

Timeframe: April 2007 and ongoing

Cost: Cannot be determined

Benefit: Attraction of companies doing businesses overseas, additional revenues and jobs for airport

### Sites & Infrastructure Strategy Eight: Determine the infrastructure capabilities for broadband and wireless telecommunication technology through the Metro Hartford

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region, and develop plans as necessary to improve the infrastructure for those technologies.

Hartford has been ranked both as one of the most “wired” cities and as one of the top “wireless” cities in the country as well. Hartford has been recognized as the 2<sup>nd</sup> most wired city in the country and ranks in the top 60 “cyber cities” for high bandwidth. It has also been recognized as one of the top “unwired” cities in the country – a city with a high concentration of wireless computer service. While these rankings are impressive and can be major selling points to companies looking for strong telecommunications infrastructure, it cannot be determined if these strong rankings apply to the rest of the region. An assessment needs to be conducted of the wired and wireless infrastructure throughout the entire region to determine whether there is a consistently strong infrastructure region-wide. The assessment needs to include the telecommunications infrastructure capacity for industrial use as well as the capacity for residential use. The assessment also should include an analysis of the geographic distribution of both broadband and wireless capacity in each community in the region to determine how prepared communities are to meet the telecommunications needs of industries and residents.

Actions:

1. Develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) with specific requirements for consultant and desired outcomes.
2. Issue RFP and receive responses.
3. Review responses and select most qualified consultant.
4. Consultant conducts study by reviewing current communication technology in the Metro Hartford region, identifying future improvements needed for broadband and wireless systems to succeed, gathering public input on communication technology needs, and developing a plan for broadband and wireless capacity throughout the Metro Hartford region.

Priority Two

Primary Implementer: Connecticut Regional Council of Governments, Connecticut Technology Council

Secondary Implementer: MetroHartford Alliance

Timeframe: January 2007

Cost: \$75,000

Benefit: Will ensure that the Metro Hartford region is fully prepared to meet the telecommunications needs of businesses and residents, and ensure that the region lives up to Hartford's rankings among the “most wired” and “most wireless” cities.

## Economic Development Strategies

**GOAL:** Increase the awareness of the Metro Hartford region, create a more positive environment, and improve the effectiveness of economic development activities through collaborative programs and cooperative efforts throughout the region.

### Economic Development Strategy One: Create an Economic Development District (EDD) for the region.

While the Metro Hartford region has sought designation as an EDD, it has not yet attained this goal, in part due to the lack of state support. We believe the region should continue to seek this designation. For those unfamiliar with the process, we have summarized activities that may need to be completed or updated once again.

One important reason to support this designation is the opportunity for funding the implementation of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, among others. Ongoing planning grant assistance provides support for the formulation and implementation of local economic development programs. Grants are intended to enhance economic development planning capability, support the formulation of development policies, and assist in building local institutional capacity. Planning grants are awarded to establish and implement effective economic development programs at local and regional levels. Eligible activities under this program include:

- Preparation and maintenance of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) process,
- Implementation of the elements of the strategy, and
- Provision of planning and technical assistance services to communities and local governments within the organization's jurisdiction.

#### Actions:

1. Meet with Economic Development Administration (EDA) officials to fully understand the application guidelines and the process for obtaining the federal designation of an EDD for the region.
2. Submit an application and the appropriate support documentation to EDA for EDD designation.
3. Continue to seek support from Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development, OPM, and the Governor's Office for EDD designation.
4. Working with the CEDS committee, develop a work plan for the EDD that builds upon this CEDS Strategy.

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### Priority One

Primary Implementer: MetroHartford Alliance

Secondary Implementer: Connecticut Department of Economic & Community Development, OPM

Timeframe: On-going / Immediate

Cost: Time of staff

Benefit: This could potentially become a new funding source for the Alliance. Would also result in recognition from the State of Connecticut as a distinct economic development entity.

## Economic Development Strategy Two: Establish a collective compact agreement to implement the recommendations outlined in the CEDS.

A major lingering concern regarding the development of this CEDS is that when the process is complete, the plan will not be implemented, which is an understandable concern given the lack of follow-through with past plans and studies.

One of the most significant steps leaders in the Metro Hartford region can take is to develop an organized method to show their commitment and accountability to improving the economic health of the region. A compact is a public document that details the terms by which each of the organizations involved in the agreement will be accountable for the success of an economic development effort. An effective compact not only details the expected results each participant wants to get out of the compact, but also details what resources each participant is going to contribute to ensure the compact's success. Following are a couple of good examples of compacts that have helped ensure accountability and continued commitment to the goals of the compact.

One good example of an economic development compact is one established by the Metropolitan Forum, a partnership of organizations in the St. Louis area among the East West Gateway Coordinating Council, FOCUS St. Louis, and the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association (RCGA). The three organizations came together in the belief that longstanding and complex regional issues are not now being effectively addressed and that a wholly new approach is required. The region's history is filled with highly publicized, yet failed attempts to address major problems, so the Metropolitan Forum arises from the recognition that something must be different this time. Stronger, more meaningful partnerships are needed among government, business, and civic leaders. Bolder actions are needed to have real impact at a scale that matters. A new spirit of honesty and accountability must motivate fact-based solutions to serious issues rather than public recognition, credit, or blame.

The Metropolitan Forum was formed by the signing of a memorandum of understanding by all involved parties. Although symbolic, this signing showed the community that the leaders were ready to support a regional approach to economic development. For more specific information on the St. Louis compact, please see the case study on St. Louis in the appendices at the end of this report.

The compact requires the participants to meet at least four times a year to discuss progress, have representation from a variety of organizations in the region, concentrate on initiatives that have a broad, significant impact on the region, and share responsibilities and costs for implementing those initiatives.

Another example of the successful establishment of and commitment to a public goal is the Boston Compact, which was recommended as a model for improving Hartford Public Schools in Education and

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Workforce Development Recommendation One. One of the most important and distinctive features of the Boston Compact is that it is a true community effort that brings together all community leaders with a stake in improving public education, and requires participants to publicly commit significant resources in exchange for demanding that the school system improve the performance of students. Each partner in the Compact must publicly proclaim the improvements expected in the public education system, and also publicly proclaim the resources the participant will commit to ensure that public education in Boston improves. Those commitments are revisited on an annual basis to determine whether they have been honored, and to track the progress made in achieving the goals and strategies designed to improve public education.

In addition to the quarterly accountability sessions agreed to in compact such as the one St. Louis established, it is also a good idea to hold annual public accountability sessions, in which the participants in the compact share with the public the progress they have made in their economic development efforts, to celebrate their successes, and to pledge further specific actions in the coming year. This not only ensures that participating organizations remain accountable to one another and to the public for economic development efforts, but also generates enthusiasm for the successes the region has achieved in improving its the economic health.

Actions:

1. Develop a collective compact agreement to implement the recommendations in the CEDS, and develop an official Memorandum of Understanding among all participants
2. The Memorandum of Understanding should detail what each participant expects to result from implementing the recommendations in the CEDS, as well as the resources each participant will contribute to ensure that the recommendations are implemented.
3. Develop key performance measures for accountability based so that all participants in the compact can determine how much progress has been made in solving the problems the CEDS recommendations are intended to address.
4. Follow up quarterly to assess progress and compare the progress made toward successfully implementing the CEDS recommendations.
5. Conduct an annual accountability session to assess the progress made in improving economic development efforts in the region, pledge continued activities, and celebrate successes.

Priority Number One

Primary Implementer: MetroHartford Alliance

Secondary Implementer: Regional Economic Development Partners

Timeframe: Develop compact April-October 2006; begin quarterly accountability sessions in January 2007

Cost: Minimal staff time

Benefit: Collaborative effort, teamwork

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### **Economic Development Strategy Three: Strengthen the Economic Development Council's role as a business roundtable that furthers the mission of the MetroHartford Alliance to create and retain jobs and to alleviate business roadblocks.**

The Economic Development Council is in perfect position to fulfill the role of a business roundtable that helps to improve the business climate in the region and serves as a forum for business and economic leaders to have an impact on issues affecting business and job growth.

Actions:

1. Give the Economic Development Council the task of serving as the business roundtable for the region that works to improve the region's business climate and alleviate roadblocks to economic growth.
2. Determine if the membership of the Council needs to appropriately diverse (including, industry sectors, size, occupation, women and minority businesses etc.) to fulfill this role, and if necessary, broaden the Council's membership.
3. Use best practice benchmarks as the foundation for this group's efforts.

**Priority One**

**Primary Implementers: MetroHartford Alliance, Economic Development Council**

**Secondary Implementers: Private sector**

**Timeframe: Immediate and ongoing**

**Cost: Staff support**

**Benefit: This could affect existing and new business locations and provide positive outcomes from the business community. Also promotes expansion and retention of existing businesses.**

### **Economic Development Strategy Four: Improve efforts to support existing business. At least ten communities in the region should adopt a Business Retention and Expansion program as their primary economic development effort by fall 2006.**

Actions:

1. Enlist the support of regional economic developers to assist in education and training at the local level on how to develop a BRE program. Include the utilities, community colleges, universities and economic development professionals
2. Identify communities that are interested and ready for training and education to develop their own specific BRE.
3. Raise necessary funds to provide this training and support.
4. Have officials sign resolutions of support for a local BRE program.
5. Identify a local sponsoring agency (E.g. economic development corporation or chamber of commerce).
6. Provide training and materials to local communities (elected officials should also be a part of this training).
7. Follow up on the survey of existing businesses conducted by the region's chambers with business visits.
8. Develop a pre-survey and post-survey publicity program. This is normally done by the local sponsoring agency.
9. Develop a system to respond to local problems identified during the survey process.
10. Develop an ongoing follow-up program for established businesses.

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Priority Number One

Primary Implementers: MetroHartford Alliance

Secondary Implementers: Cities and towns in region, chambers of commerce

Timeframe: Fall 2006

Cost: Dependent upon action items taken

Benefit: This is vitally important for the retention of jobs.

**Economic Development Strategy Five: Expand regional educational and networking opportunities between economic development professionals in the region's communities. Build on existing relationships the Alliance already has with neighboring economic development organizations and area universities.**

Though there are opportunities for economic development professionals to meet and network through the Regional Economic Development Forum ("REDF"), those efforts will need to be increased as the region moves forward to implement this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The REDF should continue conducting quarterly meetings between economic development professionals in the region to build camaraderie, generate enthusiasm, provide updates and education about economic development activities, and to celebrate successes.

Actions:

1. Metro Hartford regional economic developers should routinely attend meetings of regional economic development partners.
2. Communicate Metro Hartford's 's new vision and priority projects to the regional economic partners participating in REDF.
3. Give the communities the opportunity to showcase their best practices.

Priority Two

Primary Implementers: MetroHartford Alliance, REDF

Secondary Implementers: Economic development professionals from the region

Timeframe: Ongoing

Cost: Staff Time

Benefit: This effort will build regional partnerships and may improve regional results for economic development activities.

**Economic Development Strategy Six: Plan and conduct visits at least annually to communities that have effectively implemented best practices the Metro Hartford region wants to emulate.**

In Appendix 1 of this plan, there are case studies on six communities that have effectively put into place successful strategies that will further the community's economic goals. The case studies cover issues such as downtown revitalization, regional economic development, workforce development, business retention, branding and image development, and young professional attraction and retention. Visits to these communities would help regional leaders get a clearer idea of how to put best practices into action.

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The visits should not stop with those communities, however. The MetroHartford Alliance should continue to track and compile lists of communities that are doing things related to economic development that are worth emulating, and then plan and conduct visits to those communities as well.

Actions:

1. Research, track, and compile information on communities that have implemented successful strategies to address issues the MetroHartford also faces, including downtown development, effective marketing and branding, affordable housing, workforce development, and regional economic development.
2. Select at least one best practice community for annual visit.
3. Conduct phone interviews with economic development professionals, community development professionals, community leaders, and other people active in those communities to gather further information on the targeted best practice, the methods used to successfully implement the practice, the challenges and setbacks the communities faced, the lessons learned from their experiences, and the benefits the communities have derived as a result of implementing the best practices.
4. Maintain a database of best practices and the communities implementing them so region leaders have adequate information to determine communities to visit.

Priority One

Primary Implementers: MetroHartford Alliance

Secondary Implementers: Other economic development and community leaders in the region

Timeframe: Fall 2006 and ongoing

Cost: Depends on specific communities visited, travel

Benefit: The Metro Hartford region will learn from the experiences of others, determine the most effective ways to implement best practices, and determine the pitfalls to avoid.

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## Marketing Strategies

**GOAL:** Increase the awareness of the Metro Hartford region, create a more positive image, and improve the effectiveness of economic development marketing efforts through consistent messaging, audience surveys, enhanced website development and other key marketing efforts.

The Metro Hartford region should develop an economic development and marketing strategic plan that properly conveys the goals of the region for its existing and growing business community. It is important to develop strategies that target residents, new businesses, existing businesses, and business visitors collectively. By focusing on Quality of Life, Workforce and Education, Sites and Infrastructure, and the Business Climate, the region will have a centralized methodology and conclusive foundations to build an economic development and marketing plan and strategy.

**Economic Development Marketing Strategy One: Allocate and Fund an annual marketing budget to develop a comprehensive strategic marketing plan to promote the region, attract visitors and industry, and promote the Metro Hartford region as an excellent place to live and work.**

This plan underscores the MetroHartford Alliance as one of the primary marketing organizations for the Metro Hartford region. Given those responsibilities, the Alliance should have an annual marketing budget to develop marketing materials such as brochures, collateral materials, website and e-news products, marketing strategies and materials for the targeted industries, and for travel or business development associated with the marketing effort.

Though the Alliance may seek assistance from state or federal sources, it could also consider private funding sources for at least a portion of the marketing budget. While many of the items are outlined in the marketing plan above, we would like to draw attention to five following action items:

Actions:

1. The Alliance should employ resources or consultants to develop a strategic marketing plan for the region.
2. The Alliance should, with input from others including a consultant, establish a realistic targeted goal for funding of the marketing plan.
3. The Alliance should determine private and public funding sources.
4. The Alliance should arrange and deliver presentations to potential private funding sources to raise a portion of the marketing budget.
5. The Alliance presents the marketing budget to the region as part of the budget process for FY 2007.

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Priority One

Primary Implementer: MetroHartford Alliance

Secondary Implementer: Private Sector partners, regional partners, Economic Development Council, MetroHartford Alliance board

Timeframe: Funding / planning 2006 – Implementation -2007

Cost: Depends on action items, but potentially \$500,000 - \$2,000,000

Benefit: This is critically important for the creation and retention of jobs throughout the region.

**Economic Development Marketing Strategy Two: As part of the overall marketing strategy, the Alliance should develop consistent themes that creatively and succinctly tell the story of the Metro Hartford region, and its strategy for business development. Messages should be developed for internal and external audiences.**

Once a plan and strategy are in place, and target industries firmly established, it is critical that a clear theme be created to properly convey the goals of the region for its existing and growing business community. It is important that a marketing campaign properly reflect internal and external goals, while creating a desire by targeted businesses to (at a minimum) *evaluate* the Metro Hartford region for possible expansion/location. While the Metro Hartford region has established a brand as “New England’s Rising Star”, there are many different brands within the region that various communities are using. If Metro Hartford continues to use this brand, we suggest the other communities use this as well.

Other options might be to build upon the Metro Hartford region’s status as both the 2nd Most Wired City” in the country and its high ranking on the “Most Unwired Cities” list.

Actions:

1. Explore feasibility of having 34 towns incorporate New England Rising Star into their individual town marketing efforts.
2. Explore feasibility of having publicly traded companies located in the region. Promote the region in their annual reports.

Priority One

Primary Implementer: MetroHartford Alliance

Secondary Implementer: Hartford Image Project

Timeframe: Immediately following creation of region marketing plan

Cost: Included in marketing plan, or if separate, dependent upon scope (rough estimates of \$25,000-50,000)

Benefit: This effort will build regional awareness for potential new investment and new jobs.

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## Economic Development Marketing Strategy Three: Continue focusing on key information and data on the Alliance's existing website.

The Alliance's website already contains some valuable information related to economic development, including the buildings and land database created and maintained by CERC. This is valuable information, but they should add other information to the site once this plan is adopted, including information on the region's target businesses. Web sites are one of the most effective communication tools available to key decision makers. The more value a website provides a visitor, the more likely you can succeed in attracting industry and visitors. Expanding companies and site consultants begin researching communities through web sites

A list of attributes of informative websites follows:

- Develop key messages for target industries
- Make sure the news section is always updated and organize news by target industry. Keep all info updated and current.
- Target the research you present. Have a web page dedicated to each target industry. For example, present regional assets that a company (within each industry) would be most interested in
- Utilize PDF's to supply additional data, for instance a Target Industry Datasheet that states why the region is attractive for a particular company.
- Let users download economic and demographic figures and use with comparative data when appropriate to display how the region compares to others.
- Make the site interactive by including GIS mapping, surveys, and forums.
- Add local business testimonials.
- Provide active Links where appropriate to other economic development-related organizations and universities within the region.
- Allow web visitors to sign-up to receive e-newsletters.
- Considering hiring experts to assist in this effort

Actions:

1. Make sure the website is data rich and contains information targeted to specific industries.
2. Have the website evaluated for content, design and ease of use.
3. Ensure that the website is focused and organized so that it is easily navigated by key decision makers.
4. Allow web visitors to sign-up to receive e-newsletters.
5. Promote the web site URL in every marketing activity.

Priority One

Primary Implementer: MetroHartford Alliance

Timeframe: Immediate

Cost: Consultant

Benefits: This is necessary in today's economic development arena for competing globally.

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## Economic Development Marketing Strategy Four: Expand and Supplement the Hartford Image Project (HIP) and make it more regional in scope.

While realizing that HIP has been successful, other communities in the Metro Hartford region should be better represented so that it is more of a regional effort to improve its image.

### Actions:

1. While Hartford is the core city of the region, HIP efforts should also include highlighting and focusing on other community's assets within the region to promote to regional and national media.
2. Develop case studies of successful efforts or successful companies throughout the region to pitch to national media.
3. Develop key message points and asset points for the communities throughout the region.
4. Develop key spokespersons throughout the region to meet with media outlets, site selection publications, and industry publications.
5. Target key spokespersons for industry events, symposiums, and tradeshow to tell the region's stories.
6. Determine leadership (public and private) throughout the region who could be designated as experts in certain industries.
7. Determine key spokespersons (public and private) throughout the region that could be part of a speaker's bureau, or in media databases such as ProfNet as leading experts in certain topics.
8. Arrange and conduct regular meetings with the editorial boards of newspapers in the region.

### Priority One

Primary Implementer: Hartford Image Project

Secondary Implementer: MetroHartford Alliance

Timeframe: Current and ongoing

Cost: Staff time / marketing dollar allocation dependent upon action items

Benefits: Will help attract new jobs and investment to the region.

## Economic Development Marketing Strategy Five: Create key, target industry messages that clearly deliver the goal for business development throughout the Region to target industries.

The Metro Hartford Alliance will need to give overall direction to a region-wide strategy and industry needs, as well as relative competitive information. The target industry message must be concise and in-line with the strategic goals for the region, including addressing the unique assets in the communities and the region, alongside desired outcomes via the target industries.

### Actions:

1. Convene and solicit input from the target industry groups.
2. Define the marketing message for the Metro Hartford region, and define unique messages to each target industry group as appropriate (and each community where appropriate).
3. Engage outside resources as needed for creation/presentation.
4. Develop a strategy for the implementation of the message (internal and external).

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Priority Two

Primary Implementers: MetroHartford Alliance

Secondary Implementers: Private sector, regional partners

Timeframe: Ongoing

Cost: Consultant

Benefit: This is critical for forming the basis for marketing efforts.

**Economic Development Marketing Strategy Six: Continue working with media in the region to promote the positive attributes and assets of the region to residents, key decision makers, site selectors, and visitors.**

Alliance staff has worked to develop good relationships with local newspapers, radio and television stations to inform them of the strategies of the region, activities of the Alliance and success stories within the region. These efforts are a vital part of creating a more positive image for the region and must continue.

Actions:

1. Once a month, the President & CEO of the Alliance and other key spokespersons should hold on or off the record editorial meetings to discuss economic development activities or issues facing the region.
2. Highlight the different communities within the region to showcase their unique assets and rotate between communities and news outlets.
3. Invite media to regional functions and activities and get them actively involved in the implementation strategies of the Alliance.
4. When new job announcements occur, work with media outlets (in advance) to "hold" news items, but to help them better prepare for the story.
5. When job announcements occur, work with the new corporate leaders, and help facilitate meetings/press relations with media outlets.

Priority Two

Primary Implementers: MetroHartford Alliance

Secondary Implementers: Media outlets

Timeframe: Immediate/ongoing

Cost: Consultant

Benefit: The media can be a powerful ally to help build internal and external support for marketing and economic development efforts.

**Economic Development Marketing Strategy Seven: Continue and expand the efforts to partner with Western Massachusetts to market the region as the Knowledge Corridor, particularly as relates to the medical device industry.**

Since the Connecticut River, Interstate 91, and a shared airport link them, industrial and cultural heritage, Greater Hartford and Greater Springfield together form an economic powerhouse. Only 25

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miles apart, the two cities anchor a combined region that constitutes the second largest population, education, and economic center in New England.

Area political, business and government leaders formalized cooperation to advance the region's economy and quality of life in September 2000 and these leaders signed a compact creating the Hartford-Springfield Economic Partnership.

This partnership and regional collaboration has the capability to catapult the region and to outline the resources and strengths of this region. Combined together, this partnership promotes the unique region's diverse economy, its population and labor force, its world-renowned colleges and universities, and rich history of innovation — the reasons it is dubbed "New England's Knowledge Corridor."

Because of the successful efforts of this partnership, and other states' efforts such as the regional partnership between Mississippi and Alabama, we believe that this effort is tremendously beneficial to the region as a whole, certainly much stronger than the individual efforts of each state. We recommend continuing and expanding this effort through marketing efforts, policy discussions, short and long term strategic goals and other collaborative and innovative programs.

Actions:

1. Promote the Knowledge Corridor at trade shows, economic development forums and publications, in site selection magazines, and to site selectors touring the region.
2. The MetroHartford Alliance should work with the Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council to produce materials that promote the Knowledge Corridor.
3. Develop and provide promotional materials and talking points on the Knowledge Corridor and its positive features and assets to target industry teams.
4. Place articles on the Knowledge Corridor in national site selection and trade magazines covering Metro Hartford's target industries.

Priority Two

Primary Implementers: Hartford / Springfield Economic Partnership, Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council, HSEP Steering Committee

Secondary Implementers: MetroHartford Alliance

Timeframe: Immediate/ongoing

Cost: To be determined based upon specific defined marketing and policy programs.

Benefit: This can be an extremely beneficial program for both states, and certainly the region overall from an image and economic development standpoint. This can help retain and recruit jobs to the region and bring much needed focus and attention to the region.

**Economic Development Marketing Strategy Eight: Form specific Target Industry teams of 5-7 members and employ their expertise in overall promotion and recruitment, retention, and expansion efforts later on.**

AE believes very strongly in the approach of Peer-to-Peer Marketing for the overall development of business in the Metro Hartford region. This is an effort to also tap the vast knowledge and resources available to the Alliance as it relates to target industries, and general business development. It is important to fully focus on the target industries, as well as to leverage the industry-specific knowledge

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while simultaneously creating an “investment” on the part of the region through participation in the process and “stake” in the outcomes.

In particular, it will be important that the Alliance develop a similar team specific to International Business. It should represent a variety of public and private sector entities with vast knowledge about these specific new targeted industries.

Actions:

1. Identify local business leaders representing the target industries that can serve on each team. A target industry team’s purpose is to maintain business contacts that can 1) supply trend information and leads to local economic developers and 2) participate in trade shows and site visits.
2. Each target industry team should meet as often as necessary, but no less frequently than once a quarter, to discuss industry-specific prospects and plan for site visits, industry trade shows, and trade missions. Prepare for site visits by jointly discussing strategies on the specific needs of companies in target industries.
3. Ask members of each target industry team to help promote the region to their peers in other regions, states, and countries. Have industry champions invite their peers to attend industry trade shows and missions and participate in site visits.

Priority Two

Primary Implementers: MetroHartford Alliance

Secondary Implementers: Targeted Industry Representatives

Timeframe: January 2007

Cost: Additional Staff and marketing plan expenditures

Benefit: These target industry teams are important for maintaining and recruiting new jobs and investment.

### Economic Development Marketing Strategy Nine: Market to target industry business executives to relocate or expand to the Region.

Growing local companies within the region should be a strategy, but the Alliance should continue its recruitment efforts, with a need to attract new target industry businesses to the area. The Region should work to target both public and private companies.

The Alliance should obtain mailing and email contact information for individual companies within the target industries and use the database for tracking marketing activity. The Alliance should develop an e-newsletter, as well as other marketing and collateral materials. These materials could highlight the region’s assets for each target industry, successes of local businesses within those industries, and benefits of having a business locate in the area.

Alliance and business leaders should attend selected target industry association events and specialized tradeshows, symposiums or events to personally sell the area to prospects and site selectors. The Alliance should join industry associations supported by targeted decision-makers. Trade associations also provide economic developers industry trend information. Alliance and Regional leaders should consider sponsoring industry events where it can get substantial attention and have one-to-one meetings with media and targeted business leaders.

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The Alliance should reach business executives through travel to key geographies with a heavy concentration of target industry businesses that could be likely to relocate to the region. These trips enable local leaders direct contact with prospects. (An outside firm may be needed to coordinate these missions, as well as FAM tours in the Region. Continued networking, relationship building, and follow-through are considered critical)

The Alliance should continue to host a private conference for national site selectors who have strong relationships with the Region's target industry businesses. As with the Alliance's most recent event, you should make this a special occasion with a well-planned itinerary, high-quality accommodations, and tours of industry-specific business locations. You should also showcase the regions prime assets. Each site selector should have a personal tour guide.

Actions:

1. Identify target industry contacts or purchase a list per industry.
2. Design and distribute an e-newsletter to prospects regularly (at least once a quarter).
3. Identify and attend selected target industry association events and tradeshows to personally sell the area.
4. Employ consultant for prospect identification.
5. Take at least one target industry mission each year.
6. Conduct more site selector's FAM tours of the Metro Hartford Region similar to the tour conducted in 2005.
7. Work with the Connecticut Convention Center and the Hartford Visitors' and Convention Bureau to coordinate efforts to bring target industry conventions to the region.
8. Work with regional and national media to get regular editorial placement of target industry highlights.
9. Work with foreign consulates to coordinate and plan meetings at overseas trade shows and marketing missions.

Priority Two

Primary Implementers: MetroHartford Alliance

Secondary Implementers: Industry Representatives in region

Timeframe: Immediate

Cost: Depends on specific actions taken, association membership fees, travel

Benefit: Industry representatives can become powerful voices for economic development and marketing efforts and can assist with recruitment efforts for jobs and investment in the region.

AngelouEconomics has identified several data sets that we believe will be good measures of economic performance. These data are easily found at state and national sources, are available at the county level, and should be considered good indicators of the overall economic health of the community and its citizens. Performance metrics for each recommendation area of this plan are below:

### **Business Climate**

- Net firm creation
- Venture capital inflows
- Membership in entrepreneurs associations
- Number of companies in the Business Retention Program

### **Education & Workforce Development**

- Job growth in target industries
- Average wage growth
- Percentage of college educated workers
- Changes in SAT scores and dropout rates
- Changes in educational attainment, particularly community college enrollment
- Use and quality of workforce development programs (surveys of businesses)
- Number of college graduates staying in the Metro Hartford region

### **Quality of Life**

- Percentage of population in the 25-44 year-old demographic
- Membership rates in the Young Professional organization
- Net migration of new people to the county/region
- Poverty rate
- Per capita income
- New retail establishments downtown
- Property value increase in Hartford neighborhoods
- Percentage of new affordable housing units constructed
- Change in numbers of crimes per 1,000 residents

### **Sites & Infrastructure**

- Existence of quality business parks and sites
- Available development acreage (with utility service)
- Transit usage rates
- Office and industrial vacancy rates

### **Economic Development & Marketing**

- Local, state and national media mentions relating to economic development
- Prospect activity (info requests or visits)
- Tourism revenues
- Changes in web traffic
- Participation rates in Economic Development Council

\*The region could have an annual "scorecard" meeting where an outside consultant reviews progress made and gives the region a score on each goal and strategies implemented or not implemented.

## Case Studies

The best practices outlined on the following pages are intended to serve as inspiration for the CEDS committee.

Other communities across the United States have been faced with similar problems to that of Metro Hartford and have effectively worked through them with creative solutions. The leaders in these communities are happy to share their experiences with other communities, and the CEDS committee may desire to invest in further follow-up with each best practice community.

The case studies are organized into the following themes:

- Downtown Revitalization
- Regional Economic Development
- Workforce Development
- Business Retention
- Branding and Image Development
- Young Professional Attraction and Retainment

Although these case studies are quite varied, one dominant key to success emerged: **the need to collaborate** – with public citizens, business leaders, regional government officials, similarly-focused civic organizations, and anyone else that may have a stake in the process.

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## DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

### CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE

In 1969, Walter Cronkite announced to the nation on the Evening News that Chattanooga, Tennessee was America's dirtiest city. At the time, the city was believed to have the nation's worst air pollution, corruption, and crime rate.

In the late '70s and early '80s, Chattanooga's downtown quickly became blighted as businesses vacated the area in order to relocate to larger and more prosperous cities in the state. As a result, the Chattanooga economy suffered, and unemployment rates soared. Racial trouble struck too. In 1971, simmering differences led to disturbances in which one African-American was killed and many more injured before the National Guard could restore calm. In 1980, two members of the Ku Klux Klan shot four black women, but a white jury acquitted them - sparking the firebombing of several businesses.

With so many jobs lost and racial tensions high, it was obvious the traditional response in American cities - a few leaders snapping their fingers, ordering up a new technology, bulldozing some slum blocks - wouldn't work. Realizing that the city's downtown area was vital to its economic prosperity, the City of Chattanooga responded with a series of initiatives that aggressively tackled the issues surrounding the revitalization of its downtown and the poor perception of the city as a whole.

Enter concerned civic leaders included Rick Montague, director of the Chattanooga-based Lyndhurst Foundation, Gene Roberts (later to become mayor) and Mai Bell Hurley (who would subsequently head the famed Chattanooga Venture process). In the early 1980s, they began conducting public meetings - 65 in all - to listen to people's fears and ideas for improvement.

Chattanooga's civic entrepreneurs, with Lyndhurst funding, invited in consultants from far and wide - anyone they thought might have innovative ideas on how to restore Chattanooga's downtown. Festivals and events were held to restore confidence in the downtown. Some 50 cities nationwide were surveyed for new civic enterprises. Indianapolis was picked for a city visit. Fifty business, civic, and non-profit group leaders joined local elected officials to make the trip. They saw how another community was attempting revitalization; they got to know each other better; and they returned ready to invent an approach just right for Chattanooga.

#### THE PROGRAM

In 1982, the city's Chamber of Commerce and Planning Commission joined forces to create the Chattanooga Venture. This non-profit organization was solely focused on bringing the full participation of the community together in order to clean up the city on all fronts - environmentally, socially, and economically. The organization conducted a community survey that revealed Chattanooga's greatest assets as its natural beauty, river location, mountains, and public life. The perceived weaknesses were a negative self-image, lack of self-confidence, and socio-economic and racial divisions. The 1,700 citizens who took part in the Chattanooga Venture were composed of a social and racial cross-section of the city itself and were informed that every idea they wrote down would be seriously considered. An avalanche of ideas was boiled down to 40 truly usable ones, with a strong emphasis on downtown Chattanooga as the place participants held in common. Downtown was the catalyst that brought the community together.

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Using these 40 recommendations, the Chattanooga Venture developed a thorough urban revitalization plan, called "Vision 2000", which ultimately succeeded in bringing the city back to life.

The focus of Chattanooga's downtown restoration started with an aggressive \$120 million 21<sup>st</sup> Century Waterfront Plan. The city recognized that the Tennessee River was the heart and soul of the city. This plan focused on developing the waterfront along the river as a tourist friendly destination. In order to take advantage of the city's greatest asset, Chattanooga created the Moccasin Bend Task Force to take on the mission of resurrecting the city's downtown riverfront and creating the Tennessee RiverPark. This tourist attraction includes fishing piers, playgrounds, woodland walkways, parks, and the Tennessee Aquarium. Additionally, the city installed a state-of-the-art zero-emission electric shuttle bus system in the downtown area. Tourists and residents are now able to move around downtown between the museums and the riverfront using this free electric shuttle service.

Through visionary leadership and the combined hard work of the Chattanooga people, the city's downtown riverfront is now considered an exemplary model of how to revitalize a riverfront city.

The revitalization plan also focused on increasing housing options for all residents. In the mid-80s, spurred on by James Rouse and his Enterprise Foundation, Mayor Roberts and other leaders promised to transform Chattanooga's slums, making all housing units in the city "fit and livable" within a decade. Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise, Inc. (CNE) is a private, non-profit organization created in 1986 to develop, finance, renovate, and manage affordable housing for Chattanooga and Hamilton County's low-to-moderate income citizens. CNE receives funding through city general revenue, federal programs, the Lyndhurst Foundation and other private organizations, and through loan origination and developer fees. On average, the organization assembles \$23 million a year in foundation money, government grants, and low-interest loans by local banks. The result has been over \$237 million in affordable housing investment. In fact, almost 600 renters are being turned into homeowners each year.

In recent years, CNE has expanded its focus to include the development of mixed-use properties like the Grand Hotel and the Robinson apartment building and the development of mixed-income housing through the Chattanooga Bicentennial program. In addition, CNE has also branched into small business lending with the establishment of and participation in the Chattanooga Business Connection.

## THE RESULTS

Of the 40 goals Vision 2000 approved in 1984, 37 had been partially or wholly completed by 1992. In 1993, Chattanooga Venture facilitated a repeat project, "ReVision 2000", in which some 2,600 citizens generated 2,559 ideas, focused into 27 new goals for the community.

According to Trevor Hamilton, Vice President of Economic Development at the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce, recent successes include focusing on creating a downtown infrastructure that is "living and attractive to young professionals" with downtown lofts, nightlife, and retail; the installation of an IMAX theater near the Aquarium; and the construction of a 20 acre public park on the north shore of the river.

So far, Chattanooga's Vision 2000 plan has been responsible for 223 projects and programs. These initiatives ultimately spurred the city's economy by creating 1,381 jobs, and 7,300 temporary construction jobs. The results of the city's downtown revitalization served the needs of Chattanooga's

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1.5 million people by injecting a total financial investment into the community of \$793,303,813 (\$2,778 per resident).

This initiative has garnered national attention and attracted a collection of remarkable awards. Topping the list: recognition by the United Nations as one of the world's 12 "Best Practice Cities" at the 1996 Habitat II Conference in Istanbul. This process of community input and visits to benchmark cities as the key component to successful revitalization has been dubbed "The Chattanooga Process."

### **KEYS TO SUCCESS**

Chattanooga had many obstacles to overcome – obstacles similar to Metro Hartford. These included:

- Generating public support for new investments in the downtown area
- Changing the perception of the city from an old industrial, environmentally contaminated, low quality of life city to one that is vibrant, progressive, and environmentally conscious

Hamilton outlines the keys to success for any other city embarking on a similar mission as:

- Creating a public and private sector partnership where ideas and recommendations can be exchanged freely
- Creating an environment where the city becomes a great place for companies to invest
- Having strong public and private sector leaders, and ensuring that key leaders are in the right place and have proper oversight authority.
- Creating relevant institutions, and giving them clear objectives to accomplish.
- Creating a very clear-cut website that is easy to use, and that provides more than adequate content.
- Traveling to Chattanooga and other best practice cities to participate in "Host Group Tours" that the Chamber of Commerce offers in order to provide more incite into how the city succeeded in its economic development initiatives.

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## REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### METRO ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

*From the National Stewardship Forum*

The St. Louis region is a 6,400 square-mile 12-county commonwealth consisting of a substantial metropolitan core, along with modest-sized cities, small towns, and rural farmland in Missouri and Illinois, located at the confluence of the nation's two greatest rivers.

More than 2.6 million people live in the two-state greater St. Louis region, which is known for its affordable housing, wealth of recreational and cultural attractions and historic neighborhoods. The St. Louis region is also home to a strong business community including 15 Fortune 1000 companies and an emerging plant and life science industry. Educational opportunities are abundant in the St. Louis region. Citizens have access to 12 universities and four-year colleges, eight two-year institutions and numerous professional schools. The City of St. Louis, the largest municipality in the region, encompasses the region's downtown, hosting three professional sports venues, a riverfront district and increasing loft and entertainment opportunities.

However, the City's population has long been declining from its one-time peak of 850,000 to about 300,000 today, one of the most precipitous declines in population of any of the nation's major cities.

The St. Louis region trails badly in many key performance measures relative to peer regions. Although efforts are continuing to revitalize the urban core and improve the quality of life for all residents throughout the St. Louis region, the decline in the overall competitive standing of St. Louis among peer metropolitan areas is measurable and serious. While individual regional institutions are strong and reasonably effective in their own right, none have been able to meaningfully address the region's chronic and systemic economic and social problems. This observation did not go unnoticed in the public, private, and civic sectors and was the catalyst for the creation of the **Metropolitan Forum**.

#### THE PROGRAM

The Metropolitan Forum is a partnership among the East West Gateway Coordinating Council, FOCUS St. Louis, and the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association (RCGA). The three organizations came together in the belief that longstanding and complex regional issues are not now being effectively addressed and that a wholly new approach is required. One individual, one organization, or even one sector alone cannot address many of the St. Louis region's challenges. The region's history is filled with highly publicized, yet failed attempts to address major problems, so the Metropolitan Forum arises from the recognition that something must be different this time. Stronger, more meaningful partnerships are needed among government, business, and civic leaders. Bolder actions are needed to have real impact at a scale that matters. A new spirit of honesty and accountability must motivate fact-based solutions to serious issues rather than public recognition, credit, or blame.

The foundation for the collaboration was set following the annual RCGA Leadership Exchange trip to Toronto in the fall of 2000. (Each year, the regional chamber sponsors a three-day leadership trip of 125 elected, business, and civic leaders to another community.) Some 50 of these community leaders who participated in the Toronto leadership trip sought to build on the energy and enthusiasm cultivated during the leadership exchange and, along with the RCGA and FOCUS St. Louis, initiated the Regional

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Governance Policy Group. The Regional Governance Policy met over eight months concluding with the adoption of 15 recommendations spanning tax policy and government structure, transportation, and healthcare.

What followed was a yearlong candid discussion (sometimes a debate) among the staff directors of three regional organizations, FOCUS St. Louis, East West Gateway Coordinating Council and the Regional Chamber and Growth Association, about the efficacy of the recommendations and how (or whether) to act on them. These meetings helped to build trust, establish a common language for collaboration, and ultimately to plan for a leadership retreat of the organization's board members. In late January 2003, some 36 board members of the three organizations convened for a two-day retreat to discuss regional issues, to challenge each other and to determine whether the three-organization collaboration might work. Participation was at the highest level, the discussion was extraordinarily honest, sometimes passionate, and occasionally heated, but it was never divisive. The participants ultimately came to the conclusion that a new approach to regional problem solving was indeed needed and they agreed to take responsibility for figuring out how to do so as a three party collaboration.

### THE RESULTS

- The Forum recently prepared a coordinated and regional public spending and investment strategy for the St. Louis metropolitan area called "More for the Money."
- Dialogue has improved throughout the region and the Forum is used as a model for regional cooperation across the country.
- The region was recently ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the country by a ranking of the most "hot growth companies" by BusinessWeek Magazine.
- Urban expert Neal Pierce recently praised the strides St. Louis has made by proclaiming that "The big visible headline of your change is downtown."

### KEYS TO SUCCESS

- The citizenry has to be convinced that there is a need to head in a new direction.
- The Metropolitan Forum was formed by the signing of a memorandum of understanding by all involved parties. Although symbolic, this signing showed the community that the leaders were ready to support a regional approach to economic development. The text of the agreement follows.

*"WHEREAS, there are many dedicated leaders in business, government and civic sectors in the bi-state St. Louis region who are working to address critical metropolitan issues; and*

*WHEREAS, the St. Louis region faces important challenges that can be addressed only by outstanding leadership, honest and clear debate, and problem-solving based on sound information; and*

*WHEREAS, a diverse group of leaders (hereinafter "conveners") from the business, government and civic sectors desire to come together to conduct discussions and stimulate action to confront these metropolitan challenges; and*

*WHEREAS, the performance of the St. Louis region relative to peer regions across the nation is not at the high level to which the conveners individually and collectively aspire; and*

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*WHEREAS, none of the conveners individually can cause the regional changes and transformations necessary to raise the region's nationwide standing in many significant categories; and*

*WHEREAS, the conveners have been meeting to discuss regional challenges and the opportunity to collaborate in a working partnership; and*

*WHEREAS, there was broad agreement that a new kind of collaboration between business, government and civic sectors is both necessary and desirable; and*

*WHEREAS, the East-West Gateway Coordinating Council (hereinafter "Council"), St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association (hereinafter "RCGA") and FOCUS St. Louis (hereinafter "FOCUS") are regional organizations with members from the public, private and civic sectors in the bi-state St. Louis region; and*

*WHEREAS, the Council, RCGA and FOCUS have encouraged the conveners to form the new collaboration and support the collaboration's efforts;*

*NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the conveners hereby agree to maintain an ongoing process and forum to address regional concerns and undertake bold initiatives; and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the conveners will utilize the staff of the Council, the RCGA, and FOCUS to support the ongoing work of the collaboration, which will be known as the Metropolitan Forum (hereinafter "Forum"); and*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Forum will not be a formal organization, but will function according to the following guidelines:*

- 1. The conveners will assemble the Forum at least four times per year.*
- 2. The Forum will consist of a maximum of thirty-six representatives, twelve members representing business, local government and civic interests, plus the staff directors of the Council, the RCGA, and FOCUS.*
- 3. The Forum will be the principal decision-making body of the collaboration, responsible for key policy decisions including the determination of issues to be addressed and strategies to be undertaken.*
- 4. The Forum will endeavor to reach consensus on decisions. If a vote is required, a minimum two-thirds majority will be required overall and among the representatives of each sector represented (business, government and civic).*
- 5. The Forum may designate a management committee consisting of up to three representatives from each sector from among Forum participants. The management committee will meet as needed to plan the work of the Forum.*
- 6. The lead role for organizing, preparing for, and presiding over the meetings of the Forum will rotate among the sectors for each succeeding meeting.*
- 7. In order to encourage frank and honest dialogue, discussions of the Forum will be confidential.*

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*8. Larger, more inclusive, working groups will be encouraged and may be formed to advance specific issues or themes as determined by the Forum.*

*9. The Forum will focus on initiating and implementing bold initiatives that will have measurable impact on the region.*

*10. The conveners will develop a cost-sharing arrangement among the sectors to maintain the Forum and will work together to secure private and public funds to support expenses.*

*This Charter will be approved by consensus of the Forum and shall be used as a guideline to conduct the activities of the Forum. This Charter may be amended from time to time, also by consensus.”*

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## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

### NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

The North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) is responsible for preparing approximately 800,000 students on 58 different campuses each year for professional level employment. The system is also widely recognized for the role it plays in advancing economic development initiatives across the state. In fact, its mission statement includes the goal “to support economic development through services to and in partnership with business and industry.”

Since the educational systems’ inception in 1950, the NCCCS has been focused on training adults, and high school graduates with the skills that are in demand in the local industries. Essentially, the NCCCS has been independently developing the state’s own workforce. By doing so, North Carolina has been able to maintain a low unemployment rate by adjusting to the demands of the local businesses. For instance, if a local furniture manufacturer switches to a fully automated furniture assembly line, then the carpenters at the factory could enroll at an NCCCS technical college to learn how to build furniture with automated machines, instead of by hand. The flexibility of the NCCCS has made it successful in preparing the state’s workforce for the fluctuations in the state’s job market. Essentially, this type of education system keeps the local job market on an even keel and cushions the impact of economic downturns.

#### THE PROGRAM

The workforce development component of the system has three primary programs:

- **Occupational Continuing Education (OCE)** - This program is a vital tool for providing skill development for professionals. The OCE program offers short-term occupational skill training courses at each of the community colleges across the state with the ability to train, retrain, and upgrade individuals’ skills for current or future job opportunities
- **Focused Industrial Training (FIT)**. - This program is a special training program for North Carolina’s manufacturing industries. Essentially, the FIT program uses individualized needs assessments and consultations to design and implement targeted, customized training for companies that need to upgrade their workers’ skills because of advances in industry technology. FIT Centers are staffed with a director who works closely with local business and industry personnel in reviewing and assessing specific training needs and then develops training programs customized or tailored to those needs. The director conducts and analyzes surveys within companies, designs and develops pre- and post- methods to evaluate the skills of the workers, determines skill levels and knowledge content of the jobs, organizes the content into a learning sequence and then jointly plans training that cannot be addressed through other existing occupational programs.
- **New and Expanded Industry Training (NEIT)** – This free program is used by companies that are relocating or expanding within the state. Services are made available to companies that create 12 or more new production-related jobs in any one community in North Carolina during a one-year period over and above their previous three-year maximum employment level. The extent of services provided is based on the number of new jobs created, their skill levels, and the level of total capital investment. Companies that are eligible for new and expanding industry programs include manufacturing, technology-intensive (ex: software, biotech), regional or national warehousing or distribution centers, customer service or data processing

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services, and air courier services. Training services provided to these companies include instructors and training program development, video and other customized media programs, instructor travel costs, and other training-related expenditures such as temporary training facilities, equipment, materials, and supplies.

Each new company is contacted by the system and encouraged to meet with a local representative to ascertain the needs of their workforce and to provide information on the resources that the community college system can provide.

According to Willa Dickens, the Associate Vice President of Economic and Workforce Development for the North Carolina Community College System, the programs are utilized across the board.

## RESULTS

- OCE enrollment reached 588,731 in 2004. Enrollments were clustered predominately in health & safety (26%), public safety (39%) and education, agriculture/natural resources and business/industry skills training (35%).
- Between 1997 and 2004, the FIT program served an **annual** average of 700 companies and 11,000 employees. There are 37 FIT centers across the state.
- In 2004, the NEIT program served 121 new and expanding companies and trained 10,000 employees.

## KEYS TO SUCCESS

- According to Dickens, the primary key to success is communication and building good relationships with the business industry through Chambers, industry organizations, and small business organizations.
- Flexibility is another key to success. The system can respond quickly to changing needs of the industry, but only by maintaining awareness of what those issues are.

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## BUSINESS RETENTION PROGRAMS

### MICHIGAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

**The State of Michigan relies on the accomplished efforts of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) for all of its business retention and corporate leadership engagement initiatives.**

The MEDC is a quasi-public agency that reports to a board of directors made up of public and private sector individuals. The MEDC markets itself as Michigan's one-stop resource for businesses seeking to grow in Michigan. This includes new business relocation, as well as existing business expansion. The MEDC helps businesses by providing site location assistance, job training grants, and permits for tax abatements.

#### THE PROGRAM

The Michigan business retention program began approximately 10 years ago out of the realization that existing industries create a majority of new jobs and are extremely important to the economic base of a state. Michigan has account managers across the state and they are required to visit companies at least once a year. Between 4,000 and 5,000 companies, on average, are visited. According to Susan Novakoski, MEDC's Media Relations Manager, "one of the most successful portions of the program is that account managers uncover issues that could affect corporate operations, and it allows them to be proactive regarding any concerns the company may have." As a result, the MEDC has a pulse on the existing industry rather than being surprised if there are major concerns.

The MEDC is also focused on engaging the existing corporate leadership in the state. One way they are accomplishing this task is by governing itself through a private sector board. The board is comprised of local business people, economic developers, and educators. As a result, the board is increasingly focused on programs and initiatives that are concerned more with local and state business incentives, than out-of-state. For example, the MEDC's Michigan Certified Business Program (CBP) provides high-tech and industrial businesses with business parks that contain all of the modern amenities that businesses are attracted to today. Some of the features of the CBP business parks include aesthetically pleasing buildings, appropriate signage and landscaping, and utilities available for tap-in. Another MEDC program that has been implemented is called the Renaissance Zones program. This program promotes local business retention by creating commercial real estate zones that provide the incentive of not having to pay state or local taxes. As a result, businesses that develop in these Renaissance Zones have had an easier time spurring new job growth and investment.

For small, entrepreneurial businesses looking for assistance, the MEDC provides the Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center (MI-SBTDC) network. The MI-SBTDC network is a grassroots advocate for small businesses working in partnership with local resources to grow and strengthen companies. New ventures, in particular, may be unfamiliar with funding sources and support services. The MI-SBTDC works hard throughout the state to uncover opportunities and build relationships with organizations that makes a real difference to entrepreneurs.

The State Headquarters, located at Grand Valley State University, supports 12 regional offices and over 30 satellite offices, each providing counseling and training to small business owners and entrepreneurs throughout the 83 counties in Michigan through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration.

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Additionally, the MEDC has created the “Michigan PeerSpectives Network” through the establishment of peer groups that are composed of eight to 12 non-competing business owners who gather for confidential sharing of experiences and challenges approximately 10 times over a 12-month period. The peer-to-peer exchanges enhance the decision-making processes, critical for owners who want to grow their already established companies. The cost for participation is \$1,500 annually.

In 2002, the organization commissioned a competitive analysis of their business climate, including a comprehensive benchmarking analysis of Michigan’s economic and technology foundations, its achievements in nurturing innovative, technology-driven economic development, and its competitiveness relative to other states across the nation. These findings drive the MEDC’s programs and focus.

### RESULTS

- Since January 2005, the State has announced the creation and retention of 64,000 jobs.
- The MEDC made 6,118 personal visits to existing companies in 2005
- Michigan was recently named the “#5 Small Business-Friendly State” by the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council

### KEYS TO SUCCESS

- Proactively visiting with existing companies
- Good communication with new companies locating in state so that they are well aware of MEDC’s programs for them.
- Creating innovative new programs as the need arises.

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## BRANDING AND IMAGE DEVELOPMENT

### OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

On April 19, 1995, the destruction of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building ended 168 lives and left indelible scars on the memories and images of Oklahoma City. Prior to the attack, Oklahoma City had, essentially, little image outside of the region.

Today, Oklahoma City, the capital of the state where the wind comes “sweeping down the plain” brands itself as the “Capital of the New Century” - progressive, positive and proactive.

#### THE PROGRAM

Prior to 1995, few were familiar with where Oklahoma City was located, how large the city was, and what it had to offer. According to Cynthia Reid, Director of Marketing at the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, Oklahoma City struggled with several branding obstacles:

- Tourism in the city was lacking because of the popular perception that Oklahoma City was neither a great place to visit nor a great place to live.
- There existed a general lack of understanding and interest for what the city stood for, and what it was all about. It had NO image.

Unfortunately, understanding about the City's assets only came in the aftermath of the disaster. However, the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce embraced the opportunity to change perceptions about the region and embarked on a massive marketing and branding campaign.

The Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce embraced the city's heritage by marketing and branding the city as a land of opportunity and created the tagline “**Oklahoma City: Capital of the New Century.**” This tagline embraces several facets of Oklahoma's presence as a “Capital” - that it is a Western Capital, Technology Capital, Medical Capital, Multicultural Capital, and Jazz Capital.

The idea that the city is a **progressive and forward-looking city** is evident in the type of businesses that the Chamber of Commerce is trying to attract. The primary industries that the city is focused on expanding include the aviation, technology/manufacturing, customer care, biosciences, distribution/warehousing, automotive, health care, and energy industries. The city's economic development web site makes a notable effort to recruit large businesses by citing an impressive list of companies that have already expanded, or are actually headquartered in Oklahoma City. The list of companies that have established a major presence in the city includes General Motors, Xerox, Williams-Sonoma, AOL, Sprint, and Hertz to name a few. The list of businesses that actually use Oklahoma City as their base of operations includes Sonic, Kerr-McGee, Six Flags, Devon Energy, Hobby Lobby, and Chesapeake Energy and most recently Dell Computers and Quad Graphics. .

Oklahoma City also promotes itself as being a **low cost** place to do business. The city's economic development web site stipulates that among the 162 regions surveyed in a national ranking, Oklahoma City was named one of the cities with the lowest business costs. The survey cited that Oklahoma City ranked very low in several categories, including the relative cost of labor, energy, taxes, and office space.

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The city is also marketing itself as a **pro-business** oriented community. The Chamber of Commerce claims that the city has one of the most innovative and recognized incentive programs in the nation. One example of a business friendly incentive program is the Oklahoma Quality Jobs Program. This program is designed to provide cash payments to qualifying companies who create and maintain quality jobs for local workers. The payments to the companies have the potential of covering up to 6% of a company's payroll expense for 10 years.

The Chamber of Commerce is also branding Oklahoma City as the ideal **location** to do business. This is due to the fact that the city is located at the intersection of three major interstates. As a result, a business located in the city can easily reach 178 million customers by truck in the same day or overnight. Also, Oklahoma City is exactly equidistant from both coasts, and is located at the center of the I-35 NAFTA corridor between Canada and Mexico.

Finally, the city is also attempting to portray itself as a **comfortable place to call home**. The image that the city has developed for itself is one that attempts to convey the message that Oklahoma City is an active, desirable, affordable, culturally diverse, and environmentally friendly community. The reasons cited for the city's new image include the high quality of life, the mild climate, the low traffic congestion, the low pollution, the excellent museums and art galleries, and the excellent education system.

## RESULTS

Voters had approved a \$365 million economic development plan before the tragic bombing. This plan is directly responsible for some of the most innovative, and economically stimulating projects the city has ever undertaken. Some of the highlights that resulted from the plan include the new ballpark, arena, civic and convention centers, art museums, parks and recreational areas and the recently completed "Bricktown" river walk.

Completed in 1999, Bricktown is a downtown river walk development project that emulates that of downtown San Antonio. It attracts large crowds all year round due to its pedestrian friendly environment, large selection of restaurants, exciting nightlife, and its close proximity to the ballpark and arena. Combined with the elaborate Oklahoma City National Memorial that commemorates the tragedy of the bombing, Bricktown has allowed the city to significantly increase tourism, and begin to change the brand and image of the city. The city is moving away from a "victim of disaster" image to a more progressive, exciting, and tourist friendly image.

Recently, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Oklahoma City was able to accommodate the New Orleans Hornets, the NBA franchise, to relocate to the city for the 2005-2006 season. For the remainder of this season, the team will be called the New Orleans/Oklahoma City Hornets. The citizens of Oklahoma City have rallied behind their newly adopted team so emphatically, that on opening night 19,163 fans filled the arena in downtown Oklahoma City. The Hornets only averaged 14,221 fans last season in New Orleans.

The city hopes that this experience will prove to be another positive for the city as it continues to build its image, and in terms of what the city is truly capable of becoming.

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## KEYS TO SUCCESS

- According to Reid, the most important key to a city's successful branding and imaging campaign is "internal change." Essentially, the city needs to generate interest in the local community, and begin to change the citizens' perceptions of the city before a successful marketing plan can be implemented outside of the city.
- Developing long-term business support is the other key to success.

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## YOUNG PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

OMAHA, NEBRASKA

The Greater Omaha region has aggressively pursued the retention of its young professional workforce. The city recognized that a critical factor for the growth and prosperity of the community was the ability to recruit, retain, and engage the future leaders at an early age.

With initiatives like the Young Professionals Council (YPC) and All About Omaha (AAO), Omaha is reaching out in a dramatic way to this highly sought after group.

### THE PROGRAM

For years, the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce has struggled with retention of young professionals. They began a dialogue with many of them through focus groups and interviews. From these focus groups emerged the establishment of the Chamber sponsored Young Professionals Council (YPC).

The primary goal of the YPC is to “make Omaha one of the top communities in the nation where young professionals want to live and work.” The council wants to achieve this goal by creating excitement about living in Omaha. One of the best features of the YPC for young people is that it is a free organization.

Thirteen council members representing member organizations across the metropolitan area lead the YPC. The group has established committees designed to address the needs of its age demographic, including issues of economic development, diversity, research, and attraction/retention. Innovatively, the **Chamber also recognizes the council chairman as a full voting member of the board of directors**. Council members meet monthly, engage young professionals through monthly networking and social events and lead committees that provide hands on opportunities to get involved. All Greater Omaha young professionals can participate in the council's activities by joining one of its committees. Most importantly, the Chamber believes that creating opportunities for young people to get involved in city affairs will inspire them to remain in the region when looking for employment.

The challenges facing the council revolve around encouraging the community leaders to take these younger leaders seriously, according to Kirsten Case, the Chamber's YPC staff member. They have been able to overcome these challenges by working directly with corporations and building relationships through mentorship programs. The YPC also conducts regular surveys of young professionals throughout the region to find out what their attitude toward staying in Omaha is. Case finds that most are not dissatisfied with the region, but they are not necessarily committed to it either.

Aside from city-sponsored organizations is the independent, non-profit grassroots initiative called All About Omaha (AAO). The organization has joined the YPC in the effort to reinvigorate Omaha for young adults through civic, as well as community involvement, and social interaction. The mission of the AAO is “to unite a diverse group of young leaders through social networking and civic commitment.”

All About Omaha was the brainchild of Dana Cohn, a twenty-something native of Omaha. The impetus for the organization came when Dana returned home from undergraduate school to find many of her friends had left the community. Wondering why very few young professionals and graduate students

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chose to stay in Omaha, Dana decided to create a non-profit organization that would address the issues surrounding the retention of young people to the city. In September of 1998, Dana and seven of her friends gathered at the local Boys' and Girls' Club to develop the mission and bylaws of a fledgling idea called All About Omaha. The goal was to incorporate a broad base of community components into the mission to appeal to as many people in their 20's and 30's as possible. In March of 1999, All About Omaha officially received 501(c) 3 status and became a non-profit organization. Since that time, AAO has recruited a couple hundred members, in-kind and corporate partnerships, as well as a visible identity in the community. In fact, the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce touted AAO as "the single leading initiative aimed at keeping young people engaged and participating in the community."

AAO committees include community service, Omaha awareness, and public relations. Additionally, AAO works with its corporate sponsors, including Allstate, the Gallup Organization, and Niche to recruit young professionals for job openings. Membership costs \$20/year, although all are invited to participate in AAO sponsored events.

Hillary Nather Detish, the Past President of AAO, notes that their biggest challenge is actively engaging large corporations with young professionals.

#### **RESULTS**

- The YPC is in only its 2nd year of existence and regularly sees upwards of 300 people at quarterly networking events. Monthly breakfasts for newcomers draw in approximately 20 each month, creating consistent increases in membership.
- AAO has a mailing list of 600 and a membership of approximately 150.

#### **KEYS TO SUCCESS**

- Young professionals must build strong relationships with the older community through outreach and participation in civic events. The ability to create a healthy balance between the two is the key to success.
- Collaborate with other YP groups! Don't be territorial and learn from what other groups are doing.

## Sample Hartford's Target Audience Requirements and Key Message Points

| Audience                            | Top Requirements (Needs)   | Top Assets to Promote  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Local companies                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skilled workforce</li> <li>• Low operating costs</li> <li>• Sites to expand</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available land and sites</li> </ul>   |
| Skilled workers                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality jobs (advancement opportunity)</li> <li>• Entertainment / Shopping / Recreation options</li> <li>• Affordable housing</li> </ul>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic development vision and plan</li> <li>• Quality of life amenities</li> <li>• Workforce Development Programs</li> <li>• 4-year colleges and universities</li> <li>• Public and private community colleges</li> </ul> |
| Entrepreneurs                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to capital</li> <li>• Incubator facility</li> <li>• "How to start a business" tools</li> <li>• Creative workers</li> <li>• Good quality of life</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financing options</li> <li>• Available incubators</li> <li>• UCONN/other universities' talent</li> <li>• Access to local, New York and Boston entertainment</li> <li>• CCSU ITBD</li> </ul>                                 |
| Business Influencers and Developers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competitively priced land</li> <li>• Incentives</li> <li>• Low costs and quick permitting</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted incentives</li> <li>• Permitting process</li> </ul>  |
| Public sector officials             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise tax base</li> <li>• Improve quality of life</li> <li>• Provide more jobs</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic development vision and plan</li> <li>• Integrated team working to improve and market</li> </ul>  |
| Community at large                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality jobs</li> <li>• Balanced growth</li> <li>• Better infrastructure (roads)</li> <li>• Downtown activities / shopping</li> </ul>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic development vision and plan</li> <li>• More jobs</li> <li>• Superb quality of life</li> </ul>  |
| Fuel Cells                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Available financing</li> <li>• Technical workforce</li> <li>• Strong research presence</li> <li>• Affordable industrial space</li> </ul>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home of the CCAT Fuel Cell efforts</li> <li>• Plentiful affordable industrial space</li> <li>• Good Congressional Support for Potential Funding/Access to State Capital</li> </ul>  |

|                      |  |   |
|----------------------|--|---|
| <b>Biotechnology</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scientific-based workforce</li> <li>• Affordable lab space</li> <li>• Presence of major bio-focused University</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target niche bio programs in the overall industry cluster to support</li> <li>• Research skilled workforce</li> <li>• Affordable lab space</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Logistics</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to major highways</li> <li>• Affordable land</li> <li>• Proximity to large metros</li> </ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditionally a distribution economy</li> <li>• Proximity to suppliers and customers</li> <li>• Regional Wi-Fi network</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Retail</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proximity to markets with large populations</li> <li>• Inexpensive labor</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing residential population in downtown area</li> <li>• Large daytime population nearby</li> <li>• Attractions will bring tourists</li> <li>• Arts/cultural activities can support</li> </ul> |

## The Boston Compact

The longest-running, most comprehensive and most successful compact is the Boston Compact, an agreement between Boston's employers, the Boston Private Industry Council (PIC), schools of higher education, the Mayor, Boston Public Schools, the teachers union and other community partners. The goal of the compact is to improve the schools in the city of Boston and to provide college and career opportunities to its students.

The compact was initially formed when the PIC and other community partners realized that the community could not achieve the PIC's original agenda of decreasing poverty, joblessness, and inadequate education unless they took major steps to improve Boston public schools. The compact was designed to hold each of the signatories mutually accountable for sticking to their commitment for resources and achievement, so that the contributions of each partner was contingent on the contributions of the other partners.

In the original 1982 compact, employers committed to providing jobs and priority hiring to Boston public school graduates. The higher education community committed to providing scholarships and priority admissions to increase the number of public school students going to and graduating from college. The Boston public school system also committed to improving test scores, increasing student attendance, and decreasing dropout rates.

In the years since, the compact has been modified three times to reflect new goals each partner is to achieve, performance of partners in previous compacts, changes in funding, and political conditions. The compacts have not been created or operated in a vacuum. They have had to survive challenges such as a deep recession in the late 1980s that reduced budgets and resulted in decreases in teacher salaries, teacher layoffs, and difficulties in meeting the original financial commitments the partners made to the compact. Political crises also surfaced that resulted in the City of Boston taking over the schools from the elected school board and strained relations between local government, business and education. But, none of those challenges destroyed the long-term commitment that all partners knew was vitally important to everyone in the Boston area.

The Boston Compact has launched a variety of initiatives to support its goals over the past 22 years:

- A **summer jobs program** initiated by the Mayor's office has introduced generations of Boston public school students to employment and providing them with valuable paid work experience. The program, which employed 575 students in its inaugural year of 1982, employed about 4,000 students in Summer 2003.
- The **Compact for College Success** was created in 1993 by five Boston-area colleges and universities as part of the third Boston Compact to improve college retention and graduation rates of Boston public school graduates. The project uses faculty mentors to provide guidance to first-year students to help them make effective use of campus and community support services to improve their chances of success in college. In its first year (1993-94), in which 170 students participated on five campuses, the program resulted in a retention rate higher than the rate normally found at Boston area colleges and universities (60 percent, as found in the Patterns of Enrollment Study), and retention rates at three of the five campuses were higher than the retention rates of the overall 1993 freshman class at those campuses.

- The **Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools Endowment** was created by the Bank of Boston to provide resources to high school teachers with innovative ideas to improve classroom instruction. John Hancock Mutual Life did the same for middle school teachers, and a Boston law firm funded the program for elementary school teachers.
- New England Financial and other businesses established the **ACCESS Fund** to give “last dollar” college scholarships to graduating Boston public school students.
- The **Alternative Education Initiative** was created to support community-based alternatives to prevent students from dropping out of school.
- **Pro-Tech** was originally created by the Boston Private Industry Council, the Boston Public Schools, and several of the city’s largest hospitals to link health care employers with high school students willing to learn on the job after the school day. The program has expanded to other industries, including finance, business services, utilities and telecommunications, and is better funded due to federal School-to-Work Opportunities Act funds. In school, juniors and seniors participating in Pro-Tech are clustered together for courses related to their occupational area of interest along with science and English courses. Pro-Tech students participate in unpaid job “shadowing” during their junior year to help match them with employers for part-time paid employment during the spring of their junior year. The employment continues full-time during the summer and part-time during their senior year. Some participants continue at least part-time in these jobs even as they continue in college or other training after they graduate from high school.
- **Tech Boston** is a department in Boston Public Schools that supports advanced technology courses in 10 middle schools and 20 high schools. More than 2,500 students and 150 teachers participated in the program in the 2002 school year, taking courses in advanced web design, robotics, Java, and other high-tech subjects. Tech Boston also places about 200 students a year in internships with high-tech companies in the Boston area.

The fourth and most recent compact was signed in April 2000. This latest compact set three goals, with major commitments from all of the compact partners:

- 1) Meet the “High Standards” Challenge set forth by Boston’s mayor to improve student graduation rates, improve test scores, increase state funding for Boston public schools, and empower families and communities to support the success of school students.
  - Accountability Measures:
    - Graduation and Dropout Rates
    - MCAS (State Standardized Test) Scores
    - Stanford Nine Scores
    - MCAS success after initial failure
    - Attendance Rate
    - Level of funding for Boston public schools
- 2) Increase opportunities for college and career success by preparing public school students for college success, increasing the number and percentage of public school students

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attending and graduating from college, and increasing the employment opportunities for students graduating from college.

Accountability Measures:

- College and employment success rates (1 year and 5 years after graduation)
- College retention (14th year completion rate)
- Graduates meeting four-year public college admission requirements (GPA, SAT, required courses)
- Number of Students taking PSAT and SAT

- 3) Prepare the next generation of educators by attracting and training talented individuals to work with urban students by working with local colleges to prepare new teachers and administrators.

Accountability Measures:

- Number of qualified applicants for teaching positions (by content area and race)
- Number of Colleges and universities signing the new teacher preparation agreement
- Number of "Professional development school" agreements between individual public schools and selected colleges and universities
- Number of applicants offered early hiring commitments annually for specific Boston schools
- Number of new teachers retained after first three years of teaching experience

Cathy Minehan, President of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston and a high-level participant in the Boston Compact, put the compact into perspective when she said in a 1999 speech, "...What began as a general mutual commitment among the private and public sectors in Boston to provide opportunities to Boston public school students in return for school improvements became, by the signing of the third compact, a real partnership in developing the means by which those improvements would be realized."

**AngelouEconomics**

2801 Via Fortuna,  
Suite 430  
Austin, TX 78746

PH: 512-225-9322  
FAX: 512-225-9283

[www.angeloueconomics.com](http://www.angeloueconomics.com)