

Press Release

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Regional Leaders to Craft Economic Strategy for the Hartford Metropolitan Region

A COALITION OF REGIONAL LEADERS IN BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT HAVE LAUNCHED A PROJECT TO MOVE THE REGION'S ECONOMY FORWARD

Hartford, Connecticut – The Hartford Metropolitan Region has begun the process of taking a fresh look at its position in the global economy. Mayor Leclerc of East Hartford, and the Chair of the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) Policy Board, stated that: “Our metropolitan region needs to competitively position itself for the future in relation to other regions in the country, as well as globally. To do that we need to take a hard look at our current situation and our opportunities.” The region, and the state, have struggled to recover from the 2008 recession. Global, national, and local trends are reshaping the region's economy. The state and many of the region's 38 municipalities face increasingly difficult fiscal situations that hamper their ability to pursue projects that will lead to growth.

Recognizing that these trends, if left unaddressed, can dramatically impact the region, a coalition of leaders from governments, businesses, and non-profits are working as an advisory committee to develop a new Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Hartford Metropolitan Region. “This strategy will take a hard look at the region and identify and prioritize the most promising opportunities for creating lasting economic growth. This region is a leader in insurance, finance, and advanced manufacturing; we need to build on these strengths to encourage the kind of growth that will lead to lasting fiscal stability,” said Jim Scannell, Senior Vice President, Administrative Services, at Travelers and co-chair of the CEDS Advisory Committee.

CRCOG, in partnership with the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and the MetroHartford Alliance, recently hired the consulting firm of Fourth Economy Consulting to help the region complete a situational assessment and develop “game changer” initiatives to serve as the core of a new economic development strategy. Fourth Economy, based in Pittsburgh, recently worked with the 100 Resilient Cities initiative to help cities around the world become more resilient to economic changes.

The process will be led by an advisory committee comprised of representatives of businesses, governments, educational institutions and non-profits throughout the region. A smaller working group, comprised of partner organizations like the New Britain Chamber of Commerce, will work closely with the consulting team and the advisory committee to develop a regional vision and turn it into an actionable plan.

During this process the team will also identify potential partner organizations and set up an organizational structure to implement the initiatives. “There is only one way our region will achieve equitable and

sustainable economic growth. We must eschew the past squabbles and divisions that have kept us mired in anemic progress,” said Jay Williams, president of the Hartford Foundation and co-chair of the CEDS Advisory Committee. “If we commit to a bold, collaborative, and pragmatic approach, we can develop a roadmap to capitalize on the enormous talent and multiple assets our region possesses. I’ve seen the success of this approach in other parts of the country and there is absolutely no reason it can’t occur here, unless we lack the collective will to make it happen.”

CRCOG estimates that the process will be completed in the early winter of 2018. More information about the study can be found at: <http://crcog.org/ceds>

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About Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG)—Working Together for a Better Region

CRCOG is established under the Connecticut General Statutes as a voluntary association of municipal governments serving the 38 Metro Hartford municipalities. Our members have collaborated for more than 30 years on a wide range of projects related to planning, transportation, service sharing, and cooperative procurement to benefit our towns individually and the region as a whole.