



CITY OF DANBURY

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
DANBURY, CONNECTICUT 06810

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

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

DATE: March 30, 2005

RE: Monthly Report, March, 2005

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

Consistent with its mission, the OED submits its monthly report for March, 2005.

Business Assistance:

- The OED has been assisting with the relocation of the Main Street businesses impacted by eminent domain proceedings associated with the construction of the new police station. Under applicable law, OED is facilitating the search for new locations, advising the commercial tenants on the process, and assessing the potential costs to the city, if any, of the relocations. OED is coordinating these activities with Larry Wagner of L. Wagner, Associates.

- Last month, OED received a number of inquiries regarding the availability of the former Mallory Hat site. OED showed and/or provided information to 6 interested parties proposing a variety of uses for the site. Given this renewed interest, shortly, OED will be putting out an RFP requesting bid proposals for the site.
- OED regularly receives inquiries regarding various other properties located in Danbury. Some are initial inquiries, some are confidential at this time. The OED treats each on a case-by-case basis, answering questions regarding available economic development assistance, or referring the inquiry to the appropriate party that may meet the needs of the inquiring client.
- OED also responds regularly to inquiries for statistical information regarding Danbury's economic profile.
- If you have specific questions about individual companies or general inquiries regarding the types of businesses that have contacted OED about development opportunities in Danbury, please contact Jim Bellano at 796-1649.

Marketing and Promotion:

- OED is working with LAMAR Properties, which has offered the city an opportunity to advertise on various billboards. The billboard messages will be both informational and promotional. The billboards will appear at one location around Danbury, changing on a quarterly basis. LAMAR has also offered marketing opportunities in lieu of the billboards, i.e., on HART buses.
- There was no new activity last month on the CD-ROM marketing piece given the other projects being undertaken by OED. However, the designer continues to work on the project and sends updates via email on a regular basis.
- The OED continues to respond to inquiries from the press and other media outlets on a regular basis.
- In addition, OED is working with the Help Desk to compile information from the Town Clerk's office in order to list new business start-ups in Danbury for the Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce's quarterly business publication, *Inside Business*.

Strategic Economic Development:

- As reported last month, OED's application US Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) to undertake a Strategic Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) may be in jeopardy. Federal funding for CEDS is in question- as is the existence of EDA due to restructuring in the federal government. This may have an impact on our ability to conduct the CEDS given a potential loss of the anticipated EDA contribution of \$25,000.00.

Other:

- In addition to inquiries regarding traditional economic development opportunities, OED has also become a focal point for advising companies on other business-related activities (e.g., conventions and other tourism activities, historic preservation (downtown), a multi-plane "fly-in" to the airport, inquiries regarding film and commercial shoots, etc.).
- continued meetings with members of the Danbury development and commercial brokerage community (ongoing process).
- continued meetings with state, regional, and other economic development officials and attendance at various statewide events and seminars (ongoing process).
- consistent with the mission of the OED, and in addition to any responsibilities to municipal boards and commissions, I also regularly attend meetings of the following organizations: Housatonic Valley Sports Organizing Committee (HVSOC), Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness, Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board (WIB), City Center Danbury, Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce, Western Connecticut CID (commercial realtors/brokers), Housing Opportunities Committee (United Way of Northern Fairfield County).