



## 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JVB", enclosed within a hand-drawn oval.

**DATE:** April 26, 2005

**RE:** Monthly Report, April, 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 April, 2005.

- This month, OED attended a three-day training session for developing a strategic plan for a Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ). The purpose of the training is to assess a neighborhood's needs, develop strategies to achieve specific outcomes, and create viable programs that achieve those outcomes, i.e. a marketing plan, access to funds for neighborhood improvements, etc. The Blind Brook Neighborhood is the first subject of the NRZ effort. OED is involved in the training in order to learn the planning process and replicate it in other, appropriate neighborhoods in Danbury. The process requires an additional six days of training (3 days in May, 3 in June) that OED will attend in Orange and Hartford, respectively.

- OED continues its efforts in assisting with the relocation of the Main Street businesses impacted by eminent domain proceedings associated with the construction of the new police station. 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.
- After a meeting with the departments of Finance, Public Works, Planning, Assessor's Office, and Health OED is developing the a request for proposals (RFP) for the former Mallory Hat Factory. Recently, OED has received a number of inquiries regarding the site and has either showed and/or provided information to individuals interested in developing the site for a variety of uses.
- OED is preparing an annual report for FY 2004-2005, reflecting economic growth in the city in the first year of the department's existence. The report will reflect business activity other than provided in the monthly department reports and include items such as: new businesses, square footage taken by companies moving to Danbury, and job creation.
- 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 t 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:**

- LAMAR Properties made 2 donations to the city last month (approved by the Council). OED facilitated initial negotiations regarding the maintenance of Elmwood Park and referred the matter to the Director of Public Works to work out LAMAR's specific maintenance scope and schedule. Also, OED submitted a draft for the poster (billboard) that LAMAR donated. The likely location for the first billboard will be on Route 7, entering Danbury from Ridgefield. Once LAMAR's graphics people work up the draft, it will be submitted to the Mayor for approval and is expected to be displayed sometime in May.

- Progress continues on the CD-ROM marketing piece.
- The OED continues to respond to inquiries from the press and other media outlets on a regular basis.

### **Strategic Economic Development:**

- As reported previously, 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), Danbury Federal Corrections Institution (FCI) Community Relations Board.