



**Town of Wallingford**  
**Economic Development Commission**  
**45 South Main Street, Room 311**  
**Wallingford, CT 06492**

**Economic Development Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**April 29, 2024**

**Present:**

**Joe Mirra, Chair**  
**Hank Baum, Vice Chair**  
**Anthony Bracale, Commissioner**  
**Tim Ryan, Commissioner**  
**Dana Quigley, Commissioner**  
**Frank Apuzzo, Commissioner**  
**Rob Fritz, Commissioner**  
**Gary Fappiano, Alternate**  
**Patty Powers, Alternate**

**Absent:**

**Jim Wolfe, Commissioner**

**Others Present:**

**Don Crouch, Economic Development Specialist**  
**Stacey Hoppes, EDC Secretary**

Chair Joe Mirra called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 6:30 p.m.

**1. Pledge of Allegiance** – Chair Mirra led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

- Chair Mirra stated that he will go directly to item #5, Presentation REX Development Annual CEDS Update 2024 and then return to item #2.

Patty Powers arrived at 6:35pm  
Frank Apuzzo arrived at 6:37pm  
Rob Fritz arrived at 6:52pm

**2. Discussion on Regular Meeting Minutes dated March 25, 2024** – Hank Baum made a motion to approve the minutes as drafted; Frank Apuzzo seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**3. Review of Monthly Expenditure Reports/March 2024** – Hearing no questions Chair Mirra moved onto the next agenda item.

**4. Welcome New Commissioners** – Chair Mirra introduced Frank Apuzzo and Dana Quigley and welcomed them as new members of the EDC. Frank and Dana gave brief bios to the commission.

**5. Guest Presentation: REX Development Annual CEDS Update 2024** – Introductions were made: Barbara Malmberg – Director of Strategic Planning and Marketing, Ginny Kozlowski - Executive Director, and Dale Kroop – Director of Economic Development Resources and Municipal Services Program

- 50 • Ms. Malmberg presented the CEDS Presentation covering What is CEDS (Comprehensive  
51 Economic Development Strategy) and why is it important, Demographics of the 15 South  
52 Central towns they work with, factors that impact Economic Growth in these areas (workforce  
53 shortage and housing crisis), Key Sectors in these towns, Emerging Tech Sectors, and the  
54 Regional progress they are seeing.
- 55 • Ms. Kozlowski reviewed the Top Challenges for 2024, including financial, population and  
56 workforce, diversity-equity-inclusion, sustainability, and aging infrastructure.
- 57 • Mr. Kroop reviewed the services that they now offer to municipalities at no charge for their  
58 Economic Development Commissions and staff, including but not limited to training sessions for  
59 ED Commissions and staff, consulting for long range planning, peer review of documents and  
60 local development processes.
- 61 • *(Presentation attached)*

#### 63 **6. Old Business:**

- 64 • **Update: Historic Railroad Station Re-Use Project** – Staff Crouch updated that the RFP was  
65 submitted to Town Council to be reviewed and discussed at their meeting on April 23, 2024. The  
66 RFP was approved unanimously for distribution. Staff is working with Purchasing to get the RFP  
67 posted for bidding. Staff will draft a timeline by end of this week. The RFP will be open for  
68 proposal submission for 60 days. A plan of action was discussed regarding distribution and  
69 promotion of the project.

#### 71 **7. New Business:** No New Business to discuss

#### 73 **8. Committee Remarks:**

- 74 • **Marketing, Retention & Incentive Committee Update:** Anthony Bracale reviewed what was  
75 discussed at the strategy session on April 18th with Chair Mirra and ED Staff. Main topics  
76 discussed at the strategy session were the mission and purpose of the Marketing Committee,  
77 focus projects, and committee structure. They also discussed drafting a content calendar for  
78 digital initiatives and creating a marketing plan.
  - 79 ▪ Update and discuss: Mayor's Company Visits – Staff Crouch stated that the Company  
80 Visits to Times Microwave Systems and Holo-Krome were successful. Topics of  
81 discussion at the companies visited have been workforce and housing concerns. Fritz  
82 added that there were a couple of follow-up items for Holo-Krome for staff to look into.  
83 May visits scheduled for Nucor Steel, Ulbrich Stainless Steel, and Allnex. June visit  
84 scheduled for BYK, staff is reaching out to additional companies for more June visits.
  - 85 ▪ Discussion and possible action: Funding request for WCI Annual Restaurant Hop on  
86 May 15, 2024 – **Anthony Bracale made a motion to approve allocating \$1,200 from**  
87 **Promotional funds for WCI Annual Restaurant Hop 2024 to assist with their**  
88 **marketing efforts. Rob Fritz seconded the motion. Motion was approved**  
89 **unanimously.**
  - 90 ▪ Patty Powers updated that Strategic Marketing meeting at HUBCAP went very well. The  
91 attendees have agreed to continue these meetings monthly. The mission of these  
92 meetings is to understand, support and collaborate with town departments and  
93 organizations; and to assist in limiting duplication of programs.
  - 94 ▪ **Next Meeting** – May 16, 2024 at 12:00pm (Noon) Town Hall, Room 205
- 95
- 96 • **Planning & Zoning Liaison Committee Update:** Baum stated that the Workshop for the  
97 Proposed YLB Expansion is scheduled for May 9, 2024 @ 6:00pm location TBD
  - 98 ▪ EDC may host a Q&A for the property owners within the YLB and surrounding area  
99 tentatively scheduled for May 22<sup>nd</sup>. A butters list of addresses is complete for mass  
100 mailing prior to Public Hearing tentatively scheduled for the PZC June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- 101                   ▪ T-30 Zone (Tracy) – Town Planner, Kevin Pagini and Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO),
- 102                   Amy Torre are reviewing the Zoning Enforcement Ordinance with the Town Council
- 103                   Ordinance Committee and are asking for support in expanding their enforcement
- 104                   capabilities. **Tim Ryan made a motion to submit a letter of support on behalf of the**
- 105                   **Town Planner and Zoning Enforcement Officer's request to expand enforcement**
- 106                   **capabilities as presented to the Town Council Ordinance Committee. Patty Powers**
- 107                   **seconded the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.**
- 108

109 **9. Staff Report/regional matters** – Crouch noted some of the updates on his staff report:

- 110                   • Met with Town Planner and Calare team regarding 5 Research Parkway – adding Calare team
- 111                   to the Broker Breakfast attendees list for future events. Looking to set up a Meeting/Tour of the
- 112                   property – invite AdvanceCT team.
- 113                   • Met with Broker to discuss IX property expansion. We have had 3 companies contact us
- 114                   referring to the IX Letter that was sent out and they are taking advantage of the expansion
- 115                   capabilities.
- 116                   • Met with New Director at QCC, Renee Miller.
- 117                   • Proton Beam Therapy Center – Don will reach out and see how the project is progressing.
- 118

119 **10. Chair's remarks** – Continuing to review and improve the towns Office Space Incentive for Class A

120 office space. Personal Property Tax is key. Reach out to broker channels for input.

- 121                   • WCI would like to invite a few of the EDC members to meet with a few members of the WCI
- 122                   board to discuss projects in the Town Center. One focus of this meeting is to encourage
- 123                   improvement in the main corners of the lower town center.
- 124                   • Rob Fritz updated that 4 Center Street is being used by the Arts Community for art show events.
- 125                   They are going to there for the Restaurant Hop on May 15<sup>th</sup>. They will also be hosting arts
- 126                   shows there Thursdays – Sundays through the end of June. Flyer will be forwarded to Secretary
- 127                   Hoppes.
- 128
- 129

130 **There being no further business, Patty Powers made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.;**

131 **Gary Fappiano seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**

132

133

134 Sincerely,

135 *Stacey Hoppes*

136 Stacey Hoppes, Secretary

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# South Central Connecticut Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

South Central Connecticut Regional Economic Development Corporation

REX Development

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**REX**  
**DEVELOPMENT**



# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) – What is it, and why is it important?

- 15 towns: Bethany, Branford, East Haven, Guilford, Hamden, Madison, Meriden, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Orange, Wallingford, West Haven, and Woodbridge
- An effective CEDS planning process identifies locally-grown strategies that will guide regional economic development, encourage partnerships and collaboration, and improve economic outcomes and overall quality of life in our region.
- It is also a requirement from the US Economic Development Administration to maintain eligibility for federal funding.



# Demographics

<b>Regional Population (2022)</b>	<b>573,244</b>
<b>Regional Households (2022)</b>	<b>226,154</b>
<b>County Per Capita Income (2022)</b>	<b>\$46,781</b>
<b>Median Household Income (2022)</b>	<b>\$83,617</b>
<b>County Median Age (2021)</b>	<b>40.4</b>



## 2 Factors Impacting Economic Growth

### Workforce Shortage

- 75,000 unfilled jobs in Connecticut – the largest demand is for R.N.s
- Labor force exceeds 2019
  - 314,987 (2019)
  - 323,719 (November 2023)
- Unemployment (November 2023)
  - Region: 3.35%
  - Connecticut: 3.6%
  - US: 3.7%
- Low participation rates in workforce training programs

### Housing Crisis

- Median home sales price (New Haven County)
  - 2019: \$215,000
  - 2020: \$255,000
  - 2021: \$280,000
  - 2022: \$300,000
  - Q4 2023: \$360,000
- 67% increase in median home sales price since 2019
- Insufficient supply of affordable and market-rate housing
- SCRCOG Housing Committee focusing on a regional solution



# Key Sectors

- **Healthcare**
  - Additional locations from YNHH & Hartford Healthcare
  - Insufficient number of primary care providers and specialists
- **Higher Education** (Since 2018)
  - 1.4% overall decrease in enrollment in the region
    - SCSU: -13%
    - Gateway: -20%
    - Albertus: -13%
- **Bioscience**
  - Increasing investment in R&D through the National Institute of Health (\$636M in 2023)
  - 112 biotech companies in CT – 46% in the REX region
- **Manufacturing**
  - Ongoing transition to Manufacturing 4.0
  - Expansion of workforce training programs, including MATCH
- **Arts, Culture, & Tourism**
  - Performing arts theaters struggling
  - Using 65% occupancy as the benchmark for profitability, the region's hotels met the mark 4 out of 12 months in 2023 (33%)
- **Entrepreneurship**
  - New business starts in the region
    - 2021: 6,652
    - 2022: 7,051
    - 2023: 6,950



# Emerging Tech Sectors

- **QuantumCT**
  - QuantumCT is a joint initiative between Yale University and the University of Connecticut, working hand-in-hand to advance Connecticut's position as a center of excellence in quantum and accelerate the adoption of quantum technologies in Connecticut and beyond.
  - Quantum technologies are poised to influence hundreds of applications, including smartphones, navigation systems, drug therapy, advanced computers, and other applications impacting biomedicine, energy, defense, healthcare, insurance, and financial sectors.
- **ClimateHaven**
  - An innovation hub created to empower climate tech entrepreneurs in their efforts to develop innovative technologies that will enable their companies to scale and drive significant changes for our planet.
  - Provides access to advanced facilities, tools, and resources to support building a sustainable future.



# Regional Progress

- Regional Sector Partnerships
- SCRCOG Housing Committee
- Increased access to affordable, high-speed broadband
- Transportation
  - Tweed Airport & Avelo Airlines
  - Rail funding
  - Union Station
  - I-91/1-691/Route 15 Interchange in Meriden
  - Heroes Tunnel
- Arvinas & Alexion expansion
- Sustainable CT certification: 13 cities/towns participating, 5 cities/towns are certified



# Challenges for 2024

- Financial
  - Expiring ARPA funds
  - State budget gap FY 2025
- Population & Workforce
  - Static population
  - Older population
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion
  - DECD grant for the New Haven Equitable Entrepreneurial Ecosystem (NHE3) to help underserved entrepreneurs and business owners
- Sustainability
  - Brownfield regulations proposed changes
  - Municipal solid waste
  - Hazard mitigation
    - Climate change/natural hazards
    - Cybersecurity
    - Disaster preparedness
- Aging infrastructure