

Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD)

At a Glance

CATHERINE H. SMITH, Commissioner

David Kooris, Deputy Commissioner

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Established -1995

Statutory Authority - Conn. Gen. Statutes Chapters 127b and 184b

Central Office- 450 Columbus Boulevard Hartford, CT 06103

Number of Employees - 109

Recurring Operating Expenses - \$28,586,922

Organizational Structure - Office of the Commissioner, Office of Business Development, Office of Financial Review, Office of Finance and Administration, Office of Brownfield Remediation and Development, Office of Capital Projects, Office of the Arts, State Historic Preservation Office, Office of Tourism

Mission

The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) develops and implements strategies to increase the state's economic competitiveness.

Statutory Responsibility

Under the provisions of Conn. Gen. Statutes Chapters 127b and 184b DECD administers programs and policies to promote business, community development, brownfield redevelopment, arts, culture and tourism and is the state agency responsible for promoting economic growth.

Public Service

In an effort to provide continued quality service to its customers, the agency is staffed with highly trained economic, community development and marketing professionals who identify customer and community needs and coordinate resources—both public and private—to meet those needs.

DECD (www.decd.org) promotes in-state business and economic development, as well as out-of-state business recruitment, through use of tax credits, financing, technical assistance, and enterprise zones. Strategically, DECD supports comprehensive, industry-based economic development to strengthen the competitiveness of Connecticut's workers and industries. The department's international staff is dedicated to attracting foreign direct investment to Connecticut and helping Connecticut companies take advantage of export opportunities in the global marketplace.

DECD also provides planning, engineering, architectural and construction management services to oversee state-sponsored real estate development, including urban and downtown revitalization, industrial site development and brownfield redevelopment. DECD provides municipalities and non-profits with financial and technical assistance for community development activities. In addition, DECD provides assistance to customers for permitting and regulatory compliance with state or federal programs to allow for an expedited development process.

Economic and community vitality is a cornerstone of DECD's work and is evident throughout the grant programs and services administered by DECD's Office of the Arts (COA). DECD values the arts as a core asset of vibrant communities and views the arts as essential in attracting and retaining talent by offering a diverse palette of quality of life experiences. The creative workforce is strengthened when the arts participate as leaders in their communities across the state. As a result, DECD invests in Connecticut artists and arts organizations and encourages public participation in the arts and in creative endeavors.

DECD works to position the state as a prime location to start, expand or move a business. The department's marketing efforts, which target both in-state and out-of-state audiences, are focused on communicating the strengths of *still revolutionary* Connecticut, including its highly educated and productive workforce, prime Northeast location and abundance of financial and technical support services.

DECD works to make tourism a leading economic contributor and to position the state as a prime destination for leisure and business travelers. DECD partners with the Connecticut business community and tourism partners across the state, to provide a positive image of the state through cooperative marketing opportunities. Through its Office of Tourism (COT), DECD offers a broad range of services, including marketing, research, hospitality services, direct sales and business marketing assistance. COT operates the state's official tourism website www.CTvisit.com and popular social media sites.

Through the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), DECD administers a broad range of federal and state programs that identify, register and protect the buildings, sites, structures, districts and objects that comprise Connecticut's cultural heritage. DECD is the regulatory authority for the review of both federally and state funded projects to assist agencies with avoiding or minimizing the effects of their actions on historic resources. DECD currently administers seven grant programs for historic preservation, two state tax credit programs for the rehabilitation of historic structures, the federal historic rehabilitation tax credit program, as well as manage the Connecticut Freedom Trail and Washington-Rochambeau Trail programs. In addition, DECD owns and operates four state-owned museums: Henry Whitfield State Museum, Old New-Gate Prison and Copper Mine, Prudence Crandall Museum and the Eric Sloane Museum.

Improvements/Achievements for Fiscal Year 2017-18

DECD's investments, programs and services, and policy initiatives have made a significant impact on the economy of Connecticut and the quality of life of its citizens. What follows are some highlights from FY 2017-18.

- Since the inception of the Small Business Express Program, DECD has directly funded approximately 1,825 companies totaling \$293MM. The total number of jobs to be created and retained is over 31,000. The general categories of businesses to receive funding include: manufacturing, main street retail, hospitality/entertainment/tourism, healthcare/bioscience, business/financial services, information technology, construction, and specialty products.
- In FY 2018 DECD entered into contracts with over 35 companies for approximately \$130MM in Manufacturing Assistance Act funding. These recipients have pledged to create and retain over 11,100 jobs.
- The Office of Film Television and Digital Media issued \$128.8 million in tax credits to 34 applicants (representing 29 companies) with cumulative qualified Connecticut expenditures of \$433.6 million.
- DECD's Economic Development Programs unit supports the department's strategic initiatives, partnerships and federal grants. It supports job creation by funding innovation, technical assistance/training, regional partnerships and new technological developments.
 - A \$4.4 million grant award from the **Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment** builds on previous investments. It assists in responding to the aerospace and defense supply chain need to ensure continuity and retention of the skilled talent base, improve competencies and nurture innovation by aligning the assets of state, regional, and local economic development organizations' efforts that will result in diversification opportunities.
 - The **Manufacturing Innovation Fund** was created to support the growth, innovation and progress of Connecticut's advanced manufacturing sector. The MIF is capitalized with \$75 million in funding offering manufacturing focused programs and initiatives in the areas of workforce and training; innovation; operational improvements; and capital access. Grants for machinery, building upgrades and cost-saving energy-efficiency improvements have been provided to numerous companies. MIF programs have also helped train and update the skills of workers and launch careers of apprentices and pre-apprentices. As of June 30 2018, the MIF had assisted approximately 1,133 companies and invested over \$58.2 million to help accelerate growth, cultivate talent, and boost investments in innovation.
 - The **National Network for Manufacturing Innovation (NNMI)** provides a manufacturing and research infrastructure where industry and academia collaborate to solve industry-relevant problems. They are public/private partnerships with federal, state and private partners funding projects, mostly for small to mid-size manufactures. Connecticut is a member of three institutes: Flexible Hybrid Electronics, Smart Manufacturing and Advanced Robotics Manufacturing with a potential pool of \$220 million in grant federal grant funds.

- The **Minority Business Initiative** - a nationally acclaimed \$28 million initiative to provide minority businesses with access to capital and technical assistance. The mission is to support the economic growth of underserved and minority communities by increasing the participation of minority-owned businesses in state funding, and business development opportunities.
- The **New England Defense Cluster** – Connecticut supports a six-state consortium of state and industry leaders working to sustain and grow a strong, competitive New England defense cluster. Resources assist in coordinating the growth of defense-related businesses across the six-state New England region. The primary goals are to aid small and medium-sized businesses in meeting new cybersecurity requirements for businesses participating in the defense industry supply chain, as well as to create a trusted supplier network that will make it easier for large defense contractors to locate smaller suppliers that are able to meet their production, certification and process requirements.
- Acting through DECD, Connecticut was designated by the federal government as part of the **Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP)** initiative. With this designation, Connecticut will receive coordinated support from eleven federal agencies with access to more than \$1 billion in federal funding dedicated to economic development and the resurgence of manufacturing in the United States. This initiative was officially signed into law by the *Made In America Manufacturing Communities Act* which was part of the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).
- For the fifth time DECD's International team won federal grant funds from the U.S. SBA's State Trade Expansion Program (STEP). The grant award of \$290,000 supported the value of small business exports, and increased market access for those small businesses who were new-to-export.
- The coordinated participation of Connecticut companies at several international trade shows yielded impressive results including Medica in Dusseldorf, Germany (anticipated sales of \$500,000); Hannover Messe in Hannover, Germany (anticipated sales of \$6,625,000) and the Farnborough Air Show in the U.K. (anticipated sales of \$19,150,000).
- Connecticut also participated in the SelectUSA Summit in Washington D.C. and had over 43 pre-arranged B2B meetings with foreign-owned companies interested in doing business in the U.S.
- Since FY 2012, the Office of Brownfield Remediation and Development (OBRD) has helped invest \$208 million in more than 224 brownfield development projects in cities and towns all across the state. For every dollar invested by the DECD on brownfield programs, non-DECD partners have put in approximately \$11.26.

- FY 2018 included one large round (Round 11) of funding made available through a competitive process. \$13.6 million of brownfield grants were awarded to 16 projects. Several of the remediation grants awarded will help to increase the amount of new mixed-income housing opportunities that are being developed in the state. The smaller environmental assessment grants work well as seed money in the crucial initial first steps in identifying the hindrances of development.
- In June of 2018 funding under Round 2 of the Brownfield Area-wide Revitalization Planning Grant (BAR) Program was announced. Six municipalities in the state – Ansonia, Bridgeport, Naugatuck, New Milford, Thompson, and Thomaston were awarded a total of \$1,000,000 to develop plans for remediating and developing clusters of brownfield sites.
- During FY 2018 funds for the remediation of state owned brownfield sites under PA 11-1 continued to support the remediation and redevelopment of the former CT Transit Bus Garage in New Haven and the former Norwich State Hospital.
- OBRD has approved 34 and 16 applications for liability relief under the Brownfield Remediation and Revitalization Program (Conn. Gen. Statutes Sec. 32-769) and the Abandoned Brownfield Cleanup Program (Conn. Gen. Statutes Section 32-768), respectively, since their inception.
- The Office of Capital Projects (OCP) manages a wide variety of economic and community development projects, most notably those funded by the Small Town Economic Assistance Program and Urban Act Grant Program. OCP supported 43 projects for a total state investment of over \$29 million, which leveraged an additional \$19 million. These projects help in building strong town centers, revitalizing downtowns, and promoting economic development by supporting the arts, tourism and other community growth-based projects.
- Connecticut Office of Tourism (COT) continued with the award-winning *Connecticut still revolutionary* campaign promoting travel to Connecticut. The Connecticut *still revolutionary* advertising, social media and public relations efforts are now a year round endeavor to provide continuity in the marketplace. Given the greatly reduced budget for paid media, there was a focus on digital tactics and Out of Home placements in key markets (NY and Boston). We continued building awareness with public relations and social media tactics. The marketing messages used continue to reinforce overnight stays, our casinos as tourism destinations and a showcase of big draw attractions and hidden gems. New experiences such as culinary adventures, outdoor adventure and romantic escapes also continue to be supported.
- Over 1,600 Tourism industry partners were featured and/or supported through advertising, public relations and content marketing efforts, representing towns across every region in Connecticut.
- COT's Tourism website, www.CTvisit.com, offers more than 4,000 reasons to visit Connecticut and is where travelers can find information about places to visit, stay and eat in Connecticut as well as hundreds of inspirational travel stories, vacation deals and

event listings all in one place. Visits to CTvisit.com increased 15% with nearly 5 million sessions, 1.9 million listing page views, with 23% of sessions including a listing page visit.

- COT partnered with the Tourism industry to sponsor the Connecticut Governor's Conference on Tourism, the state's premier tourism industry event, bringing together more than 400 professionals from hotels, restaurants, casinos, tourist attractions, entertainment venues, historic sites, and cultural and arts institutions to share best practices and foster cooperative marketing efforts.
- Tourism Strategic Planning Input Meetings in January brought Tourism Industry Partners together to gain insight into the future direction of the Office of Tourism strategic marketing efforts.
- DECD's supported statewide Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau partnership contracted 230 future meetings, conventions and sports events which are expected to generate more than \$54 million in local spending and over \$3.1 million in tax revenue for the state. In addition, there were 513 leads issued accounting for 292,162 room nights.
- Connecticut Open House Day was a great success. This year's event was the 14th annual event and was designed to showcase Connecticut's exceptional cultural and tourism assets. It was a great opportunity for residents to become tourists in their own "backyard" and learn about all the great places to take visiting friends and family. 245 attractions, museums, historical sites, theaters and other venues in every corner of the state participated.
- COT continued the new Regional Marketing Program which continues to expand its partnerships with organizations from every region of the state, committed to promoting tourism. The program's mission is to work even more closely with regional organizations, COGs and chambers of commerce to help tourism-related businesses capitalize on the State's existing broad array of marketing initiatives.
- SHPO reviewed or provided guidance on more than 3,000 projects throughout the state to avoid or reduce development impacts on our state's most important historic resources.
- The State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit accepted 20 new projects into the program and reserved \$31.7 million in tax credits for 19 projects. The total project costs for the 19 projects is over \$129 million, which leverages the state's investment by an over 4:1 ratio.
- SHPO reserved over \$1.9 million in tax credits for 89 projects through the Historic Homes Rehabilitation Tax Credit program, generating over \$7.2 million in local rehabilitation expenditures. This direct assistance enhances stewardship of historic properties and pride in home ownership.

- As a testament to SHPO's strong belief in partnerships, last year SHPO awarded \$215,000 in Partners in Preservation grants and an additional \$7,000 for lectures and workshops.
- Historic Preservation is important to Connecticut's communities. In support of local initiatives, SHPO awarded \$185,500 to 12 communities for survey and planning projects, \$75,000 to municipalities in the Certified Local Government program, and \$328,575 for project specific restoration, rehabilitation, and stabilization projects.
- To recognize the important places in our state's history, SHPO assisted with the listing of 13 properties to the National Register of Historic Places, including 6 districts of multiple properties, and 6 properties on the State Register of Historic Places.
- Old New-Gate Prison reopened on July 14, 2018, with a site administrator and a seasonal tour guide. The museum will remain open through its regular season until October 31st.
- Repair to the west foundation wall of Viets' Tavern at Old New-Gate Prison was completed in July, 2018. Repainting, reroofing and improved drainage to the Tavern and two buildings on the campus will be completed by the end of the fall.
- Through the support of the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA), the Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA) provides a range of grant programs to support the arts sector with a combination of NEA and state funding across the state that support a range of institutions and activities.
- Supporting Arts in Place awarded 121 grants for a total of \$599,500 to eligible arts organizations and municipal arts offices to strengthen the state's nonprofit arts industry.
- Various COA project grant programs awarded 89 grants for a total of \$454,561. The awarded projects led to more than \$2.25 million in arts-based activities that directly benefited youth, artists, and communities across the state.
- The Arts Workforce Initiative awarded 29 individuals between the ages of 18-40, including two veterans, with paid summer internships across the state at 25 host organizations that were selected through a competitive program. The total awarded was \$108,750 and supported \$3,750 payments to interns for 10 weeks of service.
- Through the Artist Fellowship program, COA awarded 39 grants to Connecticut artists of all creative disciplines such as visual artists, literary artists, choreographers, music composers, playwrights, etc. to support the creation of new work.
- The number of Poetry Out Loud participants continue to grow each year with 5,542 Connecticut students and nearly 100 teachers and school librarians involved this past year to bring Poetry Out Loud activities into the classroom.

- The Connecticut Arts Hero Awards honored 9 individuals who are doing extraordinary things in, for or through the arts. These special Heroes were selected from over 160 nominations from all across Connecticut.
- COA hosted a tour across Connecticut with a national representative providing the highlights of Connecticut's recent Arts and Economic Prosperity 5 results. The study examined the nonprofit arts and culture sector with Connecticut results showing that arts and culture generate \$797.3 million in economic activity, support more than 23,000 jobs annually, and return \$72.3 million in revenue to local and state coffers.
- COA convened its 3rd annual Connecticut Arts Day with over 400 in attendance for a day-long convening with speakers, performers, informative panel discussions, and networking opportunities designed specifically for the arts industry.
- COA led the first annual Make Music Connecticut which included over 250 free outdoor musical events across the state as part of the Make Music Day global music celebration that takes place on the summer solstice each year and brings people of all ages and skill levels together to make music.