

Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD)

At a Glance

David Lehman, Commissioner

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Established -1995

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

Central Office - 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 5 Hartford, CT 06103

Number of Employees - 120

Recurring Operating Expenses - \$26,660,366

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

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 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 channels.

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 2018-19

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 2018-19.

- Since the inception of the Small Business Express Program, DECD has directly funded approximately 1,884 companies totaling \$307MM. The total number of jobs to be created and retained is over 30,000. 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 2019 DECD entered into contracts with 25 entities for approximately \$125MM in Manufacturing Assistance Act funding. These recipients have pledged to create and retain over 27,000 jobs.
- The Office of Film Television and Digital Media issued \$157.3 million in tax credits to 39 applicants (representing 31 companies) with cumulative qualified Connecticut expenditures of \$531.4 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. According to the most recent data available, 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 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 manufacturers. 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 Collaborative – 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 (MCP) initiative. This designation provides a platform to coordinate with a network of 23 other manufacturing communities.
- For the sixth time, DECD’s International team won a federal grant from the U.S. SBA’s State Trade Expansion Program. The grant award of \$300,000 works to (1) increase the number of eligible small businesses that export, (2) increase the value of small businesses’ exports, and (3) increase the number of small businesses exploring significant new trade opportunities.
- The coordinated participation of Connecticut companies at several international trade shows yielded impressive results. Accomplishments include:
 - Anticipated sales of \$400,000 at Medica in Dusseldorf, Germany;
 - Anticipated sales of \$51,000 at Hannover Messe in Hannover, Germany; and
 - Anticipated sales of \$29,500,000 at the Paris Air Show in Paris, France.
- Connecticut also participated in the SelectUSA Summit in Washington D.C. and had over 49 pre-arranged B2B meetings with foreign-owned companies interested in doing business in the U.S.
- From FY 2012-2019, the Office of Brownfield Remediation and Development (OBRD) has invested approximately \$210 million in approximately 240 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 \$15.24 of non-DECD funds.

- FY 2019 included Round 12 of funding made available through a competitive process. \$3,575,000 in brownfield grants were awarded to 11 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.
- During FY 2019 funds for the remediation of state owned brownfield sites under PA 11-1 continued to support the remediation and redevelopment of the former Norwich State Hospital, former Fairfield Hills Campus in Newtown, former Mystic Oral School in Groton and the former DOT Maintenance Garage in Haddam.
- OBRD has approved 36 and 19 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 16 projects for a total state investment of over \$62 million, which leveraged an additional \$800 million. These projects help in building strong town centers, revitalizing downtowns, and promoting economic development.
- COT continued with the award-winning *Connecticut* marketing campaign, promoting travel to Connecticut. The *Connecticut* advertising, social media and public relations efforts are a year round strategically, integrated endeavor to provide continuity in the marketplace. The marketing messages used continue to reinforce overnight stays, our resort 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. COT's marketing promotes every region of Connecticut, all industry sectors (e.g., lodging, restaurants, attractions), and assets in every town and city. COT uses an integrated mix of 21st century marketing tactics, including: search engine optimization and search engine marketing, social media marketing, video/YouTube marketing, Content marketing, branded content, TripAdvisor partnership, out-of-home advertising (e.g., billboards, permanent installations, public relations and influencer marketing and e-mail marketing). COT's research shows that are our most likely visitors are from CT, NYC, Boston, Rhode Island and Springfield (MA), so that is where efforts are focused. COT also targets advertising by interest (e.g., active adventure, family fun).
- Over 1,000 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 information on over 4,000 tourism attractions, accommodations and restaurants, where visitors 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 hit 5.4 and drove 3 million referrals (call, clicks, and emails) to tourism partners in 2018.

- In 2018, COT began deploying Arrivalist—a highly advanced GPS-driven analytics tool that monitors whether those who view our advertising actually visit Connecticut.
- In the summer of 2018, those exposed to our digital marketing in New York City:
 - § Visited Connecticut 6x more than those who were NOT exposed
 - § Stayed in Connecticut 3.5x longer than those who were NOT exposed
- COT partnered with the CT Tourism industry to sponsor the Connecticut Conference on Tourism, the state’s premier tourism industry event, bringing together more than 400 professionals from hotels, restaurants, resort casinos, visitor attractions, entertainment venues, historic sites, and cultural and arts institutions to share best practices and foster cooperative marketing efforts and tourism education opportunities.
- Tourism Strategic Planning Input Meetings in January and October brought Tourism Industry Partners together to gain insight into the future direction of the Office of Tourism strategic marketing efforts.
- Connecticut Open House Day was a great success. This year’s event was the 15th 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. Over 200 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.
- Thirty three new projects were accepted into the State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program and \$31.7 million in tax credits were reserved for 18 projects. The total project costs for the 18 projects is over \$129 million, which leverages the state’s investment by an over 4:1 ratio.
- SHPO reserved over \$900,000 in tax credits for 62 projects through the Historic Homes Rehabilitation Tax Credit program, generating over \$4.1 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 \$510,000 in Partners in Preservation grants and another \$200,000 in grants to local preservation partner organizations.
- Historic Preservation is important to Connecticut's communities. In support of local initiatives, SHPO awarded \$208,000 to 16 communities for survey and planning projects, \$100,000 to municipalities in the Certified Local Government program, and \$228,000 for project-specific restoration, rehabilitation, and stabilization projects.
- To recognize the important places in our state's history, SHPO assisted with the listing of 8 properties to the National Register of Historic Places, including 2 districts of multiple properties, and 6 properties on the State Register of Historic Places.
- Three accessory buildings on the Old New-Gate Prison campus, including Viets' Tavern (1764), were painted and reroofed. The museum had its first full season open to the public since 2009.
- Plans for extensive renovations to the Eric Sloane Museum in Kent were completed, and will begin in September 2019. A plan for the restoration of the Prudence Crandall Museum was approved.
- The Noah Blake Cabin at the Eric Sloane Museum has been rebuilt and will be used as the foundation for a new interpretation and visitor experience at the site.
- Through the support of the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA), 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 109 grants for a total of \$632,800 to eligible arts organizations and municipal arts offices to strengthen the state's nonprofit arts industry.
- Various COA project grant programs awarded 81 grants for a total of \$547,889. These grants funded schools, nonprofit organizations, artistic work, and municipalities and align with COA strategic goals to promote relevance, equity, access, diversity and inclusion in the arts.
- The Arts Workforce Initiative awarded 52 individuals between the ages of 18-40, with paid summer internships across the state at 37 host organizations that were selected through a competitive program. The total awarded was \$195,000 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 5,253 Connecticut students and nearly 165 teachers and school librarians involved this past year to bring Poetry Out Loud activities into the classroom.
- COA convened a two-day Connecticut Arts celebration featuring the presentation of Arts Hero Awards to 9 individuals making extraordinary contributions to the arts in Connecticut. The Arts Hero Award gala was followed by a day-long convening in New Haven featuring speakers, performers, informative panel discussions, and networking opportunities designed specifically for the arts industry to address arts relevancy.
- COA worked with fourteen regional Make Music Day chapters to present over 250 free outdoor concerts. Make Music Day Connecticut is part of a 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.