Department of Economic & Community Development

Agency Description

The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) is the lead state agency responsible for strengthening Connecticut’s competitive position in the new economy.  It does so by developing and implementing strategies to attract and retain businesses and jobs, preserving and promoting cultural and tourism assets, ensuring quality housing, and revitalizing neighborhoods and communities.

DECD administers programs and policies to promote business, housing, community development and brownfield redevelopment, and is the state agency responsible for promoting economic growth.

DECD 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. 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 provides engineering, architectural and construction management services, as well as project oversight for large-scale real estate development, including industrial site development and brownfield redevelopment.

The agency undertakes research and strategic planning activities and provides guidance on all economic, housing and community development matters; develops and implements economic, community and housing development policy; and conducts program evaluation, performance tracking and monitoring.

Additionally, DECD maintains a special focus on building strong neighborhoods and providing quality housing services. The department promotes housing development through strategic investment, professional consultation, and program and policy development as well as provides municipalities and non-profits with financial and technical assistance for community development activities.

***The programs that support housing in Connecticut are recommended for transfer to and consolidation within the Department of Housing in the Governor’s budget as part of his proposal to restructure and transform state government.***

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Chapters 578 and 588l, Sections 4-66c, 12-81, 22a-1a, 38a-88a, 11-1.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

The Economic Development program aims to maximize economic opportunities through the creation and retention of jobs, workforce development, business expansion, recruitment and retention, export assistance and foreign investment and the development and implementation of comprehensive long-term economic development strategies. In short, the objective of DECD’s economic development program is to ensure that economic opportunities exist and to create them when they do not.

## Program Description

DECD utilizes numerous state and federally funded economic development programs and services to address economic, business and workforce development issues and create employment, training, business expansion and infrastructure improvement opportunities. Some of these programs and services are as follows:

* Urban & industrial sites reinvestment tax credits
* **Economic development and manufacturing assistance**
* **Job creation tax credits**
* **Enterprise Zone program**
* **Export assistance**
* **Industrial parks program**
* **Urban development action grants**
* **Small Cities Block Grant program**
* **Technical business assistance programs**
* **Workforce Investment Act**
* **Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP)**
* **First Five program**
* **Small Business Express program**

The ultimate goal of DECD’s long-term strategies is to increase the competitiveness of Connecticut's businesses, to identify and nurture emerging industries, and to maintain and expand high-growth and critical industries.

**DECD’s short-term strategy centers on servicing the needs of individual businesses on a project-by-project basis. The activities that occur under this effort include: recruitment of new businesses to the state; expansion and retention of existing Connecticut businesses; promotion of exports; targeting foreign direct investment in the state; and planning, regulation, coordination and implementation of complex real estate development projects and tax incentive programs; and workforce development and training assistance.**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Outcome Measure | | |
| Business Assistance Portfolio Economic Impact | | |
| Portfolio Aggregate | | FY 2011 |
| Gross Regional Product | $1,350,573,325 | $61,887,253 |
| Personal Income | $1,940,889,765 | $103,455,000 |
| State Net Rev. | $172,737,200 | $36,251,200 |
| Portfolio Leveraging Ratio | 6.36 |  |

Housing DEVELOPMENT

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Chapters 127b, 127c, 128, 133, 135, 137e, 138b, 138i, 138j and 578, and Sections, 16a-40a, 17b-106, 17b-337, 17b-347e.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

DECD is the lead agency for all matters relating to housing development in Connecticut. DECD monitors and analyzes the Connecticut housing development environment by undertaking several strategic planning efforts including the [*State of Connecticut Long Range Housing Plan*](http://www.ct.gov/ecd/lib/ecd/2010-15_slrhp_-_final_.pdf), and the [*Connecticut Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development*](http://www.ct.gov/ecd/lib/ecd/housing_plans/2010-15_cp_-_hud_approved.pdf). The agency also performs certain strategy and policy functions related to housing development.

Housing development activities create the environment necessary for sustainable economic growth and stable neighborhoods. Housing development activities address the “quality of life” issues that create and reinforce the foundation that effective economic and housing development depends upon for success.

## Program Description

Based on the affordable housing needs present in Connecticut, the DECD utilizes numerous state and federally funded housing and support programs to create economic opportunities.

DECD also provides technical and financial assistance to non-profit and for-profit sponsors, and municipalities for preservation, rehabilitation and development of affordable housing and associated housing support programs and services. The agency also administers rental subsidy and tax- related assistance designed to promote housing affordability. Some of these programs and services are as follows:

* [Affordable Housing Program](http://www.ct.gov/ecd/cwp/view.asp?a=3680&Q=433350&PM=1#AHP) (Flex)
* [Housing Trust Fund](http://www.ct.gov/ecd/cwp/view.asp?a=3680&Q=433350&PM=1#HTF) (HTF)
* Elderly Congregate Rental Assistance Program
* Energy Conservation Loan Program
* [HOME Investment Partnerships Program](http://www.ct.gov/ecd/cwp/view.asp?a=3680&Q=433350&PM=1#HOME) (HOME)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Outcome Measure Housing Development – Economic Impact Change | | |
|  | Portfolio Aggregate | FY 2011 |
| Gross State Product | $923,391,822 | $34,446,626 |
| Personal Income | $1,078,085,878 | $42,000,000 |
| State Net Revenue | $8,315,596 | -$227,406 |

DECD’s short-term housing strategies are governed by the immediate housing needs of Connecticut’s communities and by the objectives set forth in the state’s Annual Action Plan for Housing and Community Development. The agency’s short-term strategies are achieved through the initiation and completion of individual housing projects.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT and SPECIAL PROJECTS

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Sections 4-66c,4-66g, 22a-1a,32-220, 32-9t, 32-9cc, Chapters 578.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

Community development activities create the environment necessary for sustainable economic growth, stable neighborhoods and healthy communities. Community development activities address the “quality of life” issues that create and reinforce the foundation that effective economic and housing development depends upon for success.

Community Development includes economic, social and environmental development that incorporates land use and resources in ways that enhance the long-term quality of life for Connecticut’s current and future generations. This supports a vibrant and resilient economy, preserves the state’s natural resources and maximizes previous investments in existing infrastructure while preserving distinctive landscapes, historic structures, landmarks, and villages.

## Program Description

DECD utilizes a number of programs, services and strategies to improve the quality of life in Connecticut’s communities.

DECD also employs numerous state and federally funded community development programs and services, as well as state bond funds, to improve the quality of life in Connecticut’s cities and towns and provide infrastructure improvement opportunities. Some of these programs and services are as follows:

* Urban Action Grants
* Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program (SC-CDBG)
* Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP)
* Brownfield Programs

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Outcome Measure – Community Development Activities | | |
| Projects/Activities FY 2012 | | |
|  | Communities Assisted | Investment |
| SC- CDBG | 33 | $17,035,000 |

DECD’s community development mission is supported by long-term and short-term strategies.

The short-term community development strategy centers on servicing the immediate infrastructure needs of Connecticut’s communities through individual development projects that result in a broad social impact upon the various constituencies within a community. DECD’s long-term strategy is governed by the goals and objectives set forth in Connecticut’s Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development. This plan focuses on the building of broad community foundations that enhance quality of life and support further economic expansion and the development of safe and affordable housing. DECD’s Brownfield Remediation and Development office provides a “one-stop” state resource for information on the programs and services available for brownfield redevelopment in Connecticut.

TOURISM & branD

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Chapter 184b, Sections 10-392 through 10-399.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

DECD is the lead agency for branding and marketing the state for tourism development. Tourism’s unique mission brings visitors to Connecticut creating jobs to employ Connecticut residents and support their families, and generating state and local taxes to support public services essential to Connecticut tax payers. It also motivates Connecticut residents to embody the pride and spirit of an engaging destination excited to support business growth and welcome tourists and visiting friends and families. The objectives are to build a market research based brand position, craft comprehensive and cost-effective marketing strategies, and execute marketing campaigns to promote Connecticut as a year-round travel and cultural destination that dramatically improves the attractiveness of the state as a place to visit, to live and work, and to grow a business.

## Program Description

The role of DECD’s Office of Tourism is unique in the state of Connecticut:

* Develops the Connecticut brand and strategic marketing plan including message, creative and in-state, out-of-state and international media strategies;
* Conducts research to guide public and private marketing efforts and measure performance;
* Executes integrated campaigns including, but not limited to, online and traditional advertising, promotions, public relations and direct sales;
* Acts as Connecticut’s primary source for state tourism destination information ,including the Connecticut Visitors Guide, tourism maps, and the official state tourism website [www.CTvisit.com](http://www.CTvisit.com)
* Provides customer services including toll free information lines and official State Welcome Centers; and
* Creates partnerships, cooperating marketing opportunities including grants and education opportunities for Connecticut businesses.

DECD’s immediate strategy focuses on changing perceptions and ultimately behavior of potential visitors, in-state residents and businesses. The strategy evolves to leveraging popular perceptions and expanding marketing to other areas to build greater integration and strengthen business development efforts. This scenario allows immediate marketing efforts focusing on tourism to increase tax revenues thereby providing a source for funding further tourism and business marketing efforts.

Program performance is measured on an ongoing campaign basis as well as benchmark tracking. The Office of Tourism provided travel assistance to 29% more potential visitors during FY 2012 via traditional inquiries, web traffic and counseling in State welcome centers (FY 2012: 3,044,601 vs. FY 2011: 2,351,375). Awareness of Connecticut as a place to visit increased 10 points (54% to 64%). Visitation to major attractions increased 5.7% between FY 2012 and FY 2011 bolstered by significant increases once the new brand campaign launched in late spring.

Arts & Historic Preservation

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Chapter 184b, Sections 10-392, 10-395, 10-400 through 10-416b.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

To take advantage of the opportunities for collaboration, coordination and growth in the cultural community through funding, technical assistance and promotion.

## Program Description

The Arts Division develops and strengthens the arts in Connecticut and makes artistic experiences widely available to residents and visitors. The Arts Division receives, coordinates and disburses federal, state and private funds through competitive, matching grant programs based on objective measures that ensure organizational health, programmatic excellence, and accountability.

* The arts are now an essential component of DECD’s mission to “develop and implement strategies to increase CT’s economic competitiveness.” In January 2012, COA released its New Directions Statement with an aggressive timeline to strategically integrate current grant programs into one comprehensive resource. More than 20 public sessions around the state and leading-edge evaluation work with the firm of WolfBrown led to the creation of the Arts Catalyze Placemaking (ACP) program, designed to give constituents additional practical and creative grant support options, strengthen the impact of arts and cultural organizations, artists and emerging groups, and to focus on innovative partnerships that create jobs and revitalize communities. ACP invests $2.274 million in grants to 136 organizations per year of state and federal funds in arts-based cultural activities and infrastructure in ways that will advance the attractiveness and competitiveness of Connecticut cities, towns, and villages as meaningful communities in which to live, work, learn and play. ACP maintains existing standards of artistic merit, while helping artists and arts organizations increase the relevance of their product and the size of their audience through a focus on placemaking.

The Historic Preservation & Museum Division functions under state and federal law as Connecticut's State Historic Preservation Office. The division 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. The division operates five historic properties: Old New-Gate Prison and Copper Mine, Henry Whitfield State Museum, Sloane-Stanley Museum, Prudence Crandall Museum, and Viets Tavern.

* Funded by the Community Investment Act, awarded over $2.5 million per year in grants to restore, rehabilitate and plan for the reuse and preservation of historic buildings owned by municipalities and non-profit organizations. Reserved over $11 million in tax credit reservations with an estimated private investment of over $87,000,000. Communities served include, but are not limited to Hartford, New Haven, Norwalk, Norwich and Waterbury.

ADMINISTRATION

## Statutory Reference

C.G.S. Chapters 127b, 127c, 128, 184b 578, 588l, and Sections 22a-1a, 10-392 et seq.

## Statement of Need and Program Objectives

The administrative functions of the agency provide direct and indirect support and/or managerial oversight to the operations of the department. Administrative functions include accounts payable/receivable, loan management, human resources, payroll, marketing and communications, budgetary planning, fiscal support, portfolio management, financial reviews, engineering, architectural and construction services, management information systems, facilities management, compliance and monitoring services, audit functions, records maintenance and legal and legislative services.

## Program Description

The administrative functions develop and implement policy; provide administrative guidance on economic, housing, community development, tourism, arts and historic preservation matters; provide operational fiscal management and budget control and planning; provide human resource and staff development assistance; conduct audit functions, program evaluation, performance tracking and monitoring. Administrative services also include the development and management of the agency’s information technology systems; coordinate and review proposed bond allocations, and management of the agency’s portfolio system which monitors compliance on housing, economic and community development projects.