

## State Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Advisory Board

## NRZ Advisory Board Concepts for 2023

CGA Sec. 7-608 authorizes the Advisory board to do the following things:

(c) The board shall promote neighborhood self-sufficiency and economic development and assist neighborhood revitalization zone planning committees in developing and implementing strategic plans. The board shall make recommendations regarding the disbursement of moneys in accordance with subsection (d) of this section. The board may serve as a clearinghouse for information about neighborhood revitalization zones, including information on (1) linkages with technical experts for the development of strategic plans, (2) innovative neighborhood success models, and (3) training and mentoring opportunities for members of neighborhood revitalization planning zone committees. The board may also conduct seminars or conferences and establish collaborative partnerships with public or private entities, including, but not limited to, financial institutions, nonprofit or religious organizations, state and private institutions of higher learning and libraries.

(d) There is created a neighborhood revitalization zone grant-in-aid program to be administered by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, for the purpose of providing financial assistance for the benefit of neighborhood revitalization zone planning committees. Such financial assistance, within available appropriations, shall be used for activities that promote neighborhood organizational development, economic development and business planning, specialized curriculum development, leadership training, the use of technology, property management, landlord-tenant relations, intergovernmental relations and such other activities as the board may deem appropriate.

NOTE: the grant-in-aid program described in (d) was depleted by 2010. OPM provided funding to the CT Economic Development Fund (CEDF) to administer through its <u>community development program</u>. Small grants were provided to municipalities to hire consultants to assist NRZs with strategic planning.

## Potential 2023 work plan topics include:

- What guidance can be provided to NRZ and community members and how should it be provided?
  - o Bridgeport's NRZ Academy
  - o Community Organizing Handbook: A Guide for NRZ Members and Leaders (2000)
  - o Guidelines for developing a strategic plan (2005 update to Ch. 7 of the above)
  - o NRZ Resource Directory for Rebuilding Communities (1995) CT Inst. Of Municipal Studies
  - o Other?
- What is the appropriate amount of oversight of NRZs, should it vary depending on level of NRZ activity, and who should be responsible?
  - Hartford NRZ compliance checklist for NRZs receiving funding
- What neighborhood-level activities are state agencies or municipalities engaged in and do they work through neighborhood organizations? Can coordination of multiple agencies' efforts through an NRZ (or other local organization) improve outcomes?
- Funding and other non-training capacity development: what do the municipalities and state think NRZs need and is it aligned with what NRZs want? Should there be needs assessments of individual NRZs?

- Reintroduce the state Advisory Board to NRZs: many NRZ leaders & members are unaware of the advisory board's existence, of state requirements, and potential state agency roles in support of what NRs do. Should the advisory board reintroduce itself to NRZs, perhaps city by city?
- Who is missing from advisory board meetings? (See attached spreadsheet)
  - o A representative of one of the NRZs in each municipality that has NRZs
  - State agencies that are relevant but haven't been included: human services, emergency services/public safety, others?
  - o Municipalities whose NRZs are not active?
- Can the state NRZ advisory board provide guidance for NRZs choosing between in-person, fully remote, and hybrid meetings?

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