



## CONNECTICUT SOCIAL EQUITY COUNCIL

### The 2025 Council Market Outlook Working Group

#### **Cannabis Marketplace Non-Cannabis Subcommittee - First Working Session**

Tuesday, November 26, 2025, at 9:00am

Join us virtually on Zoom

#### **Zoom Link:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82947962498?pwd=5i2cpQhnZ5fhAbjTTNLYD8wMUyjcUh.1>

#### **Municipal Relations Chairs:**

Arunan Arulampalam – Mayor of Hartford

Vincent Cervoni – Mayor of Wallingford

**Council Membership:** Andréa Comer (Chair), Kyle Abercrombie, Fanita Borges, Tina Beamon, Corrie Betts, Greg Davis, Avery Gaddis, Andréa Hawkins, Michael Jefferson, Daniel Karpowitz, Melvin Medina, Ojala Naeem, Edwin Shirley, Shirley Skyers-Thomas, Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Charles Venator, and Kevin Walton.

**CT Social Equity Council Staff:** Brandon L. McGee, Jr. (Chief Executive Officer), Tiffany Araujo, Georgette Cicero, Douglas Clemons, Jessie Coleman, Mariedy Collazo Cruz, Kristina Diamond, Jennifer Edwards, Vera Lembrick, Jennifer Stevens, and Caesar Valentin.

*The SEC Mission is to **promote equitable economic prosperity** by supporting **Social Equity Entrepreneurs** and reinvesting in communities **most impacted** by the war on drugs.*

#### **Notes**

The meeting brought together municipal leaders to discuss local cannabis policy, taxation, community reinvestment, enforcement, and opportunities for collaboration with the Council. Discussion touched on aligning municipal and state efforts around cannabis legalization, tax revenue use, youth protection, and reduction of black-market activity.

Mayor Arulampalam discussed how Hartford is currently regulating cannabis establishments and how the 3% municipal cannabis tax funds are being used to support communities and remedy harms from the War on Drugs. It the importance of reducing black-market sales, improving product safety, and supporting youth programs was emphasized.

Mayor Cervoni acknowledged that cannabis sales are still illegal locally meaning any cannabis activity is illegal activity. Public opinion in Wallingford leans against legalization but may be influenced by data showing tax benefits. Property taxes have risen sharply in Wallingford and Mayor Cervoni stated it was possible for cannabis revenue to ease the strain. He stated future plans to re-engage his council and community members on cannabis policy.

Mayor Trister of stated that Newington has three dispensaries operating with no increase in crime or traffic issues. Cannabis tax revenue has supported local infrastructure, although he expressed the need for clearer tracking of how funds are used. Mayor Trister was very much in support of expanding legal sales to reduce black-market activity.

Mayor Arulampalam expressed interest in dedicating cannabis tax funds to reentry and workforce initiatives as well as investing in youth and equity programs aligning with the Council. He stressed the importance of the enforcement of legal cannabis sales in Hartford as there are serious public health risks related to unregulated products.

It was suggested that municipalities should align their use of cannabis revenues with the Council's investments for greater community impact. Areas of focus would remain mission oriented through reentry programs, youth initiatives, and economic development. The Council offered to host informational sessions for municipal staff to explain available resources and partnership opportunities.

There was discussion about lack of communication with the DRS on the distribution of the 3% municipal cannabis tax. The mayors present agreed on the need for more transparency on how funds are distributed and tracked.

Closing remarks emphasized partnership, continued dialogue, and mutual learning among municipalities with differing stances on cannabis.