

The Digest of Administrative Reports to the Governor
Fiscal Year 2024-2025

At a Glance

Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD)

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Established – 1995

Statutory Authority – CT Gen. Statutes Chapters 127b and 184b, Public Act 22-1

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

Number of Employees – 130

Recurring Operating Expenses – \$31,611,572

Organizational Structure – Office of the Commissioner, Office of Finance and Administration, Office of Business Development, Office of Small Business Affairs, Office of Statewide Marketing and Tourism, Office of Community Development, Office of Brownfield Remediation and Development, Office of the Arts, State Historic Preservation Office, Office of Financial Review and Compliance, Office of Manufacturing, Office of Federal Funding, Office of Workforce Strategy (for administrative purposes only), Office of Military Affairs (for administrative purposes only), and Social Equity Council (for administrative purposes only)

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 – The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) is committed to driving economic growth across the state by providing a wide range of programs and resources designed to empower businesses, nonprofits, and local communities. Through its Office of Business Development (OBD), DECD delivers both technical assistance and financial support to help organizations thrive and expand.

DECD also provides planning, engineering, architectural and construction management technical assistance to oversee state-sponsored real estate development, including urban and downtown revitalization, industrial site development and brownfield redevelopment. DECD provides municipalities, non-profits and community development corporations with financial and technical assistance for community development activities. In addition, DECD assists clients with permitting and regulatory compliance with state or federal programs to allow for an expedited development process and manages the state Dry Cleaning Remediation Fund. Lastly, DECD secures federal funding to support the state’s economic priorities. It also works with other state agencies, universities and colleges in Connecticut, non-profit organizations, and other stakeholders to create coalitions to apply for federal funding, as appropriate, and also offers technical assistance on federal funding applications when the state is not an applicant.

The Office of Statewide Marketing & Tourism (SMT) is responsible for marketing Connecticut as a place to **live, work, and play**. SMT supports the state's economic development and tourism goals by increasing resident population, attracting businesses, and driving visitation.

SMT consists of three divisions:

- **Marketing & Branding** – Manages the state’s overarching brand and strategic messaging
- **Tourism** – Promotes Connecticut as a visitor destination
- **Creative** – Develops and produces content and design for campaigns and communications

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. SHPO 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 six grant programs for historic preservation, two state tax credit programs for the rehabilitation of historic structures, the federal historic rehabilitation tax credit program, and manages 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.

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), CT’s State Arts Agency partner to and partially funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. DECD values the arts as a core asset of vibrant communities and views the arts as essential in attracting and retaining talent. The Arts provide quality-of-life experiences, but they are also a key component of economic vitality in the state. Connecticut communities are stronger and more resilient when artists and creative thinkers help to envision solutions to the types of challenges that face our state. To accomplish these goals, DECD invests in Connecticut artists, arts organizations and municipalities in order to support creative endeavors, promote enhanced health outcomes (through Social Prescriptions for the Arts), pilot community-focused housing via the Arts Activator program, and through the formation of a Cultural Accelerator, a first of a kind partnership with Yale Innovation Lab and Yale Ventures.

Improvements/Achievements for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 – 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 2024-2025**.

- The Connecticut Small Business Boost Fund gives small business owners access to flexible funding for capital expenditures and working capital and connects them with support services. It’s a personal, equitable approach to lending because business owners are more than just numbers on a spreadsheet. As of June 30, 2025, Boost assisted 619 businesses with over \$78 million in funding.
- Four companies signed JobsCT Tax Rebate Allocation Summaries, which in turn will result in the creation of 269 new jobs. The tax rebates will be disbursed over a seven-year period.
- Launched in January 2025, the Strategic Supply Chain Initiative provides grants ranging from \$500,000 to \$5 million to support CT’s supply chain companies that are increasing their production capacity to win new business, with an emphasis on onshoring out-of-state and international companies. DECD has

received over 200 inquiries, over 70 preliminary questionnaires to vet and over 20 applications thus far. The total amount of funding dedicated to this initiative is \$25 million.

- The Connecticut Office of Film, Television & Digital Media (OFTDM) focuses on digital media sector growth and production in Connecticut and capitalizes on the state's strength as a major media center for television, animation, digital content and sports-related programming. The OFTDM is a full-service office which serves as liaison between production companies, state agencies, municipalities, production facilities, local crew and vendors.
 - The Office assisted 182 production companies producing various content on stages and locations across the state.
 - \$136 million in Digital Media & Film Production tax credits were issued to 44 production company applicants with cumulative qualified Connecticut expenditures of \$447 million. \$26.5 million in Film Infrastructure credits were issued to one production company with cumulative qualified Connecticut expenditures of \$133 million.
- The Office of Manufacturing oversees various state and federal programs. In FY 2025, in conjunction with the DECD Federal Funds and Office of Business Development teams, OM administers the following federal grant programs:
 - \$2.6 million Department of Energy State Manufacturing Leadership Program – Connecticut’s Smart Manufacturing Assessment and Access to Reduce Technology Emissions (CT SMARTE) grant from the Department of Energy under their State Manufacturing Leadership Program. CT SMARTE will accelerate the deployment and adoption of smart manufacturing and High-Performance Computing (HPC) technologies for small and mid-sized manufacturers in disadvantaged areas through leveraging existing relationships with industry, academic, technology, and community partners to include CONNSTEP, Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology Inc. (CCAT), and Industrial Assessment Center at the University of Connecticut.
 - \$625,000 Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA)’s Regional Technology Innovation Hub Strategy Development Grant Program – The Connecticut Model-Based Enterprise Tech Hub (CT MBE Tech Hub) key technology focus area will be advanced manufacturing within the Connecticut-Rhode Island (CT-RI) region. The goal is to develop a tech hub utilizing Model-Based Definition (MBD) throughout the defense supply chain. In the Strategy Development phase, our project will take the lessons learned from defense supply chain MBD adoption to align regional resources, explore model adaptation, and develop a plan to scale MBD adoption in three key commercial manufacturing sectors: 1) aerospace, 2) medical devices, and 3) clean energy.
 - \$1.925 million Department of Defense Office of Local Defense Communities Collaboration Diversification Grant – The Scaling Model Based Definition (SMBD) Grant Program is the continuation of the Digital Model Initiative (DMI) pilot project. The DMI worked with a select group of defense manufacturing suppliers to explore the technical and workforce aspects of adopting Model-Based Definition (MBD). The SMBD will leverage the learnings and collateral created during the DMI program to develop additional tools required to scale digital transformation across the state to the full defense supply chain.
- The Office of the Clean Economy is responsible for economic development associated with the state’s renewable and clean energy goals. The office developed the Governor’s Strategic Offshore Wind Roadmap and created the Connecticut Wind Collaborative to support the offshore wind industry.

- The Office of Federal Funds was formalized last fiscal year. In conjunction with the Office of Manufacturing, the Office assisted with initial implementation work on two federal grants: a \$500,000 strategy development grant under Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA)'s Regional Technology & Innovation Hubs program focusing on Model-Based Definition in the commercial sector, and a \$2 million grant under the Department of Energy's Manufacturing Leadership program, focusing on improving energy efficiency for Connecticut's small- and medium-sized manufacturers.
- The Office of Federal Funds also supported the state's NSF QuantumCT phase 2 application. In May 2023, QuantumCT received a \$1 million award to develop a Regional Innovation Engine, which aimed to build an ecosystem in Connecticut focused on quantum technologies. In July 2025, NSF announced that QuantumCT had been selected as a semifinalist in its NSF Engines program. DECD's team supported the QuantumCT Round 2 proposal, which was submitted in June. The Office of Federal Funds also supported several UConn-led applications focused on Artificial Intelligence this past year.
- In addition, the Office continued developing relationships with federal agencies so that when additional funding is released, DECD will be ready to pursue those federal opportunities that are aligned with DECD's, and the state's, strategic goals.
- Finally, the Office supported, and continues to support, DECD in the federal administration transition and the cuts to federal programs and changes to specific programs' terms and conditions that accompanied the change in administration.
- The Office of Community Development administers capital and infrastructure projects funded under the Community Investment Fund 2030, Good to Great, Urban Act (UA) grant program, and Special Act grants.
 - The Community Investment Fund 2030 (CIF) fosters economic development in historically underserved communities across the state. CIF will provide a total of up to \$767 million over five years to eligible municipalities as well as not-for-profit organizations and community development corporations that operate within them. Grants are available for:
 - Capital improvement programs, such as brownfield remediation, affordable housing, infrastructure, clean energy development, and home or public facility rehabilitation
 - Planning projects to develop capital projects with activities such as community engagement, feasibility studies, needs assessments, environmental reports and architectural services.

The CIF Board of Directors, comprised of members of the executive and legislative branches, reviews applications and makes recommendations to the Governor and State Bond Commission. CIF launched its first application round in FY 2021-2022. CIF awarded grants for Round 5 and Round 6 during FY 2025 totaling \$148 million.

- Thirty Urban Act awards totaling \$13.536 million were approved in FY 2025 and added to the active project portfolio. A variety of projects are funded under these grant programs including, but not limited to educational facilities, health facilities, roads, sidewalks, utilities, theaters, and museums that further promote Connecticut's economy and enhance citizens' quality of life.

- The Small Town Economic Assistance Program funds economic development, community conservation, and quality-of-life capital projects for localities that are ineligible to receive Urban Act awards. In FY 2025, 5 STEAP grants were awarded to municipalities totaling \$2,257,794 in assistance.
- Between FY 2016 and FY 2025, the Office of Brownfield Remediation and Development (OBRD) invested approximately \$335 million in approximately 260 brownfield development projects in cities and towns across the state. This investment has impacted over 3,800 acres of brownfield properties in the state. Also, every dollar invested in this ten-year period has been able to leverage approximately \$12 of non-DECD funds. OBRD continues to be a dedicated single point of contact for brownfield remediation and development in the state, collaborating effectively with other state agencies, especially the CT Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection.
- In FY 2025, OBRD conducted two competitive funding rounds under the Brownfield Municipal Grant Program (C.G.S. Sec. 32-763) and the Targeted Brownfield Loan Program (C.G.S. Sec. 32-765). OBRD announced approximately \$20 million and \$18.8 million on December 4, 2024 (Round 20) and June 12, 2025 (Round 21), respectively, for grant funding to a total of 44 projects across 28 municipalities in the state. This assessment and cleanup funding will help remediate and redevelop brownfield sites so that they can be put back to productive use. Many of the remediation grant awards are for public-private partnerships that are also leveraging significant private investment in the state.
- **The Office of Statewide Marketing and Tourism (SMT)** executes integrated marketing campaigns using paid media (digital ads, out-of-home, content partnerships), organic digital content (email, social media, websites), public relations and earned media, and community and corporate relations.

Flagship Initiatives:

- Make It Here – Statewide brand campaign launched in 2023 used across tourism and greater economic development efforts
- State Logomark – A bold blue "C" with a sideways "T" serves as the official Connecticut brand mark, adopted by all state agencies
- CTvisit.com – Connecticut’s tourism website with 600+ original articles and curated travel experiences.
- CTMakeItHere.com – Launched in 2024 to market Connecticut as a place to live and work through real stories of
- Social Media:
 - @CTvisit (tourism-focused)
 - @LiveConnecticut (lifestyle-focused)

Performance (FY 2024):

- Budget: \$4.5 million (plus \$4 million in federal grants)
- Visitors to Connecticut: 68 million
- Economic impact of tourism: \$18.5 billion
- Website traffic: 9.4 million visits to CTvisit.com (Top 10 U.S. tourism site)
- Earned Media: Over 4.5 billion impressions through PR campaigns
- SHPO reviewed or provided guidance on nearly 3,000 projects throughout the state to avoid or reduce harmful impacts on our state’s most important historic resources.

- SHPO continues to improve and expand its online portal for Environmental Review requests. In addition to paperwork reduction, the digital submission system has greatly improved workflows and response times. To support the transition, SHPO provided multiple training opportunities for other state workers, professionals, municipalities, and the public to explain the Environmental Review process and its requirements.
- Twenty-five new projects were accepted into the State Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program (C.G.S. Section 10-416c) and \$31.7 million in tax credits were reserved for 26 projects. The estimated total project costs for the 26 projects is over \$136.5 million, which leverages the state's investment by an over 4:1 ratio.
- 135 Historic Homes Rehabilitation Tax Credit program vouchers were sold to Connecticut Light and Power DBA as Eversource Energy between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, for \$2,793,643.92 leveraging a \$9,312,146.40 investment in the state through local trades, materials, housing stock and quality of life. This direct assistance enhances stewardship of historic properties and pride in homeownership.
- As a testament to SHPO's strong belief in partnerships, last year SHPO awarded \$265,000 in Partners in Preservation grants.
- Historic Preservation is important to Connecticut's communities. In support of local initiatives, SHPO awarded \$463,500 to 13 communities for survey and planning projects, \$60,000 to municipalities in the Certified Local Government program, and \$1.009 million for 9 specific restoration, rehabilitation, and stabilization projects.
- To recognize the important places in our state's history, SHPO assisted with the listing of 7 new resources to the State Register of Historic Places. There were 17 National Register of Historic Places actions, including 1 Determination of Eligibility, 4 new historic districts, and 2 updates to existing nominations.
- SHPO continues to refine and add to the ConnCRIS (launched in 2024), the state's first geospatial system for cultural resources. The system now contains data on 104,903 above-ground resources and 9,591 archaeological resources.
- SHPO added two new sites to the Connecticut Freedom Trail, including sites in Vernon and East Granby. SHPO also updated and streamlined the CFT application and vetting process. The Connecticut Freedom Trail documents and designates sites that embody the struggle for freedom and human dignity and celebrates African American communities.
- In FY 2025, COA awarded 727 grants totaling \$43,081,142. These represent funds awarded to the Connecticut Arts Commission (COA), funds received from the National Endowment for the Arts, funds received from the state legislature through Direct Line funding and disbursed by COA staff, funds received from the interest on the CT Arts Endowment, and American Rescue Plan funding directly allocated from the state legislature and disbursed by COA staff to both arts and non-arts organizations.
- COA awarded 84 Artist Fellowship grants for a total of \$242,000 to recognize excellence in artistic work, as well as the work of emerging artists. An additional \$5,000 was awarded to two Mahaffey Fellows to support professional development activities for mid-career arts administrators.

- Arts education is a key component in COAs strategy to strengthen creative thinking in our young people. To support arts in education, COA awarded grants totaling \$192,000 to support teaching and learning for K-12 students and educators in, about, and through the arts with a focus on social-emotional learning, developing culturally responsive curriculum and practices, and closing the opportunity gap for Connecticut students. In addition, COA increased funding for the second year of the Every Child Art Experience, awarding 27 schools \$2,500 awards for arts-based field trips for a total of \$67,500.
- COA supports a range of institutions, artists, and activities using the lenses of Relevance, Equity, Access, Diversity, and Inclusion (READI) to guide programmatic and investment decisions. In addition to the ongoing development of the READI Advisory Council, COA concluded the third year of the three-year Empower program to strengthen community-focused arts organizations, and began the first cohort of the redesigned Evolve to Empower program focusing on business training and coaching over 18 months for 12 new arts ventures.
- On top of Arts-related state and federal responsibilities, COA worked with 80 recipients of legislatively designated Line Item Funding for a total of \$14,206,887, as well as 88 legislatively directed recipients of American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funding managing a total of \$25,742,303.
- COA began two new initiatives aimed at creating long-term solutions to issues that confront the state and the nation. Launched in February 2025, COA is partnering with Art Pharmacy to develop a Social Prescription program in CT. Known as the “Prescriptions for Arts” this research-based program will reduce the loneliness and mental health crisis in the state by allowing prescriber partners to prescribe arts experiences such as dance classes, writing workshops, poetry events, concerts and theater to people who are experiencing the debilitating effects of loneliness. In addition, COA launched the initial phase of a partnership between DECD, Yale Ventures and MOC Innovations to create the DECD Cultural Accelerator, administered by the Cultural Innovation Lab at Yale. This is a groundbreaking initiative designed to build the economic infrastructure needed to support cultural producers, creative entrepreneurs and nonprofit institutions.
- COA developed and presented “CreativeU”, a two-day event on October 11-12th in partnership with the City of New Haven and Southern Connecticut State University providing key learning tracks for Arts Entrepreneurship, Creative Workforce and Multi-hyphenate artists.
- COA planned and administered the National Poetry Out Loud/Poetry Ourselves program as a partner with the National Endowment for the Arts with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.
- Weekly spotlights continue through CT Creative futures, a partnership with FOX61 CT, the CT Department of Education, and the Governor’s Prevention Partnership. These spotlights highlight career pathways in the creative industry and provide engagement opportunities for parents and students. Metrics are collected to measure the impact of this program on communities.