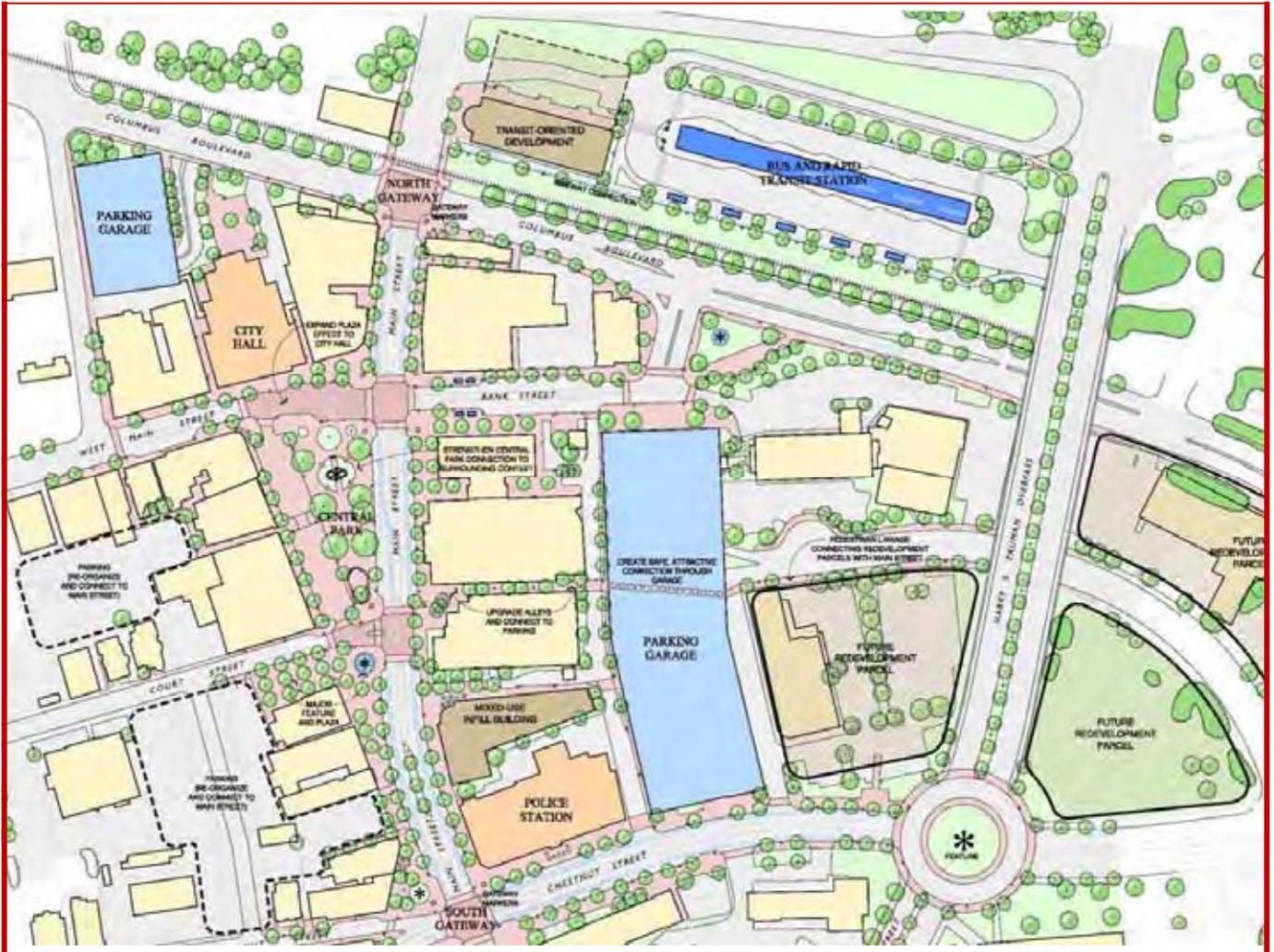




City of New Britain | Department of Public Works

# Application for Transit-Oriented Development Pilot Program



PREPARED BY:

Mark E. Moriarty, PE  
Director of Public Works  
City of New Britain  
Department of Public Works  
27 West Main Street  
New Britain, CT

DATE PREPARED:

August 4, 2010





OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

TIMOTHY T. STEWART  
MAYOR

27 WEST MAIN STREET  
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August 4, 2011

Mr. Daniel Morley  
Office of Policy and Management  
450 Capitol Avenue MS 54ORG,  
Hartford, CT 06106-1379

Dear Mr. Morley,

The purpose of this letter is to confirm support for our grant application for the Transit-Oriented Development Pilot Program. The project the City submitted for consideration involves the construction of streetscape improvements that were initially identified in our 2008 Downtown Development Plan which was prepared to help the City capitalize on the transit oriented development opportunities that would arise from New Britain-Hartford Busway project.

The streetscape enhancements proposed in our project will dramatically improve the way the downtown looks and functions by implementing a "Complete Streets" strategy which among other things will provide for better pedestrian linkages between the downtown and the Busway.

The City has made a great commitment to implementing the strategies identified in our 2008 Downtown Development Plan, and right now the City is constructing a new locally funded \$35 million state-of-the-art Police Station in the center of our downtown. We are making every effort possible to help create an environment that is best suited for transit oriented development.

We urge your support on our application, and look forward to a favorable response.

Sincerely,

Timothy T. Stewart  
Mayor, City of New Britain

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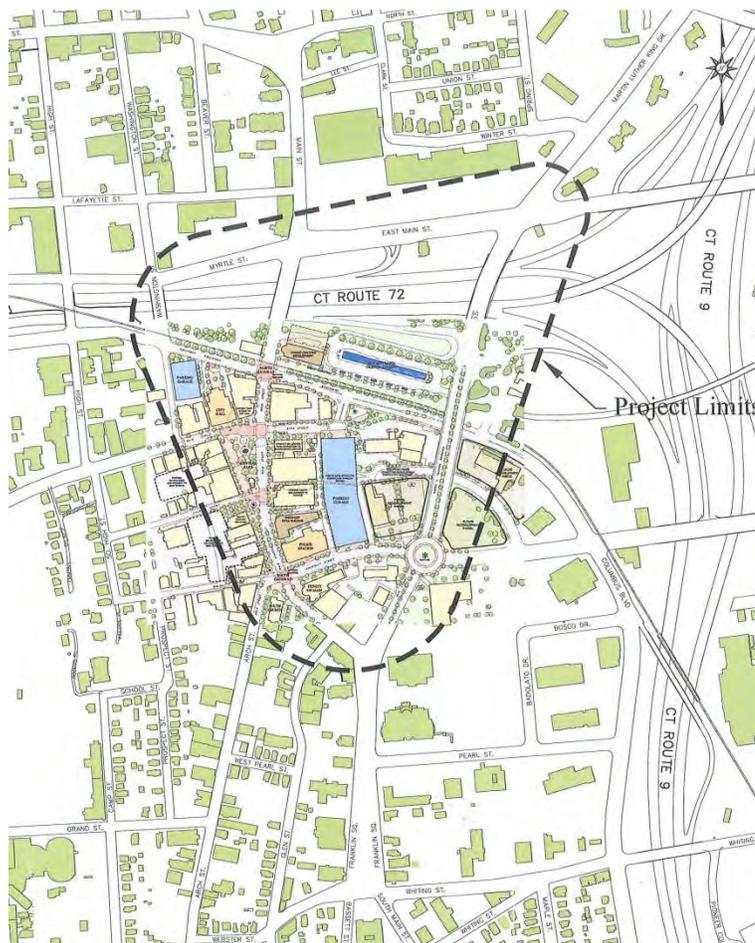
## ATTACHMENTS

- Draft Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency MOU
- Draft Resolution for Grant Application and MOU
- Letter of Support from State Representative Tim O'Brien



## PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2008 New Britain completed a Downtown Development Plan that outlines several steps needed to be undertaken to help revitalize the City's Downtown area. Much of the impetus for the City's developing the *2008 Downtown Development Plan* work was the anticipation that Downtown New Britain would serve as a terminus for the upcoming \$572 million New Britain-Hartford Busway project, and the historical data that indicates that the area encompassed by a half-mile radius around a new public transportation station provides an optimal opportunity for Transit Oriented Development (TOD). The *2008 Downtown Development Plan* has served as the City's road map to prepare for the coming of the Busway to help ensure that an environment is created that will best support TOD, and thus, help us revitalize New Britain's Downtown.



The City has already taken several of these steps, and the project discussed in this grant application will implement a "Complete Streets" strategy in Downtown New Britain that will enhance the critical pedestrian linkages between the New Britain-Hartford Busway and the Downtown. In addition, the function and balance of the Downtown road network will be improved for all users, not just cars. This would be done through a combination of work including constructing decorative streetscape enhancements, narrowing pavement width, improving pedestrian access, providing bicycle lanes, and improving parking access.

The construction of the Busway is currently scheduled to begin in August 2011 so this is the time to construct

these improvements which will not only serve to benefit Downtown New Britain, but will also greatly support the overall success of the New Britain-Hartford Busway project by creating an environment in New Britain that best promotes bus ridership.

To help implement the construction of our "Complete Streets" planning and design work, the City needs to acquire funding for construction activities.



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## CURRENT CONDITIONS IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA

New Britain is located near the geographical center of the State of Connecticut which provides easy access to nearly anywhere in the State. There is direct and convenient access from the Downtown to I-84, Route 72, Route 9 and the entryway of the New Britain-Hartford Busway. The 2000 U.S. Census Bureau data indicated that New Britain has a median household income nearly \$20,000 per household less than the Connecticut State average, and 16.4% of its' population live below poverty level.



Despite these current conditions in the Downtown area, there is a strong foundation of mixed-use development and a good blend of commercial, public/institutional, residential, educational, and cultural development. Some of the large public institutions in the Downtown include City Hall, Central Connecticut State University's Institute of Technology and Business Development (ITBD) Campus, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DPUC Office), and the New Britain Courthouse. Downtown New Britain also has its share of unique and historical public spaces including the recently renovated New Britain Museum of American Art and the Frederick Law Olmstead-designed Walnut Hill Park, where the City just completed a \$2 million renovation project this past spring.



Parking in the Downtown consists of several surface lots, two large parking garages, and on-street parking. Currently, there are sufficient parking options to support the downtown area; however, there is a perception that there is a lack of parking in the downtown area which would be addressed through the project for which the City is seeking TOD Grant Funding.



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The existing downtown streetscape has good potential for enhancement. However, it is substandard in its current state with excessively wide pavement widths and an overall lack of cohesiveness. The streetscape generally reflects an old, worn and tired urban environment.

The City completed the *2008 Downtown Development Plan* to help recognize and then capitalize on the transit oriented development that we anticipated would occur related to the New Britain-Hartford Busway project. The City revised the zoning ordinances for the Commercial Business District (CBD) zone that encompasses the entire Downtown area. The changes to the CBD Zone were made primarily to allow this zone to easily accommodate higher density residential uses that are an essential component in creating a highly livable downtown and supporting transit oriented development.

Following recommendations from the *2008 Downtown Development Plan*, the City has recently self-funded \$35 million for the design and construction of a new 87,000 SF state-of-art Police Station through a municipal bond. The new Police Station is being constructed in the heart of the downtown, on the northeast corner of Chestnut Street and Main Street, and will be completed by December 2012. In part, the new Police Station was placed downtown to address concerns that New Britain's downtown area is an unsafe environment.



The proactive steps that the City has been taking to help revitalize the downtown area appear to be working, and within the past five years New Britain has experienced a steady increase in private dollars being invested in the Downtown area. These improvements have ranged from complete building renovation projects to a series of façade improvements, and overall, the look of Downtown New Britain is steadily improving. In consulting Downtown New Britain developers, much of their private investment is directly related to their anticipation of a positive impact on the Downtown area from the New Britain-Hartford Busway project, and the recognition that any properties redeveloped now can be purchased inexpensively with a potential for increased market value when the Busway is operational.

It is expected that this activity will continue and will yield a much greater return for public money spent on implementing a "Complete Street" strategy that will provide an improved, safer link from the Busway to the downtown area for vehicles and pedestrians. In addition, the implementation of the streetscape improvements will link two parking garages located in the downtown and support the transition to the mass transit link provided by the new Busway, as well as stimulate retail and residential developments. Improved access to the transit station will increase employment and residential opportunities for City residents.



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## VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Representatives from the City of New Britain participated in the long-running New Britain-Hartford Busway study and design process and ancillary studies, beginning with the Hartford West Major Investment Study (MIS) over ten years ago. Most relevant to our current streetscape project efforts is the work for the station area planning studies and TOD guidelines completed for the Central Connecticut Regional Council of Governments (CCROG) by the planning and urban design firm of Crosby, Schlessinger and Smallridge, in July 2004. Relative to streetscape around the Busway stations and especially in the downtown core, these studies emphasized the critical importance of “creating an attractive, safe and inviting pedestrian environment...” as well as using public space, streetscape design and public improvements to link and integrate the transit station into the surrounding commercial space. Among the most important considerations stressed was the need to have these improvements be of a high quality, human scale and planned in a comprehensive manner so as to have a unifying and integrating effect for the various components of the downtown.



Similar principles are espoused in the various plans and policies of CCRPA, including the agency's endorsement of the Busway project and support for downtown streetscape project improvements to encourage revitalization and enhance economic viability in the region's traditional downtown centers in the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development, the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, and the agency's various transit and transportation plans.



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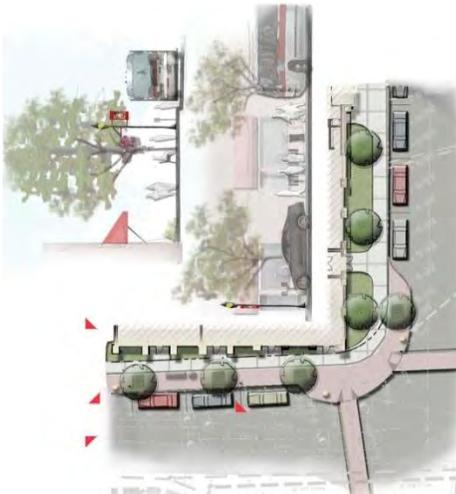
At the municipal level, the City of New Britain has completed several major planning efforts in recent years, all of which advocate strongly for the implementation of a high-quality streetscape improvement plan to improve the appearance, functionality and economic vitality of the Central Business District.

The first was the *2004 Economic Redevelopment and Feasibility Study* for the Route 9 and 72 Corridors, which noted the need to improve the visual appearance of the downtown to create an impression that New Britain is a good place to visit and do business.



Next and perhaps most relevant was the *2008 Downtown Development Project Plan* which led to a substantial re-zoning of the downtown to incorporate "smart growth" principles targeting the creation of a more walkable, pedestrian-oriented downtown, encouraging intensive residential and mixed-use development, good urban design and integration of all elements of the entire urban core, to include linkages among all portions of the downtown and the creation of a vibrant urban environment.

Implementation of some main elements of this plan is now underway, with the re-zoning completed and the municipal police headquarters now under construction at the intersection of Main and Chestnut Streets. As a logical follow-up to the work done under the Downtown Plan, the City Plan Commission adopted a city-wide *Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) 2010-2020*, which essentially incorporates all elements of the *2008 Downtown Plan* as a basis for future planning and development in the Downtown area.



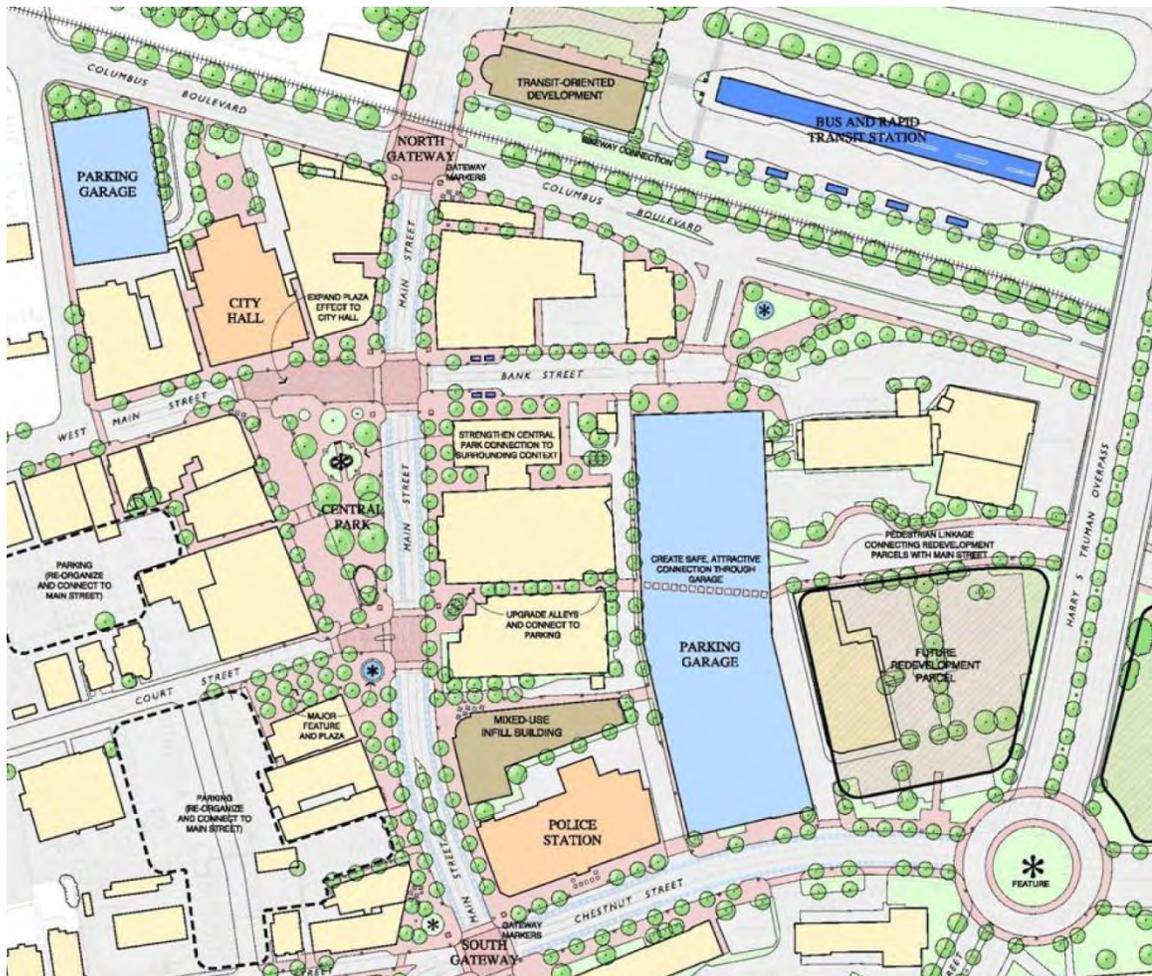
An off-shoot of the POCD is an Incentive Housing Zone (IHZ) planning study, recently endorsed and forwarded for approval by OPM. This planning document also focuses on principles of smart growth and transit-supportive development on the Downtown Busway terminal and the two other Busway station locations in the City, emphasizing mixed-use, residential use, more intensive development and public improvements to encourage walking and enhance the public space and pedestrian environment.

Finally, the City has recently adopted a *Historic Preservation Action Plan*. This plan focuses on preservation efforts in the Downtown area as a means of improving the community's self-image, preserving the area's historical character, and restoring and re-creating a healthy, attractive, vibrant and desirable Downtown environment. A major component of this plan is the recommendation for public improvements and streetscape projects which complement the historic character of the Central Business District and improve the walkability and ambience of the downtown.



## DETAILED PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

The Project involves the construction of a section of the improvements identified in our *Downtown Streetscape Master Plan for the City of New Britain*. This Streetscape Master Plan utilizes a "Complete Streets" strategy. **The request for funding is for \$1 million, which would be used to construct decorative streetscape enhancements, narrowing pavement widths, improving pedestrian access, provide bicycle lanes, and improving parking access.** The area to be included in this phase of the project is identified on the Site Plan, provided on Page 1 (Project Overview) of this application. In order to fully fund the project, it is anticipated that this funding will be supplemented with both City funds and other funding sources.



The City received funding for the planning and design costs associated with the *Downtown Streetscape Master Plan* from a \$212,500 Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, which required an equal match from the City. This grant, which will support the Knowledge Corridor for Sustainable Development, will continue the City's efforts to link the Downtown to the Busway. The Knowledge Corridor is a concept that has evolved over the last 10 years through the work of the Municipal Planning Organizations and the partner agencies of the Hartford-Springfield Economic Partnership.

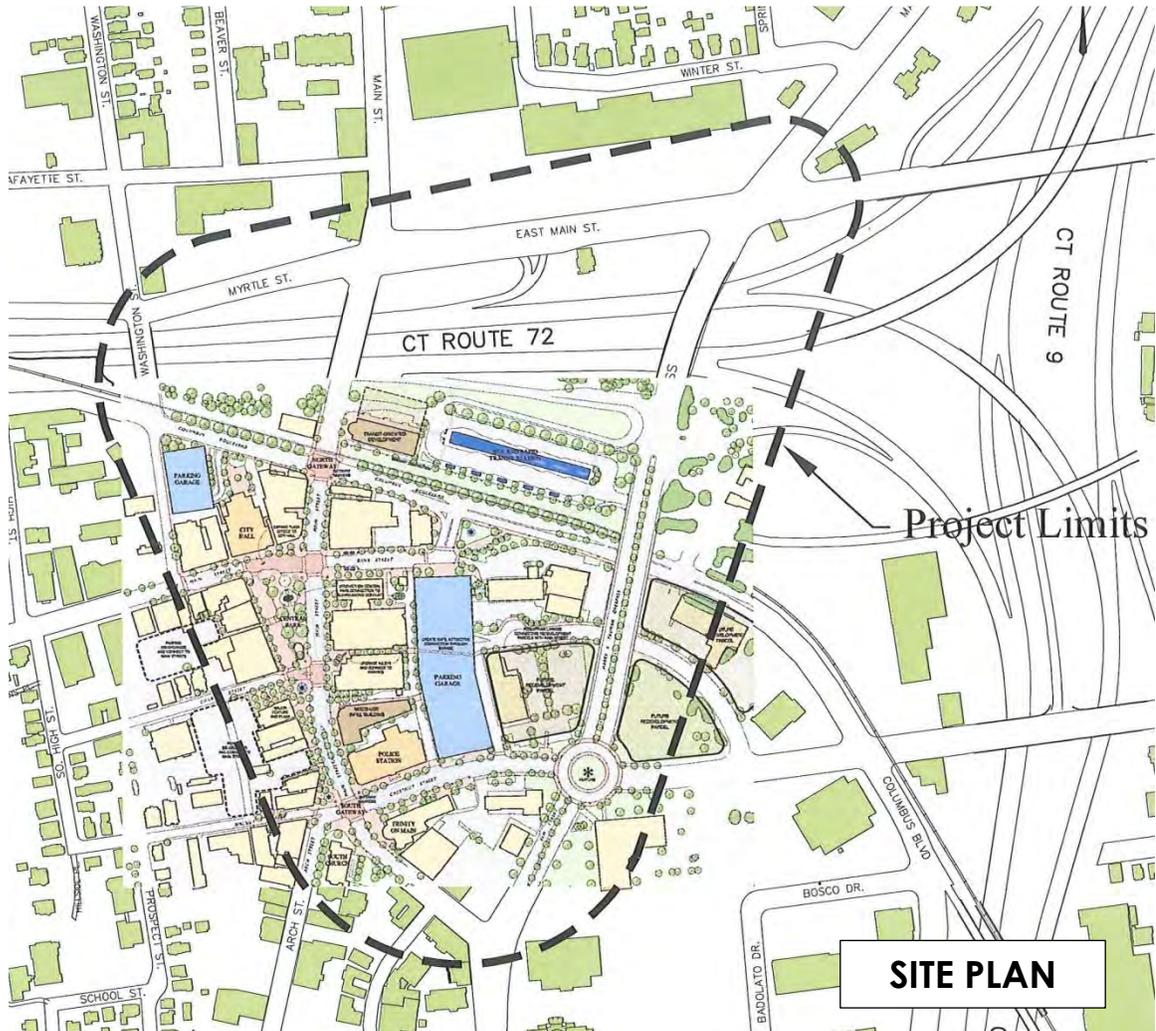


# "A Fresh Vision for Historic New Britain"



## GRANT IMPLEMENTATION

The planning and design of the "Complete Streets" for Downtown New Britain is currently underway. As shown on the Site Plan below, the Initial Project area includes the downtown area, located immediately south of the new Busway Station, and extends over Route 72 to connect the East Main Street area, located immediately north of the Station, to the downtown.



It is expected that the design of this phase of the Streetscape Improvements will be completed and ready to be advertised for construction in Summer 2012. Construction is expected to be completed in late 2013, and will complement the construction schedule for the New Britain-Hartford Busway Project.

The City of New Britain can meet all of the reporting and contractual requirements of this funding. The City has a demonstrated history of successful coordination, administration and completion of Federal and State funded projects.



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## TRANSIT/RIDERSHIP REPORT

Project Support for Growth Principles 1-3 of Conservation & Development Policies Plan for Connecticut:

### **PRINCIPLE 1:**

*Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure*

The proposed project incorporates improvements to the existing urban infrastructure, and linkages to a new transit corridor. The proposed improvements support Downtown residential, commercial, and mixed-use redevelopment in an older, urban environment. As specifically stated in this Growth Principle for Main Street Development, the *“revitalization strategy must take advantage of existing Main Street assets and build on historic architecture, a traditional town center sense of place, pedestrian-friendly safe walking environment and the opportunity for unique business development in order to provide an alternative to ‘big-box’ and mall shopping.”*

### **PRINCIPLE 2:**

*Expand Housing Opportunities & Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs*

Downtown New Britain has a variety of single family, multi-family, mixed use, and commercial/residential housing units. This project will support providing improved access to transit facilities for increased opportunities for shopping, employment and recreational activities.

### **PRINCIPLE 3:**

*Concentrate Development Around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options*

The City of New Britain is located in the center of the State, and has easy and direct access to major Interstate and State Highways. With the construction of the Busway Station in the center of the Downtown, an alternative transportation mode for easy access to employment, retail and recreational facilities will be available. This expansion of the regional transportation network allows for increased mobility to and from the area, without additional vehicles on the local or State roadways.



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## CRITICAL STEPS

The City of New Britain has been successful in applying for and obtaining funds to study, plan and design its' vision for the Downtown area. As described in this application, revitalization efforts are continuing in the area, with both private and public dollars being invested. The construction of the highly-anticipated New Britain-Hartford Busway will foster additional opportunities for Transit-Oriented Development, as well as improve employment opportunities for residents in the region.



Obtaining funding to construct the improvements throughout the downtown area, through the approval of this grant application, is a critical step that will further enhance the City's vision for the future. In addition, the funding requested in this application will provide much-needed opportunities for supplemental municipal funding through the issuance of municipal bonding. Efforts to realize the City's vision for the future improvement of Downtown New Britain are on-going.



## INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT

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### NEW BRITAIN TOD PILOT GRANT PROJECT

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This INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT is made and entered into by and between the City of New Britain (hereinafter the "City"), acting herein by Name, its Mayor, Timothy T. Stewart, and the CENTRAL CONNECTICUT REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY (hereinafter "CCRPA"), acting hereby by Carl J. Stephani, its Executive Director.

#### WITNESSETH:

Whereas, the State of Connecticut, through its Office of Policy and Management (hereinafter "OPM"), has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a TOD Grant Pilot Program; and

Whereas, the New Britain City Council has authorized its Mayor to apply for a TOD Pilot Project Grant and agreed to this Memorandum of Understanding with the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency concerning the application; and

Whereas, the City and the CCRPA both endorse the New Britain Downtown Complete Streets PILOT TOD Grant Project to provide funding to enhance New Britain's ability to create a more livable and walkable community to support the transit oriented development that will be encouraged in conjunction with the Busway Project to result in the significant enhancement of the downtown area's existing Transit Oriented Developments (TODs), and

Whereas, the City seeks the participation of the CCRPA in the PILOT Grant project particularly to assist in coordination of the project with evolving rail improvements and TOD plans for the broader regional corridor; and

Whereas, if awarded the grant, the City will pay CCRPA a fee of \$2,500 to assist in coordination of the project with evolving rail improvements and TOD plans for the corridor,

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises and benefits to the parties hereto, the City and CCRPA hereby agree as follows:

#### SECTION 1. CCRPA SERVICES

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The CCRPA, shall assist the City in coordination of the project with evolving rail improvements and TOD plans for the corridor for a fee of \$2,500.

#### SECTION 2. COMPENSATION

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The cost of services to the City shall not exceed \$2,500, invoiced to the City by the CCRPA on a periodic basis at an hourly basis at the rate of \$65 per hour plus expenses (i.e. printing, travel reimbursement, etc.), which will be billed at cost.

SECTION 3. OTHER

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The conditions noted above may be amended in whole or in part by written, mutual agreement of the parties or their authorized representatives. The terms and conditions set forth herein constitute the entire agreement between the parties and supersede all previous communications, representations, or agreements, either written or oral, between the CCRPA and the City.

The CCRPA and/or the City may terminate this agreement at any time by a thirty (30) day written notice. In the event of early termination, all finished and unfinished, documents related to the services provided shall, at the option of the City, become property of the City, and the services charged by CCRPA will be paid on the basis of the hours and direct expenses they have charged against the project.

The parties agree that all activities conducted under this agreement will be in full compliance with all State of Connecticut and Federal laws.

Approved:

City of New Britain

Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency

\_\_\_\_\_  
Timothy T. Stewart, Mayor                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Carl J. Stephani, Executive Director                      Date

# RESOLUTION

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Item #

RE:

**To His Honor, the Mayor, and the Common Council of the City of New Britain:**  
the undersigned beg leave to recommend the adoption of the following:

WHEREAS, this resolution authorizes the submission of the Application for a Grant for the construction of Streetscape Improvements in accordance with the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Pilot Program Request for Applications; and

WHEREAS, it authorizes the City of New Britain to enter into and, if necessary, to amend a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency, or any successor organization, which incorporates the requirements outlined in the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Pilot Program Request for Applications, as well as identifies any other specific responsibilities that the City chooses to delegate to the Regional Planning Organization in administering the grant, if awarded, as agreed to by the parties; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Timothy T. Stewart, Mayor, or his successor, be authorized to sign the grant application, to negotiate the terms and conditions of the MOU, to sign the MOU on behalf of the City of New Britain, and to sign any other documents associated with administering the grant, if awarded, including any amendments thereto.

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Alderman David DeFronzo

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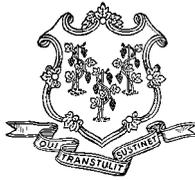
Alderwoman Tonilynn Collins

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Alderman Wilfredo Pabon

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Alderman Louis Salvio



State of Connecticut  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

**REPRESENTATIVE TIM O'BRIEN**  
TWENTY FOURTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
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HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591

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**ASSISTANT MAJORITY LEADER**

**CHAIRMAN**  
REGULATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

**MEMBER**  
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE  
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION ELECTIONS  
COMMITTEE  
BANKS COMMITTEE

July 29, 2011

Mr. Daniel Morley  
Office of Policy and Management  
450 Capitol Avenue MS 54ORG,  
Hartford, CT 06106-1379

Dear Mr. Morley,

The Hartford-New Britain Busway project has been a high priority for me the state legislator from New Britain, and as you know, the Governor has made this important project a high priority for transit and economic development in our State. Among the many gains to our state of the Busway is the opportunity for transit-oriented development along this new transit line. I am very excited about the state's Transit-Oriented Development Pilot Program, and **I am writing to you in support of the City of New Britain's \$1M grant application under this program.**

Even given how well-suited the Hartford-New Britain Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line, in general, is for transit-oriented development, the city of New Britain is, in particular, is especially and uniquely well-suited and well-prepared for transit-oriented-development. In fact, all of the New Britain BRT stations offers excellent transit-oriented-development opportunities that are different and unique from each other, and the Downtown New Britain station, offers especially good opportunities.

The City is currently working on a comprehensive Streetscape Master Plan that utilizes a "Complete Streets" approach to the downtown area. The intent is to make New Britain's downtown the type of livable and walkable community that best supports the type of transit oriented development we expect will occur as a result of the Busway Project.

New Britain would devote funding it received from the Transit-Oriented Development Pilot Program to help fund construction activities identified in the Streetscape Master Plan. The City has a proven record of being able to spend grant funding wisely and maintain project schedules. **I believe the City of New Britain's application is especially strong because the grant money**

**would be used for actual bricks and mortar construction, and it would therefore maximize the amount of jobs created.**

Overall the improvements proposed would significantly improve the link between the New Britain-Hartford Busway Station and downtown New Britain. This project will further support investment and job growth in the Downtown area as a mixed-use urban environment, and it will serve as an excellent showcase for what is possible for the future of our state using transit-oriented-development techniques.

Thank you for your consideration, and look forward to a favorable review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim O'Brien". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

Tim O'Brien  
State Representative