

## **Economic and Community Development Efforts**

One of the primary roles of economic and community development director (EDD) is to assess the City's needs, and determine how to best match needs with available resources. It is also the role of the EDD to attract new investment, create a portfolio available properties as investment opportunities and to translate and market the community's attributes into the language of development, provide material and information that allows for public and private investment to be made, develop a financial program of incentives to attract development, build a catalog of available sites and match potential buyers with sellers, meet regularly with building officials and to keep developers informed of relevant regulatory processes.

## **Implementation of Strategic Initiatives:**

- Coordinate and support planned development of historic properties
- Coordinate and support planned development of greenway
- Coordinate with Redevelopment Agency and support planned redevelopment of the downtown area
- Assist in the planning and construction of industrial parks and creating new development opportunities
- Help implement a residential redevelopment plan for downtown
- Assist businesses and private developers in on obtaining funds for development including the remediation of brownfields

## **Commercial Growth and Retention:**

- Act as primary contact for businesses seeking information regarding opportunities to locate or expand operations in Derby including providing tours of potential sites and any other information or assistance as needed.
- Work with state and federal agencies to produce a guide for prospective businesses, which includes the permit application process, basic zoning overview, economic incentives, other important information, and FAQs
- Develop a listing of prospect businesses (both local and national) in targeted industries,
- Maintain an inventory of available real estate parcels (including raw land) and actively promote and market to list of prospects

- Create and manage economic incentive programs to provide strategic growth and retention of business
- Assist with the creation of marketing materials (including advertisements, editorial copy, and press releases) to promote the City of Derby
- Manage exhibits at major events.
- Create and maintain a highly professional website
- Leverage existing relationships with Regional organizations such as the Valley Regional Alliance, the Lower Naugatuck Valley CEDS

### **Grant Administration:**

- Maintain a listing of state and federal grant opportunities for economic development initiatives
- Lobby state and federal legislators and agencies on behalf of the Town of Derby for earmarks for key projects and to support grant applications
- Provide expertise and leadership in the grant application process Coordinate efforts with City Departments
- Coordinate efforts to implement and administer grants if awarded, working with all applicable government agencies
- Ensure compliance and coordinate efforts with grant managers

### **History of Grant making in Derby**

Derby historically, with the exception of Police, Fire and Education has not applied competitively for grants in recent years. Most of the City of Derby's funding has been through earmarked appropriations, formula based grants and state bond funds. The City of Derby never had a formal grant's office, nor any one individual specifically devoted to securing funding. Derby has relied on discretionary funding to help meet its needs.

Recently, non-competitive or discretionary money (money given by the state and federal delegations without the City applying for it in a formal way) has been much more difficult to secure. In an effort to do away with "pork-barrel" grants, the federal government has tightened up its process. Consequently, for a City the size of Derby, it will be much more difficult to get discretionary funding as a lone applicant,

i.e., Derby has more of an opportunity asking for funding on a regional level or in collaboration with other lower valley towns and cities. Additionally, the federal government has done more in the way of trying to make non-competitive grants, competitive. Forms now need to be filled out and submitted (in the past a letter would suffice). On the State side of things, what has always been a formula based grant to the City of Derby, the Small Cities Block Grant, is now competitive. It will require Derby to compete with like-sized municipalities rather than rely on the traditional lump sum (anywhere from \$400,000 to \$750,000).

Part of the role of Grants Administrator is to oversee projects for funding that has been acquired. Additionally, there have been errors made in years past that require working with various state and federal agencies to ensure that the City of Derby is correctly administering funding to avoid disruption of future grant opportunities.