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In Re:
State Economic Strategy Plan Information Forum

DATE: JANUARY 22, 2008
HELD AT: UConn's STAMFORD
1 UNIVERSITY PLAZA
STAMFORD, CT

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Reporter: Samantha M. Howell, LSR #00462

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IN ATTENDANCE:

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Commi ssi oner Joan McDonal d
Stan McMi llen
Dr. Floyd Lapp
Ken Del Vecchi o
Ti m Cal nen
Franci s Kni ze
Tom Bapti st
John O' Tool e
Mi ke Frei muth
Jenni fer Herri ng
Chri s Bruhl
Donal d Frost
Vi n Tufo
Li z Rosenbaum
Shei la Willi ams
Joe Ri cci o
Denni s Li nden

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1 (Forum commenced at 5:07p.m.)

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3 MS. MCDONALD: Good evening, everybody. It
4 is a little bit after five, and we're going to kick off

5 this evening's public forum, the Department of Economic
6 and Community Development Strategic economic plan
7 framework. This is our ninth public forum; we've been in
8 eight other towns in the State up until now. Stan's going
9 to give you some more specific information.

10 I should introduce myself; I'm Commissioner Joan
11 McDonald of the Department of Economic Development, and
12 there was an act in the legislature last year that requires
13 my department to develop a strategic plan, and it also
14 requires public input. And we sat around over the summer
15 and decided that we wanted to hear from the public early
16 and often, so rather than bring a plan to you, we came up
17 with these series of public forums throughout the State.
18 The first one was in November in Torrington, and as I was
19 saying to Chris Bruhl when I came in, we've heard major
20 issues and micro issues around the State.

21 The issues that have risen to the top are workforce
22 training, housing and transportation. And then each part
23 of the State has its own localized issues that are
24 important as much as the macro issues. In Torrington we
25 heard about preservation of farmland, in Groton we heard

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1 about the preservation of tourism and expansion of tourism.
2 In Waterbury we heard about the -- focus was on
3 Brownfield's redevelopment.

4 So we're very anxious to hear about what both the
5 macro issues are for those of you in Stamford and Lower
6 Fairfield County, and also what you view as local issues.
7 So I'm going to turn it over to Stan, who's going to go

8 through about a little bit of our process, and then, like I
9 said, this is to hear from you. It's the start of our
10 public involvement. We are going to take the information
11 that we gather, and develop it into a plan, and we will be
12 back to you, and we'll have several focus groups to hear
13 about what people think about these initiatives. So with
14 that, I'm going to turn it over to Stan.

15 MR. MCMILLEN: Thank you, Commissioner.
16 I'm Stan McMillen; I'm the chief of commerce for the
17 economic community development. The strategic plan was
18 mandated by Public Act Code seven, dash, two three nine,
19 which was passed last July. It's required that the
20 strategic plan be presented to the governor and the
21 legislature by July 1, '09, and I'll tell you a little bit
22 more about that.

23 The purpose of the forums is to gather public input.
24 We need to build a vision for a different Connecticut. In
25 order to construct a strategic plan, we need to know where

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1 we're going. I'm going to say a little bit about the
2 comment process, and we'll have a presentation by the South
3 West Regional Planning Authority, and if Bridgeport is here
4 we'll have them present their CEDS.

5 These are very valuable and insightful documents and,
6 as very valuable and useful work, we need to recognize and
7 appreciate that work and incorporate that into our plan.
8 As I said, section four of Public Act Code seven, dash, two
9 three nine for responsible growth requires us to produce a
10 strategic economic plan for the State, and revisit it every

11 five years thereafter. It's a dynamic plan; it's not going
12 to sit on the shelf, it's going to be updated and revised.

13 We have to host regional forums. This is the tip of
14 the iceberg as far as public outreach is concerned. Once
15 we bring a team of consultants onboard with us, we'll be
16 conducting focus groups and general public surveys. The
17 plan is going to serve as a roadmap for the next five, ten,
18 fifteen and twenty years down the road. We need to
19 establish clear and measurable goals as we create this
20 plan. As we go along, we have to be able to assess not
21 only where we are, but how far along we are towards our
22 goals.

23 The purpose of these forums is to gather public input,
24 to specify issues and concerns, and to identify strategies
25 to move Connecticut's economy forward. We encourage you to

6

1 think big, think outside the box. Imagine if you were king
2 or queen for a day, if you could control the universe, what
3 would Connecticut look like in five, ten, fifteen, twenty
4 years down the road? That's what we need to do to build a
5 vision.

6 The factors that affect us today and in the future,
7 and in which we would like to compartmentalize our
8 thinking, are along the lines of competitiveness, the cost
9 of doing business, which includes the regulatory
10 environment, energy cost, housing, transportation,
11 workforce and responsible growth and development. I think
12 of building a strategic plan as this is sort of a
13 conceptual framework. We need to understand where we are

14 and how we got here, and that requires a lot of data and
15 analysis. A lot of that work has already been done.

16 This process that we're engaging in today is to build
17 a vision for Connecticut's future as best as we can
18 articulate it. Once we know where we want to go, we then
19 build the strategies, and the tactics, and the roadmaps to
20 how to get from where we are to where we want to go. And
21 along the way we need to build metrics that can measure our
22 progress, because this governor and the next governor is
23 going to wonder how we're doing, and we need to be able to
24 articulate exactly how we're doing and where we want to be.

25 Our forum is transcribed by a transcription service

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1 sitting over here, so please come to the microphone sitting
2 here and announce your name and provide your testimony. As
3 I said, the South West Regional Authority will speak for
4 five minutes and present their comprehensive economic
5 development strategy. Speakers are limited to three
6 minutes, including elected officials, if any. Be specific
7 as to the time frame you're referring, whether it's a
8 short-term, long-term type of vision that you have, and
9 think big, as I said, focus on the future.

10 This e-mail address is an alias for me so, please, if
11 you feel inspired outside of this, in the middle of the
12 night and you can't sleep, get up and send an e-mail to
13 this address and it will be incorporated as part of our
14 transcript. At this time, I'd like to call Dr. Floyd Lapp
15 to present the comprehensive economic development strategy
16 for the South West Regional Planning.

17 DR. LAPP: Thank you, Stan. Good evening,
18 Commissioner. Actually, our comprehensive economic
19 development plan is a coming attraction. It started
20 recently with the greater Bridgeport under the banner of
21 Congress Member Shays, One Coast One Future, which takes a
22 look at the linkage and relationship between South West
23 and greater Bridgeport, and our cases even further into
24 Westchester County. The good news is that based on the
25 timeline our work should be completed by this fall, so

8

1 that we'll be able to make it available to you, and you
2 can do with it as you wish. Hopefully, some of it will be
3 incorporated into your work coming out next year.

4 And for those who might not be familiar with the CEDS,
5 just to give you some of the highlights, it's a fourteen
6 municipality region in the South Western and the greater
7 Bridgeport. There will be a demographic analysis; what age
8 groups are we gaining? What age groups are we losing?
9 And, very seriously, many of us know this already that
10 we're losing young people in this region. Housing is
11 another component.

12 And the quest for affordable housing creates all sorts
13 of dilemmas; one that we learned, in our own housing
14 analysis, was excessive journey to work trips. People
15 cannot find housing in the regions, so they tend to look
16 further out beyond the gulf coast that host so many of the
17 jobs. Labor force observations will be included in the
18 CEDS' business profile, real estate overview, industry
19 trends and, finally, recommendations.

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20 So we've only just begun, as the song goes. We look
21 forward to working with One Coast One Future with our
22 friends in greater Bridgeport and Westchester County, as
23 well, and if anybody has any questions or comments, please
24 fire away. And, Stan, I will forward to you, on behalf of
25 my colleagues, the outline that we're using so you will

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1 have a pretty good sense of what it includes by month by
2 season. Okay. Thank you.

3 MR. MCMILLEN: Is James Wine (phonetic)
4 here? Bridgeport didn't present their CEDS at the last
5 meeting, so I invited them to present here. Mr. Wine may
6 show up later. At this time, I'd like to call Ken
7 Del Vecchio.

8 MR. DELVECCHIO: Good evening. My name is
9 Ken Del Vecchio, and I'm the president of Connecticut's
10 Association of Realtors. As a trade association with
11 nineteen thousand Connecticut members, Connecticut
12 Association of Realtors has long promoted the balance and
13 wise use of our land and other resources to provide for
14 the diverse needs of our community.

15 Just a few years ago some of our Local Association of
16 Realtors cosponsored with the the Chambers of Commerce to
17 reform smart growth. Each included a presentation by
18 UConn's cooperative extension service, and center for land
19 use and education research. I'm leaving you with a copy of
20 our statement of policy.

21 My comments are built around five smart growth
22 principles approved by our board of directors. Number one,

23 provide housing opportunities and choices. Since 1990 we
24 have lost thirty percent of our twenty-five to thirty year
25 olds. To compete in a global society, this must stop.

10

1 There are several ways to meet this challenge; over a ten
2 year period, sixty-four thousand new units can be built if
3 the Complete Home Connecticut proposal is adopted by our
4 State's legislature.

5 And our valuable stock of existing housing can be more
6 fully utilized under a proposal that died last year known
7 as Learn Here Live Here. Location Efficient Mortgages or
8 LEMs, these are loans that reward home buyers who purchase
9 within neighborhoods with easy access of public
10 transportation. A participating bank, for example,
11 recognizes an additional three thousand dollars per year
12 for qualified mortgage income for dual income families who
13 buy within two miles of a bus stop or a train station.

14 Building better communities: The State doesn't have
15 to reinvent the wheel. In many instances, towns and
16 regional planning agencies have already created good plans
17 of conservation and development. UConn's cooperative and
18 extension service showed how valuable it has been in
19 assisting towns to take an inventory in natural treasures
20 and simultaneously drawing a blueprint and strengthen the
21 employment base without harming those treasures.

22 Protect the environment: Connecticut realtors
23 recognize that quality of life depends significantly on
24 drinking water, clean beaches and streams, the protection
25 of working farms and preservation in open space and

1 recreational areas. Many do not know it, but our
2 association has lobbied for programs to assist farmers in
3 holding onto their properties.

4 Protect private property rights: Private property
5 rights are fundamental to our free market economic systems
6 and are protected by the fifth and fourteenth amendment of
7 the United States. Remember the Kilo versus New London
8 case.

9 And number five, implement fair and reasonable public
10 sector physical measures. Clearly the emergency real
11 estate conveyance tax imposed in 2003 have outlived its
12 temporary purpose. At a time when thousands of
13 Connecticut's residents were threatened with losing their
14 homes at a loss, the governor, legislature and town
15 officials should honor the June 30th sunset of this. Thank
16 you.

17 MR. MCMILLEN: Thank you. Tim Calnen.

18 MR. CALNEN: I'll pass, sir.

19 MR. MCMILLEN: Francis Knize.

20 MR. KNIZE: Hello. My name is Francis
21 Knize; I'm from Sky Train Corporation and we are a
22 monorail company. We have proposed in the State of
23 Connecticut concerning a solar power and nitrogen fuel
24 cell power monorail. This aligns with a lot of the smart
25 growth initiatives in the office of responsible growth set

1 forth by our governor, and needs to be more -- the fact
2 that transportation is an element in this plan must be
3 emphasized.

4 The bill six three six six, which dictates the future
5 of Connecticut's transportation, also speaks about, as you
6 do, an outside the box kind of approach to transportation
7 today. The monorail satisfies many of these requirements.
8 First of all, we're elevated out of the street corridors
9 and we create our own corridors. This enables us greater
10 safety. In fact, in the entire history of the monorail, in
11 a hundred years there's only been two deaths, and that's
12 really something to know.

13 As well, we are working with fuel cell companies
14 throughout Connecticut, and also UConn's global fuel cell
15 center. We're out getting some grants from the Department
16 of Energy and other federal agencies to be able to develop
17 new ways to propel or transport vehicles like monorail.
18 For instance, we're right now working on a system which
19 will take the fuel cell voltage, dump it to a super
20 capacitor, and with a new rapid charging battery -- which
21 will be on board on monorails -- in fact, any transport
22 vehicle -- we can flash charge this battery in thirty
23 seconds.

24 What this means is that we're getting the benefits of
25 the hydrogen fuel cell without having to put the fuel cell

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1 in a crash scenario on the streets. And this is what is
2 interesting to the DOE. As well, we are targeting four
3 cities here in this State of Connecticut, and I want to do

4 more here in Stamford, but we have proposed an exhibition
5 from the government center out to Adrien's Landing. As you
6 know, Adrien's Landing -- the taxpayers -- put about a
7 billion dollars into it.

8 I went to that conference for the transit oriented
9 development recently held by the AIA. And I recognized an
10 amazing statistic; when you bring public transportation into
11 an area, it increases the investment by three thousand
12 times. So this is very important that we make Adrien's
13 Landing work, and it holds the perfect location acting as a
14 hub being on the Connecticut River, where we can eventually
15 take great plans to Hartford go up to Bradley International
16 Airport. We can get there in twelve minutes with a
17 nonpolluting form of transportation.

18 And also smart growth calls for a satellite parking
19 concept. Adrien's Landing is perfect for it, because it's
20 right off of I-95 and I-84. And our behavior -- excuse me,
21 I-91 and I-84. Our behavior must change in the next years
22 to be able to park on the outskirts of the city, and to
23 take used transportation throughout the city.

24 So I hope that at the end of this meeting I can have
25 more of an opportunity to say more. If you want me to wind

14

1 up now I understand, but I do want to talk about job
2 growth, concerning the hydrogen fuel cell, concerning the
3 GE Corporation and also the association with UConn's, which
4 we have. Thank you, very much.

5 MR. MCMI LLEN: Tom Baptist.

6 MR. BAPTIST: Hi. I'm Tom Baptist; I'm the
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7 executive director of Audubon Connecticut. We're a State
8 organization of the National Audubon Association here in
9 Connecticut. With more than twelve thousand members in
10 our State, we work to protect birds and other wildlife in
11 their habitat using education, science and conservation,
12 as well as legislative advocacy.

13 We put the benefit of humanity and the earth's
14 biological diversity through our network of nature centers
15 and protect the wildlife sanctuaries in Connecticut, as
16 well as our local and volunteer Audubon Chapters. We
17 connect people with nature and inspire next generation of
18 conservationists. Last year more than a hundred thousand
19 Connecticut residents visited our facilities in Greenwich,
20 Southbury, Sharon, and Guilford.

21 Understanding the natural landscaping resources in
22 Connecticut, what areas are most important to preserve, and
23 which areas are most at risk is a critical first step
24 towards preserving the functionality of our complex
25 ecosystem and observing, importantly, the quality of life

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1 that Connecticut landscapes provided to our systems.

2 We know and understand about our natural capital more
3 effectively to be safeguarding and enhancing those
4 qualities that makes Connecticut special. And we commend
5 the department for the work you're doing for preparing the
6 State economic strategic plan. And thank you for the
7 opportunity to communicate tonight. I have seven pages of
8 written testimony I'd like to leave with you, but I'll
9 summarize that quickly.

10 I'd like to talk about the value -- the economic value
11 of Connecticut's wildlife related recreational resources.
12 There are compelling data regarding the value of wildlife
13 diversity in Connecticut. In 2001 the fish wildlife
14 service published its natural survey of fishing, hunting
15 and wildlife associated recreation. The diversity of
16 wildlife supported by Connecticut's healthy habitat
17 translates into real and direct economic benefits.

18 According to the fish and wildlife service, two
19 hundred and ninety-two thousand Connecticut residents were
20 fishermen last year -- excuse me, 2001 thirty-eight
21 thousand were hunters. A million and sixty-three thousand
22 were involved in home-based wildlife viewing, such as bird
23 watching. And more than two hundred and sixty-nine
24 thousand participated in wildlife moving away from their
25 homes.

16

1 State specific figures have not been released for the
2 2006 survey, but the national trends are clear; it's likely
3 that the number of Connecticut residents engage in wildlife
4 related activities, and recreation has increased since
5 2001. The same survey concludes that wildlife related
6 recreational activities add up to more than eight hundred
7 million dollars annually in Connecticut, spent on things
8 like fishing and hunting, with more than five hundred and
9 thirty million spent on nonconsumptive wildlife viewing.

10 So it's a robust and growing part of Connecticut's
11 industry. I'm here to speak for the wildlife and to
12 encourage you to include in your consideration, just as the

13 speaker for the Connecticut Association of Realtors
14 mentioned, the balance between economic development and the
15 need to protect the national resources that our residents
16 value, and use and enjoy. Thank you, for the
17 opportunity.

18 MR. MCMILLEN: Thank you, sir. John
19 O'Toole.

20 MR. O'TOOLE: Good evening. It's
21 interesting following the Audubon Society; I'll admit I
22 like watching birds and all of that, as well. I believe
23 actually what I'm going to comment on, and I've given you
24 my testimony, and I'm going to summarize first, because I
25 know how quick three minutes can go.

17

1 What I'm advocating for is the Shovel Ready Site, a
2 certified site program. One thing I've been holding in my
3 pocket for about seven years, is a shovel from New York
4 that shows the certified sites, but I actually believe it
5 complements what you've just heard. If you have a
6 certified sites program before the developer, before the
7 builder, before the owner shows up on the scene and
8 dictates to the community how these sites are going to be
9 developed, it gives the community an opportunity to have a
10 very open conversation.

11 Case in point, probably about seven years ago a major
12 pharmaceutical company wanted to build a research facility
13 right next to our flagship campus in Mansfield,
14 Connecticut. And what happened was, it seemed like it
15 would be a perfect fit with that union to have research and

16 development near the school, but when the developers showed
17 up and proposed plowing that Greenfield under and building
18 this facility, there was outrage.

19 What Connecticut needs to do is find out where that
20 research facility should be and proactively certify the
21 site, so that we take the guesswork out of it for
22 developers, and also don't tear at the fabric of the
23 community with the type of experience that Mansfield had
24 there. The other point that I would really like to make is
25 that over the past few weeks, folks from Northeast Utility

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1 had commented on specific recommendations on balanced
2 growth, capacity building, the need for infrastructure,
3 Shovel Ready Sites, energy policy, marketing and keeping
4 the State of Connecticut competitive.

5 But throughout all this, I would like to underscore
6 the fact that we would like to support what you're working
7 on, and we'll do all that we can to support your
8 department's mission. In here -- and I have heard the
9 beep, so I can't quite expand -- I have the reasons why you
10 want the Shovel Ready Sites, and some of them I touched on,
11 but I gave you about sixteen pages, but I gave you samples
12 of how other states are doing it. I start off with New
13 York, which put about four million dollars into this
14 program to date, and they're able to track eighty-five
15 hundred jobs to Shovel Ready Sites. And they will also be
16 able to track over a billion dollars of investments into
17 the Shovel Ready Sites from Buffalo to Albany and down
18 through the metropolitan area.

19 Also, I give you in here what North Carolina -- what
20 their criteria is. There is no real criteria, but I'm
21 going to leave. Thank you, very much.

22 MR. MCMILLEN: Thank you, John. Mike
23 Freimuth.

24 MR. FREIMUTH: Good evening. Mike Freimuth
25 from the City of Stamford. I thought I'd make a few

19

1 points on critiquing of what's not working right now, and
2 offer up four or five marks that I came up with, with a
3 cup of coffee and myself this afternoon. It's always
4 dangerous following the utility guys these days, so I'll
5 skip the energy section.

6 But, quickly, I think the State's problems are we
7 practice fiscal zoning over physical zoning. We focus on
8 what makes property taxes rather -- we don't mind our
9 demand for services and capitalizing in our investments.
10 We don't really have a true business retention strategy.
11 The company is courted by another state, Connecticut cannot
12 accept the counteroffers, and many times expansions are
13 forgone and the opportunity results are much bigger.

14 We have some old programs; the Manufacturer's
15 Assistance Act goes back to Ella Grasso. It needs to be
16 retold. It doesn't meet today's needs, it focuses on
17 plants and equipment. Increasing overhead is not the way
18 to go to try to make companies more competitive. Old
19 programs, number two, our urban jobs program has very high
20 thresholds to qualify new base program services. Twenty
21 million dollars, three hundred jobs to even qualify wiper

22 out a whole series of midsize firms.

23 Bond commission: Everything seems to be subject to
24 the political whims of the State Bond Commission. One, you
25 got to hope it meets; two, you have to hope it will

20

1 authorize your project; three, you hope to get your paper
2 processed to get your money out. Frankly, business deals
3 don't wait through the process; let the Commissioner do her
4 job.

5 Some ideas to change: Knowledge-based workers and the
6 arts. It's been repeatedly exercised that in order to
7 obtain and attract today's knowledge-based workers we have
8 to increase our quality of life investments. Yet, in
9 Stamford, for instance, the city produces eight million
10 dollars in hotel taxes, yet the contributions for the state
11 of the arts was decreased from two million to five hundred
12 thousand. Produce money to generate activity and it's
13 taken away.

14 The University of Connecticut: We're in the building
15 right here. The State is losing its youth, UConn's is
16 turning away kids from Storrs; we have facilities like this
17 that are not meeting our business community's needs. We've
18 expanded the business programs, the health care programs,
19 we need to orient ourselves to expanding the physical
20 programs here, as well as residential offers, and we need
21 to offer more four year degrees at the local community
22 system.

23 Energy: John alluded to it, I'll mention it.
24 Reliability, capacity, quality and price; all four are an

25 issue. There's three ways to getting at it; generation,

21

1 transmission and distribution. We need to focus all three
2 across all four categories. Minority business programs:
3 They are weak -- they are beyond weak. We need to expand
4 those things on a regional basis, we need to set an
5 initiative down here between Norwalk and Bridgeport. We'd
6 like the State to be a partner in that.

7 Brownfields: Look, we got enough money to set up some
8 new sites in the State, let's start spending some money to
9 clean them up. PILOT program should be launched. We
10 should spend dollars in the streets to start cleaning up
11 the sites. Workforce Transportation: Increasingly,
12 Stamford's workforce is coming from New York. How does
13 that help Connecticut? We like it for the business tax,
14 use of the employee tax, employee arbitrary and labor
15 opportunist. It's tougher and tougher to get here from the
16 east, frankly, so we encourage, among other things,
17 development of complexes up and down the rail corridor,
18 particularly in Bridgeport and Norwalk.

19 We do also support a full host of transportation
20 efforts to include and increase the bus activity to support
21 the train station, which is totally lacking in the State.
22 We'd like to support I-95's operational lanes from Stamford
23 to Norwalk, Bridgeport, Fairfield, and New Haven. Three,
24 we believe in transit based development will provide labor
25 force throughout Connecticut. And, four, we need some

1 assistance in public infrastructure, including ourselves
2 and other peers here in the City of Stamford.

3 Finally, I would be remiss if the State's plan did not
4 address one condition that's been staring us in the face,
5 and that is climate change. Our capacity to deal with
6 storm drains, water retention, buffer zones, everything we
7 build on a twenty-five year engineering clock; last year we
8 had two one hundred year events. The fact of the matter is
9 the State's infrastructure is not built for private change
10 that's come forth. It's incumbent on the State to
11 capitalize on new cap trade laws to get access for dollars,
12 which would be available nationwide to rebuild the city's
13 infrastructures, and, frankly, to repair for problems yet
14 to come. Thank you.

15 MR. MCMILLEN: Thank you. Jennifer
16 Herring.

17 MS. HERRING: Hi. Thanks, Commissioner
18 McDonald, for the chance to talk. I'm Jennifer Herring;
19 I'm the president and CEO of Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk.
20 The State of Connecticut has long recognized the aquarium
21 as a valued tourism destination. And, in fact, we've been
22 receiving tourism dollars from the State since 1994. This
23 helps us drive approximately five hundred thousand
24 visitors a year, thirty five percent of whom come from out
25 of state. So we have a strong track record as the largest

1 tourism attraction within a hundred miles of New York City

2 and appreciate the State's support. We think it's a
3 win/win.

4 Fourteen -- every dollar of the State generates
5 fourteen dollars in our spending and fifty-nine dollars in
6 economic impact. And we think that we, and institutions
7 like us with big economic impact, should figure in your
8 economic plan going forward, but we also have other ways in
9 which we're important economic drivers for the State. The
10 first is our role as an anchor in one of the most important
11 smart growth developments in the State. That has leveraged
12 eight hundred and fifteen million dollars in private
13 investments to date, which is a huge value to the region.

14 We're also a shining example of how we can help retain
15 those young families that are leaving the State in record
16 numbers. They're looking for places to live that can offer
17 schools, first-class services, institutions of quality like
18 ours, where they can have fun and learn in a safe, secure
19 and stimulating environment. And, of course, at the
20 Maritime Aquarium, the opportunity to encounter nature and
21 get connected with it is an added benefit.

22 We play an extremely important role in helping to
23 address the science achievement gap, which I know is of
24 concern to you as you're trying to retain and recruit the
25 future workforce for Connecticut. Science comes to life

24

1 for a hundred and thirty thousand students a year at the
2 Maritime Aquarium, and our educational experience reached
3 seventy percent of the colleges in the State; they're both
4 broad, and in many cases, very deep, as well.

5 And, lastly, we play an important role for the State
6 that I'd like to put on your agenda. Our mission is to
7 inspire people of all ages to appreciate Long Island Sound
8 and protect it for future generations. And by Long Island
9 Sound we define it as the Sound itself, and the watershed,
10 which, of course, is the entire State of Connecticut. The
11 Sound is not just any body of water; it is federally
12 designated as an estuary of national significance because
13 of the richness of its biota, and it's a huge economic
14 asset of the State.

15 The 1990 study, that the Long Island study did, rate
16 the economic impact at five point five billion dollars,
17 including commercial fishing, recreational uses, tourism,
18 marine transporting and the value of coastal wetlands. Our
19 2004 study, which was more narrow, confirmed many of these
20 values. So as you think about your strategy, and your
21 economic development vision for the State, I urge you to
22 not only consider our institution as a tourism driver, but
23 also an essential economic driver for the region and the
24 State as a whole. And I especially urge you, in the larger
25 picture, to see Long Island Sound as part of the State's

25

1 economic plan. I think that can encompass many of the
2 things that Tom was talking about, and the gentleman from
3 the real estate board was talking about, in terms of the
4 environmental values.

5 It's a natural resource, we need to protect it. It's
6 vital to enhancing the quality of life in Connecticut, and
7 the activities that take place there have enormous economic

8 value. So I hope that we can, together, create some
9 comprehensive plan aimed at protecting Long Island Sound.
10 We have a saying that guides all our work: In the end we
11 will conserve only what we love, we will love only what we
12 understand, and we will understand only what we are taught.
13 The Maritime Aquarium helps teach people to fall in love
14 with Long Island Sound.

15 So I thank you for the opportunity to speak, and I
16 extend an invitation to visit, and I do hope that you will
17 include the Sound in the broad sense in your economic plan.
18 Thank you.

19 MR. MCMILLEN: Thank you. Chris Bruhl.

20 MR. BRUHL: Thank you. I'm Chris Bruhl;
21 I'm the president of the Business Council of Fairfield
22 County. We have more formal statements that offers some
23 lists of some specific ideas, but I wanted to framework at
24 the macro level to observe. Of course, Fairfield County
25 currently competes very successfully in what we earn. And

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1 that's very important to the State. It's important as a
2 portal to the growth that the metro New York regions bring
3 into the State. It's important, of course, for the taxes
4 that the people pay, and it's important that we enable the
5 integration of the State economy and the boarding
6 economies and that really points out a couple of key
7 things.

8 Our success here have come with costs. High value
9 means high costs, but it's been a price worth paying, but
10 the price -- the value of the equation is challenged,

11 however, and we need to, therefore, think about the two
12 fundamental strengths of the price. And the first is
13 location, and that we're economically integrated into one
14 of the strongest regional economies in the world, the
15 tri-state metropolitan area. And that we have a workforce,
16 that by global standards, is highly educated and highly
17 skilled and enormously productive.

18 And our continued success of the region and our
19 continued contribution to the State depends on our ability
20 to maintain, in fact, strengthen both of these pillars. In
21 our approach from the Business Council and my comments
22 tonight, we can't cover everything that's important. We've
23 heard so many observations just this evening, whether it
24 was from the Audubon Society, or the Maritime Aquarium, or
25 the Realtors, of some really thoughtful and important and,

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1 for us, very compatible ideas on what we need to do to
2 maintain our competitiveness.

3 We'd like to suggest that the State needs a
4 quarterback, and DECD is it to enforce a strategic economic
5 plan. And that the need is great -- our efforts -- not
6 really to have good independent plans; policy silos is
7 probably the critical first step. It's hard to do
8 sometimes, it requires statutory changes, but the idea of
9 an integrated strategy is essential. We'd like to touch on
10 five components of such a strategy. I won't go through the
11 specific recommendations of each case, but I'll use the
12 ones that are (unintelligible).

13 First, of course, is transportation. You can't come

14 to Fairfield County without realizing that we're paying
15 more attention to the traffic report than the weather
16 report. So transportation is critical. And while we're
17 looking at the broader scheme of how people move around in
18 other regions, how they get in and out of the city, how we
19 reach Hartford and Boston, we need to think about what are
20 the micro things that ties it all together. We have a
21 train station, in which two of the ten -- the North
22 American headquarters are two of the ten largest banks in
23 the world are across the street from each other, and
24 therefore, we're about to potentially overwhelm access to
25 the train station, and access to entry to I-95 in a

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1 westerly direction.

2 A solution which integrates land use, transportation,
3 and a whole host of other issues, about that one very
4 defined street address -- which actually has regional
5 implications, and good examples of micro and macro --
6 without going into nine minutes, just to quickly sum up,
7 other key areas, of course, are in the area of housing;
8 we're now paying approximately twice the national average
9 of rental units. We have more, you know, the home -- the
10 famous starter, the thousand dollar cottage, those kinds of
11 issues would require a massive State investment in housing
12 to worker income housing.

13 Billion dollar trust fund taxed into State pension
14 funds, perhaps, would be a wonderful way to go,
15 particularly around second mortgages, which will enable
16 people to visit the housing market for the first time.

17 From an education perspective, we can't be an integration
18 destination, and we can't fulfill the promises of this
19 nation to all people unless we say the achievement gap is
20 an embarrassment.

21 Let's set a goal; five years from now, no achievement
22 gap. We already know how to do it, it's a question of will
23 and limitation. The achievement gap has to change. I also
24 observed, as my own personal constituency, boomers of the
25 new entry level workforce. An economic strategy around the

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1 boomers, those people who are within the age of thirty-five
2 and sixty, to be recycled into the workforce are essential.
3 We can't discharge anyone, whether it's people who are
4 professionally excluded or people who professionally
5 retired, we need everybody involved.

6 Livable communities, we've heard about some of those
7 options already, so I won't dwell on it, but we need to
8 make our cities competitively attractive so people would
9 want to live there. Cities are places where people live
10 before they're places where people work. And the idea of
11 the State investing in livable cities is critical.

12 Energy, of course, we are paying among the highest
13 prices for energy, and our distribution systems have modest
14 reliability, investments are underway to be expedited.
15 Conservation efficiency, the State needs to step up with
16 programs. And, finally, in the thinking big department, I
17 also like to think friendly. Commissioner, I think you've
18 been in Fairfield County more than you've been
19 Commissioner -- many other commissioners in the State, but

20 you've certainly set a standard of openness and visibility.

21 I'd like to offer, therefore, to you and your
22 colleagues, a home away from home. Come on down and make
23 our office your office here in Fairfield County. We
24 already housed, as needed, the ISF cluster, the Metro North
25 Commuter Council, the Town of Road Division and Workplace

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1 Inc., and why not the Department of Economic Community
2 Development, as well. So think of Stamford as your home
3 down here in Fairfield County. Thank you so much.

4 MR. MCMI LLEN: Thank you. Donald Frost.

5 MR. FROST: My name's Donald Frost; I'm
6 representing the Connecticut Maritime Coalition. I want
7 to tell you there's more to the maritime cluster in
8 Connecticut than CMC and its stretching concerns. And
9 this is specifically focused around this area. DECD
10 cluster workshops in 2006 began with the 2000 and the 2002
11 reports left off in defining this cluster.

12 Early reports focused on Connecticut's maritime
13 industry cluster, which covered companies and jobs that
14 handles cargo ports, pilot ships in and out of ports, own
15 and operate terry systems, own and operate marinas,
16 recreational boating, professional fishermen and women,
17 shipyards, and the schools educate and train some of these
18 jobs.

19 A lot of the original study only looked at in-state
20 operations and shipping as a service to shippers, not an
21 integrated global industry. For the west of New Haven
22 there is another maritime cluster that employs many, many

23 more people. Prior studies rely on the Department of
24 Commerce SIC codes and needs codes, but they just define an
25 organization by its primary industry. And many large

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1 trading and financial organizations have significant
2 shipping maritime functions that are integral to their
3 operations, and many of them are right here in Connecticut,
4 right in Stamford.

5 There are employers in southwest Connecticut, who, for
6 tax reasons, are defined as agencies operations for
7 overseas companies engaged in shipping. As a result, they
8 are usually misrepresented in the scale of their
9 operations. There's a lot of jobs here. The organization
10 that encompasses this group, the south western Connecticut,
11 is a nonprofit group called Connecticut Maritime
12 Association, as differentiated from CFC. It is a
13 nonactivist or advocate group. It's more of an educational
14 group.

15 It's a maritime cluster in its own right representing
16 banking and nonbanking financial institutions, ship
17 ownership, operates class specification societies, like
18 flag registries like Belize, and Panama, and Liberia.
19 Private equity funds, hedge funds, Wall Street analysis,
20 investors, cargo interest, some of the biggest green
21 companies in the world are right here in Connecticut. Some
22 of the biggest iron or coal mining companies -- maybe they
23 don't work here, but they're located here. Lawyers,
24 brokers, maritime arbitrators, surveyors, breakthrough
25 traders -- something that did not exist ten years ago --

1 every conceivable service in the global industry that is
2 not now in Connecticut; but we work here and our businesses
3 have been growing.

4 I want to remind you that between ninety-five and
5 ninety-seven percent of world trade rules by sea. Of that,
6 only ten percent by weight, thirteen percent by volume and,
7 perhaps, forty forty-five percent by dollar value rest on
8 container ships, most on my ships -- on the ships that I
9 work with. They're owned, operated, financed, brokered,
10 inspected, etcetera from Connecticut.

11 Southwestern Connecticut and nearby is a virtual
12 center of commercial shipping in the United States. In
13 thinking of things of maritime Connecticut, please keep in
14 mind that the businesses that are run here may not directly
15 impact the State's ports and jobs, but we're still here.

16 MR. MCMILLEN: Thank you.

17 MR. TUFO: Good evening. I'm Vin Tufo, the
18 director of development for the Stamford Housing
19 Authority. Hi, Stan. How are you, Commissioner? I'd
20 like to talk just briefly about the relationship between
21 housing, especially in southwestern Connecticut, and
22 economic development, as we see it. And then I'd like to
23 get into some very specific solutions -- some short term
24 and some long term solutions that are easily and readily
25 available. They require an active working coordination,

1 however.

2 Stamford and southwestern region are experiencing
3 great challenges to their strategic economic health and
4 development, because there aren't enough affordable housing
5 options for workers. Now, there's workforce housing so
6 companies can bring and maintain jobs in our area. Firms
7 simply won't come, stay or expand here without housing that
8 their workers can afford. Furthermore -- and this is very
9 important, I think -- essential service workers --
10 professionals, which are the teachers, policemen, fire
11 fighters, municipal workers, and health care workers, and
12 we now all know about the nursing shortage -- will not
13 locate to our area, or, at best, they will not stay in our
14 area, creating a very wasteful or revolving door. We'll
15 attract young, bright professionals in these professions.
16 Train them, season them.

17 A lot of them do achieve higher performance in
18 specialization, only to see them relocate later to less
19 costly areas when they seek to set down roots. Stamford
20 has the highest rental cost in the entire country,
21 according to National Housing Coalition, and our single
22 family home prices are approaching seven hundred thousand.

23 I'd like to talk about some very specific solutions
24 that I think we have in our power, two State agencies have
25 in their power to enhance and increase production and

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1 preservation of all types of housing -- affordable housing,
2 rentals, home ownership, marketplace, assisted housing. If
3 they're accessible in they're available, even if they're

4 being employed here now but inefficiently, or they're being
5 employed in the surrounding states -- New York -- where you
6 come from, Commissioner -- Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New
7 Jersey has excellent lessons to teach us, because they've
8 been working on some of the same problems for longer, and
9 for many ways they coordinated some of these two solutions
10 so that they're more effective where they are.

11 Solutions: Improve housing production through
12 enlightened programs, such as Home Connecticut,
13 inclusionary zoning, Hope Six public housing
14 remodeling, transit oriented development and smart
15 growth initiatives. Emphasize housing preservation through
16 one for one replacement and targeted preservation efforts
17 of expiring used properties. Engage employees to
18 collaborate efforts to create employer assisted housing,
19 both rental and affordable home ownership.

20 Develop a coordinated affordable housing mechanism
21 between the major state financing agencies, DECD and CHAFA,
22 that is consistent with the State's housing policies.
23 Eliminate abrupt changes in financing programs, such as
24 what's currently going on with the CHAFA low income housing
25 tax credit qualified allocation plan. These will have the

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1 effect of undermining numerous projects already in
2 predevelopment, undercutting potentially millions of
3 dollars in investments.

4 Implement a one stop approach for financing
5 applications that is proven successful in New York and New
6 Jersey. Eliminate the cannibalization of one program for

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7 another, such as the elimination of PILOT, the repayment of
8 lower taxes program and its replacement with unspecified
9 aid to cities and towns. Create and maintain long term
10 funding commitments for multiphase development projects.
11 Accurately assess and provide gap financing for the
12 revitalization and preservation of the State's moderate
13 family development, which have predominantly workforce
14 housing before we lose them. Fully fund the State's
15 moderate rental housing PILOT and nonprofit tax abatement
16 programs, and, finally, streamline State programs intended
17 to coordinate production of housing, Brownfields
18 redevelopment, transportation and infrastructure.

19 And, again, as I mentioned earlier, take stock of what
20 surrounding states have already done to streamline housing
21 programs, and let's look at their best practices and see
22 what we can adopt here in Connecticut. Thank you.

23 MR. MCMILLEN: Thank you, Vin. Liz
24 Rosenbaum.

25 (No reponse.)

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1 MR. MCMILLEN: So we've heard from all the
2 people who have signed up to speak. Are there any others
3 who would like to speak?

4 MS. WILLIAMS: My name is Sheila Williams.
5 I have no notes or anything, because I just found out
6 about this yesterday, but I'm a -- what you would consider
7 a lower class member of Stamford, and I take public
8 transportation every day. I work three jobs in order to
9 pay rent here in Stamford. There are a lot of us that do

10 this here. To take a bus from one area to the other, two
11 buses takes me an hour to get from the Cove area into High
12 Ridge just because of the way the schedules were.

13 They told us that this would be coordinated; I have
14 seen no coordination. I have seen no change. I have seen
15 people tell us -- I called for bus schedules to be posted
16 like they are in Bridgeport, and I was told we can't do
17 that to Stamford, it's not available. You built a new
18 train station for Southport when it got burned down, but
19 every time something gets knocked down here in Stamford, we
20 don't see a change. I understand we're stepchildren to the
21 State, but I would like to see it changed. Thank you.

22 MR. MCMI LLEN: Thank you.

23 MR. RICCI O: Good evening. I'm Joe Ricci o;
24 I'm the executive director of the Bridgeport Port
25 Authority; sorry I couldn't make the meeting in

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1 Bridgeport. I came down here against the traffic. A
2 couple of things; we're the only active port authority in
3 the State of Connecticut. We're a catalyst for
4 development in Bridgeport in port district oh four,
5 maritime projects -- maritime development projects, as
6 well as maritime transportation projects. We own and
7 operate the ferry terminal and took a really dilapidated
8 dock and turned it into a really beautiful and safe
9 terminal for passengers to take the Bridgeport Port
10 Jefferson ferry.

11 And you could actually chart that once that investment
12 was in by the State of Connecticut, and the federal

13 government partnership with the Port Authority that
14 ridership climbed and it continues to climb. Again, I had
15 many conversations with the commissioner, but I would like
16 to go on record that from the port-wide community, and the
17 maritime community, we need a strategy for Connecticut to
18 support.

19 We shouldn't be competing with one another for
20 product, or services, or money funding their
21 infrastructure. The situation with the barge porter
22 service between Bridgeport and New Haven is really
23 unfortunate and that shouldn't occur that way. And,
24 really, for years it was organized privately through some
25 of the terminals that we had, what was called Port

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1 Connecticut, and none of the terminals would compete.

2 I would just like to make a couple of points. One,
3 not only do we need a good strategy for Connecticut to
4 support, but in these areas, I think, for dredging, and
5 dredging is a real competitive issue here, not only in
6 Connecticut, but how do we compete with other ports
7 throughout the country? Because that money is very
8 competitive and now it's on a nationwide grid, versus
9 before money was doled out to other regions.

10 Number two, for development, I think if we had an
11 infrastructure development program among the three major
12 ports and other smaller harbors in the State, at least we
13 would know when the money would be available, and I think
14 that's important. And taking it out of the political race
15 or the political contest would help immeasurably. So the

16 infrastructure is really important. We've benefited by
17 that for the last thirteen years to some -- almost twenty
18 million dollars for the State funding has come through the
19 Bridgeport Port Authority through DECD, DOT, DOP, as well
20 as some federal money.

21 And, lastly, I would also look at -- if you're going
22 to do this and adopt a port strategy for the State of
23 Connecticut, you really have to look at the governance of
24 the individual port authorities. Right now we are solely
25 members of the port authority from the City of Bridgeport,

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1 and that's by City ordinance and City charter. And that's
2 fine, but often times we're at conflict with city
3 administrations over some projects. And, in a sense, we're
4 managing a State-wide asset in a municipal environment, and
5 it's inherent that there's going to be some conflicts
6 there.

7 So I would urge you to consider that as part of your
8 strategy also for ports. Thank you, very much, and I
9 appreciate the time.

10 MR. MCMILLEN: Thank you.

11 MR. LINDEN: Good evening. My name is
12 Dennis Linden and I'm a long time resident of this area,
13 and I have a business that specializes in economic
14 development activities. I'm currently, in fact, working
15 with UConn's, but only in Upstate near the Storrs area.

16 I think one of the things that you should require for
17 your plan is that the University have some kind of economic
18 mission or plan for each of its campuses, and this one

19 should be no exception. All around the country and in
20 many, many cities, new industry is being created -- is
21 largely being created around the University and I can cite
22 you many examples of that. But here at UConn's in Stamford
23 there may or may not be -- I'm not sure, but there may not
24 be any idea of linking the University to economic
25 development and that should be a part of every state's

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1 economic plan.

2 So I just urge you to take a look at that and try to
3 find a way to incorporate that. Thank you.

4 MR. MCMILLEN: Thank you. Is there anyone
5 else who would like to speak?

6 MR. KNIZE: Hi there again. I'm Francis
7 Knize from Sky Train Corporation, and we are working with
8 the local fuel cell center out of UConn's, and the
9 technology portal, and dealing with their transportation
10 institute and the chemistry department for lightweight
11 materials composite, because we're interested in the fact
12 that the students will develop a chemistry for a composite
13 shell -- lightweight composite shell in the course -- and
14 how they have a monorail that's lightweight, that
15 increases its efficiency.

16 And I want to emphasize the fact that we want to
17 enable the students of UConn's to actually design the
18 futuristic monorail shell, which will be showcased around
19 the country. I want Connecticut to set an example for the
20 rest of the nation on what we can do -- what Connecticut
21 can do for furthering our climate change agenda. We've

22 shown up at a variety of climate change conferences around
23 the country, and we've met with a lot of politicians on
24 this.

25 We want to create a interstate partnership of this,

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1 particularly California and Florida, so we have a triangle
2 of climate change -- of partnerships. That's a start. I'm
3 also a documentary producer, and I'm going to be doing a
4 major PBS documentary on all of this. And we want to
5 have -- we've met with the Connecticut Science Center and
6 they're going to be getting involved in a business
7 exhibition.

8 So about Stamford, Stamford's really the high density
9 area -- the problem area for the State. So I eventually
10 want to talk about how we can bring the monorail plan to
11 Stamford, but there's also the Steel Point Project in
12 Bridgeport. We've talked to officials there and also in
13 New Haven, and we can lead the nation and bring back
14 manufacturing and industry.

15 Now, I did a documentary where I interviewed Phil
16 McDonah (phonetic), foremost green architect, and who's
17 now -- and by the way, in the documentary that's coming
18 out -- by DiCaprio (phonetic) on climate change and what we
19 need to do. I said to Phil, "look into the camera and tell
20 our governor what you think needs to be done in the State
21 of Connecticut."

22 And he said, "well, you know, there's nothing left in
23 the textile industry, and all of the industries that have
24 been here in the past, and we need to concentrate on

25 developing new technologies for the future and educate our

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1 youth." And that's what I'm going to be doing. I'm not
2 going to take up any more time, but I wanted to emphasize
3 that. Other than the fact that we're going to be providing
4 a lot of jobs here in the State of Connecticut, not only in
5 the parts manufacturing, but in the operation of the
6 monorail, and so on and so forth. Thank you, very much.

7 MR. MCMILLEN: Thank you.

8 MS. MCDONALD: I just wanted to take a few
9 minutes to summarize what we've heard here tonight. And,
10 again, as Stan and I both said, this is the start of the
11 dialogue; you've given us all great food for thought, and
12 between -- this is the first time we've heard from the
13 Audubon Society. We've heard from different cultural
14 institutions around the State. We've heard from the real
15 estate development community. And the people touched on a
16 number of different issues, whether they be workforce
17 housing, whether they be transportation, whether they be
18 preservation of the environment.

19 And what we're hearing as the common thread is
20 everybody wants to work on these issues collaboratively,
21 that the sense that we're getting -- whether it's here in
22 Stamford, whether it's in Torrington -- is people are ready
23 to grapple with these issues, and ready to deal with the
24 change that will be required to effectuate them. So, as
25 Stan mentioned, we need to complete our strategic plan by

1 July 1st of 2009.

2 Many of you have heard me say this before, but it is
3 not our goal to write a plan and have it just sit on a
4 shelf. And if you kind of think ahead, July 2009, so then
5 we're talking about the legislative session in 2010, and
6 we're not going to wait until then. And we're going to
7 continue to engage in the dialogue. Many of you mentioned
8 tonight responsible growth. I sit on the responsible
9 growth task force; Joan McGee (phonetic), who hopefully
10 will be here, sits on the task force with me and we're
11 looking at ways of how we can do things today. So they
12 will all be incorporated into the plan.

13 And I think one of the other things that I've heard
14 is, no, we can't stand still. We can't take -- we take a
15 snapshot, we use data for what we need to make intelligent
16 decisions, but we can't stand still. So we can't say to
17 everybody, okay, stop while we do all this good planning
18 and then we'll start to implement. We do things in stages,
19 and, you know, Vin, your remarks about looking at best
20 practices, we'll continue to do that. We aren't going to
21 wait for the plan to come up with some of these initiatives
22 and start implementing them.

23 Some of them are going to take longer than 2009. Some
24 of the issues of major transportation funding, of how we
25 deal with land use regulations and the State zoning,

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1 they're not going to all happen by July 1, 2009; but we're

2 feeling very energized that people are willing to look at
3 things differently, because, as Stan mentioned, we want to
4 see -- we want to see where Connecticut is going to be ten,
5 fifteen and twenty years from now. And we want to make
6 sure that we set the stage to make those things happen.

7 So we appreciate everybody's thoughts tonight. We'll
8 be back. We'll be back with some initiatives that might be
9 politically unpopular, but we feel that the sense is that
10 people want to work together to help come up with a
11 solution, and be part of that solution and not part of the
12 problem. So thank you, very much. And, again, if anybody
13 wants to wait, we will for about fifteen, twenty minutes to
14 see if other folks want to come and make remarks, or if
15 people want to ask questions or speak up.

16 MR. MCMILLEN: I also want to say that we
17 need this plan -- as somebody mentioned it being a
18 comprehensive integrated plan, this requires that it takes
19 account of the State plan of conservation and development,
20 and all of the fifteen CEDS that either exist or in
21 process, as well as the Department of Transportation's
22 strategic plan that's now in public hearing, and the State
23 Department of Education and the Department of Higher
24 Education's strategic plan. So this is to say why do we
25 need another plan? It's going to be an integrated plan;

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1 it's going to pull all of this together. So that's part
2 of our charge.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What are CEDS?

4 MR. MCMILLEN: I'm sorry, Comprehensive

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I further certify that I am a Notary Public duly
commissioned and qualified to administer oaths in the State
of Connecticut.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand
this 3rd day of February, 2008.

Samantha M. Howell
Notary Public

My Commission expires:
September 31, 2011