

## **Suggestions For Statewide Economic Improvements**

### **Transportation**

- Revitalize the railroad system throughout the state
  - Upgrade tracks and beds
  - Upgrade trains
  - Monitor and improve service
  - Explore alternative energy sources for power (*fuel cells*)
- Investigate possibility of monorails from city to city
  - Use highway medians
  - Investigate using fuel cells
- Add light rail system next to existing heavy rails for commuters
- Increase highway capacity
  - Create a layered highway for I95 in congested areas
  - Trucks on bottom level, cars on top level
- Widen road shoulders to allow for safer bike paths
  - Upgrade them when roads are being resurfaced
  - Create a network of bike paths to encourage bike commuters

### **Technology Transfer**

- Attract technology companies to the state using tax incentives
- Create wireless wifi zones in all of the cities to improve communication networks

### **Brownfield Remediation and Redevelopment**

- Reward innovative uses for redevelopment through grant programs
- Retro-fit old buildings with fuel cells and solar panels
- Convert old warehouses into sound stages to attract and support film industry

### **Business Regulation**

- Constantly monitor ways to decrease costs and regulations on businesses

### **Labor Force Quality and Sustainability**

- Encourage increased usage of online courses in high schools  
(*This allows resources to be diverted to higher need students*)
- Improve career development opportunities for students in high schools

*(Provide all students with opportunities to learn about the business community – require an economics course for all high school students)*

- Establish mentoring programs for retraining workers  
*(Subsidize the mentors or sponsoring companies)*
- Provide financial support for regional business and planning organizations  
*(CERC, Chambers, COGs, and Regional Economic Development Corporations)*

### **Cost of Doing Business**

- Keep corporation and business taxes as low as possible
- Explore ways to lower energy costs using alternative sources

### **Affordable and Work Force Housing**

- Property tax surcharge for million dollar houses – 10% excess tax used to support affordable housing projects (allow 10% to be used as a tax deduction)

### **Land-Use Policy**

- Require decisions to be made in a timely manner
- Require clear process and procedures for applicants
- Simplify rules and regulations
- Provide legal and technical (site plans, etc.) support for small business owners

### **Taxation**

- Rethink tax structure throughout the state
  - Property Tax – local tax to cover local operational expenses (state should not touch)
  - Sales Tax – use for transportation infrastructure and capital projects
    - 4% - statewide projects – highways, trains, etc.  
*(.5% - could be used to purchase open space)*
    - 2% - local capital projects – send money directly back to the communities for local capital projects *(no need for STEAP grants then)*
  - Income tax used to finance state service systems – personnel, operational costs, etc.

### **Availability of Capital**

- Low interest loans for small business startups

### **Energy Costs and Supply**

- Increase use of fuel cells and other alternative energy sources

- Support use of fuel cells and solar panels in municipal buildings (schools, *hospitals, government buildings*)
- Explore increased use of bio fuels (*also helps local farmers*)

**Submitted by:**

Doug Parker

President and Executive Director,

Northwest CT Economic Development Corporation

**From:** Stan Lyman  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 20, 2007 7:34 AM  
**To:** CT Strategic Plan  
**Subject:** Strategy-Connecticut's Future

I have lived in this state all my life. This state was once a vibrant industrial power. I have observed the hemorrhaging of Manufacturing jobs leave this state for others, some jobs even left the country.

What the state needs is a package of incentives that will entice business back into our state and just as important, keep the existing business here were they belong.

This package can only come from the support of the highest levels of state government. They are the only people who can stop the bleeding and make our state healthy again.

A example of such support is our states recent moves to successfully entice the production of movies here. Our state should be able to do something of that nature to bring other business in and convince other business and industry in the state to stay.

**From:** Robert Chellis  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 20, 2007 6:34 PM  
**To:** CT Strategic Plan  
**Subject:** Utilization of CT retirees

**Re: Retirees: Utilizing their knowledge, experience and energy**

Dear Dr. McMillen,

I'm responding to the invitation for public input on the Connecticut State Economic Strategic Plan.

I suggest the state - to complement its efforts to enhance the states economy and high tech development - consider ways to keep active older people - with their assets and retirement incomes - in the state, while at the same time making the best use of their knowledge and experience. It is an effective way to maximize the use of Connecticut's assets. Educating the Baby Boomers was expensive. Now that education, combined with the wisdom of experience, is a valuable asset. Too often, retirees move to the sun belt, or a golfing community, or otherwise retire from actively contributing to society. But studies show that new retirees are often receptive to on-going contributions. They often want to continue learning, and to keep working and contributing - on a full or part time or volunteer basis.

My partners and I at Campus Continuum have been conducting surveys of homeowners, age 55+, with college degrees, for the last year or more. Working on behalf of colleges including Juniata College (PA), U. of Wisconsin, Oshkosh; UMass Dartmouth; and St. Francis University(PA) our surveys have found a great interest - among empty nesters in their late 50's and 60's - in moving to a condominium community tightly linked to a college or university. Rather than wrapping a community around a golf course, we collaborate with a college or university to build on or next to their campus. Our residents are given "faculty-like" access to the campus, and this is a powerful attraction. This benefits the college in a number of ways - financially, by adding educational resources and potential adjunct faculty, by supporting and adding programs, and by helping students, also in a number of ways. These retirees are eager to share in the cultural aspects of campus life - and add to them. They are eager to tutor, mentor, career counsel, and generally assist young people move ahead. They enrich the campus with a wealth of experience and knowledge - and pay the school for the opportunity!

This is a different application of effort for your group - but I suggest that encouraging this type of active retirement community at your state schools - and many are in lovely areas - would be a big plus for Connecticut in general, and the school and its community in particular.

Campus Continuum is a Massachusetts partnership that has been pioneering in this market place. We would be glad to share our experience so far. I'd be glad to take a call anytime, or you may wish to visit our website, [campuscontinuum.com](http://campuscontinuum.com)

Sincerely,  
Robert Chellis

**From:** *Sender's name requested to be withheld*  
**Sent:** Monday, November 26, 2007 1:57 PM  
**To:** CT Strategic Plan  
**Subject:** strategic plan

Dear Mr. McMillan:

I applaud the initiative that brings your effort to my attention.

The public venues through which general public comments will be captured repel me but, if you are interested, and you give me a manner and format through which to communicate with you, I am interested in providing you several ideas.

One involves a simple idea about reducing the cost of energy in Connecticut, the next increases the availability of working capital funds to things that develop business and business growth locally, and the third is a window to future US Space policy that I see developing over the medium and long term. Each idea feeds into the "responsible growth initiative" and support "transit-oriented development" as requested by our governor.

Best Personal Regards,

**From:** Laurie Krause  
**Sent:** Friday, November 30, 2007 10:12 AM  
**To:** CT Strategic Plan  
**Subject:** Support for Affordable Housing

**Hello – this is to lend my support for the fact that affordable housing and supportive housing is essential to the state's current and future economic health. The following extremely pertinent information has been provided by Partnership for Strong Communities:**

Due to housing costs that have risen more than 70% since 2000, nearly 3 times wage increases, too many workers spend too much of their income on rent and mortgage payments, with increasingly less left over for food, transportation, clothing, healthcare and recreation. Since just 2004, the number of burdened households - earning less than 80% of area median income and spending more than 30% of that income on housing - has grown from 19% to 26%! Since 2000, we have lost 4% of our affordable smaller 1- and 2BR units, and increased the supply of 4-, 5- and 6BR homes by nearly 11%.

**Without housing that is affordable, Connecticut will see economic growth and social problems:**

1. Young professionals and families will seek more affordable starter homes in other states (CT has lost more 25-34-year-old population than any other state since 1990)
2. Businesses seeking affordable and trained labor pools will not come, stay or expand here.
3. The state will continue to lack production of managerial and professional jobs.
4. People who are very low income and who have disabilities or illnesses are at a greater risk of homelessness.

**Connecticut can solve its fiscal problems by producing housing that is affordable:**

- The construction and occupation of new housing is a proven producer of sales and income tax revenue to the state, and property tax to municipalities.
- Housing for workers will foster an increase in the stagnant population growth the state has experienced (allowing for increased federal aid and obviating the threat of a future loss in Congressional seats).
- Supportive housing can provide the stability that many individuals who have experienced long-term homelessness need to get back to work, paying taxes and no longer needing expensive state and municipal services.
- Building green and sustainable housing can help alleviate high energy costs for households.
- Housing built as a vital part of transit-oriented development can save gasoline costs, unclog congested highways and reduce air pollution.

- Developing new supportive housing sites in coordination with the state's transit-oriented development initiative would provide residents with transportation they need to get back to work.

**I hope that you will consider this and know that housing must be considered as the central element of Connecticut's economic development policy. Thank you very much for your time and consideration, and I hope you enjoy your holiday season!**

Laurie E. Krause, Chairman, CMBA's Affordable Housing Committee

**First Bankers Mortgage Company**

270 Farmington Avenue, Suite 325

Farmington, CT 06032