

**Department of Economic and Community Development  
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009**

**Community Infrastructure Projects**

The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) has awarded six towns \$3.4 million in federal stimulus funds for a variety of infrastructure and community development projects that will help create a demand for jobs while improving the quality of life in some blighted neighborhoods. The stimulus funds as authorized under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) are being disbursed to Enfield, Naugatuck, Plainfield, Torrington, Wallingford, and Windsor. Contracts with the towns for the stimulus funds awarded for projects approved by DECD are projected to be executed by November 30<sup>th</sup>. Towns will undertake the bidding process for projects during the month of December. Towns are projected to start projects by the spring of 2010.

Summaries of the projects follow:

- **Enfield (\$500,000)** – An area in the Thompsonville section of town is at risk to become blighted as several private properties have been foreclosed or abandoned. With a \$500,000 grant, the town plans to buy, rehabilitate, and resell these properties to promote economic recovery in the area and help those most affected by the recession. The rehabilitated properties will promote energy efficiency and conservation. It is estimated that five (5) construction jobs will be created as a result of this activity. The rehabilitated properties will be re-sold to low- and moderate-income persons as part of a Neighborhood Stabilization Program.
- **Naugatuck (\$420,000)** – The town will use its \$420,000 grant to replace 4,000 linear feet of crumbling sidewalks on the east and west sides of Cherry Street. The replacement project, which will include ADA improvements, will enhance pedestrian mobility to nearby shopping, municipal facilities, post office, senior center, banks, medical offices and other activities that are vital to downtown economic revitalization efforts. The replacement of sidewalks and curbing will allow pedestrians to cross street intersection by ramps and detections creating a sense of “walk ability”. This activity, which benefits low- and moderate-income persons, will increase pedestrian activity and reduce vehicle usage in instances. It is estimated that twenty-four (24) construction jobs will be created by this activity.
- **Plainfield (\$500,000)** – The town has a plan to increase pedestrian safety and promote homeownership and reinvestment in the Wauregan and Central Village sections. The project uses the \$500,000 grant to replace cracked and dilapidated sidewalks, incorporate ADA requirements, and improve drainage. The goal is to improve the quality of life in the areas and encourage further private investments. The replacement of sidewalks and curbing will allow pedestrians to cross street intersections by ramps and detections creating a sense of “walk ability”.

This activity, which benefits low- and moderate-income persons, will increase pedestrian activity and reduce vehicle usage in instances. It is estimated that ten (10) construction jobs will be created by this activity.

- **Torrington (\$367,500)** – The city will receive a \$367,500 grant to replace 9,000 feet of sidewalks on Water Street from Main to Prospect Streets. The area has been severely affected by foreclosures. City officials believe the project, which is adjacent to the downtown area, will complement the city revitalization plan by improving accessibility and mobility on the street and enhance the image for existing residents and future investors. The City is working closely with the Department of Economic and Community Development to develop a Revitalization Plan for major renovation and construction. The project will complement the endeavor and have an immediate impact in stabilizing the neighborhood by providing improved accessibility and mobility on the street and improve the image and perception of the area for existing and future investors. The replacement of sidewalks and curbing will allow pedestrians to cross street intersections by ramps and detections creating a sense of “walk ability”. This activity, which benefits low- and moderate-income persons, will increase pedestrian activity and reduce vehicle usage in instances. It is estimated that twenty-six (26) construction jobs will be created by this activity.
- **Wallingford (\$971,400)** – Two sidewalk replacement projects will have an immediate impact in stabilizing areas by improving the image and accessibility on the street. The town will use its \$971,400 grant to replace deteriorated sidewalks near Ulbrich Heights, a 132 rental unit residential housing complex for low- and moderate-income families and a 40 unit elderly housing complex, and surrounding streets. The projects include new sidewalks, curbing and drainage, and addresses ADA requirements. The replacement of sidewalks and curbing will allow pedestrians to cross street intersections by ramps and detections creating a sense of “walk ability”. These activities, which benefits low- and moderate-income persons, will increase pedestrian activity and reduce vehicle usage in instances. It is estimated that twenty (20) construction jobs will be created by these two activities.
- **Windsor (\$640,500)** – The town is proposing to raze two blighted properties, one a former tavern and another a former motel near the intersection of Interstate 91 and Route 305. The demolition is a part of the town’s effort to redevelop and revitalize the area. Special considerations will be given to the construction of commercial and residential structures on these sites that will incorporate smart growth and energy efficiency standards in the design of buildings. A second project will be to construct and/or reconstruct the sidewalks in the Deerfield section of town. The replacement of sidewalks and curbing will allow pedestrians to cross street intersections by ramps and detections creating a sense of “walk ability”. This activity will increase pedestrian activity and reduce vehicle usage in instances.

Also, the installation of additional sidewalks will effectively encourage the use of mass transit by providing a means to walk to the numerous bus stops in a safe fashion. For the third project the town is proposing to use its \$640,500 grant to create a rehabilitation/refinancing program to help existing homeowners make necessary improvements to their homes and help others stay in their home by restructuring debt. This Neighborhood Stabilization Program is intended to minimize the impact that the housing crisis is taking on both families and neighborhoods. It is estimated that these three activities, which benefits low- and moderate-income persons, will create seven (7) construction jobs.

- The Department conducted ARRA reporting training and a Q & A session for the six CDBG-R recipients.

## **Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2**

The Connecticut Consortium has submitted an application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban requesting ARRA funding of \$45,000,000 to supplement the initial Neighborhood Stabilization Program authorized by the Federal government. Consortium participants have reached across their traditional sectors of activity to create a coordinated, statewide program for stabilizing neighborhoods impacted by foreclosure.

The Connecticut Consortium members are:

- The Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (*Lead Applicant*);
- The City of Bridgeport;
- The City of Hartford;
- The City of New Haven;
- The City of Stamford;
- The Corporation for Independent Living;
- The Greater New Haven Community Loan Fund; and
- Neighborhood Housing Services of Connecticut, Inc.

The goal of Connecticut's program is to stabilize and transform Connecticut neighborhoods through the application of targeted, comprehensive strategies that promote physical revitalization, economic growth and opportunity, and enhanced quality of life.

Federal NSP2 Funds will be used to support the following activities as a part of this program:

- Acquisition & Rehabilitation;
- Redevelopment; and
- Financing Mechanisms.

Complementary activities that are expected to be leveraged against NSP2 activity include:

- Code Enforcement & Demolition;
- Infrastructure & Open Space Development;
- Housing Counseling & Services;
- Community Safety & Services; and
- Comprehensive Community Partnerships.

### **Marketing/Technical Assistance**

The Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) continues to promote the ARRA funding solicitations and provide technical assistance to businesses interested in pursuing opportunities in the areas of Economic and Business Development, Community and Brownfield Development; Housing Development and Energy by:

- Maintaining and updating the DECD's Recovery website;
- Providing letters of endorsements for application submissions;
- Reviewing solicitations and providing pertinent information to companies based on their specific needs/opportunities; and
- Matching companies up with the appropriate opportunities.

### **Energy**

- Provided a letter of support for The Greater New Haven Clean Cities Coalition, Inc.'s Connecticut Clean Cities Future Fuels Project which was awarded \$13,195,000. The project will deploy multiple fuels and technologies. Vehicles to be deployed include 163 CNG, the vast majority for high mileage taxis and 18 heavy-duty LNG refuse trucks. Infrastructure to be deployed includes three CNG stations, one combined B20/CNG/Electric station, one L/CNG station, one hydrogen station, and seven electric chargers. DOE estimates that the initiative will help displace 1.4 million gallons of petroleum annually.
- Responded to 21 inquiries and made referrals to other state and federal programs/resources.
- DECD, CI and CCEF staff coordinates and collaborate on potential projects that may include ARRA funding.

### **Weatherization Assistance Program**

As a result of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), the State of Connecticut is designated as a grantee for the federal Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) for low-income people. The ARRA WAP is a temporary three year stimulus program designed to create new green technology jobs and assist low-income persons to minimize energy-related costs and fuel usage in their homes.

The Department of Social Services (DSS), which has traditionally handled weatherization for Connecticut, will receive additional funding in the amount of \$64.3 million from the federal Department of Energy (DOE) to carry out the ARRA WAP.

The DOE-approved ARRA WAP state plan authorized the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to act as a subgrantee of DSS for participation in the ARRA WAP program and to provide weatherization services to the state-financed portfolio of housing. These properties generally house very low income persons, as well as persons with disabilities and families, and typically generate very high fuel bills.

DSS has allocated approximately \$19 million to DECD for energy efficiency improvements.

Connecticut's state-financed rental housing stock includes more than 8,100 units for the elderly and disabled and more than 7,800 units of family housing. More than 30% of state-financed rental housing is more than 50 years old. This means that most housing of this type was built at a time when energy costs were low and the technology to produce energy-efficient housing was unavailable. The goal for DECD is to weatherize between 2,350 units and 2,850 units of state-financed housing over the term of the ARRA WAP funding which begins April 1, 2009 and ends June 30, 2012.

The purpose of the DECD weatherization initiative is to install energy conservation measures in state-financed rental housing of income-eligible persons, primarily rental units occupied elderly person who pay their own utilities.

DECD through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process will select a contractor to assist in the implementation of the WAP program by the first week of December.

DECD will "divide" its 2,850 units of state-financed housing to be weatherized by region and will use regional boundaries that align the Weatherization Program Service Delivery Areas of Connecticut Community Action Agencies. The five (5) service delivery areas with the corresponding number of state-financed rental units with potential to be weatherized are as follows:

- 456 units in the ABCD Area (Action for Bridgeport Community Development, Inc.) with properties primary in Fairfield County;
- 855 units in the CRT Area (Community Renewal Team) with properties in the central corridor of Connecticut from Granby, Suffield, and Enfield through the Greater Hartford area down to Branford, Guilford, Madison, Clinton, Westbrook and Old Saybrook;
- 285 units in the Greater New Haven and Derby areas and covered by New Opportunities, Inc.;
- 70 units in New Opportunities, Inc. Area, with properties in the Greater Danbury, Torrington-Northwest Connecticut and Waterbury areas; and

- 684 units in the ACCESS Area (ACCESS Community Action Agency, Inc.) with properties in the Northeastern and Southeastern sections of the state.

Typical weatherization services shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Clean, tune, test, and safety check heating systems;
- Replacements of oil burners;
- Installation of programmable thermostats;
- Pipe and duct insulation;
- Crawlspace ceiling installation;
- Installation of insulation on hot water heaters;
- Installation of carbon monoxide/smoke detectors;
- Blower door directed air-sealing guidance;
- Attic insulation;
- Sidewall insulation;
- Heating system repairs/replacements;
- Repair or replacement of primary windows and/or doors; and
- Repair or replacement of storm windows and/or doors.

#### **Other ARRA Activities**

- DECD coordinated the implementation plan with the Connecticut Development Authority (CDA) for the ARRA Recovery Zone Bonding Programs; and
- DECD supported Four TIGER Grant applications to FTA submitted September 15<sup>th</sup>.