

PROMOTE APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Overview

This “briefing booklet” has been prepared as part of the process of preparing an update to the 2008 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Branford. This booklet is intended to familiarize the members of the POCD Update Committee and others existing and potential future strategies related to economic development.

What Is “Economic Development”?

For the purposes of the POCD, “economic development” could be considered to include any development which provides one or more of the following:

- jobs / income for people,
- goods and services for people and/or businesses, and/or
- net tax revenue to the municipality (revenues generated exceed the cost of services provided).

Many people think that “economic development” only includes business and industrial development. However, some other uses (such as age-restricted housing) can also be economic development since they provide these same benefits (jobs, services, and tax revenues exceed the cost of services provided).

Hospitality / Tourism



Healthcare



Economic Areas

The main economic development areas in Branford include:

- Branford Town Center
- Railroad Station / Transit-Oriented Development Areas
- Route 1 West
- Exit 53 / part of Route 1)
- Exit 54 / part of Route 1
- Exit 55 / part of Route 1
- Exit 56 / part of Route 1

There are some other business areas in Stony Creek, Indian Neck, Short Beach, marinas, etc.

Background

Inventory

Branford is fortunate to have strong business and economic development portfolio. Available information indicates that Branford has over 1,000 businesses providing employment for over 12,000 people. The payroll from these businesses supports residents of Branford and the region. The value added by local industries and the retail sales in local businesses indicate that Branford is supporting the availability goods and services to the community and the region. According to the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC), about 13 percent of Branford's tax base consists of commercial and industrial properties.

Assessment

While employment and other metrics can fluctuate due to overall economic conditions, Branford has a diversified economic development portfolio. According to studies of the south central Connecticut region, the business sectors that were found to be the most economically viable and are considered to be economic development priorities include:

- Healthcare, Biomedical & Life Sciences
- Higher Education
- Arts, Entertainment & Tourism
- Advanced Materials & Manufacturing

Branford has attracted a number of these types of businesses and hopes to continue to do so in the future.

A buildout study conducted by SCRCOG in 2010 estimated that, even after considering environmental constraints, the land in the business zones in Branford might support an additional 840,000 SF of floor area and the industrial zones might support an additional 3,000,000 SF of floor area.

2008 POCD

GOAL	Provide for businesses and services that meet community needs
STRATEGIES	Identify "ideal" business mix Encourage "green" business development Provide tax incentives Create a façade improvement program Improve Town / business communication

Economic Development

Branford, CT

North
Branford

East
Haven

Guilford

Branford
Hill

Branford Center

Pine Orchard

Stony Creek

Indian
Neck

Short Beach

Business Zones

- Central Business (BC)
- Local Business (BL)
- Restricted Business (BR)
- Commercial Park (CP)

Industrial Zones

- General Industry-1 (IG-1)
- General Industry-2 (IG-2)

Residential Zones

- Residential Zone

4,000 Feet

Possible Strategies For 2018 POCD

NEW STRATEGY

Support Overall Economic Development

Five-Year Update

The Planning and Zoning Commission revised regulations for:

- Home businesses;
- Bed and breakfast establishments;
- Limited retail in industrial zones;
- Animal day care;
- Assisted living / continuing care facilities;
- Design guidelines to improve facades of commercial uses.

A. Overall Economic Environment		Comments
1. Support programs and policies that create a “fertile environment” for economic growth in Branford.		
<i>a. Investigate ways to create incentives to support existing and new economic development.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>b. Investigate ways to reduce impediments that deter existing and new economic development.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>c. Conduct a new “business survey” to update important issues and concerns from the 2002 survey.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>d. Consider refreshing / reviewing the “targeted industry” report for guidance regarding future opportunities.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

NEW STRATEGY

Support Existing Businesses

Five-Year Update

The Economic Development Commission and/or staff:

- prepared a Targeted Industry Study;
- hosted programs for local businesses;
- evaluated tax incentive programs (not implemented);
- evaluated façade improvement programs (not implemented);
- created on-line forums for various business segments.

A. Existing Businesses		Comments
1. Support the efforts of local businesses to thrive and grow in Branford.		
2. Encourage residents to support local businesses.		
3. Maintain a “business-friendly” approach in accordance with other POCD recommendations.		
4. Express appreciation to existing and new businesses and industries.		
<i>a. Consider supporting and promoting business appreciation events for different economic sectors in Branford:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Manufacturers / technology</i> • <i>Retailers / service providers</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Attract New Economic Development

NEW
STRATEGY

A. Economic Expansion		Comments
2. Promote appropriate economic development in Branford.		
<i>a. Seek to attract bio-science, technology, advanced manufacturing, and similar industries that strengthen existing economic "clusters" in Branford.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Continue programs to assist appropriate new economic development opportunities.		
<i>a. Encourage brokers to use CERC Sitefinder and other programs to share information on available sites.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>b. Provide information on economic incentives.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>c. Provide information on, and assistance with, the land use permit and approval process.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Continue to work with local, regional, and state organizations to promote appropriate economic development in Branford.		

Promote Tourism

NEW
STRATEGY

Promote Tourism	Comments
1. Work with local businesses to link together existing tourism assets and attract new ones: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thimble Islands • Stony Creek Quarry • Brewery Tours • Jazz on the Green • Walkable downtown / harbor • Museums / Historical properties • Shoreline East Rail Service • Lodging establishments • Hospitality (restaurants, etc.) • Shoreline Greenway • Branford Open Space / Trails 	

Enhance Economic Opportunity Areas

A. Town Center And Villages	Comments
1. Continue to support businesses and activities in the Town Center in order to create a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly area.	
2. As appropriate, support businesses and activities in the village centers in order to create a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly area.	

B. Exit 53	Comments
1. Continue to work with State and regional agencies to coordinate development and redevelopment opportunities at Exit 53.	
2. Continue to work with State and regional agencies to improve the Exit 53 interchange with additional ramps (NB on ramp and SB off-ramp).	

Concept Study – Exit 53



C. Route 1 Corridor	Comments
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support development / redevelopment of the Route 1 corridor to reflect current community desires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design review to get better building design • Design review to get better landscaping, shielded parking, etc. • Mixed-use sites / buildings to reflect changing demand for retail uses • Property consolidation to maximize development flexibility • Access management to reduce curb cuts • Pervious pavement to reduce runoff • Shared parking to reduce pavement • Better stormwater management 	

D. Industrial / Other Areas	Comments
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to monitor and manage traffic flows and patterns near Exit 56 to avoid traffic congestion. 	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Revisit the Industrial zoning designations where industrial development may not be feasible or desirable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The triangle south of I-95 between the Exit 53 connector and the railroad tracks • Some areas along the Branford River waterfront at Maple Street / Meadow Street area (Town Center) • Tabor Drive area • North side of Route 1 between North Ivy Street and North Chestnut Street 	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Consider creating a Business – Marina Zone. 	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Consider whether the Local Business (BL) zone on Double Beach Road is appropriate or whether the existing use can be accommodated as a Special permit use in a residential zone. 	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Consider whether the Restricted Business (BR) zone on Route 1 East at the Guilford / North Branford line is appropriate. 	

Reference Materials

- ## Notes & Comments

