Panel Discussion: Developing Economically Sustainable Communities
Evolving Trends and Issues

Mark Nielsen
Director of Planning
NVCOG
19 Cities and Towns
Centered around Waterbury
Bristol to the North
Shelton to the South
448,745 Residents (2014 ACS)
Historically...

- Robust Manufacturing Economy
- Compact, Walkable & Vibrant Town Centers Arose Around Industry
- Infrastructure Built to Support Population
- Geography and Waterways Constrained Growth
- Connected by Rivers, Then Rail and Trolley Lines
Then...

- Flood of 1955
- Highway Construction Changed the Character of the Region
- Businesses Began to Relocate
- Downtowns Declined and Became Underpopulated
- Factories Closed - "Brownfields"
Today…
A Region in Motion

2 Million Daily Trips
Transportation System

• Diverse
• Mature Network of Highways and Roads
  • I-84 / Route 8
  • US Route 6 / Route 34
  • Other State Routes
• Commuter Rail
Transportation System

Local Fixed Route Bus Systems

- **North East Transportation (NET)**
  - Waterbury, Wolcott, Watertown, Middlebury, Naugatuck

- **Greater Bridgeport Transit (GBT)**
  - Lower Valley to Bridgeport

- **CT Transit – New Britain**
  - Bristol to New Britain

- **CT Transit – New Haven**
  - Service to New Haven

- **CTfastrak**
  - New Britain and Express to Hartford
Daily Commute Trips

- **124,000** To and From Hartford and North East
- **91,200** To and From New Haven and South East
- **70,600** To and From Bridgeport, Stamford and South West
- **30,000** To and From Danbury, New York State and West
- **140,000** Remain Within the Region
Issues

• Highway Infrastructure Deteriorating – Needs Rehab
• I-84 & Route 8 Carrying More Vehicles than they were designed to handle
• Rail Service Underutilized
  • Doesn’t Meet the Needs of Most Commuters
• Investment in Transit will help Avoid Costly Highway Repairs
In the next 20 years...

- Growing Population = Increased Traffic, Congestion, Delays
  - Focus on Alternate Modes
- Aging population – more people older than 65
  - Focus on Mobility and Access
- Online Retail Increasing
  - Focus on Freight
- Population Shifting Back to Cities
  - Focus on Transit and Walkable Centers
- Investment in Existing Infrastructure
  - Focus on WBL, brownfields = livable, walkable communities
People and Places – Framing the New Economy

NVision 2020 Naugatuck Valley Corridor Conference on Infrastructure and Development

Laura Brown, Community & Economic Development Educator
UConn Department of Extension

January 28, 2016
Waterbury, Connecticut
What is Economic Development?

A set of purpose-based strategies and actions that **improve the economic well being and quality of life for a community**. These actions are defined through a **process** of identifying and analyzing economic issues, building and mobilizing assets, and reconciling differing values and goals.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old Economy</th>
<th>New Economy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic Drivers</td>
<td>Economic Drivers</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MANUFACTURING &amp; AGRICULTURE</strong></td>
<td><strong>SERVICE &amp; TECHNOLOGY</strong></td>
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<td>Focus on a</td>
<td>Focus on</td>
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<td><strong>SINGLE SECTOR</strong></td>
<td>REGIONAL CONNECTIONS AND DIVERSIFICATION</td>
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<td>Attracting</td>
<td>Attracting and growing</td>
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<td><strong>INDUSTRIES</strong></td>
<td><strong>TALENT</strong></td>
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<td>Success is measured by a fixed</td>
<td>Success is measured by the</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE</strong></td>
<td><strong>ABILITY TO LEARN &amp; ADAPT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical environment &amp; cultural</td>
<td>Physical environment &amp; cultural</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>AMENITIES ARE SECONDARY</strong></td>
<td><strong>AMENITIES ARE PRIMARY TO ATTRACTING TALENT</strong></td>
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How Important is quality of place?

“As the current trend of growing dependence on technical skills continues in the global economy, quality of life, however it's defined, will steadily rise on the list of location selection factors. Accordingly, communities that foster quality of life will almost certainly be far more likely to attract investment.”

- Site Selection Online
  August 2008
Thank you!

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Housing and Transit: Dollars and Sense!

David Fink
Policy Director, Partnership for Strong Communities
Housing & Transit: Benefitting Towns, The State & Its Residents

- The market IS DEMANDING multifamily homes
- Boomers haven’t saved
- Millennials have debt, no interest in SF
- Towns have too much SF, shrinking grand lists, no way in for new residents
- State needs new, younger population, spending on other-than-housing
- >40 TOWNS have mass transit access
Housing & Transit: Dollars & Sense!

Reconnecting America:
Housing 32%, Transportation 19% BUT 9% near mass transit – lots $$ left over for economy

Housing Near Transit:
Denser, more energy efficient, walkable, more affordable, more palatable
CAN CREATE recreational, dining, gathering district.

STATE PREPARED offering aid
Naugatuck: A Model For Transit Oriented Development (TOD), Public/Private Partnerships

Mayor Pete Hess
Borough of Naugatuck
Naugatuck TOD

Project Area:
- Today - 4 Downtown Parcels
- Access to Greenway & Transit
- Working With CTDOT to Relocate Metro North Station

TOD Project Area

½ Mile Buffer of Train Station (Relocated)
Naugatuck TOD

- Reclaiming Former Industrial Sites
- Mixed Use Development
- Centered on Transit Connections
- Bike/Ped/Greenway Access
- Partnering With Private Developers
Key to Attracting Investment/Private Partnerships

• Borough Site Control
• Initial Public Investments
  • Brownfields
  • Transportation
• Zoning Regulations
• Staying the Course