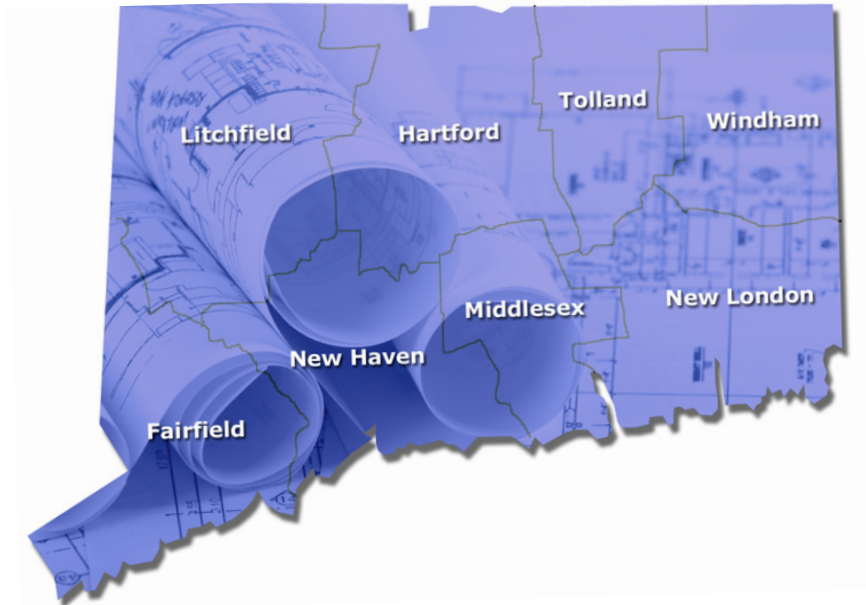


# Prosperity for All:

## A Blueprint for Connecticut's Future

January 2009



### Our Vision for Connecticut: Prosperity for All

In a changing and competitive world, the overarching goal for Connecticut should be to secure **a prosperous future**, which nourishes the major engines of wealth creation, enables entrepreneurs to flourish, creates well-paying jobs, and sustains a high quality of life. **Prosperity depends on building an economy that is fully competitive in the global marketplace.**

Prosperity must extend to **all of our people**. We seek a positive, improving future, the elements of which are accessible to all of our children, not just a few. Securing greater **competitiveness and prosperity for all of us** necessarily involves making it possible for each individual to prosper.

We seek a foundation for **prosperity that will be sustained**. The benefit to be sought is long-term, not short-term – a legacy, not a temporary or transitory gain which saddles generations to come with the deferred cost of paying for our current gratification.

In the spirit of the recent awakening of a civically-engaged electorate, our group believes that citizens can come together to solve our shared problems. Public-spirited citizens of Connecticut who share our concern for the future and subscribe to the general principles outlined in this [Blueprint](#) are invited to join us.

The authors of this [Blueprint](#) are all members of a working group of civically-involved citizens convinced that Connecticut's future should not merely be subject to the whims of fortune, like a leaf blown about by swirling winds in a chaotic storm of events, but that our state should develop a vision to which it could aspire, and a strategic plan to make that vision a reality. The authors are: Carol Shaw Austad, David Blitz, Leo Canty, Bill Cibes, David Fink, Shelley Geballe, Heidi Green, Jim Horan, Ned Lamont, Matthew Nemerson, Paul Petterson, Diane Randall, and Lyle Wray,

Others who participated in the discussions leading to the development of this [Blueprint](#) included: Chris Bruhl, Mike Critelli, Tom D'Amore, Elliot Ginsberg, Oz Griebel, Bob Hohler, Dara Kovel, Sal Luciano, Sharon Palmer, Bob Santy, Tom Swan, and Pat Wallace. Their constructive suggestions were most welcome.

We want to thank President Jack Miller and Vice President Chris Galligan of Central Connecticut State University for providing the working group with a congenial environment for our discussions and First Experience Communications for providing public relations and design services.

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# Prosperity for All



If we were like Alice in Wonderland, we in Connecticut could muddle along contentedly from day to day without knowing what we want to achieve. “Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?” Alice asked the Cheshire Cat. “That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,” said the Cat. “I don’t much care where,” said Alice. “Then it doesn’t matter which way you go,” said the Cat.

But we are not like Alice. We know where we want to “get to.” Our goal – our vision – is **prosperity for all**. And we believe we need a blueprint to get there.

This is our contribution to the development of that blueprint.

## Our Vision for Connecticut: Prosperity for All

In a changing and competitive world, the overarching goal for Connecticut should be to secure **a prosperous future**, which nourishes the major engines of wealth creation, enables entrepreneurs to flourish, creates well-paying jobs, and sustains a high quality of life. **Prosperity depends on building an economy that is fully competitive in the global marketplace.**

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**We believe that certain bedrock beliefs are shared by a growing number of Connecticut citizens:**

1. Good government is **proactive**. Government is the only institution representing all of society. No other institution, no matter how dedicated, public spirited and full of integrity, adequately represents the whole public interest.
2. Good government **plans**<sup>1</sup>, developing a roadmap to guide decision-makers as they act to implement the state's vision of the public good.
3. Good government invests in programs each of which produces a **public good with a high rate of return on investment**.
4. Connecticut is part of the United States. When our national government strives to achieve a vision consistent with that of Connecticut, our government in Connecticut should **synchronize our policies with those national programs** that facilitate our own goals.
5. Connecticut is part of the New England and Northeastern economic regions. Our state should **collaborate with neighboring states** to improve the competitiveness of the entire area.
6. Connecticut's towns are an integral part of the whole state. **All towns and regions of the state should synchronize their policies and planning with those of the state.**
7. Connecticut should **leverage our key assets** like innovation, human capital, infrastructure and quality of life.<sup>2</sup>
8. If resources are not immediately available, we should identify how appropriated and capital investments can be phased-in over a period of time to sustain progress. At a bare minimum, we should **allocate available funds so as to "do no harm."** We should do nothing in the short term that does not support a long-term goal.

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<sup>1</sup>Thinking and acting with strategic and long-term perspective is vital to achieving our vision. Strategic planning enables proactive governance. Strategic planning helps avoid the cost of bad results, which we believe stem from reactive governance, or "drift," in which there is no decision-making at all. Strategic planning when done well facilitates adaptation to changing environments. Strategic planning focuses discussions between policymakers and administrators and improves coordination among departments. It encourages synergy between national and state programs, so the resources of both are maximized. It links budgets to outcomes, helping to identify and re-allocate squandered resources, such as duplicate programs. Good planning establishes funding priorities which identify key areas for economic and social development that should be protected from budget cuts in times of economic downturn, and which should be the major recipients of additional funds as new revenues become available. It creates more accountable and transparent government. In the end, it may lead to increased participation by grassroots citizens in decision making.

<sup>2</sup>Four assets identified as key by the Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institution.

## Key Action Items for 2009



Our “Blueprint for Connecticut” outlines a long-term vision and strategic plan to make Connecticut competitive in the future global economy. But we also recognize that we face the challenge of an immediate fiscal crisis: budget deficits of major magnitude over the next three fiscal years, combined with large unfunded liabilities for retiree pension and health commitments.

To address these more immediate difficulties, we developed a supplemental paper, “Act Now: Balance the Budget and Prepare for the Future.” It outlines actions for FY 2010 and FY 2011 that:

- address our state’s underlying weaknesses by **investing in the foundations for future economic competitiveness**,
- **spare our most vulnerable residents** from the most severe consequences of these difficult times, and
- **fairly share the burden** of the increased taxes that will inevitably be required.

Today’s challenges cannot be solved by adhering to the Connecticut tradition of “the land of steady habits.” Nor can they be met by an apathetic or uninformed citizenry, nor empty rhetoric, nor self-destructive electoral anger. They cannot be solved by a rainy day fund that is less than one third of the looming deficits, nor can one-shot federal stimulus payments reasonably be expected to close long-term structural operating budget shortfalls.

We must be willing to make the right choices, as well as the tough ones. We must share sacrifice, not merely vent frustration. Most importantly, we need to see these times as transformational, not temporary. Our choices must be about fundamentals, not phantom fixes.

This is why it is important to keep an eye toward the future while we make short-term budget decisions.



## Connecticut's Long-Term Prosperity Depends on Leveraging Key Assets

To a great degree, Connecticut's prosperity hinges on American prosperity. Both currently face a "perfect storm" of obstacles to achieving the goal. Increasingly, the United States is but a player in a competitive global economy, and the competitive advantages on which the nation formerly relied – knowledge, technology, a skilled workforce – are diminishing as other countries match and surpass our achievements.

As other nations become more economically competitive and wealth and jobs flow abroad, the United States and Connecticut are experiencing a restructuring of jobs. There are fewer jobs which produce goods, and a relative increase in service jobs – both at the high end (financial services) and the low end (fast food). Moreover, high end service jobs can move overseas fairly easily under certain circumstances. Even now, there are growing income inequalities, in part a consequence of a lack of educational attainment.<sup>3</sup> But because of the current income inequality and its adverse effect on educational achievement of those at the lower end of the spectrum, the lack of preparation for jobs requiring knowledge will only exacerbate future disparities. We need to confront these projected problems and find ways to overcome them.

Moreover, like most other states, we continue to face the specter of continued uncontrolled sprawl, which creates additional barriers to restoring our competitiveness. We in Connecticut may not see the rapid population growth over the next forty years that will occur mainly in the South and West – although we would welcome new workers to our workforce. Nonetheless, sprawl remains unabated. Failing to modify land use rules that require large lots for residential uses spreads out the population and significantly raises the costs of housing and transportation. Failing to locate people close to jobs and shopping, or close to energy-efficient modes of transporting them back and forth, frustrates our ability to conserve energy, reduce harmful emissions and avoid environmental degradation. It also drastically raises the cost of infrastructure – such as roads, schools and public safety protection – necessary to service their needs. And because only relatively affluent residents can afford to pay these extra costs, sprawl encourages segregation by income, and indeed makes some essential elements of prosperity unaffordable to large segments of the population. To combat sprawl, it is critical to encourage urban investment and discourage urban disinvestment.

To meet the challenges we face, we need to strategically align our investments to leverage the key assets of innovation, human capital, infrastructure, and quality of life and place.<sup>4</sup> If we seize the opportunity to do so, we can prosper.

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<sup>3</sup>Bruce Katz, of the Brookings Institution, has called this phenomenon the "iron law of wages" – "the more you learn, the more you earn."

<sup>4</sup>As David Osborne and Peter Hutchinson observe in *The Price of Government*, "(J)ust as driving the price of government too high can damage an economy, so driving the price too low can undermine its viability. In the Information Age, the keys to economic success are education levels, quality of life, and connectivity (the ability to reliably move information, goods, and people) – and these things cost money." (pages 57-58)



“Today what matters most isn’t whether companies simply create or use technology, but how they apply innovation to compete – innovation in new product ideation, research, growth strategy and manufacturing,” says the Connecticut Technology Council. It sees “a window of opportunity for Connecticut to position itself as a place where innovation thrives – a place where support for new ideas, technology transfer, collaboration, risk capital, spinoffs and inventions flourish.” Connecticut should seek to create true new wealth, not just convert deficit spending into temporary opportunities.

For its size and resources, our state has been one of the world’s most successful sovereign units at creating wealth. Over the past two centuries, Connecticut has flourished by leveraging a combination of relentless innovation, large supplies of capital from New York and Boston, accumulations of important patents, an infrastructure that connected its rocky and hilly land to the world, personal and corporate connections, and politically bold public support for private efforts.

Over a period of time, Connecticut must transition from a state in which a few large companies dominated the private sector, to one in which productivity is based on entrepreneurial small and medium-sized businesses. The state should become one of the unique places which are attractive to the unusual innovator, who is so often the progenitor of a new cluster of economic activity.

Connecticut has a number of advantages in areas required for innovation. It is small enough to facilitate interaction among its economic units. It ranks high in the number of patents granted per capita. It ranks high in the number of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher. But there are specific policies that must be in place to support innovation. (And there is a need to invest in human capital to ensure that the workforce has the skills to support innovation in Connecticut.)

- Develop a superlative, integrated state-wide response system to welcome, analyze and, when appropriate, assist innovators from the state, the Northeast, the country and the world. Understand issues of culture and competitive advantage for each type of “innovation immigrant.”
- Provide the most targeted and useful early stage financing and assistance – based on best practices of competitive states –for carefully selected high potential concepts and businesses.
- Initiate a state tax credit program to match a percentage of bona fide very early private investments in Connecticut companies.
- Expand and develop additional unique features of the existing R&D tax credit programs and trade-in opportunities.



- Develop support for clusters that take advantage of Connecticut's key industry areas and the realities of the direction of their development:
  - Information technology and productivity software for insurance and financial services
  - Modeling and product development in manufacturing
  - Molecular modeling for biotech
  - Aerospace design and assembly
- Explore expanding concentrations in:
  - Defense communications and data protection
  - Military intelligence equipment and systems
  - Homeland Security applications
- Consider special support for building capacities to serve global clean energy markets such as fuel cells, batteries, and solar and nuclear energy technology research and development.
- Encourage expansion of nanotechnology and plastics & polymer technology from central Massachusetts into Connecticut.
- Maintain existing and develop new incentive support for biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies.
- Leverage existing capacity to provide world-class medical procedures to non-residents.
- Keep producing skilled workers to support Connecticut's primary economic clusters, like financial services.



## Education

Education is critically linked to productivity and our state's ability to provide a qualified workforce for present and future employers. The top-10 in-demand jobs projected for 2010 didn't exist in 2004. We need to prepare students for jobs that don't yet exist using technologies that haven't been invented to solve problems we cannot yet identify.

Connecticut has world-class institutions of higher learning, community colleges which have focused increasingly on workforce development, and some of the finest primary and secondary schools in the United States. But an unacceptable number of primary and secondary schools in the state are failing to produce students with the skills necessary for higher education or for a meaningful job. Moreover, higher education is increasingly unaffordable for many, and some necessary programs are overcrowded. So state investment is required, in conjunction with national programs, to:

- Provide high quality early childhood education to all;
- Radically diminish educational disparities between school districts throughout the state;
- Intervene early, when students are first identified as being truant, low-performing, or having discipline problems, to identify the underlying cause(s) and address them quickly;
- Ensure that all elementary school teachers can teach reading, and ensure that all students can read;
- Provide STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) learning for all;
- Align curricula between secondary schools, community colleges, and universities to create a seamless transition;
- Increase the percentage of urban youth who graduate from high school and successfully complete at least two years of postsecondary education.
- Encourage educational entrepreneurship and innovation;
- Invest in critical workforce areas at the community college and university level (to provide faculty to produce, e.g., nurses, engineers, accountants, actuaries, teachers);
- Maintain current service levels and in the long run, increase state funding of public higher education to avoid shifting to students an ever-greater burden of paying for this public good;
- Preserve and eventually increase need-based aid funds for students at all institutions of higher education; and
- Explore synchronizing with national initiatives to guarantee low-income student loans equal to 100% of undergraduate and graduate tuition to public institutions of higher education – and a comparable level at independent institutions – to be forgiven if graduates participate in a defined public service initiative.



### **Health Care**

Our state has unfinished business in the area of health care that we cannot afford to ignore. Yes, there are areas of public health in which Connecticut compares favorably to the rest of the nation. Our state ranks first in oral health and childhood vaccination rates, and fifth in prenatal care. Connecticut has the fourth lowest percentage of smokers in the country, and eleventh lowest in cases of diabetes. But other data are disturbing. Our larger cities have high infant mortality rates, and we have a high incidence of cancer and asthma. Even though a relatively high percentage of Connecticut residents have health insurance, one in eleven residents have none. And our health care costs are among the highest in the nation. In order to enhance the quality of life and to improve economic competitiveness, we must, in conjunction with evolving national policy:

- Cover every state resident by meaningful insurance that adequately meets health needs (in ways that do not adversely affect the competitive economic position of companies that do business in the state);
- Focus on cost-effective service models such as prevention and management of chronic illness to address cost drivers;
- Build on successful efforts in both the public and private sectors (e.g., Pitney Bowes, state employees) to contain health care costs and focus on prevention, for both employers and residents;
- Develop an independent health data analysis center to continue tracking health care related information;
- Support a common electronic system for keeping health care records and making patient information available quickly and seamlessly and confidentially to doctors and hospitals and other caregivers; and
- Expand eligibility for HUSKY to insure more children and their families, provide outreach/enrollment assistance to enroll more eligible persons, and ensure that enrollees have timely access to needed health care.

### **Economic Security**

Having a structure in place that provides economic security for all protects both individuals and businesses against downside risks that threaten their savings and their bottom line, and accordingly encourages entrepreneurial economic choices that lead to economic growth. As Roger Altman of the Brookings Institution has argued,

## Human Capital



A basic level of security frees people to take the risks – for example, starting a business, investing in their own education, or trying an unconventional career – that lead to economic growth. With inadequate protection against downside risk, people tend to be overcautious, “fearing to venture out into the rapids where real achievement is possible,” as Robert Shiller of Yale has argued. “Brilliant careers go untried because of the fear of economic setback.” (“An Economic Strategy to Advance Opportunity, Prosperity and Growth,” Brookings Institution, April 2006, p. 13)

To bolster economic security in a state in which high overall wealth hides great disparities among income classes, the state should:

- Maximize participation in the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC);
- Provide programs to expose more families to asset-building opportunities (including opening bank accounts, credit repair, homeownership, Individual Development Accounts [IDAs], and financial education);
- Expand the Care4Kids program, which provides child-care subsidies; and
- Enhance educational opportunities for young people in urban areas.



Connecticut currently experiences the largest out-migration of young adults of any state in the nation. Although many factors contribute to this movement, a major cause is the fact that much housing is beyond the economic reach of many residents ready to enter the workforce.

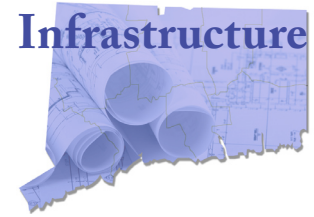
Another barrier to prosperity for many is the difficulty of getting from home to work and to locations where goods are sold. Connecticut needs a balanced transportation system which relies more on rail and bus transit that can move people quickly and efficiently to their destinations, and less on inadequate and congested roads. Another way to reduce highway congestion is to facilitate the use of rail to take long-haul trucks off the highways: one train carries freight equivalent to the capacity of 200 to 500 trucks, while using a fraction of the energy.

The state, working in synchronization with national policy, should also enhance infrastructure supportive of clean water, energy transmission and distribution and information distribution.

Investment in infrastructure itself generates economic development. Investment in infrastructure provides both short term stimulus and long term competitive advantage.

## **Housing**

- Fund small state grants to towns, under the HomeConnecticut plan, to plan for higher density zoning in appropriate locations for a combination of market-rate and affordable housing.
- Provide capital incentives to towns that implement their plans and create affordable and market-rate housing under the HomeConnecticut legislation.
- Provide additional Rental Assistance funds to support very affordable units.
- Plan for, and provide financial support to, mixed-use transit-oriented development in areas targeted for priority transit investment.
- Use life-cycle costing to prioritize compact housing units located near transit.
- Create affordable and supportive rental housing in smart growth locations.
- Preserve and revitalize existing public housing, and recapitalize and repair privately owned affordable housing.
- Create homeownership opportunities in cities through purchase, rehab, and resale of foreclosed homes for affordable prices.
- Support brownfield remediation to a residential standard in areas with existing infrastructure and proximate to transit.



## Transportation

- Prioritize critical transportation projects, including major mass transit facilities and major highway and rail bridge reconstruction, so that they are “shovel ready” when the national government adopts a multi-billion infrastructure package.
- Develop and implement a statewide strategic plan for a balanced transportation system, coordinated with the statewide plan for economic development and other statewide plans, which should include:
  - Improve rail service levels (frequency of service, speed between stations, reliability, and customer comfort) with intra-state scheduling comparable to NYC access
  - Build 10,000 new commuter parking spaces at rail stations, over 5 years
  - Increase capacity of I-95 during rush hour through “Intelligent Technology,” incident management, and the use of break down lanes where safe and feasible
  - Upgrade quality and expand bus service to reduce congestion between destinations not served efficiently by rail
- Consolidate authority for rail and bus transit at the state level, with appropriate delegation to regional bodies for implementation.
- Consolidate the federally-mandated Metropolitan Planning Organizations in the state, to provide for more coherent planning.
- Support mixed-use transit-oriented development, with higher-density and affordable housing clustered at transit nodes on existing corridors.
- Re-vitalize and upgrade existing rights of way for adequate commuter transit and rail freight.
- Work with New York and the national government to create a Lower Hudson rail freight link, to take off the interstate highways what is otherwise projected to be a 48% increase in truck traffic by 2020.
- Maintain existing roads and bridges to the highest standard, but avoid new highway construction or lane expansion.
- Provide adequate dedicated revenues to fund transportation infrastructure.
  - Increase the gas tax by at least fifteen cents (e.g., five cents annually over three years)
  - Allocate 100% of the gross receipts tax to the Special Transportation Fund
  - Create a new revenue source dedicated to congestion relief by adopting EZ Pass technology on all limited access roadways entering Connecticut



## Energy Conservation and Distribution

- Prioritize, with the help of energy stakeholders, Clean Energy projects so that they are “shovel ready” when the national government adopts an energy infrastructure program and/or in support of a national Green Collar economic development plan.
- Emphasize residential energy conservation projects with an emphasis on older homes (often in cities), for a high ROI and a stimulus to the economy.
- Support the modernization of the electricity distribution system by using new technologies, including “smart grids” that allow sections of the grid to operate independently during crises and that make more effective use of distributed generation (like solar, wind, fuel cells, and co-generation).
- Encourage the development and use of new technologies (carbon-fiber core conductors, high-temperature superconductors) to enable increased amounts of electricity to flow over existing rights-of-way.

## Information Infrastructure

- Support the build-out of broadband infrastructure in conjunction with new national policy to:
  - Permit telecommuting on a widespread basis;
  - Support access of students to educational material; and
  - Enhance business access to necessary data and other information necessary to support competitiveness.

## Clean Water

- Focus development in areas with adequate water and sewer infrastructure.
- Continue, with national support, the state Clean Water Program to rebuild and upgrade existing urban sewer systems.

# Quality of Life and Robust Communities




Robust communities, those where residents and visitors participate in shared activities that knit together the social fabric, enhance the quality of life in an area. Families and individuals from all walks of life worship together, attend concerts and dance performances, gain understanding of life through viewing and creating artistic exhibits, and develop insight into past cultures through visits to museums. They mutually support non-profit organizations that bring together resources to help those who have little or none. They develop their capacity to reason through lifelong learning experiences provided by universities, colleges, and other educational institutions. They enjoy themselves by eating and drinking together and participating in nightlife in vibrant town and city centers. They experience nature by hiking or biking through pristine conservation areas with beautiful vistas.

Central cities, at the heart of their metropolitan regions, often provide a locus for churches, museums, art performances, and social service organizations, as well as exciting opportunities for social interaction. The presence of vibrant communities is another factor critical to retaining young knowledge workers in the state, as well as a feature attracting families with children. And the opportunity to enjoy protected land, coasts, The Sound, lakes, and streams – unmarred by sprawl, traffic and pollution -- also contributes to the quality of life.

## How do we leverage this key asset?

- Codify a definition of “smart growth” and/or “responsible growth” and its principles in statute, to guide all state investments and regulations.
- Create a public/private state planning structure to enhance all state plans, but especially the Conservation and Development Policies Plan, which should be given increased applicability.
- Fully fund existing Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILOT) programs for state property and colleges and hospitals.
- Create a new PILOT program for museums, churches, social service and other 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations in recognition of the valuable benefits they provide to the quality of life, and of the costs they impose on local communities.
- Build on the recent national grant to CRCOG and the work of the small business clinic at Yale Law School, to create model smart growth zoning codes that towns can adopt – and then provide towns with the funds to calibrate these codes to their street grids.
- Encourage urban investment, and discourage urban disinvestment.
- Create a pool of funds to recalibrate zoning codes to encourage mixed-use/high density development in areas with public transit first, sewer infrastructure second.
- Create an incentive fund for towns that adopt regional revenue sharing – through an “upper level of local government” – on new industrial, commercial and high-end housing development.



## Quality of Life and Robust Communities

- Decrease reliance on the property tax, which often provides perverse incentives for decisions that negatively impact the quality of life and the state's economic competitiveness.
- Continue to emphasize – and fund – educational progress in the major cities to address the needs of low-income children.
- Phase-in state assumption of fiscal and administrative responsibilities for special education.
- Develop ways to activate the untapped potential of social capital and good will in our neighborhoods and communities.

# Effective State Government



To carry out its vital responsibilities, Connecticut government should be effective in its performance and visionary in its policies. The processes and procedures of government should measure up to the high standards we demand of our society's substantive vision. A well-functioning government should exercise prudent stewardship of our funds as it facilitates opportunity for all. Its key functions should include:

- a. Comprehensive and long-term strategic planning with significant public input, so that the state has a measurable vision of where it wants to be in the future, and clear strategies for achieving its vision. This planning should embrace not only economic development, housing, transportation and community development, but also planning in education, health and human services, to assure that the state's vision is comprehensive, well-integrated and that its strategies never work at cross-purposes;
- b. Timely collection, analysis, and public dissemination of data in target areas so that the state knows where it is at any one moment;
- c. Inter-agency cooperation and collaboration to replace bureaucratic "silos" that frustrate integrated actions;
- d. The internal capacity to monitor, evaluate and publicly report on – in as close to real time as possible – the efficacy of its strategies in moving toward its vision;
- e. Consistent use of data analysis and program assessment to ensure that investments meet long-term objectives;
- f. The internal capacity to implement and enforce those strategies, including competent monitoring of the performance of public functions by non-governmental contractors;
- g. The discipline to maintain a focus on achieving longer-term goals (and not get distracted by the latest headlines);
- h. The internal capacity to track, evaluate, and publicly report on our current public investments – both appropriations and tax expenditures – and their financial and non-financial returns;
- i. A state and local revenue system that minimizes perverse incentives and conforms to the principles of a high quality, fair system (as developed by, e.g., the National Conference of State Legislators);
- j. The capacity to objectively evaluate the economic and fiscal impacts of proposed changes to our state and local tax code, conduct tax incidence analyses, assess the economic and fiscal return of current tax expenditures, and assure that our state and local tax codes are consistent with, and advance, the vision for our state;
- k. A shift in emphasis in state policy, programs, and budgetary choices to greater investment in initiatives that intervene early to prevent problems from occurring or escalating so as to reduce the state's current reliance on far more costly subsequent interventions;
- l. Fostering inter-town cooperation and collaboration – perhaps through an "upper level of local government" – to replace destructive and wasteful competition for resources, and reduce urban disinvestment.



This is a time of change and of possibility.

We, and our elected leaders, face a choice. We could, as a disjointed collection of individuals, abandon ourselves to the tides of fortune that sweep over us. Or we can mutually join with one another to share our ideas and make well thought-out decisions to shape the future outlines of our society.

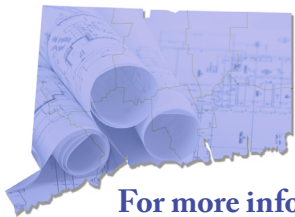
Shall we just let the future happen to us? Or shall we plan for it, prepare for it and make the most of it?

We all have a stake in our future. We believe that when we work together we can positively affect our state's economy and our well-being. And we believe that we should work together to bring about the highest quality of life we can envision, supported by the most prosperous economy we can achieve.

The coalition of individuals and groups that developed this report has many different backgrounds and interests. The particular beliefs, commitments and agendas of its members may differ. But all of its members believe that the state needs a Blueprint for Connecticut's future, based on **Prosperity for All**.

A series of Appendices is available at our Web site: [www.ctblueprint.org](http://www.ctblueprint.org). These Appendices – a combination of “working papers” written this year by members of our coalition and summaries of public policy analyses developed by respected associations – provide further elaboration and substantiation for many of the recommendations contained in this Blueprint. Although there may be points in each appendix with which some of us disagree, in the main the collective documents demonstrate there is broad consensus on the ideas and principles embodied in this Blueprint.





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