

Striking the Right Balance in Land Use and Economic Development

Center for Land Use
Education and Research
Webinar Series

April 28, 2021
1:00 – 2:00 pm



UConn
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE,
HEALTH AND NATURAL
RESOURCES

EXTENSION

CEDAS
Center for Economic Development Assistance

ADVANCECT
CONNECTICUT

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS



Courtney Hendricson
Vice President of Partnerships,
AdvanceCT

- Courtney has 20 years of experience as a local economic developer with expertise in commercial real estate and business retention and attraction.
- She is passionate about local government and its direct impact on residents and business.
- She oversees AdvanceCT's Partnerships Team by fortifying relationships within Connecticut's economic development community and ensuring all state and local stakeholders are working collaboratively to solve business issues.



Kristen Gorski
Economic Development
Coordinator, Town of West Hartford

- Kristen provides outreach to enhance the relationship between the Town of West Hartford and local businesses.
- She is responsible for business retention and expansion, new business attraction, small business and entrepreneurial support, and commercial and multi-family development.
- She is a liaison between the Town and its businesses and non-profit organizations as well as the real estate and development community.



Laura Brown, CEdD
Community & Economic Development
Educator, UConn Extension

- Laura's work focuses on asset-based community and economic development, regionalism, sustainability, active transportation, and economic development education with a focus on equity and justice.
- Recent projects include the Connecticut Trail Census project, CT Trail Finder, the First Impressions Program and the Best Practices in Economic Development and Land Use Committee

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



The land on which conduct our programs is the territory of the Sequin including Quinnipiac and Tunxis, Matabesec, Mohegan, Mashantucket Pequot, Eastern Pequot, Schaghticoke, Golden Hill Paugussett, Nipmuc, and Lenape Peoples, who have stewarded this land throughout the generations. We thank them for their strength and resilience in protecting this land, and aspire to uphold our responsibilities according to their example.

<https://native-land.ca/>

CONNECTICUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

A not-for-profit membership organization committed to advancing the practice and process of economic development in Connecticut.

Members include:

- Municipal economic development professionals, practitioners and local economic development commissioners
- State economic development professionals
- Regional economic development practitioners
- Private sector businesses
- Educators from colleges and universities

www.cedas.org



- Independent, private nonprofit focused on economic development
- Collaboration between, and funded by, the State of CT and the private sector
- Focus: business engagement, retention, and recruitment
- Repurposed mission to jumpstart economic growth and job creation in CT
- Fee-based membership organization 501(c)(6) with a 501(c)(3) foundation



How can I balance planning and economic development in my community?

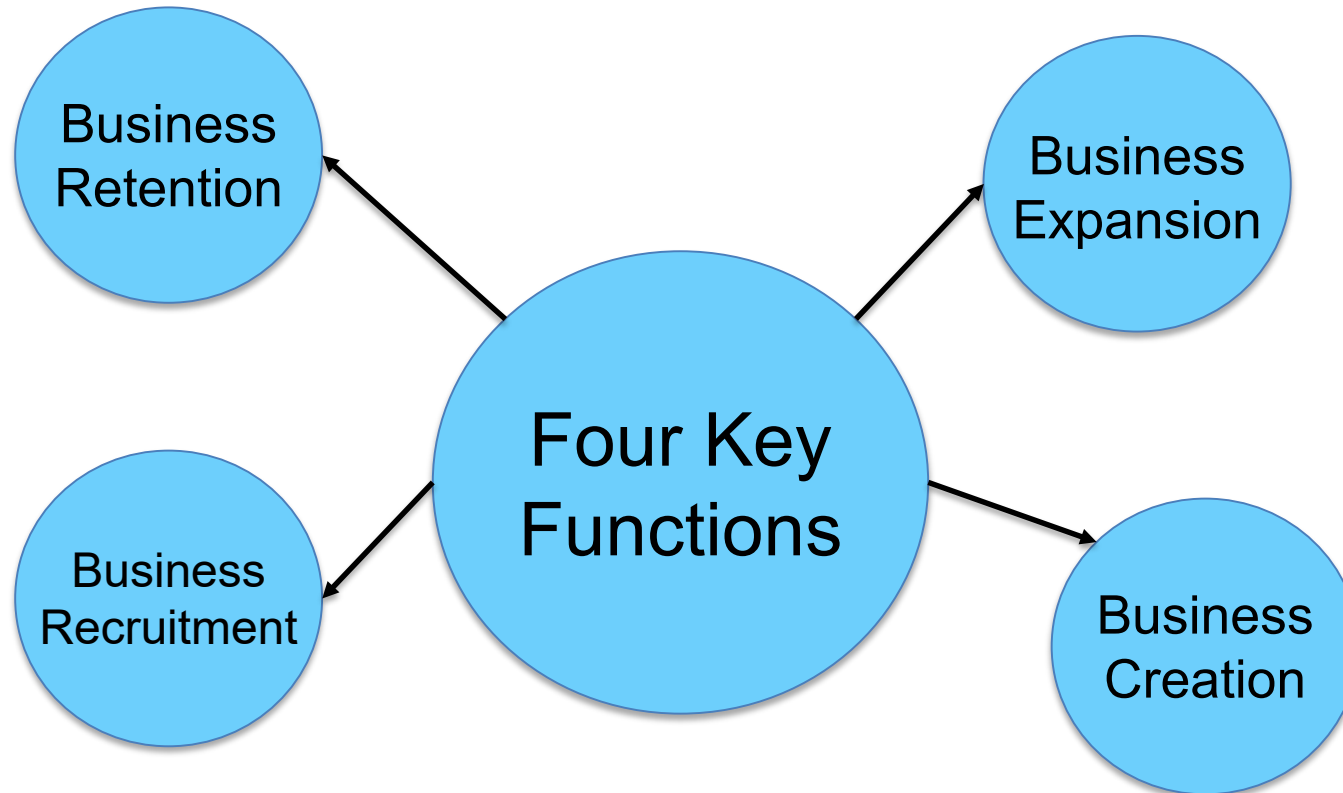


How can I encourage and attract the appropriate type and amount of non-residential development for my community?



What tools are available to help me find the balance between planning and economic development?

WHAT DOES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LOOK LIKE FOR MY COMMUNITY?



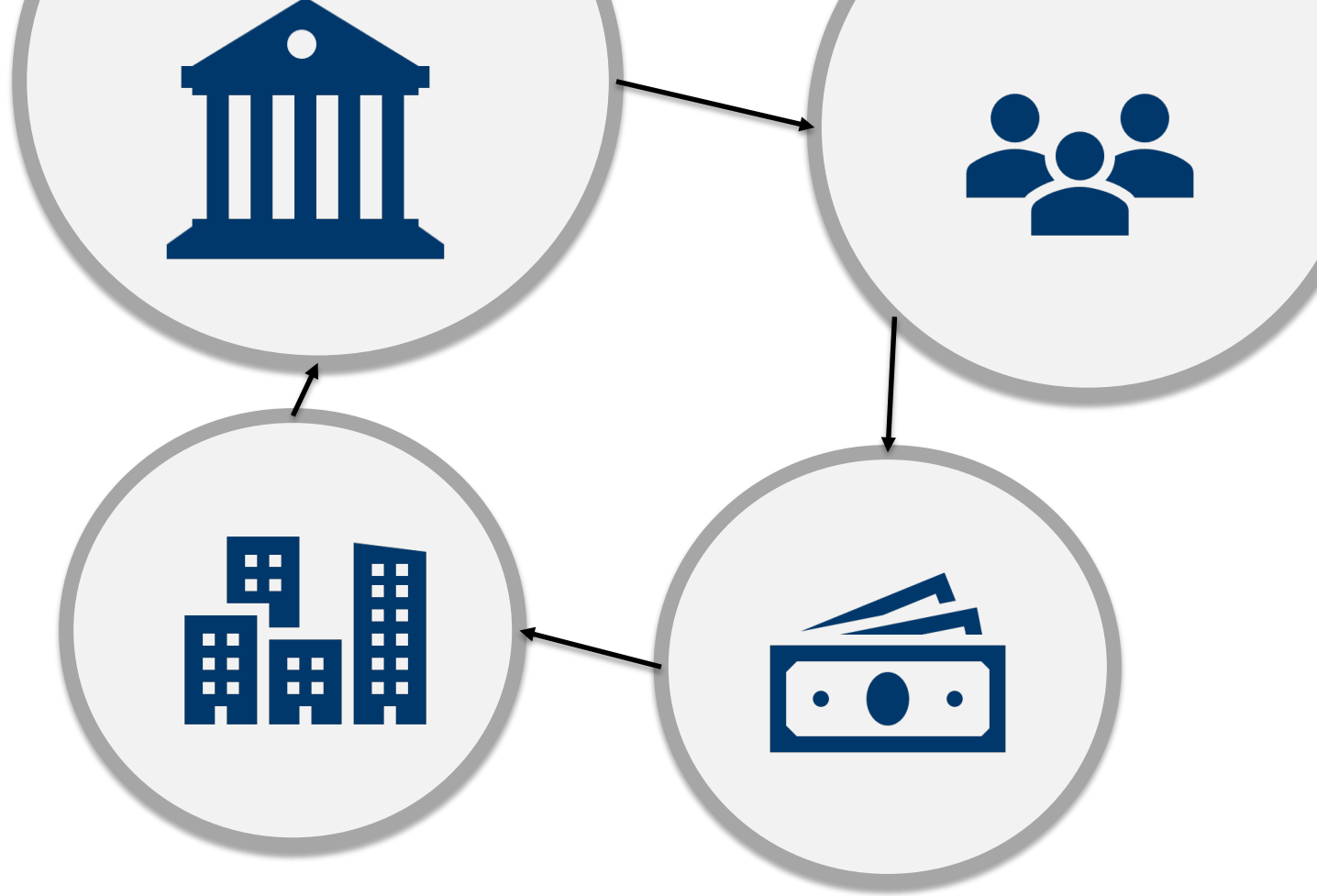
KEY CONCEPTS:

- Not one size fits all
- Transactional versus transformational

WHAT ARE COMPANIES REALLY LOOKING FOR IN A COMMUNITY?

- Location
- Suitable real estate
- Predictable and consistent land use process
- Skilled employees
- Transit and housing access
- Incentives?
- Industry sector needs vary





WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE REGULATORY PROCESS?

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY COMMUNITY IS READY FOR A DESIRED DEVELOPMENT PROJECT?



What is my community's vision for economic development?



Does the land use regulatory process support this vision?



Do I know my community's real estate opportunities?



Do I know what resources are available to support this project?

WHEN AND HOW SHOULD MY COMMUNITY SAY NO TO A DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL?

Does it align with the community's vision for economic development?

Is the site being proposed a good fit?

Is there political support for the project?

KEY CONCEPTS:

- Business-friendly ≠ no regulation
- Over-communicate with the applicant

Best Practices in Economic Development and Land Use



CLEAR Webinar - April 28, 2021

Laura Brown - University of Connecticut Extension Community & Economic Development Educator, Kristen Gorski, President, Connecticut Economic Development Association & Economic Development Coordinator , West Hartford, CT

PARTNERSHIPS & SPONSORS

COLLABORATING PARTNERS



2019 PARTNERS & SPONSORS



PROGRAM GOALS

Improve the overall quality of economic development services by creating process standards;

Drive communities to pursue excellence in land use and economic development by recognizing communities with best practices

Accelerate sharing of best practices among community decision-makers



More transparent, efficient, community engaged economic development

HOW IT WORKS

Communities review criteria and do a community scan

Communities contact and coordinate with relevant departments/committees

Communities complete an application including documentation and submit a PDF

Applications reviewed by team of peers

Awards issued



CRITERIA

Communities submit narrative and images demonstrating how they meet criteria

POINTS BREAKDOWN	TOTAL POINTS	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Presentation of Application	10	4%
Communications	70	28%
Coordination & Collaboration	60	24%
Organizational Capacity & Strategy	70	28%
Policies and Programs	35	14%
Community Choice	5	2%
	250	100%
Minimum points required to qualify for award in 2019 = 70	70	28%

COMMUNICATIONS



Offers pre-application meetings

Web page for planning & economic development

Uses social media to communicate with stakeholders

Land use regulations are available online

Communicates within 72 hours

GIS land use and parcel information online

Shares applications and renderings online

Offers online permitting that allows for electronic signatures

COORDINATION & COLLABORATION



Coordinates meetings between relevant municipal departments

Actively participates in regional economic development initiatives

Publishes a check list demonstrating required permit

Works collaboratively with partners

Encourages applicants to conduct community and neighborhood meetings

Offers coordinated inspections

Hosts interdepartmental staff meetings

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY & STRATEGY



Has a point person dedicated to economic development

Has a mission statement for economic development

Ongoing training/professional development for economic development and land use staff

Has completed a standardized economic development self-assessment

Asks applicants to provide feedback on the application process

Reviews zoning and land use regulations at minimum every five years

Has an economic development strategic plan

PROGRAMS & POLICIES



Has municipal incentive policies posted

Publishes design and signage guidelines

Has a formal business retention and expansion plan

Zoning codes provide reliability, predictability and transparency

Demonstrates movement towards administrative review

Other innovative and creative ideas not previously accounted for in other criteria

INNOVATIVE IDEAS



EDUCATIONAL TOOLS

Student internships in public policy and economics

- ◆ Jade Hardrick (2020)
- ◆ Kevin Fitzgerald (2019)

Four community case studies

Development of the annotated tool library with descriptions and

resources

communities.extension.uconn.edu/bestpractices/

CONNECTICUT



BEST PRACTICES

in ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
& LAND USE PLANNING



Learn more about Global City Norwich www.globalcitynorwichet.com/

Global City Norwich

Supporting small business and cultural awareness in Norwich, Connecticut

By Jade Hardrick, Connecticut Economic Development Association & Laura Brown, UConn Extension

A collaboration between the City of Norwich, Norwich Community Development Corporation (NCDC), and the Chelsea Groton Foundation resulted in the creation of the Global City Norwich (GCN), a multi-year project supporting the revitalization of downtown Norwich. By hosting festivals and local events that represent local and surrounding communities, Norwich was able to bring business activity to the vacant storefronts in the downtown area and increase cultural appreciation.

Since 2018, GCN has brought cultures and communities together in an effort to engage and attract residents, visitors and businesses to the Downtown area in Norwich. GCN has collaborated with church groups and schools to bring people together at their events such as a cup of nations soccer tournament, a welcoming America celebration, and a big Polish festival as well as a successful Peruvian Festival. At this event, the culture of Peru was showcased via dances, singing, food, and flag-showing. At least 2,000 people attended (at least 20,000 Peruvians live in the surrounding areas of Norwich) and many Norwich residents weren't aware of the Peruvian population and its culture until this festival.

TOOL LIBRARY - LIBGUIDE

[UConn Library](#) > [LibGuides](#) > [Economic Development & Land Use \(EDLU\) Main Page](#) > Home

Economic Development & Land Use (EDLU) Main Page — Home

Home

Communications

Coordination & Collaboration

Organizational Capacity & Strategy

Policies & Programs

BEST PRACTICES IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & LAND USE COMMUNITY TOOL-BOX

This program is intended to drive communities to pursue excellence in land use and economic development practices and to recognize the communities that have established best practices. Planners and economic developers use this program to engage community stakeholders in discussions about how to achieve higher standards and develop creative, community-specific ways to implement them. The three goals of this program are to: accelerate the sharing of best practices across the State of Connecticut; improve the overall quality of economic development services at the local level; and ultimately, improved economic development in Connecticut. This guide provides tools and resources for communities interested in implementing best practices criteria.



<https://guides.lib.uconn.edu/EDLUMain>



2021 ACCREDITATION TIMELINE



MAY – OCT, 2021	Education, training & webinars
NOVEMBER, 2021	Applications open
JANUARY, 2022	Application period closes
FEBRUARY, 2022	Application reviews
MARCH, 2022	Award announcements

BEST PRACTICES COMMITTEE

Review and update program criteria and application guidelines

Make program policy decisions

Cultivate program partnerships

Market and conduct outreach

Serve as peer reviewers for applications

Laura Brown - Co-Chair
Kimberly Parsons-Whitaker
- Co-Chair
Garrett Sheehan
Paige Bronk
Kevin Fitzgerald
Rich LoPresti
Kristen Gorski
Kelly Buck
Mark Waterhouse
Rebecca Nolan
Courtney Hendricson
Mike Andreana
Shelly Saczynski

Donald Poland
Michael Piscitelli
Lindy Lee Gold
Sadie Colcord
Caitlin Styrzczula

2019 PILOT PROGRAM



Implemented through
\$6,000 sponsorship

24 communities
accredited in 2019

Program received
bronze award for
Innovative Programs
and Initiatives by
International
Economic
Development Council

COMMUNITY IMPACTS

When asked if they had made any changes as a result of participating, 73% indicated they had and improvements included improving systems for accepting applications and permits fully online, starting a business visitation program, and updating our land use permit flow chart to better guide the applicants through the permitting process.

“I believe it is important to share knowledge and best practices amongst communities to elevate the practice of economic development.”

“We welcome the opportunity to evaluate our practices as a municipality. We hope that the receipt of this accreditation can be leveraged to obtain grants... that will support and improve our town.”

Best Practices in Land Use and Economic Development Short-term Program Evaluation, Conducted October 2019, n=16,

NEXT STEPS & LESSONS LEARNED

Municipal economic developers have been tapped out - Potential need for re-tooling after COVID

Long-term evaluation needed

Need for administrative support - Engagement of Connecticut Conference of Municipalities

Additional education programs around criteria



THANK YOU!

Laura Brown

Laura E. Brown, MS, CEcD

Associate Extension Educator - Community & Economic Development

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