

## **Detail of Proposed Catalytic Projects**

### ***Sponsored Projects***

#### *Bubbling Up*

- Stamford Innovation Center

A green tech, digital media business incubator, start-up fund and tech community hub at Old Town Hall.

- Next Generation Eastside

A pilot of whole place-making in Stamford's Eastside neighborhood, including: a new rail station at intersection of the NEC, the New Canaan branch and a proposed new street car line; mixed-income housing with a strong affordability component; and green development. The project will pilot a new model of redevelopment based on a private/public partnership, rather than eminent domain. Project will seek LEED neighborhood certification, and serve as a test bed for new models of energy and water efficiency, including co-generation of power on a neighborhood scale and on-site storm water management, storage and recycling. All buildings will be built to survive probable sea level rise and storm surge. The project will integrate three neighborhood schools in the project, the community and neighborhood businesses, as possible pilot site for experiential education project described below. Redevelopment will incorporate existing Eastside businesses and also serve as a magnet for next economy jobs not possible to accommodate in downtown office space.

#### *Need to Launch*

- Expansion of Experiential Education

Integrating high schools and higher education institutions more deeply into the Stamford economy and community, including mentoring, internship and community projects that help to develop pattern recognition skills. Requires school-based management, as the school is the logical point of engagement, rather than through a central office. This also enables incremental implementation. To be scalable, also needs to provide for differentiated levels of engagement, from light coaching to intense mentoring. Might make sense to start with Norwalk Community College, then work from there up to UConn Stamford and down to Stamford Public Schools, leveraging NCC's Gates-funded project to reform developmental education (see below).

- Reinventing the Region

Taking the Reinventing Stamford conversation to the Fairfield County scale to build the network and the political clout to work collaboratively on issues of regional significance, such as transportation and expansion of higher education.

- **Community Whiteboard**

Virtual community white board would be enhancement of the website to use all of the new social networking tools. Might also want to have the url of @reinventingstamford.com available as an email address for a Community of Reinventors, with elevator pitch at bottom of email. Physical community white board would be a publicly accessible space in the renovated Old Town Hall or UConn-Stamford that would graphically display progress on projects and enable the community to add comments and ideas.

- **Network of Listening Posts**

This has always been a secondary objective of the Reinventing Stamford civic conversation, namely to expose and network people who follow an emerging condition as part of their work. We need to document what we think we know about the existing participants, and figure out how to create a network that engages them and combines and amplifies their knowledge. Part of this is to efficiently distill and visualize the intelligence collected for playback to the listening posts and the larger community in close to real time.

- **Resilience Institute**

Would establish Stamford as a center of thought leadership in resilience and foresight and as a center of innovation in defining the Green City and making whole places. Would bring together the world's leading thinkers/practitioners in monitoring and analyzing emerging conditions and use the city as a test bed for catalytic projects to exploit the opportunities in them. Would develop the new talent to make whole places and to run the Green City and its businesses, staffing Stamford and exporting new talent to other cities.

- **Government Reform Experiments**

Networks of civic and public entrepreneurs to deliver higher quality, more citizen-driven public services at lower cost. Start with one department/function.

## ***Aligned Projects***

### *Already Underway*

- **Mill River Project**

The Mill River restoration will be the premier project in New England in terms of both urban green space creation and habitat restoration. The effort has been institutionalized in the Mill River Collaborative, which is raising \$60 million of federal, state, foundation and private contributions to complete the work. Ultimately, this could create a corridor for hikers, bikers, animals and fish linking the Long Island Sound to the lakes, forests and farms in North Stamford and New York, integrating Stamford's natural resources in a way that could significantly

contribute to its identity as a place.

- **Downtown Rezoning Project**

The DSSD and the URC are collaborating on a comprehensive update of downtown zoning to enable more rapid approval of projects which embody the urban design principles of Stamford's 2004 Master Plan. The aim is to develop clear, consistent and simple zoning rules that make it easy to develop dense, mixed-use projects of outstanding design quality (building wall meets sidewalk, animated first floor, interesting façade, well-screened parking, etc.) and make it impossible to build projects that don't "work." This will have the effect of raising land values and accelerating development once the housing and credit markets come back. This project will protect, enhance and extend the pedestrian core (Main, W. Park Place, Bank, Atlantic, Broad, lower Bedford and lower Summer Street); concentrate broad market retail in the pedestrian core; manage auto traffic to achieve a better balance between auto and pedestrian; and incorporate traffic calming techniques to benefit the pedestrian experience. It is part of a larger effort to foster a seamless system of sidewalks, bike paths and high quality transit (e.g., street cars, light rail) that serves the downtown and the collar and connects them to surrounding neighborhoods, the Transportation Center and the Northeast Corridor rail line. These improvements would complement existing and proposed (e.g., Urban Transitway, redesigned I-95 underpasses) road projects that will improve auto traffic to and from I-95, the Transportation Center, downtown and the Southend.

- **Springdale and Glenbrook Transit Villages**

Revised zoning allows for more dense, mixed-use and walkable development in commercial centers of Glenbrook and Springdale around the existing rail stations. A natural outgrowth of this effort would be the development of the surface lots at the two stations with structured parking, topped with mixed income housing and screened at the base with active uses.

- **Energy Improvement District**

Stamford created the state's first Energy Improvement District, which covers the downtown and the South End. The district is governed by a five-member board and is staffed by Mike Freimuth, the City's Director of Economic Development and Intergovernmental Relations. The board is working on a business plan for development of combined heat and power generation and renewable power, starting with a fuel cell pilot at Government Center.

- STC Master Plan

The Land Use Bureau is spearheading a study of short term, medium term and long term improvements to the Stamford Transportation Center that would increase its capacity and improve the user experience.

- NCC Reform of Developmental Education

NCC has a \$780,00 grant from Gates Foundation to reform developmental education, the community college euphemism for remedial education, and the vestibule where many students get stuck, burn up their Pell grants, get bored and drop out. Research shows we need to integrate, rather than sequence, basic literacy and math education with content-rich training in an area of interest to the adult learner, in order to achieve high rates of persistence, completion, matriculation, job retention and wage growth. NCC is focusing on the creation of Learning Communities to strengthen peer identification and support. This is lighter version of the advisory model, without the commitment to fundamentally restructure instruction around the advisories. Not clear where the advisors would come from at scale. Without the advisor, the advisory model will not be effective. Perhaps one approach would be to engage the larger community as coaches, mentors and part-time advisors. There is a separate Developmental Education Division at NCC, which will be an obstacle to the reintegration of remedial education into the main curriculum that needs to be the focus of reform.

- SHS “Medical Home” project with IBM

Creates a network among all of the healthcare professionals serving a patient and a common database of medical records. Enables coordination of care and more effective disease prevention and management.

- Business Alliance for Northeast Mobility

A consortium, which Kip Bergstrom helped to organize with Bob Yaro of the RPA, of the major chambers and economic development organizations from Portland, Maine to Richmond, Virginia. Lobbies for increasing the speed and frequency of intercity and commuter rail on the NEC. Succeeded in passing multi-year, \$12 billion reauthorization for Amtrak last year, and in getting \$8 billion for high-speed rail in the stimulus package this year. Will be a primary player in getting a federal commitment to build a national high-speed rail system equivalent in scale (e.g., \$500 billion) to the Interstate Highway System. This will be of competitive advantage to the Northeast as we have shoulder-to-shoulder metros whose labor sheds could be integrated with higher speed and more frequent rail service, thus creating larger and more productive regional innovation networks. Stamford would go from a position at the edge of the New York Metro to a position at the center of the Northeast Megaregion. A key immediate challenge is to fight with California, the Midwest and others for our slice of the \$8 billion high-speed rail pie that we helped to bake, and to get Amtrak focused on building a much larger rail capacity on the NEC than what they have in their master plan and capital budget.

### *Other Potential Aligned Projects*

- **Bike Path Project**

The Land use Bureau is launching a comprehensive study of bike paths in Stamford: how they should be configured and signed, where they should be located and how they should be networked.

- **Master Plan Update**

We will need to update the 2002 Master Plan sometime in the next five years.

- **Higher Education Expansion Project**

There is a groundswell of interest from various Reinventing Stamford conversations to expand the higher education presence in Stamford, either through expansion of UConn-Stamford or via another means. This would include a research capability and a close connection to the needs of the Stamford community, both residents and businesses.

- **Arts & Culture Project**

With the financial restructuring of the Stamford Center for the Arts has come a diminishment of its role as the focal point of the Stamford arts and culture community. There is a need to fill this vacuum and to find ways to strengthen the arts as a cultural force, to make art a central element of all projects, and to reveal and leverage Stamford's growing digital media and entertainment sector.