



What's New on HartfordInfo.org

February 2011

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What's New on HartfordInfo.org is a periodic update announcing recent additions to HartfordInfo.org. Please feel free to forward this message to others. To be added to the distribution list send an email message through our [feedback page](#).

HartfordInfo.org, a program of the Hartford Public Library, is a gateway to information and data on issues important to those who live and work in Hartford and the region.

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New Community Programs on HartfordInfo.org:

We have reorganized our *Community Programs* page! You can now search for videos using the title, date or keywords, search by topic, or by year. Check it out at <http://www.hartfordinfo.org/video/default.asp>

Videos of these programs have recently been added:

- [HartfordInfo Today: 2011 - A Really Big Year for Hartford](#)
- [U.S. Representative 1st Congressional District Candidate Forum](#)
- [Interstate 84 Viaduct Study Community Summit](#)
- [Hartford State Senators and Representatives Candidate Forum](#)

New Data on HartfordInfo.org:

- **American Community Survey (ACS) 2005 - 2009** – 2005-2009 Data Profiles provide data on demographic, social, and housing topics for Hartford. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "acs 2005 - 2009" in the Google search box and then click "Search."

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New Reports on HartfordInfo.org:

- **The Connecticut Competitiveness Agenda Project Executive Summary** — To find out what would make Connecticut a compelling place for fast-growing technology companies, some of the state's fastest growing and strongest enterprises were interviewed. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "*competitiveness agenda*" in the Google search box and then click "Search."
- **Mayor Pedro E. Segarra's Speech at Rising Star Breakfast: Hartford: One City, One Plan to Create Opportunities Together** — The Mayor unveiled both an immediate and long-term vision to grow Hartford, create jobs, and embrace a more positive and productive future. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "*Segarra speech*" in the Google search box and then click "Search."
- **iQuilt PowerPoint Presentation** — This PowerPoint presentation was made at a public forum at the Hartford Public Library on November 25, 2010, by the iQuilt planners and partners. The presentation includes an update and renderings of the project. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "*iquilt*" in the Google search box and then click "Search."
- **Connecticut State Post-Employment Benefits Commission Final Report, October 2010** — This report evaluates the unfunded mandates for various Connecticut state retirement systems, and suggests short- and long-term approaches to solving the problem of adequately funding them. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "*benefits commission*" in the Google search box and then click "Search."
- **City of Hartford: Proposed Parking Concession** — The City of Hartford is considering putting the operation of parking facilities and on-street parking out to bid. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "*parking concession*" in the Google search box and then click "Search."
- **Community Court Newsletter, Fall 2010** — This issue recognizes the Court's 12th anniversary and the more than 340,000 hours of community service that has been performed. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "*community court 2010*" in the Google search box and then click "Search."
- **Five Years of Neighborhood Policing 2010 Safe City Report Hartford Police Department** — This report summarizes crime statistics for the City of Hartford for the period 2005 -2010. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "*neighborhood policing*" in the Google search box and then click "Search."
- **Bridging Tough Times for Connecticut's Families: 2010 KIDS COUNT Data Book** —The past two years have been a difficult time for many families, including many middle-income families. The seventeen indicators reported in this Data Book show the situation of the children of Connecticut. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "*2010 kids count*" in the Google search box and then click "Search."
- **Asylum Hill Neighborhood Association (AHNA) Strategic Plan** — The most recent version of the Strategic Plan for Hartford's Asylum Hill Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ). Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "*ahna*" in the Google search box and then click "Search."
- **An Assessment of Connecticut's Tax Credit and Abatement Programs** — This report examines the economic and fiscal impact of the state's tax credit and abatement programs from 1995 through 2007. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "*tax credit*" in the Google search box and then click "Search."
- **Community Development Block Grant Community Meetings, Fiscal Year 2011 -2012** — A PowerPoint presentation made at the Community Development Block

Grant (CDBG) community meeting held at the Hartford Public Library on December 15, 2010. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "cdbg" in the Google search box and then click "Search."

- **Housing in Connecticut 2010: The Latest Measures of Affordability** — Connecticut remained an expensive state to buy or rent housing in 2009-10 despite a market buffeted by foreclosures and uncertainty. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "2010 housing measures" in the Google search box and then click "Search."
- **Green Ribbon Task Force** — This PowerPoint presentation outlines the work of the City of Hartford Green Ribbon Task Force, which was appointed last year to examine the City's parks. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "green ribbon" in the Google search box and then click "Search."
- **Hunger in America 2010: National Report Prepared for Feeding America** — This report concludes that the Feeding America system serves an estimated 37 million different people annually, an increase of 46% since 2005. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "hunger in america" in the Google search box and then click "Search."
- **The Continuing Fiscal Crisis in Corrections: Setting a New Course** — The current fiscal crisis has spurred lawmakers to reconsider who is punished and how. Research-based responses that keep offenders in the community have been shown to maintain or enhance public safety at less expense. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "crisis in corrections" in the Google search box and then click "Search."
- **Assessment of Connecticut's Correction, Parole and Probation Systems** — This report focuses on the State's Correction, Parole and Probation Systems, that together constitute one of the fastest expanding segments of the Connecticut budget. Go to www.hartfordinfo.org and type "parole systems" in the Google search box and then click "Search."

New Articles on HartfordInfo.org:

Through agreements with the *Hartford Courant*, the *Hartford Business Journal*, the *Hartford News*, the *Hartford Advocate*, and the *Northend Agent's*, and with the *Capital Region Report*, *Cityline*, *Real Hartford*, *Urban Compass*, and *40-Year Plan* blogs, HartfordInfo.org continues to offer selected articles as permanent additions to the Web site. Some recent additions include:

Good News in Hartford

- **Hartford's Festival Of Light Shakes Off Doubts, Finds Success** — Public reaction was tepid when the City's Festival of Light holiday display moved from Constitution Plaza to Bushnell Park. But by the time the festival concluded, things looked brighter. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Hartford Schools Making Progress, National Researchers Say** — Researchers from the University of Washington who have been studying the city's public schools released their findings recently, appearing to validate Superintendent Steven Adamowski's reform efforts while cautioning against a dip in progress. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **First Lady Honors Artists Collective** — The Artists Collective was recently recognized with a prestigious national award by First Lady Michelle Obama at a White House ceremony. [Click here for the article.](#)

- **Hartford Library's The American Place Program Helps Refugees, Immigrants** — In the past 10 years thousands of refugees and immigrants have gone to the Hartford Public Library as they try to build new lives. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **The Hartford Will Help City Buy And Demolish Blighted Capitol West Building** — The Hartford Financial Services Group will commit \$2 million to help the City buy Capitol West, tear it down and redevelop the property. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **A Story of Courage and Grace** — Alice Mokonje Garsuah recently danced in the Hartt School of Music's ballet production of the "Nutcracker." But it wasn't all that long ago that Alice and her family were involved in a very different kind of "dance", a dance with death. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **City Street Cleaner Makes A Habit Of Returning Lost Valuables** — 'Tis the season of giving. But this is more of a holiday tale of returning. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Changes Bring Back Control, Respect At Rawson School In Hartford** — What a difference a school year has made at Rawson Elementary School on Holcomb Street. [Click here for the article.](#)

Big Ideas

- **Agenda For Hartford In 2011** — The most important project in Hartford — for what it is doing and how it is doing it — is taking place at a building most people in the region have never seen. This project points to what Hartford must do in 2011 — creatively use its existing assets to create jobs for city residents. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **State Safer With Fewer Children Locked Up** — Connecticut locks up fewer children than it did a decade ago. But are we safer? The provocative answer is that not only is juvenile crime down, but we're saving money. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Schools Sought To Try Out Tough Exam System** — A national educational group is looking for Connecticut school systems to try a new rigorous exam system adapted from those used in many other countries. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Busway: Serious Rapid Transit** — Boston has its T, Washington has its Metro, and Hartford can and should join their ranks with a high-speed regional transit system of its own, namely the proposed New Britain-Hartford Busway. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **One City, One Plan: Six Month Review** — It has been just over six months since a resolution was passed to adopt the "One City, One Plan - POCD 2020." Some of the suggestions that residents made during the One City, One Plan discussions are already taking shape. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Building On Value: Development Should Leverage State's Resources** — Connecticut's approach to economic development is not working and should put more emphasis on leveraging the State's assets. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Regional Group Calls For Lowering I-84 To Street Level** — Moving I-84 to surface level as it passes through Hartford appears to be the best alternative to explore, according to a report released to the public recently evaluating various options for improving the 3/4-mile-long, elevated portion of I-84 that begins at Sisson Avenue and runs to Union Station. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Yale Entrepreneurs Want to Promote Healthy Eating To Children In Urban Neighborhoods** — If you're trying to promote healthy eating for children, how do you compete with fast food? The answer might be in borrowing some of fast-food's methods. [Click here for the article.](#)

- **Legalizing Drugs Would Stop The Bleeding** — Lethal violence around illegal drugs has been a scourge of Hartford for more than three decades. There is an argument that ending the war on drugs would actually improve lives. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Put The UConn Health Center In Hartford** — Rick Green applauds Hartford Mayor Pedro Segarra for stating the obvious: The University of Connecticut's medical school and health center should be in Hartford. [Click here for the article.](#)

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Education

- **Hartford Superintendent: "Successes Come With More Challenges"** — In his final state of the schools address Superintendent Steven Adamowski recognized academic gains made in the past three years, but cautioned that there is much work still to do. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Hartford Kids Get Real World Job Skills** — Marie Perez, a sophomore at Bulkeley High School in Hartford, looks forward to her bus ride to the Lazy D Ranch. Perez is among a group of students who participate in City Slickers, a program that introduces them to the fresh country air, horses and, most of all, to the hard work associated with the animals' care. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Young Teacher Welcomes Challenge Of Hartford Classroom** — Chris Gentile, 22, is in his first year in the Teach for America program, teaching seventh-grade at McDonough School. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **New Haven's Promise Of Free College Just A Start** — Yale University will donate \$4 million annually to fund the New Haven Promise, which pledges to pay full college tuition at a public school for students who maintain a B average, attend school and demonstrate good citizenship. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **City Shows Off Plans For A New Weaver High School** — A new Weaver High School would have academies in the culinary arts and hospitality, health sciences and possibly architecture. It would resemble a college campus, both in design and in a potential partnership with the neighboring University of Hartford. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **First Graduating Class** — The first class has graduated from The Academy for Parents, a family literacy project for low-literate Latino parents of young children in Hartford. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Bridgeport Legislators Seek Settlement In Education Funding Case** — Legislators recently began a campaign to pressure Governor Dan Malloy to negotiate a settlement in a 5-year-old lawsuit that calls for overhauling the way the state pays for its public schools. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Municipal Lobbyist: It's Time To Start Cutting School Costs** — Approaching an exceptionally dismal budget season, towns and cities are taking aim at the state law that prevents them from cutting school spending. The Minimum Budget Requirement should be abolished, a lobbying group for municipalities said recently. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Education Week Report: Connecticut Scores C+** — Although Connecticut ranked 16th in the nation on Education Week's annual "Quality Counts" report, it nevertheless received a grade of just C+. [Click here for the article.](#)

Downtown Development

- **ESPN Contributing \$5 Million For Hartford's Front Street Development, But Will Not Open A Venue There** — Ten years ago ESPN got in on the ground floor at Front Street committing to the entertainment and restaurant district. Now, ESPN has announced it won't be opening a venue there but it will contribute \$5 million to the project. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Grocer Opens in Downtown Hartford** — A market offering the widest selection yet of groceries to those living and working in downtown Hartford is open, although the city's quest for a full-fledged grocery store in its business district continues. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Hartford Skateboarding Task Force Unveils Revised Design** — Drawing on input from local skaters and BMX riders, the Hartford Skateboarding Task Force has prepared a second design for the proposed skatepark at New Ross County Wexford Park. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Downtown Hartford Office Buildings Nearly One-Third Empty** — Nearly one-third of all the office space in the city's central business district is empty. And it could get worse this year, experts say. [Click here for the article.](#)

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In the Neighborhoods

- **Vacant Asylum Hill Commercial Building Bought By Revitalization Group** — With the blighted Capitol West building targeted for a fast track to demolition, another prominent eyesore less than a mile away in Hartford's Asylum Hill neighborhood is set for a top-to-bottom makeover. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **The 311 Data Dump: What Do Hartfordians Worry About?** — Over several days, blogger Kerri Provost looked at what active 311 cases tell us about what Hartfordians worry about. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Church Looks To Continue Community Dinners** — For Pastor Eva Steege, hosting a dinner for low-income and socially isolated people is not just about providing food. It's about building a community that includes everyone. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **The Projects, From Promise To Curse** — The era of public housing in Hartford came to an end recently with the groundbreaking for new housing that will replace last of the city's early 1940s housing projects, Nelton Court, in the North End. [Click here for the article.](#)

Economic Development

- **Valet Venture Grows Into Parking Behemoth** — In 1981, Alan Lazowski spotted a way to make some money the summer before his senior year of college: start a valet parking service for a restaurant in downtown Hartford. Today, Lazowski's summer venture has blossomed into LAZ Parking, the fourth-largest parking company in the country. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **A Big Help To Hartford** — Hartford has its challenges, but also its strengths. One of those is the small businesses along the city's major avenues. An agency that has played a key role in this positive development is quietly celebrating its 35th anniversary. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Bosnian Refugees Build Niche Computer Firm** — High school friends Zermina "Nina" Velic and Belma Ahmetovic are no longer chasing the American dream of owning a business. The two 17-year-old immigrants have already achieved that

success and secured an opportunity to meet President Obama. [Click here for the article.](#)

- **Taking It to the Streets** — It's no secret that getting a job in today's economy is far from easy. But it's far harder for people who are just coming out of prison. That's why Cord Smith started a special program to teach people to become street vendors. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Hartford Architectural Firm Celebrates 25th Year In Style** — The economy has shown few signs of recovery, but don't tell that to the principals at Amenta/Emma Architects P.C., of Hartford. [Click here for the article.](#)

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Arts and Culture

- **Nicki Mathis Pays Tribute To Sarah Vaughan** — Since Texas-born singer Nicki Mathis rode into town three decades ago, the jazz diva has become Hartford's avatar of soulful expression, a hometown version of Lena Horne, Billie Holiday and Abbey Lincoln wrapped in one. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Crooner Tony Allen's Wonderful Life** — How Tony Allen, the 82-year-old legendary troubadour of Hartford's old Front Street, got started in the music biz 60 years ago sounds like something right out of the most upbeat scenarios in Frank Capra's Christmas classic, "It's a Wonderful Life." [Click here for the article.](#)

Hartford History

- **Hartford Turns Over Treasure Trove Of Public Records To Library** — Thousands of documents dating back to 1639 have recently been transferred to the Hartford History Center at the Hartford Public Library. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Capital Community College Gets Grant to Study City Heritage** — The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has awarded \$98,645 to Capital Community College to study Hartford's history, literature, communities and culture. [Click here for the article.](#)

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Other Major Developments

- **Are Connecticut Latinos on the Sidelines This Election Year?** — The failure to nominate a Latino for statewide office may have had an impact on the number of Latinos who went to the polls in November 2010 — a great loss for Connecticut, because a truly vibrant democracy needs involvement from all its citizens. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **The Truth: State Taxes Are Going Up** — Barring an economic miracle, your state taxes are going up next July. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **The Obsession with Destruction** — More and more, blogger Kerri Provost turns to sources like The Hartford News because they at least cover the spectrum of experience in the city. The articles encourage civic and community participation. They represent the diversity of experience. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Abolish 2-2-2, or Maybe Make It 66-15-12-4-1-1-1** — The unwritten Hartford City Council 2-2-2 system demands that the Democratic members of the Council majority must consist of two white, two black and two Latino members. [Click here for the article.](#)

- **Searching Out The Hard-Core Homeless** — Once Hartford's hard-core homeless end up in a hovel beneath one of the city's bridges, they tend to stay. These are the people too sick, too high, too broken to trust that anything can save them. One more visit from the Hartford Homeless Outreach team just might convince some to come out from beneath the bridge. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Immigrants Make Way To Suburbs, Small Towns** — Mirroring a pattern seen in some other parts of the country, many immigrants in Connecticut have moved beyond its urban centers in search of jobs, affordable housing and safe communities. [Click here for the article.](#)

Notable Transitions

- **Channel 30's Tom Monahan Reflects On His Long Career** — Tom Monahan has retired after providing political analyses, election-night results and candidate profiles for decades in Connecticut. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Ciao, Fran** — Longtime Hartford resident and community activist Fran Reale passed away January 11, 2011. She was a co-owner of City Fare Catering on Franklin Avenue and founder of Kidzzz, a program designed to teach youngsters the art of cooking. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Electronics Repair Shop To Close After Long, Long Run** — Herbert Rubenstein's TV and electronics repair shop in Hartford has been in the business of fixing TVs, stereo equipment and other electronic devices for 64 years. Rubenstein says he's closing shop. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **Two Historic Downtown Hartford Stores Closing** — Two side-by-side historic downtown Hartford stores, including a smoky oasis for pipe and cigar smokers and a cutlery seller that opened in 1898, are set to close at the end of March. [Click here for the article.](#)
- **HART Director Leaving** — Marilyn Rossetti, executive director of Hartford Areas Rally Together for the past eight years, is leaving her position. Rossetti, a past president of the HART board of directors, has spent about 20 years with the organization in various capacities. [Click here for the article.](#)

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