



CITY OF HARTFORD

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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DAVID B. PANAGORE
Director of Development Services

ROGER J. O'BRIEN, PhD, AICP
Director of Planning

PEDRO E. SEGARRA
Mayor

July 9, 2010

Abby Hall
United States Environmental Protection Agency
Smart Growth Program
Washington, DC 20460

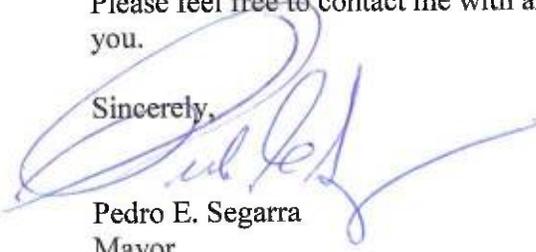
Dear Ms. Hall:

The City of Hartford is pleased to submit this letter expressing our interest in participating in the EPA's Greening America's Capitols program. Attached please find a description of our proposed "Capitol Avenue Visioning" project along with images indicating the project's physical boundaries.

Hartford seeks to become a symbol of the identity and values of the state, and as such the City is committed to sustainable development. The "Greening America's Capitols" program is an opportunity for us to further develop and showcase in a comprehensive manner ideas and projects that have been in the works for several years.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have regarding our application. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Pedro E. Segarra
Mayor

Cc: hall.abby@epa.gov
David Panagore
Roger O'Brien
David Fay

Capitol Avenue Visioning Hartford, Connecticut



1. Project Contact

Name: Pedro E. Segarra
Title: Mayor
Phone: 860.757.9500
Email: SEGAP001@hartford.gov
Address: Office of the Mayor
550 Main Street, 2nd Floor, Room 200
Hartford, CT 06103

2. Description of the Design Challenge and Area of Need

Project Area

The project area comprises all properties fronting on the mile-long portion of Capitol Avenue which runs east-west from Main Street to Sigourney Street, as well as the portion of Sigourney Street from Capitol Avenue to Hawthorne Street. In the center of the project area is the Connecticut State Capitol and the Legislative Office Building, the seats of Connecticut's State Government. The area also includes the State Library, the Supreme Court, the State Armory, and many State government offices, as well as three churches, residential and retail areas, and the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts. At the east end of Capitol Avenue are the Elm Street and Buckingham Square National Historic Districts and at the west end is the George Keller Local Historic District. The project area also includes the proposed Sigourney Street Bus Rapid Transit Station, which is bordered to the north by Laurel/Marshall section of the Asylum Hill National Historic District (residential), to the east by the main campus of the Aetna Insurance Group, and to the south by Interstate 84 and the railroad line.

Users

Thousands of people work in, live in and visit this area every day.

Residents: Census 2000 Data

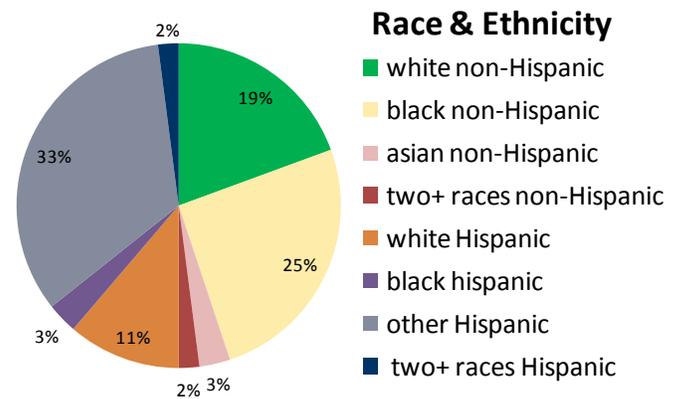
- The half mile area surrounding this section of Capitol Ave includes seven Census tracts.
- Approximately 17,000 people live within ½ mile of this section of Capitol Avenue.
- The Median Household Income of this area ranged from \$15,123 to \$40,024.

Workers: This area encompasses the Connecticut State Capitol and a host of state and federal office buildings, the occupants of which are daily users of the project area.

Visitors: Attractions such as The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, the Museum of Connecticut History, Bushnell Park, the State Library, and several houses of worship are within the study area, bringing visitors to the area every day.

Public Transit Users:

- CT Transit Bus Service- the follow routes travel on this portion of Capitol Avenue:
 - 61- Hartford/Wethersfield via Broad Street (20 min peak period headways)
 - 63 – Hartford/Hillside Avenue (20 min peak period headways)
 - 69-Hartford/Capitol Avenue/Elmwood/Newington (30 min peak period headways)
- Sigourney Street BRT Station
 - This station will be built as part of the New Britain-Hartford Bus Rapid Transit project, which will be a dedicated BRT facility along a 9.4-mile corridor between downtown New Britain and downtown



Capitol Avenue Visioning Hartford, Connecticut



Hartford's Union Station. Revenue operation is scheduled to begin in December 2013. ConnDot is estimating about 4,800 daily passengers at this new station, many of whom will be accessing office buildings on Capitol Avenue.

- Improvements totaling over \$4.8 million are planned for the Sigourney Street bridge, including new pedestrian scale lighting, repairs to the staircase on the east side of the bridge at Capitol Avenue and a new accessible ramp adjacent to the existing staircase on the west side of the bridge at Capitol Avenue, new sidewalks, and street trees in various locations surrounding the station.

Challenge

Capitol Avenue is a minor arterial road with a right-of-way ranging in width from 55 to 70 feet. At the eastern end near Main Street there are two driving lanes and streetscape improvements have been installed. There are also restaurants and residences at this end and here the avenue is quite pedestrian friendly. The central and western portions of the avenue, however, remain oriented to the automobile, with up to 5 driving lanes, an entrance to the interstate highway, and a dearth of sidewalks, crosswalks, bicycle lanes, and street trees that make pedestrian and bicycle use uncomfortable.

In the central portion of Capitol Avenue there are many acres of paved parking lots which not only make the area barren and uninviting, but also cause excessive storm water run-off. Efforts over the years to create mixed-use in-fill development on this vacant land have not, so far, been successful. The Sigourney Street portion of the project area is a six-lane divided road that rises over Capitol Avenue and under the I-84 Viaduct, intersecting with an entrance and an exit to the highway. There is a great deal of pedestrian traffic along Sigourney Street generated by the nearby insurance company campuses.

Many buildings in Hartford have been neglected and torn down only to be replaced by surface parking lots. Priority was given to automobiles over pedestrians, and the result is what you see today on Capitol Avenue. Recently, Hartford has been experiencing a comeback and there is community and political support to attempt to overcome these challenges.

Current Efforts

The challenge presented by the Capitol Avenue study area is being addressed by several different plans and projects that are currently underway. A unifying vision is necessary to move these plans forward.

"One City, One Plan," Hartford's Plan of Conservation and Development 2020

The City of Hartford's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), referred to as "One City One Plan," was adopted on June 3, 2010. The not only encompasses a long-term vision for the community but also offers guidance for short-term decision-making. The proposals of the Plan are broadly based recommendations for future development and the improvement of Hartford over the next decade and beyond. The POCD touches on every aspect of Hartford's current and future development and is guided by the following five goals:

- Promote Livable and Sustainable Neighborhoods
- Protect the City's Natural and Built Environment
- Enhance Mobility Through Transit, Pedestrian and Bike Systems City-Wide
- Advance Downtown's Role as the Region's Center for Commerce, Culture and City Living
- Promote and Encourage the Integration of Sustainable Practices

One of the main elements of the plan is the Action Agenda, which contains 240 different implementation projects designed to help the City meet its goals. One of these action items is "Improve the Capitol Avenue Corridor by creating a mixed-use neighborhood, replacing surface parking with structured parking, and developing available land with new buildings." Other objectives that the Capital Avenue Visioning project

will help to meet include “Provide Quality Housing,” “Emphasize Complete Streets,” “Promote Good Urban Design,” and “Improve Pedestrian Connections, Conditions & Level of Service.”

In addition to this comprehensive list of action items, another major product of the POCD is the Future Land Use Map, which is the basis for the City’s zoning regulations. In anticipation of the redevelopment of Capitol Avenue, the Land Use designation for a portion of the study area was changed to a category called CORMU-Commercial, Office, and Residential Mixed Use. This land use category envisions areas designated for multi-faceted large scale mixed-uses and live-work corridors. This category encourages adaptive reuse of older buildings as well as larger scale developments. As such, it helps form the regulatory basis for the redevelopment of the street, particularly the large blocks currently used for surface parking.

iQuilt

The iQuilt project is an arts-based economic development plan, led by the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts and integrated into *One City, One Plan*, capitalizing on Hartford’s unique heritage and cultural assets. Hartford’s remarkably compact downtown features more than 45 such assets, including jewels like The Bushnell, State Capitol and Museums, Bushnell Park, The Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford Stage, Old State House and the new Connecticut Science Center. The plan proposes developing new and updating existing public spaces and weaving them together with identity branding and innovative way-finding strategies, interpreted trails, interactive street furniture, green arts features, public art and active arts programming. iQuilt will make it easy and enjoyable to walk from one cultural asset to another. Since Capitol Avenue is the Bushnell Center for Performing Arts’ primary link to Main Street, a Greening America’s Capitals visioning will certainly help advance the iQuilt.

Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Plans

The Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ) program was instituted by the Connecticut State Legislature in 1995 as a tool for the revitalization of neighborhoods with blighted buildings. Neighborhood stakeholders form NRZ committees, create strategic plans for improving their neighborhoods, have the plans adopted by the City Council, and then work to implement those plans. Hartford has thirteen NRZs and the Capitol Avenue project area is located in three of these: SoDo, Frog Hollow, and Asylum Hill. Both the SoDo and Frog Hollow NRZ Strategic Plans call for improvements to Capitol Avenue , including streetscape improvements (e.g. sidewalks, lighting, street trees, and trash receptacles), improved traffic circulation and traffic calming, rezoning, development of vacant land, new residential units, and new retail uses. The Asylum Hill NRZ strategic plan calls for improvements and redesign of the I-84 Viaduct and mixed use, transit oriented development along Hawthorne Street adjacent to the proposed site of the Sigourney Street BRT station.

Green Capitols Project

In partnership with the ConnDEP, the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) has put out to bid a contract to construct examples of Green Infrastructure on the grounds of the State Capitol in Hartford. The project includes Green Roofs, Rain Gardens, Bioswales, Rain Harvesting and various types of Porous Pavements. This is phase one of the Capitol Green Program which will be followed by a Green Streets project on Trinity Street through Bushnell Park and Capitol Ave. The work is being done in conjunction with the MDC’s Clean Water Program that is intended to reduce CSO’s, SSO’s and nitrogen discharge. This project is within the Capitol Area Visioning study area.

I-84 Viaduct Study

A planning and community involvement process for the long-term reconstruction or replacement of the I-84 Viaduct, a divisive highway overpass that is reaching the end of its useful life, is underway. The City, the

Capitol Avenue Visioning Hartford, Connecticut



Capitol Region Council of Governments (CROG), and the Hub of Hartford, a stakeholder group, are working together to carry out this process.

Benefits

Focusing on pedestrian-scale infill development and streetscape improvements will help to make this a coherent street, and a place where people enjoy spending time. The Neighborhoods have expressed their eagerness to transform lots into pedestrian scale mixed use developments in order to bring new retail, restaurant and residential opportunities to the area. This project will lead to improvements in connectivity, increased safety, improved transit utilization, and increased usage of public space.

3. Potential Impact of the Project

Expected Outcomes of Design Assistance:

- A process for collaboration & gathering design-based ideas from stakeholders.
- A framework for addressing the issues.
- A vision for people to rally around.
- Ideas for new sustainable development.
- Supplemental materials for funding applications.

Potential Impacts of Project Implementation

- Improved pedestrian safety & walkability
- Increased foot traffic
- Increased residential population & new retail & restaurant destinations in efficient, mixed use environments
- Improved green infrastructure- tree canopy, reduced stormwater runoff, etc.

Realistic, Achievable Goals for Project Implementation Following Design Assistance

- Create design standards for the Capitol District
- Attract private developers to implement infill developments
- Apply for funding for streetscape improvements
- Improve transit facilities (BRT station and bus stops)
- Implement sustainable green infrastructure projects
- If “Capitol Avenue Visioning” is chosen to be part of the *Greening America’s Capitals* program, an outreach program will be developed that will consist of press releases, presentations at public meetings, a website linked to www.hartford.gov, and integration with other city efforts including “Healthy Hartford” events, the Mayor’s “Healthy Communities Initiative”, and “GreenUp Hartford” publications. This will increase public support and awareness of the overall initiative to improve Capitol Avenue, as well as the specific goals resulting from the design assistance project.

Replication

The Capitol Avenue Visioning plan will combine a variety of techniques to realize change, including visioning & visualization, land use & regulatory changes, and public outreach activities. It will show how using these techniques in addition to leveraging ongoing investments in transportation, streetscapes, and sustainable development can create a model that can be followed by other communities across the state.

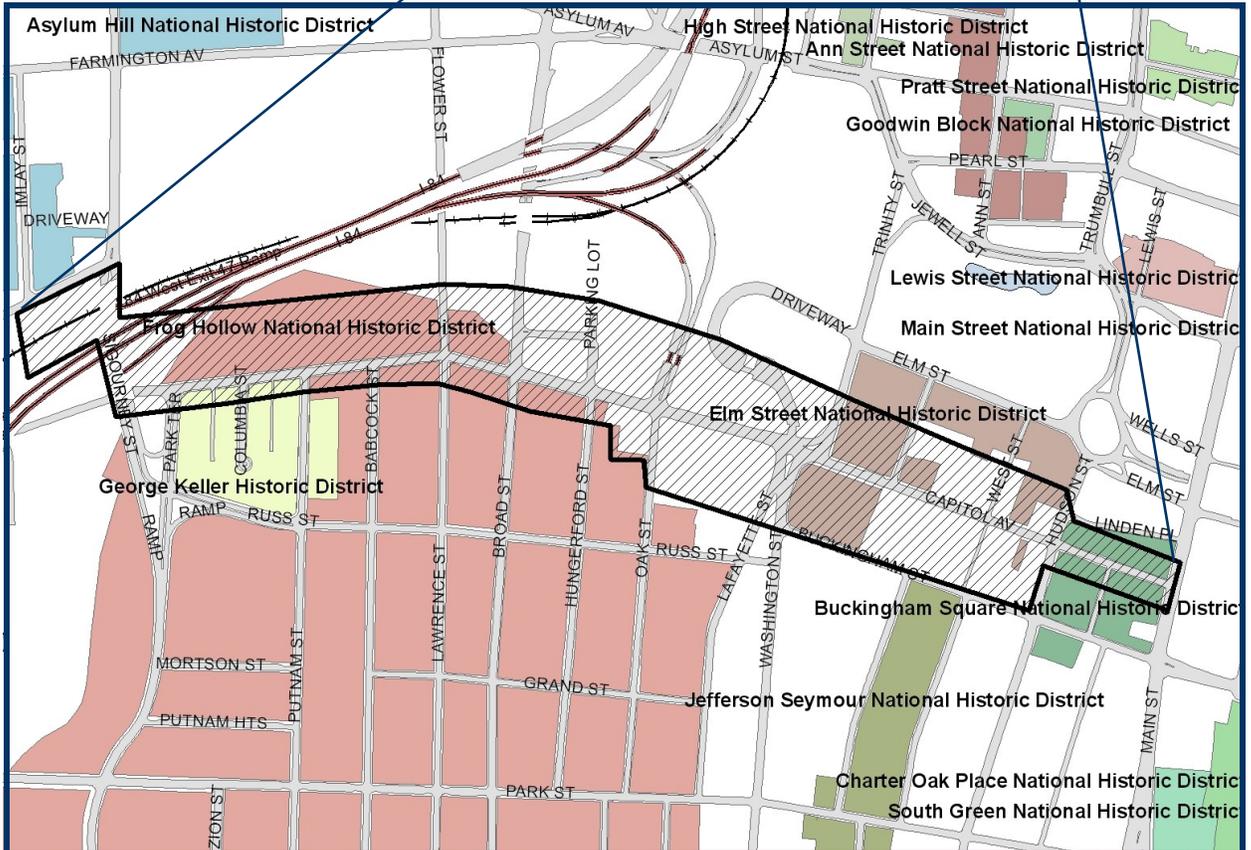
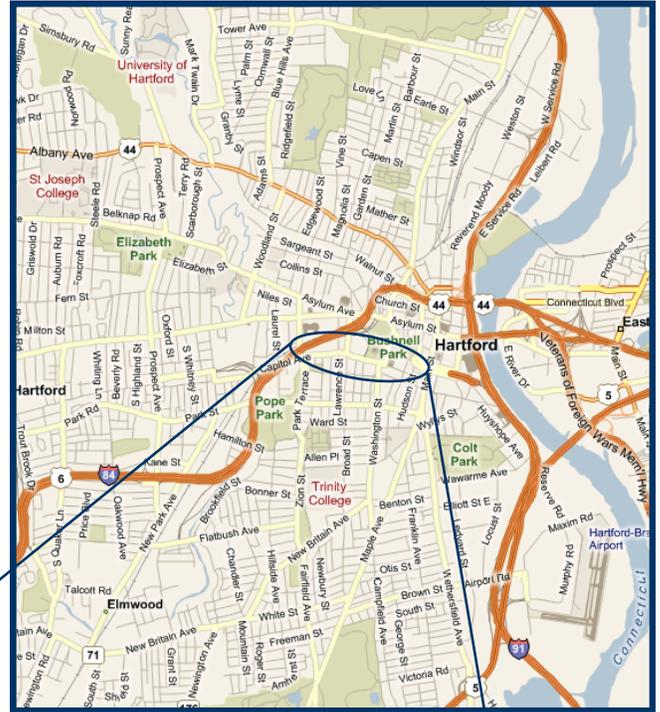
4. Political and Public Support

References for Political Support:	References for Public/Community Support:	
Office of Governor Jodi Rell	Frog Hollow NRZ	Asylum Hill NRZ
State Representative David McCluskey	SODO NRZ	Hartford 2000

Capitol Avenue Visioning Hartford, Connecticut

Project Location:

Capitol Avenue:
Park Terrace to Main Street
+ Sigourney Street BRT Station



Greening America's Capitals
Capitol Avenue Visioning

Project Area

Map prepared by the City of Hartford
Planning Division of the Department
of Development Services, June 2010.

0 165 330 660 990 1,320 Feet



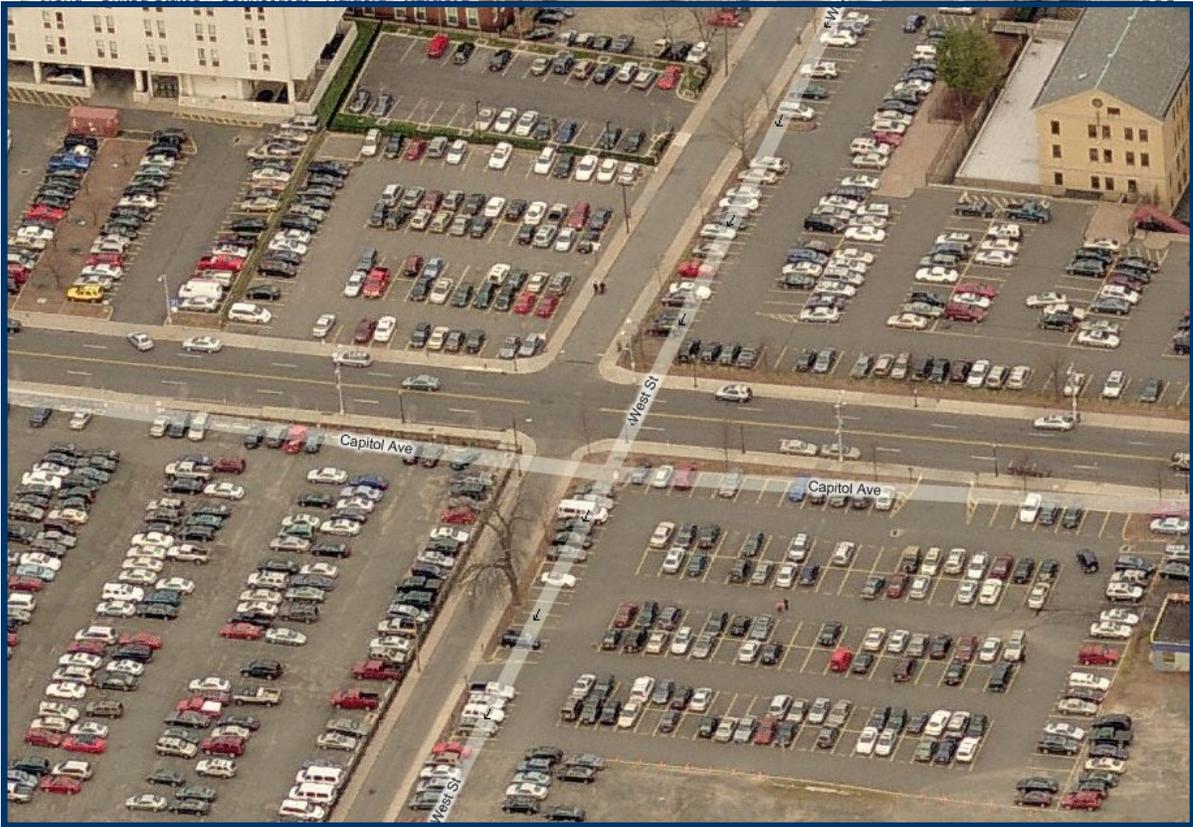
**One City,
One Plan**
POCD 2020



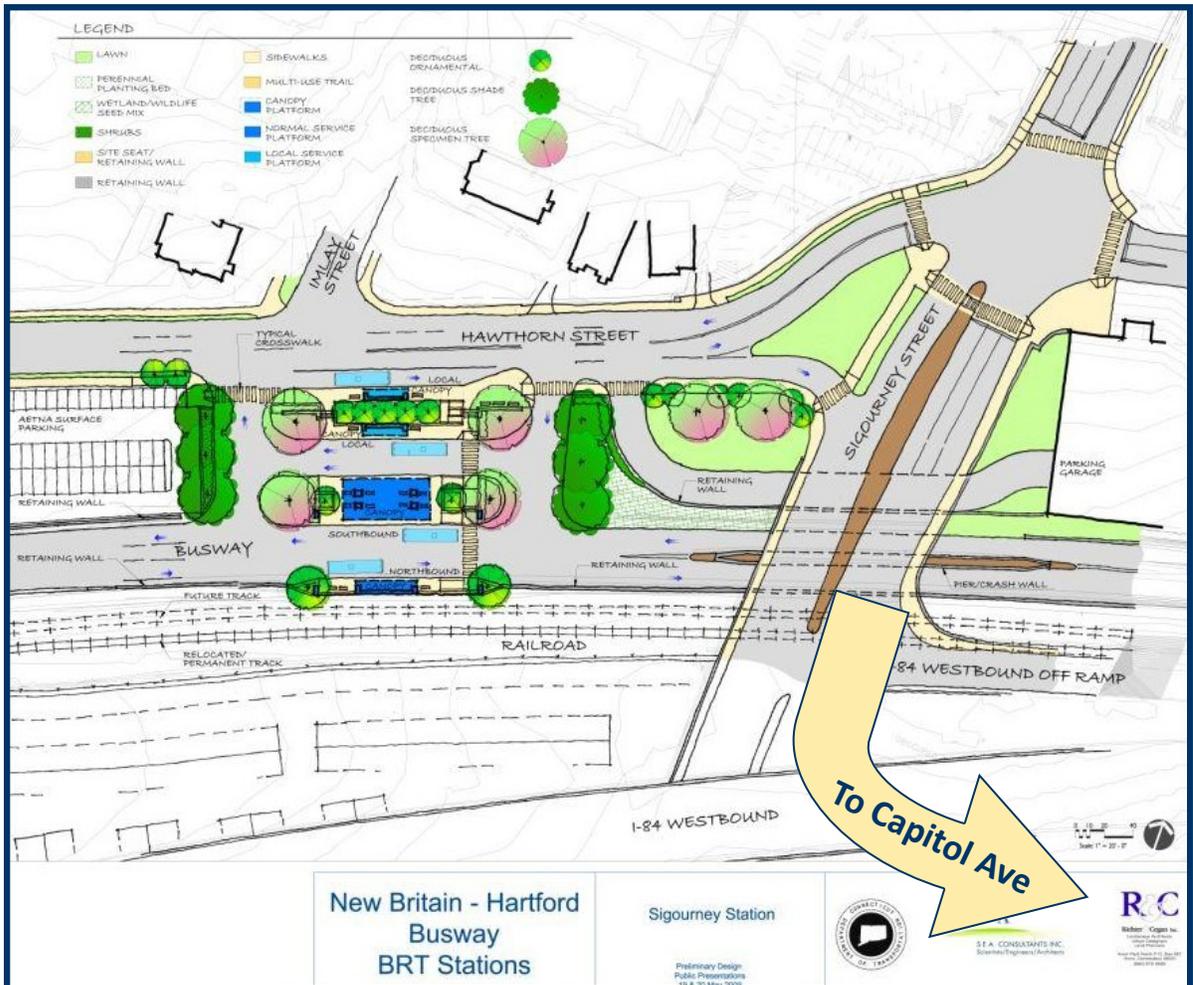
Capitol Avenue Visioning Hartford, Connecticut



Detail: Intersection of Capitol Avenue and West Street



Proposed Sigourney Street BRT Station



Capitol Avenue Visioning Hartford, Connecticut

Study Area Images



Connecticut State Capital



Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts



The Armory



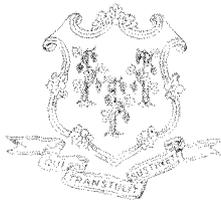
CT State Library & Supreme Court Building



Columbia Street, Frog Hollow National Historic District



Holy Trinity Church



M. Jodi Rell
GOVERNOR
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

July 8, 2010

Ms. Abby Hall
USEPA Headquarters
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mail Code: 1807T
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Ms. Hall:

I write to express my support for the City of Hartford's 2010 Letter of Interest as submitted to the Greening America's Capitals initiative. The City of Hartford, in partnership with the State of Connecticut, the Metropolitan District Commission, Business Improvement District, MetroHartford Alliance, The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, Bushnell Park Foundation and Greater Hartford Arts Council, is leading efforts to set an example for smart growth in Connecticut. If selected to participate in the 2010 Greening America's Capitals project, the city will focus the design team on a mile-long stretch of Capitol Avenue – from Main Street to Sigourney Street and its planned bus-rapid-transit station. Capitol Avenue, a prominent artery named for the State Capital grounds through which it passes, stands much to gain from such a visioning process.

The city has demonstrated a commitment to smart growth principles such as those outlined within the Greening America's Capitals program. Such principles are articulated by *One City, One Plan* – Hartford's 10-year Master Plan for conservation and development – which has gained support from all sectors of the city. An imbedded component of *One City, One Plan*, is the ongoing effort to advance *The iQuilt*, an arts-based economic development plan led by the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts.

To capitalize on Hartford's unique heritage and cultural assets, *The iQuilt* proposes integrating new public spaces with improved existing ones, as well as developing innovative identity-branding and way-finding strategies. With interpreted trails, interactive street furniture, green arts features, public art and active arts programming, *The iQuilt* will make it easy and enjoyable to walk from one cultural asset to another. Capitol Avenue is a critical artery within the *iQuilt*. The support of the EPA through the Greening America's Capitals program will greatly assist in advancing this important component of Hartford's *One City, One Plan*.

Therefore, I fully support the City of Hartford's request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M. Jodi Rell".

M. Jodi Rell
Governor



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

REPRESENTATIVE DAVID MCCLUSKEY
TWENTIETH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

DEPUTY SPEAKER

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 4110
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591
HOME: (860) 521-3554
CAPITOL: (860) 240-8585
E-mail: David.McCluskey@cga.ct.gov

July 9, 2010

Ms. Abby Hall
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
Ariel Rios Building, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460 Mail Code: 1807T

Dear Ms. Hall;

I write in strong support of the City of Hartford's Letter of Interest for the Greening America's Capitals initiative. The City of Hartford has partnered with the State of Connecticut, the Metropolitan District Commission (our regional water authority), Business Improvement District, the MetroHartford Alliance (our regional chamber of commerce), The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, Bushnell Park Foundation and Greater Hartford Arts Council in its efforts to become an example for smart growth in Connecticut. If selected as one of the Greening America's Capitals project, Hartford will focus the design team on a mile-long stretch of Capitol Avenue which is a prominent artery named for Connecticut's State Capitol building. This stretch borders our historic Bushnell Park, which was designed and built by Jacob Weidenmann, a Swiss-born landscape architect and botanist, and Union Station which is slated for a significant increase in passenger rail service as part of the U.S. DOT's High Speed Rail Initiative.

The city is committed to the smart growth principles contained in the Greening America's Capitals program as demonstrated by its 10 year Master Plan for Conservation & Development entitled *One City, One Plan*. The plan has gained support from all sectors of the city and has imbedded within it *The iQuilt*, an arts-based economic development plan, led by The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts. To capitalize on Hartford's unique heritage and cultural assets, *The iQuilt* proposes integrating new public spaces with improved existing ones, as well as developing innovative identity-branding and way-finding strategies. With interpreted trails, interactive street furniture, green arts features, public art and active arts programming, *The iQuilt* will make it easy and enjoyable to walk from one cultural asset to another.

Capitol Avenue is a critical piece of the iQuilt. As such, support of the EPA, HUD and the DOT through the Greening America's Capitals program will greatly assist in advancing this important component of Hartford's *One City, One Plan*. Hartford is keenly focused on a future committed to smart growth and achieving a vibrant downtown surrounded by distinctive, equitable, economically viable, and environmentally friendly neighborhoods.

Once again, I urge your office to give the City of Hartford's application your utmost consideration. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 860-982-7761 or my e-mail david.mccluskey@cga.ct.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David McCluskey".

David McCluskey
Deputy Speaker

Ms. Abby Hall
USEPA Headquarters
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Mail Code 1807T
Washington, DC 20460

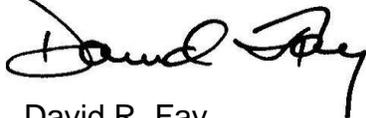
Dear Ms. Hall:

The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts wholeheartedly supports the City of Hartford's application for the *Greening of America's Capitals*. The Bushnell is a non-profit arts organization, founded in 1919, dedicated to presenting, creating, inspiring and sharing the best in the performing arts, while serving as a catalyst to advance education, promote economic development and build a sense of community in central Connecticut.

We have worked closely with fellow stakeholders across Hartford's cultural landscape to create the iQuilt, a project which capitalizes Hartford's many unique and cultural assets, by linking them with new and existing vibrant public spaces. The iQuilt incorporates advanced design concepts ranging from parking lots utilizing permeable paving, bioswales, and green arts installations, to increased pedestrian and bicycle access to the City's greatest cultural, economic and arts resources. The iQuilt has been enthusiastically incorporated into *One City, One Plan*, Hartford's 10-year Plan for Conservation and Development with principles fully consistent with those of the *Greening America's Capitals* initiative.

Our work with leaders representing the City of Hartford, the State of Connecticut, the Greater Hartford Arts Council, the MetroHartford Alliance, Hartford's Business Improvement District, the Metropolitan District Commission, Bushnell Park Foundation, and several neighborhood associations has created a strong, coherent vision for smart growth, sustainable design, and economic vitality. Capitol Avenue is our front door and forms a critical artery of the iQuilt. Support of the EPA through the *Greening of America's Capitals* will further strengthen and promote this project as a model for cities across the state and the nation. We greatly appreciate your favorable consideration of the City's application.

Sincerely,



David R. Fay
President and Chief Executive Officer

166 CAPITOL AVENUE
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1621

TEL 860.987.6000

FAX 860.987.6070

BOX OFFICE 860.987.5900

WWW.BUSHNELL.ORG



Mailing Address: 111 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106
Location: 155 Wyllys Street, behind Good Shepherd Parish House
Phone: 547-1663 X21 ♦ **Fax:** 547-1831
Email: Htfd2000@aol.com ♦ www.hartford2000.org

July 6, 2010

Abby Hall
Development, Community, and Environment Division
Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation
U.S. Department of Environmental Protection
Washington, D.C. 20460

Re: Capitol Avenue Visioning, Hartford, Connecticut

Dear Ms. Hall:

Hartford 2000, Inc. is pleased to support the City of Hartford's application to participate in the *Greening America's Capitals* program being undertaken by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency through the Partnership for Sustainable Communities.

Hartford 2000 is the coalition of Hartford's thirteen Neighborhood Revitalization Zones (NRZs) and the City of Hartford whose mission is to strengthen the individual and collective capabilities of the Neighborhood Revitalization Zones and to serve as an advocate for neighborhood issues. The NRZs are grassroots organizations created by local residents and other stakeholders under Connecticut state law and City ordinance for the revitalization of neighborhoods with large numbers of blighted buildings. Hartford 2000 provides information, educational workshops, and engagement and facilitation services to NRZs, neighborhoods, and the Hartford community.

The project area for Hartford's Capitol Avenue Visioning project is located in three neighborhoods – Asylum Hill, Frog Hollow, and South Downtown. If Hartford is selected by EPA to participate in this program, the affected NRZs and Hartford 2000 will work closely with the City to design and carry out a robust public participation process which will engage the stakeholders from the entire project area, including residents, businesses, faith communities, government, institutions, and community based organizations and coalitions.

We look forward to EPA's positive consideration of Hartford's Letter of Intent.

Sincerely,
Linda A. Bayer
Staff Consultant

Hartford 2000 Mission

To strengthen the individual and collective capabilities of the Neighborhood Revitalization Zones and to serve as an advocate for neighborhood issues.



July 5, 2010

Abby Hall
United States Environmental Protection Agency
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Mail Code: 1807T
Washington, DC 20460

RE: Application by the City of Hartford for funding from EPA's Greening America's Capitals Program for a Capitol Avenue Visioning Project

Dear Ms. Hall:

The Frog Hollow Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ) Committee has authorized me to convey to you that it supports the application, submitted by the City of Hartford, for funding under the EPA's Greening America's Capitals program for a proposed Capitol Avenue Visioning Project. The Committee unanimously approved its support for this proposed project during a roll call vote conducted from June 30 through July 4, 2010.

Capitol Avenue is a major thoroughfare through the Frog Hollow NRZ, and consequently improvements to Capitol Avenue form a substantial part of the Committee's Strategic Plan for the Revitalization of the Frog Hollow NRZ. The proposed project supports the Committee's effort to implement the following strategic projects under its Strategic Plan:

- Strategic Project 1 (page 3), which addresses traffic circulation on Capitol Avenue within the NRZ and looks toward calming traffic as well as encouraging greater use of public transportation into the NRZ
- Strategic Project 2 (pp. 3-5), which addresses the western end of Capitol Avenue as defined by the Capitol Avenue Visioning Project and which seeks to expand and to enhance the greenscape of Capitol Avenue as well as to make the pedestrian connections between Capitol Avenue and Pope Park easier to manage
- Strategic Project 13 (pp. 13-14), which addresses the overall streetscape of Capitol Avenue and which includes expanded plantings along the street
- Strategic Project 27 (pp. 20-22), which addresses the area of Capitol Avenue at the Connecticut State Capitol and which seeks to develop and green corridor here that encourages State legislators to walk into our neighborhood.



There are also several additional strategic projects that include Capitol Avenue and its surrounding environs, such as our anti-litter campaign (Strategic Project 4, pg. 5) and our proposal to expand greenspace generally (Strategic Project 16, pp. 14-15), that would benefit from the Capitol Avenue Visioning Project. Our Strategic Plan is available for review at our web site, <fhnrz.com/plans.html>.

The Capitol Avenue Visioning Project will bring together numerous Capitol Avenue stakeholders in an effort to develop a coordinated and comprehensive plan for Capitol Avenue. The proposed project represents an effort to both effectively utilize public dollars as well as and also efficiently marshal Hartford's resources at and around Capitol Avenue. The proposed project would also enable us to pursue a variety of other projects that are connected to, but not directly related to, Capitol Avenue. Funding for this proposed project would represent a tremendous opportunity for us to advance the revitalization of the Frog Hollow NRZ and to build upon the City's larger effort to bring various stakeholders together to improve and to enhance our city.

This letter represents a valid transmission of the position of the Committee for the purposes of supporting the application the City of Hartford will submit to the EPA's Greening America's Capitals Program, which will be which will be submitted by the City on or before July 9, 2010.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Corrigan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

David Corrigan
Chair

Tomas J. Nenortas, President
South Downtown Neighborhood Revitalization Zone
c/o Demetria Cain, Secretary, SoDo NRZ
17D Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

July 2, 2010

Abby Hall
United States Environmental Protection Agency
Smart Growth Program
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Ms. Hall:

I am writing on behalf of the South Downtown Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (SoDo NRZ) in strong support of the request by the City of Hartford, Connecticut for the EPA's Greening America's Capitals Program. The SoDo NRZ is dedicated to the preservation and revitalization of the Capitol City's unique architectural heritage, promoting green infrastructure and development, and engaging stakeholders for a clean, safe, and vibrant neighborhood.

The city's proposed "Capitol Avenue Visioning" will build on hard work and community engagement that has occurred citywide. In addition to complimenting *One City, One Plan* and the Bushnell Theater's iQuilt project, participation in Greening America's Capitals will advance efforts and plans made by our organization. Capitol Avenue is one of our most important public spaces, and has the potential to serve as a shining model for sustainable development, city-and-statewide.

The support of the EPA would be of tremendous assistance in advancing our aspirations for our city and its neighborhoods. The Sodo NRZ enthusiastically support's the City of Hartford's application to the Greening America's Capital's program and greatly appreciates your thoughtful consideration.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tomas J. Nenortas", written in a cursive style.

Tomas J. Nenortas, President
SoDo NRZ