

## Strategy/Recommendations

### Clusters – Initiatives

Focus on use of cluster power to boost NVC economics, use manufacturers precision metal, plastics, financial services and health care clusters.

#### Metal Manufacturer Cluster

Expand Waterbury and Bridgeport Metal Manufacturers Cluster initiatives for communities and industries in these communities that still have a manufacturing base.

- Manufacturer cluster can be a true export-oriented engine of the regional economy.
- Manufacturer cluster representatives have expressed a desire to aid metal manufacturers to expand business, training and job partnership assistance.

Plastics Cluster lab at Emmett O'Brien Vocational School needs to be incorporated in industry plans to train new workers, retain displaced workers, continue with research and development for new application.

Finance Service Cluster – the NVC job market and employment by industry trends represent a steep decline from 1997-2001. Efforts to work as a region to curb this trend must be initiated. ITZ zones and back-office operations of financial firms should be marketed.

Health Care Cluster – Waterbury area hospitals, Griffin Hospital outpatient facilities, and home health care services have stabilized. This cluster will be one of the largest sources of employment opportunities for the region.

- Inner city workers to be trained in all aspects of health care services.

#### Transportation

### **Goals and Objectives of the Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley**

The Central Naugatuck Valley Region's Long-Range Regional Transportation Plan 2000 reflects goal and objective of TEA-21:

**GOAL:** To develop and maintain a transportation system that will provide the public with a high level of mobility, safety, and choice, while also addressing social, economic, and environmental needs and concerns.

Objective 1: To provide a transportation system that reinforces and compliments the regional land use plan and the land use objectives to the region's 13 municipalities.

Objective 2: To maintain and improve the region's highway system with an emphasis on making better use of existing transportation facilities while seeking to improve the safety and reduce traffic congestion, energy consumption, and motor vehicle emissions.

Objective 3: To maintain and improve public transportation service by providing a choice of travel modes, reducing highway congestion, improving efficiency, and providing mobility for people who are transit dependent.

Objective 4: To provide transportation services to eligible low-income residents participating in the federal Job Access and Reverse Commute program, in order to promote their employment opportunities.

Objective 5: To provide transportation services that includes ramps for wheelchairs, curb cuts, intersection timing, minibus service, large print signage, and audio-visual signal crossing cues that are responsive to the elderly and the disabled.

Objective 6: To plan and program transportation improvements according to existing and realistic future funding sources.

Objective 7: To provide "walkable communities", especially in downtown centers and in congested areas, connecting these areas with commuter parking lots, residential areas, schools, commercial and industrial corridors, and recreation areas.

### **Local Priorities for Transportation Projects**

COGCNV cannot guarantee that local priorities will match regional or state priorities, although inclusion of these projects in the plan was vital to the public comment process. COGCNV will assist municipalities with their priorities whenever possible. Each of these projects was prioritized, deemed to be a regional and/or state priority.

The following are the communities and number of projects noted for the five year plan.

**Beacon Falls – four activities.**

**Bethlehem – five activities.**

**Cheshire – four activities.**

**Middlebury – two activities.**

**Naugatuck – nine activities.**

**Oxford – eleven activities.**

**Prospect – ten activities.**

**Southbury – five activities.**

**Thomaston – three activities.**

**Waterbury – nine activities.**

**Watertown – six activities.**

**Wolcott – nine activities.**

**Woodbury – three activities.**

Copies of the full transportation plan are available and are on file in the Valley Council of Government and/or Council of Government Central Naugatuck Valley. Several transportation initiatives were recommended by various communities in the Capital Needs Assessment Report, located within Section Z of this report.

## **Valley Council of Government Area**

### **Overview**

For the Lower Valley Region to achieve its smart growth strategies, the desired growth and economic development initiatives must be supported by the transportation system. This includes vehicular transportation as well as transit services (rail and bus) and pedestrian/bicycle facilities.

- Improve Route 8
- Enhance Transit Services
- Make necessary improvements on major roadways
- Enhance pedestrian and bicycle transportation

### **Improve Route 8**

**Make improvements to Route 8 to improve access and service within and between local communities and other areas.**

Route 8 is the primary transportation spine in the Valley Region. Improvement of the traffic flow at Route 8 interchanges is essential to reducing congestion and improvement service, safety, efficiency of traffic flow, and ultimately air quality in the Valley.

## **Strategies**

1. Promote efforts, to obtain designation of Route 8 as a federal interstate, to improve highway design, condition and funding.
2. Continue to work with CT DOT to obtain funding to implement the changes designed for Route 8 interchanges.

## **Enhance Transit Service**

### **Enhance transit services in the region.**

The Valley is fortunate to have bus and rail transit services provided by:

- Valley Transit District (VTD)
- Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority (GBTA)
- CT Transit, and
- Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro North).

## **Strategies**

1. Create, support and enhance local bus transportation that helps achieve the region's housing, employment, and economic development objectives.
2. Encourage preparation of a regional multi-modal transportation study.
3. Continue to work with Valley Transit to enhance local bus services for the handicapped and senior citizens.
4. Explore the feasibility of expanded employment shuttle service to serve more residents and destinations.
5. Continue to develop and encourage marketing efforts to increase mass transit use in the region.

## **Make Necessary Improvement on Major Roadways**

Make necessary improvements on other major roadways in the region in order to enhance level of service, improve safety, and support desired growth patterns.

- Route 34 in Derby
- Route 67 in Seymour
- Route 115 in Ansonia
- Route 110 in Shelton
- Pershing Drive in Derby/Ansonia.

## **Minor Arterial Roads**

- Bridgeport Avenue,
- Commerce Drive, and Huntington Street in Shelton, and
- Division Street on the Derby/Ansonia line.

## **Strategies**

1. Work with CTDOT to design improvements (as necessary) to Route 34.
2. Work with CTDOT to prepare a corridor study for Route 67 (with emphasis on an access management program).
3. Develop a circulation plan for Main Street in Ansonia (Route 115) as a key part of a Downtown Enhancement Plan for this area.
4. Work with CTDOT to design improvements (as necessary) to Route 110.
5. Work with CTDOT to extend Pershing Drive to connection to downtown Derby.
6. Work with the local communities and CTDOT to address needed improvements on major roadways in the region.
7. Support access management planning for Huntington Street and Commerce Drive in Shelton and Division Street on the Derby/Ansonia line.
8. Assist in obtaining state funding to implement plans to widen Bridgeport Avenue in Shelton to four lanes.

## **Enhance Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation**

### **Sidewalks and Trails**

### **Bicycle Routes and Multi-Use Trails**

## **Strategies**

1. Conduct an inventory of where sidewalks and trails exist in each community and develop strategies to extend and interconnect them.
2. Assist communities seeking funding for sidewalks and trails in open space/ recreational areas.

3. Continue to plan for multi-use trails within open space and recreation areas that accommodate both pedestrian and bicycle traffic.
4. Provide improved mapping for the Bicycle Route Concept Plan developed for the Region, as part of the Consolidated Regional Transportation Plan.
5. Encourage provision of safe, convenient bicycle facilities (including signage, pavement markings, etc.) when improvements are undertaken on major roads.
6. Support provision of public facilities such as bicycle racks, where appropriate, to encourage bicycle use.

### **Brownfield Redevelopment**

Support Waterbury's plan for comprehensive brownfields redevelopment that will investigate, catalog and assess brownfield properties throughout the City.

Continue to support and expand the Brownfield Pilot Project as an innovative and effective regional effort that offers considerable promise to redevelopment brownfields throughout the Naugatuck Valley.

### **Brownfield Conservation and Recovery (Waterbury)**

- Identify, catalog and assess all Brownfields in Waterbury.
- Establish criteria for ranking contaminated sites based on the probability for redevelopment.
- Develop site-specific redevelopment scenarios for sites best suited for adaptive reuse.
- Complete environmental testing for selected sites.
- Complete limited site work to improve the marketability of selected sites.
- Create a "Brownfield Directory" to assist in the marketing of these challenged sites.
- Facilitate the return of priority sites to productive use that expands the grand list of Waterbury.

### **Brownfield Pilot Activities**

**Industrial waste and brownfields are the most identifiable and pressing environmental problems confronting the Valley.**

The Valley is not alone, of course, in coming to grips with an industrial past – abandoned factories, boarded up mills, and contamination of sites and waterways.

**The Brownfields Pilot project is an innovative and effective regional effort that offers considerable promise in addressing environmental issues in the Valley.**

Continue with the Valley's Brownfields Pilot Project, an innovative effort to assess and redevelop the many brownfield sites located throughout the Naugatuck Valley.

### **Waterbury ITZ Recommendations**

Waterbury should continue with marketing of the “zone”.

The marketing of the ITZ should be done face-to-face with top decision makers.

Research indicates a wide range of space needs on behalf of area businesses. Therefore the buildout should reflect this diversity.

The NVDC should consider forming a “liaison committee” of area business leaders to act as an informal advisory panel.

The Waterbury ITZ should develop linkages to the state's cluster initiative on economic development and leverage resources there with focus on cluster for health care, financial services, all within the ITZ.

Other communities might follow with the ITZ concept particularly the NVC communities with vacant and underutilized spaces in the downtown area that can be supported by fiber and/or technology advances.

### **Economic Development Summit**

SEDC/NVDC should arrange a one-day economic development summit, invite all communities particularly those with or planning commerce/business parks to exchange ideas and concepts on their development plans.

Twenty-two projects were submitted for review under the Investment Survey report process. Eleven of the twenty-two projects are for business and commerce development type projects (land acquisition, infrastructure development, road, water, sewer and other utilities, marketing information and disposition parcels and/or buildings within the community).

Communities will be able to exchange client needs, space requirements, types of business needs including access to highway, utility demands, i.e. water for processing and/or discharge into municipal systems, land or buildings space availability.

While the community might have some “competitive” restraints not all communities can satisfy all the developer or business demands/requirements. A cooperative sharing of information on a regular basis will provide for two-way communications, sharing of resources in order to promote each individual towns “commerce/business parks”, will also permit one town to hand off to another potential leads that cannot be accommodated within one town, but that can be satisfied in another or within the region.

The municipalities that thrive maintain a stake in those cities that struggle because their success depends in part on the condition of towns that border them.”

### **Recommendations for Regional Action<sup>1</sup>**

Strategy: Create a More Streamlined and Productive Civic Infrastructure in the Valley

- ❖ Hold a full-day summit in the Valley focused on creating a more efficient and streamlined civic infrastructure.

Strategy: Create a Strategic Approach to Workforce Development that Benefits the Poor and Working Poor

- ❖ Develop a Valley workforce development plan.
- ❖ Launch a demand-driven training program.
- ❖ Design career ladders for the underemployed.

Strategy: Increased Intermunicipal Cooperation around a Range of Development Issues that Affect the Communities of the Lower Naugatuck Valley

- ❖ The Valley Regional Planning Agency, working with area residents and business people, should develop a plan to protect and sustain the region’s natural environment.

Strategy: Retain and Create New Jobs in the Valley by Assisting Existing Valley Companies and Residents with Entrepreneurial Interests

- ❖ Initiate a Business Calling Program to assist in the retention and expansion of existing companies.
- ❖ Advocate for the establishment of a one-stop business assistance center at the Valley Chamber of Commerce.

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<sup>1</sup> “Addressing Needs and Opportunities in the Lower Naugatuck Valley” prepared by Mt. Auburn Associates.