

Economic Development/Marketing/Grants/CDBG Report

August 2023

Downtown/West End Updates

- Carrier Construction is moving quickly on construction of Phase #1 of Centre Square Village.
- ECD staff still expects a popular “fast casual” restaurant with several locations in central CT to purchase 209 Riverside Ave. The building will require a full renovation and conversion to restaurant.
- An art studio offering fun activities for the public is planning to open on Riverside Avenue once its lease is finalized. ECD staff expects to announce more information at the September ECD meeting.
- *Golden Years*, an established adult daycare/home healthcare provider, is relocating to 118-126 Main St. The project will bring approximately 20 full-time employees to a prominent downtown building.
- ECD, Mayor’s Office, and Public Works are working with CT DOT on the potential of state funding – in addition to awarded funds through the Community Investment Fund (CIF) – to assist with the Route 72 streetscape project.
- City staff expect the downtown bus stops currently located on North Main Street near Centre Square village and City Hall will soon be relocated to the area on North Main Street in front of the Wheeler Health project.
- New Colony Development Corp. expects to begin cleanup of the Sessions building at 273 Riverside Avenue at end of August.
- Other Significant Downtown Infrastructure:
 - Wheeler and Carrier are coordinating with Eversource on installation of service meters
 - Grant-funded work will begin shortly on design for a bike/walking path in the West End to connect Rockwell Park with Downtown/Memorial Blvd/Middle St.
 - Streetscape design continues for both Route 72 and North Main Street.
 - Carrier will begin work on the retaining wall required along the railroad bank shortly after breaking ground on Centre Square.

Development Outside Downtown

- City staff will provide an update on the revolving loan program at the August ECD Board meeting.
- ECD staff is meeting with Ecosmart on its stalled construction project in the Southeast Bristol Business Park. The pandemic and development costs have delayed this project. More info to come.
- Baumer has begun operations at its temporary relocation with longer-term plans to construct a new building on Business Park Drive.
- Staff will provide an update on 894 Middle Street at the August meeting. This includes updates on the draft RFP.
- Route 6:

- Eblens and Boston Market have each closed operations, unfortunately.
- All Star Weddings wedding planner has opened in the plaza with Rodd's Restaurant.
- The new Citgo gas station at the intersection of King St./Route 6 is under construction.
- The other new gas station on Farmington Ave. heading toward Plymouth/Terryville should resume construction shortly, as the owner is dealing with steel supply/labor issues.
- The city still has one "hybrid" cannabis retail license available. Currently there are several potential companies interested in this final license.

Small Business/Manufacturing Technical Assistance Grants Completed or In Process

- Rx Crystals: Assisting with new signage framing.
- West End Pizza: Assisting with new fixed assets.
- Plaza Oaxaca: Assisting with new flooring, drywall, painting, and ceiling tile replacement.
- Ryse & Grind: Assisting a new startup business with new flooring, plumbing, sheetrock, and lighting.
- Curtis Products: Assist with a second round of manufacturing technical assistance to utilize remaining funds for marketing and sales consulting.
- Fourslide Spring & Stamping: Assist with purchase and installation of a new instant measurement system.
- Cuts by Chelle: Assist with new air conditioning and fence enclosure.

Marketing

Marketing and Public Relations Initiatives:

- 1) The West End Business Marketing Campaign is being finalized to help support the businesses within the West End neighborhood while construction continues along Rt.72/69. Park Street from Tulip Street to Divinity Street will be closed from July 31 to September 27, a map has been uploaded to the Bristol All Heart website and the Bristol Press printed an article on July 21, 2023 to make the community and the West End businesses aware of this road closure.
- 2) Mayor Caggiano and Dawn Nielsen were able to tour the new KindCare Assisted Living facility with Building Official Rick Brown on July 20th to view the final work being done there. A ribbon cutting ceremony is tentatively scheduled for October 24, 2023 to celebrate the opening of the facility. If any Commissioners know of someone who may benefit from their services/living there, contact Josh in the Sales Office.
- 3) Please continue to support the Bristol Farmers by stopping by any Saturday from 10 am to 1 pm to support all the local vendors.
- 4) The groundbreaking on July 13th for the By Carrier Centre Square Village was a success. A video was produced and launched to make the community aware of all the

construction happening in downtown, including the Centre Square Village project. See the Bristol All Heart and the Mayor's Office social media pages.

- 5) The Ribbon Cutting for The Bristol Bazaar took place on Saturday, July 15th and was a huge success with a great turnout. On Friday, July 28th Anthony Anthony (yes, he has two first names!), the Chief Marketing Office for the State of CT visited The Bristol Bazaar with Mayor Caggiano, Justin Malley, and Dawn Nielsen to take a tour and discuss featuring this unique new Bristol business in the State of CT's marketing campaigns to promote all the great things CT has to offer. More exciting news to come on this in September, stay tuned.

Grants Administration

Grant Submissions:

- An application was submitted for the DOT's Community Connectivity Grant, to focus on replacing noncompliant ramps near schools, municipal buildings, and high pedestrian traffic areas of the city.
- Still pending: Assistance to Firefighters Grants – for continued training of fire personnel.

CDBG Program Highlights

- **CDBG Year 48**
Program Year 48 has been closed. The New England Carousel Museum project was granted an extension and remains open pending completion of the work.
- **CDBG Year 49**
The Annual Action Plan for Year 49 was approved by HUD.