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CONNECTICUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION RECOGNIZES MUNICIPALITIES' 'BEST PRACTICES' POLICIES CEDAS ISSUES 'BEST PRACTICES IN LAND USE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT' ACCREDITATION TO TWENTY-FOUR CONNECTICUT COMMUNITIES

[October 2019] The Connecticut Economic Development Association (CEDAS) is proud to announce that it has certified twenty-four Connecticut cities and towns as exemplifying best practices in land use and economic development. These twenty-four communities subjected themselves to a rigorous application review process that required documentation of their procedures for development projects and consideration of their economic development strategy.

This is CEDAS's first year accrediting communities. The program, presented by sponsors Eversource and UI, was conceived as a way to recognize communities that are committed to doing economic development and at the same time, to raise the bar for excellence in the entire state. Applications were submitted from across Connecticut, with towns and cities showcasing the policies that create efficient economic development processes, target strategic business growth, and implement planning and zoning practices that thoughtfully plan for future population and community-specific needs. The 2019 application cycle opened in June and concluded on September 15th. The expectation is that other communities will follow their lead and take part in next year's accreditation process.

This year's certified communities are the: Town of Bethel, Town of Bolton, City of Bridgeport, Town of Brookfield, Town of Canton, City of Groton, **Town of Ellington**, Town of Fairfield, Town of Farmington, City of Hartford, Town of Madison, Town of Manchester, City of Milford, City of New Haven, Town of New Milford, Town of Newtown, Town of North Haven, Town of North Stonington, City of Norwich, Town of Portland, Town of Groton, Town of West Hartford, Town of Windham, and Town of Windsor.

Awards will be presented to communities receiving 2019 'Best Practices in Economic Development and Land Use Planning' accreditation at the CEDAS' Annual Meeting on October 23rd in Bridgeport, Connecticut. This event will celebrate successful applicants, present updates on CEDAS' activities and growth, and continue the conversation on how 'Best Practices' communities can showcase this designation as models for growth and as partners for future investment. To secure tickets please visit www.cedas.org.

"In order for our state to be successful at economic development, we need all levels working together and at the top of their game – local, regional, and state. The communities we are recognizing have shown a commitment to economic development and exemplify that Connecticut is open for business," said Garrett Sheehan, this year's President of CEDAS and CEO of the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce. "This program was never intended to be a competition, but

rather a way to raise our collective standards. I strongly encourage all Connecticut communities to adopt these best practices and apply for next year's certification." "This program was an excellent way to recognize the existing efforts of many communities and provide great examples of best practices for others. It was an amazing collaboration and I was pleased to work on the program" said Laura Brown, UConn Extension and CEDAS Board Member.

The Best Practices program was created as a partnership with Eversource, UI, Pullman & Comley, and STV/DPM to present this accreditation as a catalyst for economic development in Connecticut. Collaborating partners include UConn Extension, the Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association, and the Connecticut Economic Resource Center. Connecticut can celebrate in the fact that it has many communities that are committed to economic development and doing it right. Staff, volunteers, and elected officials spent hours putting together their applications. Officials and volunteers organizing their community's application also used this process as a chance to review their current policies and plans for business and community growth and as an opportunity to receive recommendations for updates and future improvements. According to one applicant "We applied because we do have best practices, but the internal and external dialogues don't recognize that. This designation helps change the dialogue, and gives us direction on improvements." The Program review committee also identified initiatives and programs that represent model approaches. These existing programs will be organized to create a resource library of examples for other communities looking for successful examples.

More information about the program is available at <https://www.cedas.org/Resources/CT-Best-Practices-In-Land-Use-and-Economic-Development/>

CEDAS is a non-profit association of economic development professionals. The organization is managed by an all-volunteer board. CEDAS works closely with the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) and the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) to foster economic growth in the state. CEDAS focuses networking and training opportunities for its membership.

The Connecticut Economic Development Association congratulates those communities receiving the 2019 'Best Practices in Economic Development and Land Use' accreditation and aims to highlight their success and contributions to promoting Connecticut as a home for future business and community growth.