

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

BY HER EXCELLENCY

M. JODI RELL

GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 15

**WHEREAS**, The State of Connecticut is defined by breathtaking landscapes that extend from the majestic shoreline to the rolling hills, vibrant cities, attractive suburbs, scenic small towns and picturesque farms; and

**WHEREAS**, We must actively steer the continued growth and development of our state to prevent sprawling development patterns from forever changing the character of our communities. If left unchecked, this trend will continue to fragment the landscape, impair our ability to remain economically competitive, consume precious natural resources, waste energy, pollute the air and water, increase Greenhouse Gases (GHG) that can accelerate the pace of climate change, and overwhelm local and state infrastructure; and

**WHEREAS**, Connecticut has already taken action to address issues raised by growth and development through approval of more than \$3.5 billion to fund transportation programs that will improve our highways, rail lines and bus systems and encourage transit-oriented growth; and

**WHEREAS**, Connecticut has launched a national search that will soon bring to our Department of Transportation a Deputy Commissioner who will focus exclusively on creating mass transit systems that support and encourage sound land use; and

**WHEREAS**, Connecticut has put in place impressive programs to protect open space, farmlands and historic sites. As a result of funding for state and local purchases of open space, Connecticut has preserved 479,160 acres of open space. This represents achievement of 71 percent of the state's goal of preserving 673,210 acres – or 21 percent of our land area – as open space. Connecticut's efforts have also resulted in the preservation of 222 farms with 31,025 acres of farmland. In the past two years alone, \$20 million in state bonding has been authorized for this purpose. In addition, funding for these and other important programs will be increased in future years as a result of the enactment in 2005 of the Community Reinvestment Act; and

**WHEREAS**, Connecticut has established an Office of Brownfield Remediation and Development to strengthen our efforts to clean up and reuse valuable properties often located in urban areas; and

**WHEREAS**, Connecticut is working actively to develop energy policies for the 21<sup>st</sup> century that will decrease our reliance on fossil fuels through increased use of renewable energy sources and a focus on conservation and efficiency; and

**WHEREAS**, Connecticut has embraced sound growth principles through revisions to the State Plan of Conservation and Development that provide a mechanism to begin steering growth to appropriate areas of our state; and

**WHEREAS**, Connecticut must build on these and other initiatives to ensure the success of our efforts to revitalize cities, preserve the unique charm of our state and build livable, economically strong communities while protecting our natural resources for the enjoyment of future generations; and

**WHEREAS**, Efforts to better steer growth and development must be respectful of the Connecticut tradition of “home rule” and “local autonomy” by including municipal officials as full partners in this initiative;


**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, M. Jodi Rell, Governor of the State of Connecticut, acting by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the statutes of this state, do hereby ORDER and DIRECT that:

- 1) There shall hereby be created an Office of Responsible Growth within the Office of Policy and Management.
- 2) The Office of Responsible Growth shall be responsible for the following:
  - a. **Chairing an Interagency Steering Council**, consisting of the Commissioners of the Department of Economic and Community Development, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Agriculture, Department of Transportation and the Department of Public Health as well as the Executive Directors of the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority and the Connecticut Development Authority, to coordinate policy development and capital planning in an effort to efficiently utilize state expertise and financial resources.
  - b. **Creating Regional Roundtables** that will invite the ongoing participation of city and town officials and foster the development of planning agendas tailored to the specific needs of different parts of our state, starting with new transit corridors.
  - c. **Developing support and incentives for communities** to engage in regional planning, to update zoning maps and ordinances and to build the capacity of municipal staff, boards and agencies to make complex land use decisions. This effort will include the establishment of a new municipal training program that will be created in conjunction with regional planning organizations, the Connecticut Land Use Academy and resources that already exist in our state’s colleges and universities.
  - d. **Updating the “Green Plan” for Connecticut** by June of 2007 to better identify sensitive ecological areas and unique features, guide acquisition and preservation efforts, support local build-out maps and assessments, and make these and other maps accessible to state agencies, regional planning agencies, local communities and nongovernmental organizations through geographic information systems (GIS).
  - e. **Reviewing transportation policies and projects** to increase opportunities to promote mass transit and roadway design that support state and local economic development while preserving and enhancing the character, as well as the “walkability,” of our communities.
  - f. **Expanding housing opportunities** to meet the needs of all Connecticut residents and support an expanding workforce with housing that provides ready access to passenger rail and bus service.
  - g. **Reviewing all State Funding** that has an impact on the growth and development of Connecticut and establishing criteria that will target funds for uses that are consistent with goals that emerge for responsible growth.
  - h. **Targeting economic incentives** to support development in designated Responsible Growth areas.
  - i. **Creating a new “Green and Growing” webpage** to highlight best practices and develop a virtual toolbox and roadmap to promote Responsible Growth region by region and community by community.

- 3) The Office of Responsible Growth shall be housed within the Intergovernmental Policy Division of the Office of Policy and Management. Two additional planning staff shall be added to the existing planning staff in the Division.
- 4) The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management shall designate a member of his staff to serve as the State Responsible Growth Coordinator.


This order shall be effective upon signing.

Dated at Hartford, Connecticut, this 6<sup>th</sup> day of October 2006.

  
M. JODI RELL  
Governor



By Her Excellency's Command:

  
Susan Bysiewicz  
Secretary of the State

SECRETARY OF THE STATE  
CAPITOL OFFICE

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SPECIAL REPORT  
DATE