Connecticut Main Street Center is proud to announce the formation of our new Downtown Resource Center. The DRC is for people who are working to revitalize their commercial districts, but who may not need or be ready for a fully designated Main Street program. Since CMSC is the only statewide non-profit organization dedicated to restoring and maintaining our downtowns, we wanted to make resources and tools more widely available. Downtown Resource Center members receive:

- Technical assistance and on-site consulting from national experts
- Trend information, “best practice” tools, and a members-only web site
- Access to a network of peers, and information sharing events
- Statewide alerts, and advocacy on downtown issues

The Downtown Resource Center will use the same National Main Street Four Point Approach™ that our designated Main Street communities utilize, a proven method that has worked in over 1,600 communities across the country. This approach focuses on incremental, sustainable progress achieved by following a plan. It uses public-private partnerships and includes four key areas of downtown revitalization.

- Organization – creating civic value, support and capacity to rebuild downtown
- Economic Restructuring – helping existing businesses, and attracting the right mix
- Design – restoring the character and physical value of buildings and streetscapes
- Promotion – bringing people downtown, through image, advertising and events

DRC members will benefit from discounted registration at Downtown Revitalization Institute workshops, too. The DRI workshops are presented by the Connecticut Main Street Center, and made possible by Bank of America, in collaboration with the Office of the State Treasurer. DRI offers a full day each quarter with nationally known experts on capacity building, business and real estate development, promotion, and design as a revitalization tool. Participants will learn to utilize historic and natural assets that already exist, and to build on them. They will discuss business restructuring, niche analysis, real estate development, public spaces, traffic patterns, pedestrians, parking, branding, and special events.

- JANUARY 28 – Building Your Capacity to Revitalize Downtown
- APRIL 29 – Using Design as a Tool for Downtown Revitalization
- JULY 26 – Economic Realities of Downtown Revitalization
- OCTOBER 28 – Promotional Strategies for your Commercial District

For more information about the Downtown Resource Center or the Downtown Revitalization Institute, please go to our web site, www.ctmainstreet.org.
Most of our resources were devoted to providing technical assistance to designated Main Street communities. Key projects from the past year include a design charrette in Rockville, in partnership with the Yale Urban Design Workshop, which yielded a plan for filling empty and underutilized spaces. We helped develop a niche market strategy in Windsor that analyzed downtown’s physical assets and the magnets that draw people. We brought in a national expert to work with the Upper Albany Main Street program in creating a plan that focuses on crime prevention and public/private collaboration. We conducted resource team visits to our three newest Main Street communities – Norwich, Waterbury and Winsted. We also provided assistance in the form of visual merchandising workshops, business retention training, quarterly networking sessions for staff and board presidents, and fund development planning.

Our third annual conference, Finding Solutions, was held at the Omni Hotel in New Haven, in partnership with the Community Economic Development Fund. This is the only opportunity in the state for downtown revitalization professionals to meet and discuss common issues. This year, 262 people attended, spending a full day sharing information, tools and ideas about commercial district revitalization.

### USES OF FUNDS
- **Technical Assistance for Current Main Street Communities**: 75%
- **Developing New Main Street Communities**: 10%
- **Advocacy**: 5%
- **Administrative**: 10%

### SOURCES OF FUNDS
- **Connecticut Light & Power**: 26%
- **Main Street Solutions Conference**: 9%
- **In-Kind Support**: 20%
- **Miscellaneous**: 1%
- **Department of Economic Development**: 44%
Search Our Web Site by Topic

Another way in which we are making the Connecticut Main Street Center resources available to a broader spectrum of users statewide is through our web site. Newly updated, it will enable users to search by topic for the latest tools and trends in downtown revitalization. This is yet another benefit of membership in the new DOWNTOWN RESOURCE CENTER. For more information about becoming a DRC member, visit our web site at www.ctmainstreet.org, or call us at 860-280-2337.

Relevant articles and links to helpful organizations or web sites are grouped by topic. These include state agencies, business planning and development, demographic and market statistics, urban design, consultants, historic building rehabilitation, funding, transportation and parking, real estate development and adaptive re-use, special events, and more. We are confident this will prove to be a valuable resource for community and economic development professionals throughout Connecticut.
Economic Development

Nationally, the Main Street Approach to Downtown Revitalization™ is one of the most powerful economic development tools known. Here are the cumulative reinvestment statistics for Connecticut Main Street communities from 1996 through June 2004.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Improvements</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net New Businesses</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net New Jobs</td>
<td>1,601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Projects</td>
<td>873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Volunteer Hours</td>
<td>114,678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Investment</td>
<td>$169,362,260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Investment</td>
<td>$165,531,629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Investment</td>
<td>$334,893,889</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These numbers just begin to tell the story. The increase in jobs was 78%, and the number of new businesses reflects a 217% increase. Volunteer hours increased by 378%, confirming the value of the National Main Street Four Point Approach™ to community and economic development. Involving residents and business owners in positive, long-term sustainable improvement through partnerships and planning creates greater success.

For every $1 spent on a local Main Street Program’s operating budget, $70.16 has been reinvested into Connecticut Main Street Downtowns.