

November 25, 2024

Ms. Melinda Wilson
Executive Director
Community Investment Fund 2030
Department of Economic and Community Development
450 Columbus Boulevard
Hartford, CT 06103

Re: Town of Enfield Application for Community Investment Fund 2030

Dear Ms. Wilson:

I am writing to express my strong support for the Town of Enfield's joint application for a \$10 million grant from the Community Investment Fund to facilitate the redevelopment of the defunct Enfield Square Mall through critical infrastructure improvements and site work. This infrastructure / site work will lay the foundation for transformational redevelopment, including the proposed \$300 million "Enfield Marketplace," leveraging hundreds of millions of dollars in non-state funds to transform the blighted, vacant, and deteriorating mall into a dynamic mixed-use development featuring 250,000 square feet of new retail space and a substantial multi-family residential complex (anticipated to be 450 units).

This redevelopment initiative is crucial for the economic and social revitalization of northern Connecticut. The project will not only address the blight caused by the underutilized mall but also provide significant opportunities for local businesses, create jobs, and offer much-needed affordable housing. The proposed mixed-use development aligns with CRCOG's Regional Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs), enhancing economic vitality and quality of life for our residents.

The planned Enfield project furthers the goals of the Community Investment Fund by fostering inclusivity and stability for all residents. Enfield is home to one of the Capitol Region's few low income and disadvantaged communities (LIDAC), which is an important consideration for this grant opportunity. This type of development encourages economic growth by drawing new businesses, increasing property values, and generating jobs by transforming the site into a vibrant hub of activity and opportunity for economic and community development in an underserved area.

Specifically, this project achieves the purpose and goals of the Community Investment Fund by:

- **Promoting water and sewer infrastructure improvements.** By replacing vast, impervious surfaces with landscaped areas and modern drainage systems, the site will better manage stormwater, reducing the risk of flooding and minimizing pollutant runoff into nearby water bodies. These improvements align with sustainable urban design practices, benefiting both the environment and the community.

- **Promoting affordable housing.** In addition to increasing the availability of housing stock generally, twenty percent of the units will be designated as affordable housing. Mixing affordable housing with market-rate housing promotes economic diversity, fosters social integration, and creates vibrant, inclusive communities where residents of varied income levels can thrive together.
- **Promoting the remediation of brownfields.** The property is currently contaminated by asbestos and ground infiltration. Developing the property will reduce environmental hazards, improving public health and safety. Restored brownfields enhance community aesthetics and increase property values, fostering pride and cohesion among residents.

The \$10 million infrastructure grant is essential for making this ambitious redevelopment project a reality, as it will support demolition, necessary infrastructure improvements, and site preparations, which are otherwise roadblocks to economic and community development. With your program's support, we can transform Enfield Square into a thriving community hub, promoting sustainable growth and economic resilience.

In closing, I urge the Community Investment Fund Board to approve the Town's grant application to help us realize this transformative vision for Enfield and its surrounding communities. We greatly appreciate your attention and support.

Sincerely,



Matthew W. Hart
Executive Director

Cc: The Honorable Ken Nelson, Jr., Mayor
Christopher Bromson, Town Manager
Aaron Marcavitch, Director of Economic & Community Development
CRCOG Policy Board