



For Immediate Release  
Contact: Marc Dillon, Chief of Staff  
Phone: 203.385.4001  
October 13, 2011

## **Stratford awarded state grant to continue transit-oriented work in Stratford Center**

Funds will allow town to move toward relieving traffic congestion near train station, spurring economic development.

**STRATFORD** – The Town of Stratford has been awarded a \$250,000 grant from the state Office of Policy and Management to continue its Transited Oriented Development work in Stratford Center. The grant was provided through the state’s Transit Oriented Development Pilot Grant program, and will allow the Town to conduct important planning work to enhance Stratford Center’s economic and community vibrancy.

“This grant will help us continue to push to make Stratford Center a more livable, commuter and business-friendly area, which will help with economic growth,” said Mayor John A. Harkins. “My thanks to the Governor and the team at the Office of Policy and Management for granting our application the result it deserved.”

In 2009, Stratford was awarded a separate grant from the Tri-State Transportation Campaign to conduct a feasibility study for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in Stratford Center. The study was completed in 2010, and concluded that the Town was well-positioned to create a TOD district in the one-half to one-mile radius around the Metro North train station.

TOD is defined as mixed-use residential or commercial development in an area that is designed to maximize access to public transportation, and often incorporates features to encourage transit ridership. A TOD neighborhood typically has a center with a transit station or stop (train station, bus stop, etc.), surrounded by relatively high-density development with progressively lower-density development spreading outward from the center.

Stratford's Metro-North station, coupled with its proximity to major transportation hubs such as Bridgeport, and to major employment centers such as Stamford and New York, make Stratford a strong candidate for this type of development. However, barriers to TOD exist that must be solved before real development can occur. The state's grant of \$250,000 will allow the Town to:

- Develop zoning regulations & design guidelines to promote and guide TOD within Stratford Center. This will allow a wider variety of mixed uses (higher density residential, retail, service and office space)
- Development of a Stratford Center Revitalization Plan that would develop revised traffic patterns in the area and identify ways of maximizing development to promote additional retail, service and housing. The plan will also assess pedestrian and bicycle linkages and determine physical enhancements that could promote safety for pedestrians and bikers.
- Creation of a Public/Private Reinvestment & Partnership Strategy for the TOD district that will result in public-private development partnerships and guide public investments within the TOD area.

The feasibility study provided Stratford with the building blocks for a comprehensive vision statement around transit-centered development in and around its historic center. With this new state grant, Stratford can move forward towards achieving that vision to enhance the Center's residential neighborhoods and their livability, preserve the historic district, revitalize the Downtown and commercial areas, and creating valuable commercial development that enhances employment and the Town's tax base. Stratford's efforts will also support regional goals of connecting regional transportation service with local transit-orient development areas. Stratford's efforts will be focused on maximizing those public transportation facilities and services to support growth in housing and commerce.