
Inside Hartford

A Guide to
City Government



Citizens' Research Education Network

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Because knowledge is power.

People need information.

Since 1981, the Citizens' Research Education Network (CREN) has asked and helped to answer questions that inform citizens and drive social change.

What is the impact of a proposed casino on Hartford neighborhoods? How do mortgage rates and bank policies impact communities?

Social justice, CREN believes, ultimately depends on a wide and broad understanding of the systems and people in power. We work to make that information available and meaningful.

CREN programs include...

- ☆ CREN PRESENTS, a half-hour television community news program on Hartford Public Access, using citizen journalism to provide media and financial literacy and other news and information.
- ☆ City government digests, providing advance notice of City Council and Board of Education meetings so interested citizens can participate. Call CREN for information or to subscribe.
- ☆ *Inside Hartford*, which this year will be used in public schools and parenting classes to help increase citizen activism and participation.
- ☆ Research. CREN works with community groups to ask and answer questions and create change: How many buildings in my neighborhood are abandoned? How many Spanish-speaking doctors are at work in Connecticut? Working with students and citizens, CREN will create original maps, analyze data, and best use it to make change.

If you share CREN's vision, we welcome your interest and support. Donations are tax-deductible. And volunteer time at CREN is rewarding, invigorating, and fun.

We hope you find this guide useful. Please share your suggestions for the next edition.

Sincerely,

Liz Dupont-Diehl
Executive Director

34 Sequassen Street
Hartford, CT 06106

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A Guide to *City Government*

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Note: Throughout this guide, words in bold print are defined in the Glossary. The term “City” refers to City of Hartford government and “city” refers to Hartford, the geographic area. The term “Council” refers to the Hartford City Council.

Charter Revision

On November 5, 2002, the residents of Hartford voted to make historic changes to the **City Charter**. These changes, which took effect on January 1, 2004, redefined the way in which the City conducts its business.

They reflect voters' desire to clarify the accountability and increase the effectiveness of City government.

The preamble of the Charter states "we, the people of Hartford, Connecticut ...adopt this Charter for the more efficient, efficacious and equitable transaction of our public business."

The Charter establishes the city's boundaries and the powers of the City Government, prescribes how elections will take place, grants powers to the Mayor, Court of Common Council, and other elective offices, establishes a Board of Education and a Department of Education, and sets forth the requirements and authorities of boards and commissions and certain permanent City departments. The Charter spells out how the City budget is prepared and adopted, how the City may borrow funds, and how the City's pension system is operated.

The Charter must be reviewed at least every ten years by a Charter Revision Commission and may be amended by a vote of the electors of the city of Hartford.

There are five major areas of change contained in the new Charter:

- ☆ The Mayor became the City's full-time chief executive officer;
- ☆ The Mayor now appoints five of the members of the nine-member Hartford Board of Education and voters elect the remaining four;
- ☆ Most departments, Boards, Commissions, and regulatory processes are established by **ordinance**, rather than being mandated by the City Charter;
- ☆ The newly formed Planning and Zoning Commission replaced the Planning Commission and acquired the zoning responsibilities formerly held by the Court of Common Council; and
- ☆ The term of office for municipal elected officials was extended from two to four years.

The change to a Mayor-Council form of government (commonly referred to as a "strong mayor" form of government) eliminated the position of City Manager and reassigned its roles and responsibilities to the Mayor. This change gives the Mayor the

authority over the administration of City government, including appointment of department heads, board members, and commission members, and the power to veto ordinances and **resolutions**. Although the Mayor has the right to speak at Council meetings, he/she may not vote. The Charter also created the position of a Chief Operating Officer who is the principal managerial aide to the Mayor.

The new Hartford Board of Education is made up of nine members with four-year staggered terms. Hartford residents elect four of these members, no more than three of whom may be from the same political party, and the Mayor now appoints the remaining five Board members, no more than three of whom may be from the same political party. The Charter also established qualifications that Board of Education members, whether elected or appointed, must meet. To be eligible to serve as a Board of Education member the individual must have completed a training program. The Charter also created the positions of two non-voting Board members to be filled by students in the Hartford public schools who are appointed by the Mayor.

The previous Charter established a wide variety of departments, positions, boards, and commissions. This made it difficult for the City to adjust its structure and procedures to technological, financial, and societal changes and the needs of the city. The new Charter establishes only a few "permanent" departments, positions, boards, and commissions. The Charter allows the Council and Mayor to establish other departments, positions, boards, and commissions through the adoption of ordinances.

In Hartford, prior to Charter amendment, zoning powers were vested in the Court of Common Council, or the City Council. Connecticut State law requires that, when a municipal charter is amended or a new charter adopted, zoning powers must be vested in a separate Planning and Zoning Commission. Hartford's Charter revision, therefore, transferred the Council's zoning powers to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

The Court of Common Council retained the following powers: to conduct hearings and inquiries regarding City administration, to confirm or reject Mayoral appointments, and to enact ordinances and resolutions.

For copies of the City's Charter, please visit the official City of Hartford website at <http://www.hartford.gov>.

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City Government Leadership

This section will describe the structure and procedures of Hartford's elected and appointed leadership. Part II outlines the major responsibilities of City departments.

Where is City Hall?

City Hall is located in downtown Hartford at 550 Main Street (06103). It houses the offices of the Mayor, City Council, Corporation Counsel, Personnel, Vital Records, Registrars of Voters, the Town and City Clerk, the Assessor, the Finance Department, the Department of Human Relations, and the Tax Collector. It also houses the Council Chambers and City records dating back to 1852. The general phone number for City Hall is (860) 522-4888.

Given the small size of the Municipal Building, many City departments must be located in other facilities, some of them City-owned and others leased from private owners. Police Headquarters, the Public Works Yard, and the Fire Training Facility are located in the North Meadows. Parks maintenance staff is housed in Colt Park, horticulture staff in Elizabeth Park, and other public works employees at 525 Main Street. The Human Services Division is located at 2 Holcomb Street, around the corner from the Health Division on Coventry Street. The City Treasurer, Development Services, and the Probate Court are all in Constitution Plaza.

For more information on the individual departments, including locations and contact information, see Part II— City Departments, Services, and Programs.

What government meetings are open to the public?

Connecticut Freedom of Information (FOI) laws give the public the right to access the records and meetings of public agencies. Any city board or commission that is conducting the public's business must follow rules of open government:

- ☆ Posting notice of meetings.
- ☆ Allowing the public access to meetings
- ☆ Creating and posting minutes that record what happened at the meetings.

Some proceedings, called Executive Sessions, may be closed to the public if they meet certain standards. Members may vote to close a meeting for discussions of pending litigation against the city, issues regarding personnel matters for a particular employee, security, real estate acquisition, or a caucus – that is, a discussion with members of one political party only, to discuss strategy or party matters. However, in order for FOI to be invoked to close a meeting to the public to discuss employee or personnel matters, the employee in question must have had the option to request the meeting be held in open session.

Only the portion of the meeting that concerns these areas can be closed to the public. Votes must be taken in public and recorded as part of the minutes. Other parts of the meeting which do not meet these standards must remain open.

The public also has the right to view and request copies of public records, including reports filed by political candidates listing contributors, minutes and agendas of meetings, annual reports and audits, and other documents prepared in the course of conducting public business that do not meet the criteria for exemption.

Citizens who feel they have been wrongfully denied access to public records or meetings may appeal to the Freedom of Information Commission. Information on this, and the full act, is available at <http://www.state.ct.us/foi/>. You may also call the commission, at (860) 566-5682 or (866) 374-3617

Who are the elected leaders of Hartford's City Government?

The Mayor

The Mayor serves as the chief executive officer of the City. It is a full-time position. The Mayor appoints the Chief Operating Officer, the Corporation Counsel, and the heads of all departments. The Mayor is responsible for the performance of the employees and appointed officials of the City and oversees all of the services provided by City departments. The Mayor appoints the members of all boards, commissions, agencies, and other entities created by the **City Charter, Municipal Code, or General Statutes**, unless otherwise provided. The Mayor also has the power to recommend and introduce ordinances and resolutions. S/he has the right to speak but does not have the power to vote at Council meetings.

The Court of Common council

The Court of Common Council, commonly known as the City Council, is the legislative arm of the City government. Nine members are elected from the city at-large, not from districts or neighborhoods, to serve four-year terms. The Council's authority is derived from the City of Hartford's Charter and Municipal Code and the Connecticut General Statutes. The City Council has the power to:

- ☆ Adopt ordinances to preserve the public peace, health, safety, comfort, and welfare of the inhabitants of the City and to enact penalties for violations that are enforceable in Connecticut's court system;
- ☆ Adopt the City's Annual and Capital Budgets and appropriate funds;
- ☆ Adopt resolutions on any topics, including establishment of City policies, programs or services, allocation of funds, acceptance gifts, waiver of fees, sale of land, etc;
- ☆ Approve appointments made by the Mayor;
- ☆ Establish fees for City services; and
- ☆ Investigate the official conduct of any City department, agency, or employee.

Council President

The Council President is elected to a two-year term by Council members to preside over Council meetings and to carry out other tasks determined by the Council or Charter. S/he can both speak and vote at meetings as a member of the Council. If the Mayor is absent and/or disabled and unable to perform the duties of the office, the Council President acts in his/her place and has all the powers and duties of the Mayor with the exception of appointing or removing officers or employees for the first 30 days. In the event of the Mayor's death, permanent disability, or resignation, the Council President becomes the Mayor until the next election. The Council President may serve an unlimited number of terms.

Majority Leader

The Council's Majority Leader is chosen by the Council members who belong to the political party that holds the majority of Council seats. The Majority Leader serves as leader of the party within the Council. One of the Majority Leader's responsibilities is to present recommendations for each agenda item during Council meetings.

Minority Leader

There may be more than one minority party represented on the Council. Each party holding less than the majority of Council seats may select a Minority Leader to serve as leader of the party within the Council.

City Treasurer

250 Constitution Plaza
(860) 757-9100

The City Treasurer is an elected position with financial responsibility to Hartford taxpayers and retired City employees. The City Treasurer is the custodian and investor of all City funds. S/he invests the assets of the City's pension fund, manages all cash and banking relations, invests and distributes City funds, and serves as a consultant to the Council on various financial matters. The City Treasurer also serves as the secretary of the Pension Commission.

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Registrars of Voters

550 Main Street
(860) 543-8585
(860) 722-6321 TDD

There are two Registrars of Voters; one is a Democrat and one is a Republican. The mission of the Registrars of Voters is to increase voter enrollment and participation, maintain related files, conduct elections, primaries, and referendums, and uphold the integrity of the electoral process.

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Who are the other important City officials?

Chief Operating Officer

550 Main Street
(860) 543-8500

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) is the principal managerial aide to the Mayor and serves at his/her direction. The COO is responsible for the supervision and direction of all departments and agencies of the City on behalf of the Mayor and any responsibilities that may be assigned by the Mayor.

Corporation Counsel

550 Main Street
(860) 543-8575

The Corporation Counsel provides legal advice and assistance to City Departments and elected and appointed officials on any matters related to the interests of the City. The Corporation Counsel serves as parliamentarian at Council meetings.

Town and City Clerk

550 Main Street
(860) 543-8580
(860) 722-8334 TDD

The mission of the Office of Town and City Clerk is to keep the most up-to-date and accurate official land and legislative records. The Town and City Clerk is appointed for an indefinite period of time by the Council and is responsible for preparing the Council agendas, minutes of meetings, and certified copies of any proceedings of the Council. The office is also responsible for maintaining all property ownership records, voter registration cards, liquor permits, claims against the City, domestic partnership registration, trade name certificates, airplane registration, and all land, voting, election, and military records. Additionally, the City Clerk office issues various licenses, such as dog, hunting, and fishing licenses, and administers the absentee ballot program. The Town and City Clerk is the guardian of the official seal of the City of Hartford.

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How are local officials elected?

Regular elections are held in Hartford on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November. (Special elections may be set by the City Council.) Elections for the Mayor, Council members, the City Treasurer, and Constables are held every four years beginning in 2003. The Registrars of Voters are elected every four years beginning in 2004. Four members of the Board of Education are elected every four years beginning in 2005. (An additional five members of the Board of Education are appointed by the Mayor.) There is no limit to the number of terms elected officials may serve.

Council members are elected **at-large**, not by district, so that each member represents the entire City. No more than six members may be from any one political party.

Candidates for local office are generally nominated by political parties. These nominations take place at the town committee level. Town committees are governed by state election law and the rules of the state political parties, which play a significant role in the function of City government. In Hartford, the town committees can perform any of the following functions:

- ☆ Assist the Mayor and Council in selecting members to serve on boards and committees.
- ☆ Nominate and endorse candidates for state and local elected offices.
- ☆ Screen and endorse candidates for Council appointee positions such as Corporation Counsel and Assistant Registrar of Voters.

An individual may also have his or her name placed on the ballot by collecting signatures of registered Hartford voters. The number of required signatures is based on a State formula determined by the number of actual voters in the last election. More information about town committees, petitions, nominations, and elections can be obtained by contacting the Registrars of Voters at (860) 543-8585.

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How does the Council do business?

Council meetings are held in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order and the Council Rules. Roberts Rules of Order is a standardized guide for conducting meetings in an orderly, timely, and fair fashion. This procedure is called "parliamentary procedure".

Council Rules are adopted by the Council at the beginning of the four-year term and may be amended as necessary. The Rules outline when meetings will be held, how Council members and the public are expected to act, in what order matters will be heard, what Council committees will exist, and generally how the Council will function.

A Brief Overview of Parliamentary Procedure

Under parliamentary rules, all actions must be presented in the form of a **motion by a Council member**. When a motion has been made and **seconded**, the Chairperson states the motion to the Council, asks for discussion, and then calls for a vote. When a question is under debate, only the following motions may be considered:

Motion to **adjourn** the meeting,

Motion to **recess** the meeting,

Motion to **table** an item,

Motion to **call the question** – end discussion and bring it to a vote,

Motion to **postpone** to a certain day; or

Motion to **amend**, or make changes.

A Councilperson may vote yes or no on the motion or may choose to **abstain** from voting. After a motion has been voted on, any Council member who voted with the majority may move to reconsider the question at the same meeting or at either of the next two regular Council meetings. Usually, a simple majority is required to pass a motion.

Order and Decorum

The Council President is the Chairperson of Council meetings and is expected to maintain order. In the Council President's absence, the Council may provide in its rules for the designation of a member to preside as temporary Council President, and that person becomes the Chairperson for that meeting. Five Council mem-

bers must be present at a meeting for a quorum to exist.

When a Council member wishes to speak, s/he must raise her/his hand to draw the attention of the Chairperson. Upon being recognized, Council members are to limit their comments to the question under debate and avoid personal attacks or attributing improper motives to any member.

The Agenda

Only items submitted by the Mayor, Council member(s), other elected City Officials, and boards and commissions can be included on the Council agenda. Items must be submitted to the Town Clerk by noon on the Wednesday preceding the Council meeting. The meeting agenda usually consists of at least fifty items.

The agenda is available for public inspection at the Office of the Town and City Clerk beginning on the Thursday prior to the Council meeting. The supplemental agenda items are ready for inspection between 4:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. on the day of the Council meeting. Members of the public can get a copy of the Council agenda free of charge at the Clerk's office, on the Internet, or at Council meetings. The entire Council packet, including attachments for all agenda items, can be obtained by paying an annual fee to the Town Clerk. CREN publishes a preview and review of all Council activities, which is available by email subscription and also in local newspapers. You can request the service by calling (860) 509-3702.

Types of Meetings

Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers in City Hall. During July and August, meetings are only scheduled for the second Monday in the month. Any meeting scheduled to take place on a holiday takes place on the next business day.

A public hearing, at which citizens may address the Council on any topic they choose, takes place at 6:30 p.m. preceding the first Council Meeting of every month.

Special meetings are held whenever the Council finds it necessary. A special meeting may also be called by the Mayor, the Council President, or any three Council members on 48 hours notice to the Council. The discussion items are limited to the items identified in the notice.

Emergency meetings may be held only when a public emergency has occurred involving or threatening the lives and/or property of the residents of the City. Only the Mayor and the Council President have the authority to call an emergency meeting and may do so with three hours notice to the Council.

Occasionally, the Council meets in an Executive Session, allowable only under conditions set forth in the Freedom of Information Act. (See page 6 for details) Six of the nine Council members must vote to hold an Executive Session.

Council members may meet in separate small meetings called *caucuses*. A **caucus** is a meeting of members of one political party to discuss policy, choose candidates, or consider other matters. Caucus meetings are not open to the public.

Council Committees

The Council appoints its members to committees and subcommittees at the beginning of the Council term. The primary purpose of Council committees is to review and discuss items being considered by the Council and make recommendations to the full Council. Committees may be restructured, added, eliminated, or changed by the Council as needed. The Council may also appoint a special committee for the sole purpose of holding public hearings on a particular issue. As of the date of this publication, there are ten standing committees, which are listed below. Committee meetings are conducted monthly and are usually held in the Council Chambers at

City Hall in the evening. Generally, public participation is allowed at committee meetings. If you wish to receive notices for any committee meetings or if you would like a copy of the meeting schedule for the year, contact the Council office at (860) 543-8510.

Boards and Commissions

Boards and Commissions provide advice and recommendations to the City Council. Six boards and commissions are required by the City Charter: Planning and Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Pension Commission, Internal Audit Commission, Committee on Abatement of Taxes and Assessment, and the Board of Assessment Appeals. The Council has the authority to establish by ordinance other boards and commissions to focus on issues they find especially important. With few exceptions, the Mayor appoints the members of a board or commission and the Council approves the appointments. Each board and commission operates under its own rules and sets its own meeting schedule. Meetings are open to the public. To receive information about their activities, contact the Office of the Town and City Clerk at (860) 543-8581.

All members of boards and commissions must be residents of Hartford and must be registered to vote in Hartford. Interested individuals may contact the Mayor's office to submit an application, at (860) 543-8500.

Name of Committee	Monthly Meeting Schedule
Committee of the Whole	2nd Monday at 7:30 PM
Education	4th Wednesday at 5:30 PM
Finance and Revenue	4th Tuesday at 6:30 PM
Health and Human Services	1st Monday at 5:30 PM
Housing	3rd Thursday at 6:30 PM
Labor and Workforce Development	2nd Wednesday at 5:30 PM
Management and Budget	Thursday immediately following the 1st regularly scheduled Council meeting in the month at 5:30 PM
Planning and Economic Development	1st Tuesday at 6:00 PM
Public Works, Parks and Environment	3rd Wednesday at 5:30 PM
Quality of Life & Public Safety	3rd Tuesday at 5:30 PM

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What is a typical City Council meeting like?

Order of Business

Council meetings open with a salute to the flag, a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, and a roll call of Council members. The order of business for Council meetings is as follows:

- ☆ Action on the records of the previous meeting
- ☆ **Public Hearings**
- ☆ Motion to place resolutions on the **Consent Calendar** and approval
- ☆ Petitions and communications
- ☆ Unfinished business
- ☆ Reports of Committees
- ☆ Action on ordinances previously presented
- ☆ Action on resolutions not included on the Consent Calendar
- ☆ New business
- ☆ Adjournment

Suspension of the Rules

A suspension of the rules is needed to allow the Council to rearrange the order of the agenda items and/or to allow the Council to consider the items on the supplemental agenda. Unanimous consent is required to add any agenda items concerning expenditures of funds.

Public Hearings

There are several rules that govern the public hearing portion of Council meetings and separate public hearings held by the Council.

Every person or group who wishes to speak must sign his/her name on the roster prior to the start of the Council meeting

Each person addressing the Council must give his/her name and address. If s/he represents a group, s/he must also give the name and address of that group

Each person addressing the Council shall limit his/her remarks to three minutes

Remarks are limited to present or proposed City policies, budgets, ordinances, or resolutions

All remarks are to be addressed to the Council as a whole, not to any one Council member

The Council is not allowed to debate during public hearings, although members may comment or ask questions of the speakers

Any person making personal or slanderous remarks shall be barred from future meetings

Consent Calendar

The Consent Calendar is a list of resolutions that the Council votes on all at one time rather than with individual votes. It is a way for Council members to pass non-controversial resolutions without voting on each item individually. Only the Majority or Minority Leader may call for a motion to place a resolution on the Consent Calendar. If any Council member objects to a resolution being placed on the Consent Calendar, it is moved to the **action agenda** where it will be brought to a vote as a separate item. Before the vote on the Consent Calendar, the Majority Leader reads off the list of item numbers to be placed on the Consent Calendar, each of which represents a resolution. Once this motion has been moved and seconded, **one roll call** vote is taken to approve all Consent Calendar items.

Petitions and Communications

The Majority Leader calls for a motion and a second to receive communications on the agenda. These may include reports, petitions, letters, and other forms of communication to the Council that do not require action. The Majority Leader reads off the list of item numbers that represent the items to be received and one roll call vote is taken to receive those items.

Referrals

The Majority Leader may make a motion to refer individual agenda items to one or more of the Council's standing committees. Referrals may also be made to the Director of Public Works, a board, or commission. Public hearing dates for ordinances are assigned at this time. Generally, there is no discussion about these items at the Council meeting due to initial discussions conducted at the committee meetings. Once the motion for referrals has been moved and seconded, one roll call vote is taken for all referred items.

Unfinished Business

Items tabled at previous meetings may be removed from the table and voted on, or they may be tabled again. An item may be tabled because there is no consensus to vote in favor of or against the item or the Council feels it needs more information before it can act.

Committee Reports

When items have been previously referred to committees or other bodies, a report to the full Council of their findings is submitted to the City Clerk to be included with the Council agenda packet. A motion to waive reading of the reports is usually made, since Council members have had the opportunity to read the reports prior to the meeting. When a motion to waive reading of the reports has been moved, seconded, and approved, a voice vote is taken to accept the reports. If there is no committee report on an item that has been referred to committee, a motion may be made to discharge the committee from reporting. This can occur when either the committee did not have a quorum at its meeting and therefore could not take any action or the committee did not meet and has no report.

Action Agenda

Items on the action agenda are voted on individually. During a typical meeting, you will hear the following:

- Majority Leader: "Move to adopt resolution at item #35."
- Council member: "Second."
- Council President: "Is there any discussion?"
- Council President "If there is no (more) discussion, Mr. Clerk, please call the roll."

The Council has two ways to take action; they can pass either a resolution or an ordinance.

A resolution may make a formal statement, establish a policy, request or authorize action by or give direction to the Administration, settle claims, waive fees, or authorize expenditures.

An ordinance may modify existing laws, adopt the budget, levy a tax, borrow money, establish the amount of fines, adjust compensation, or authorize the appropriation of funds. Once adopted, an ordinance becomes a **statute** or law and becomes a part of the Municipal Code. An ordinance requires a public hearing, which must be advertised by the Town Clerk. An ordinance must be read at two council meetings no less than three weeks apart before Council may take action.

Controversial matters often involve lengthy discussions in which Council members publicly express their support of or opposition to an item. Council members may have questions for the Corporation Counsel regarding the item being discussed. Substitutes and amendments may be offered or may be referred to a committee for further study. The discussion may end naturally after all interested Council members speak or when a Council member moves to "**call the question**". The item is then voted upon by a roll call vote. Five votes are necessary for passage.

All ordinances and resolutions are sent to the Mayor following adoption. The Mayor can **veto** the ordinance, sign it for approval, or take no action. If the Mayor signs the ordinance or resolution, it goes into effect on the date specified. If the Mayor vetoes it, the Council can override the veto with seven votes. If the Council fails to override the veto, the ordinance or resolution fails. If the Mayor fails to return the ordinance or resolution to the City Clerk within seven days with either a veto or a signature, it automatically goes into effect.

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City departments, Services, and Programs

This section will outline the major responsibilities of City departments, their locations, and contact information. More information about the City's departments is available on the Internet at www.hartford.gov.

Where do I go for help in City Government?

The Mayor's Office

Constituent Services, 550 Main Street
(860) 522-4888

In addition to having the powers and responsibilities listed in Part I, the Mayor's Office contains a Constituent Services Division. Residents may report neighborhood problems, get information about City services, register a complaint, make inquiries, or pay a compliment. When you report a problem, the Mayor's staff contacts the appropriate department on your behalf. They then track the complaint until you get the service you need or the problem is resolved.

City Council Offices

550 Main Street
(860) 543-8510

The nine council members and their staff occupy the Council Offices. Each Council member has a staff person who assists with customer service, scheduling, and researching issues.

Department of Development Services

Director's Office, 250 Constitution Plaza
(860) 757-9022

The Department of Development Services is divided into five divisions: Office of Grants Management, Housing and Property Management, Licenses and Inspections, Economic Development, and Planning.

Office of Grants Management

260 Constitution Plaza
(860) 757-9270

The Office of Grants and Management secures, administers, and manages U.S. Housing & Urban Development (HUD) entitlement grant programs such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership (H.O.M.E.), Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG), and Housing Opportunities for Persons With Aids (HOPWA), as well as other federal and state grants and loans.

Housing and Property Management Division

250 Constitution Plaza
(860) 757-9005

The mission of Housing and Property Management is to stabilize and improve the City's housing stock and neighborhoods. The Division provides loans for development, renovation, and first-time home purchase of all types of housing, as well as for lead abatement ordered by the Health Department. The division staffs the Fair Rent Commission, through which tenants may file complaints of excessive rents, and provides counseling to tenants, landlords, and homeowners on various housing problems. Assistance is also provided to individuals, families, and businesses that are being displaced as a result of code enforcement or other government action.

The division is also responsible for the City's property acquisition and disposition activities. It works with other City divisions and departments to acquire and dispose of uninhabitable and vacant properties in order to preserve, improve, and strengthen the city's neighborhoods, stabilize the existing housing stock, and promote home ownership.

Licenses and Inspections Division

260 Constitution Plaza
(860) 757-9200

The mission of the Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) is to ensure the health and safety of the public and the soundness and habitability of the city's residential, industrial, and commercial structures. It reviews plans and specifications and inspects new and altered structures and properties to enforce all State building codes, City housing codes and zoning ordinances. It issues food and vendor licenses and zoning, building, demolition, and event permits. It inspects weighing and measuring devices, such as gas pumps and scales. The division staffs the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Economic Development Division

250 Constitution Plaza
(860) 757-9070

The mission of this division is to expand the non-residential tax base and the pool of job opportunities within the city in order to improve its business climate and standard of living. It seeks to create an environment that is attractive to high quality business enterprises by promoting the benefits of locating a business in the city and working with existing city businesses. This division also staffs the Hartford Economic Development Commission and the Redevelopment Agency.

Planning Division

250 Constitution Plaza
(860) 757-9040

The goal of the Planning Division is to promote quality urban design throughout Hartford. The division is responsible for preparing the City's long-range Plan of Development and the Capital Improvement Plan, and reviewing and making recommendations on development proposals, conformance with design, historic, and zoning regulations. It reviews and makes recommendations on amendments to Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ) plans and proposals to establish new NRZs. The division provides data from the US Census and other sources, mapping, and other analytical services. It also provides technical assistance to neighborhood groups and NRZs as well as staff the Planning and Zoning Commission, Design Review Board, and Historic Properties Commission.

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Emergency Services and Telecommunications (911)

This new department is responsible for taking emergency calls for fire, police, and emergency medical services and for dispatching the appropriate service providers to the scene of the emergency. Dispatchers are civilians, not police officers, and are located at the Police Department and are supervised by the city's Department of Emergency Services and Telecommunications.

Finance Department

550 Main Street
(860) 543-8550

The Finance Department manages the City's financial affairs and, in conjunction with the City Treasurer, advises the Mayor and Council on financial policy. The department contains the following divisions: Assessment, Tax Collector, Accounting and Control, Procurement, and Risk Management.

Assessment Division

(860) 543-8540

The City Assessor determines the value of all buildings, land, personal property, and all motor vehicles and determines which property is taxable and which is tax-exempt. Each year the Assessor produces a Grand List, the listing of all taxable property, which is used by the City Council to determine the tax rate.

Tax Collector's Office

(860) 543-8565

The Tax Collector bills and collects taxes on all taxable property. The Tax Collector oversees the sale of tax liens, when authorized by Council, and the sale of property acquired by the City through foreclosure due to tax delinquency. The division also collects parking fines and staffs the Committee on Abatement of Taxes and Assessments.

Risk Management Division

(860) 543-8560

The Risk Management Division secures and manages health benefit plans and insurance coverage for City employees and retirees. It also manages Workers Compensation, Heart and Hypertension Programs for Police and Fire employees, and property and casualty insurance for the City. The division provides safety management programs and OSHA (U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration) training for City Departments.

Accounting and Control Division

(860) 543-8550

This division maintains the City's accounting and payroll systems, reviews payment requests prior to processing, produces monthly and annual financial statements and reports, as well as the fixed asset inventory (equipment, furniture, etc.). It also assists the independent auditors in preparing the annual audit.

Procurement Services Division

(860) 543-8555

The division is responsible for purchasing goods and services for the City departments in a competitive manner and in conformance with all applicable laws and policies. The procurement office is responsible for leases and the disposal of surplus property and certifies small and minority businesses for participation in the City's Minority Small Business and Set Aside Program.

Fire Department

Headquarters: 275 Pearl Street
(860) 722-8200

To report a fire, call 911

The Hartford Fire Department works to prevent and minimize loss of life and property through public education and quality fire, rescue, and emergency medical services. The department responds to all emergencies, including fire, medical, hazardous materials, and terrorism. The divi-

sion puts out building and vehicle fires, investigates suspicious fires, and administers the State Fire Safety Code. The division provides fire prevention education and co-sponsors, with the Boy Scouts of America, a Fire Explorer Troop for young people. There are 12 fire stations throughout the city.

Health and Human Services Department

Director's Office: 2 Holcomb Street
(860) 543-8860
(860) 722-6712 TDD

The mission of the Health and Human Services Department is to protect, enhance, and improve the health of city residents and to help people help themselves and enjoy life in Hartford. The Department contains two divisions – Health Services and Human Services.

Health Services Division

Burgdorf/Fleet Health Center, 131
Coventry Street
(860) 543-8800

This Division is responsible for enforcing all public health laws and ordinances. Health staff investigate and identify communicable diseases, track and treat them, and work to prevent their spread. Such diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS. The health of mothers and children is a focus of the division's work. Services include outreach to mothers at risk, nutrition programs, family support, and lead poisoning prevention, education, and treatment.

The division also provides inspection and licensing of food preparation facilities, and conducts health inspections of day care centers, schools, shelters, and swimming pools. It is responsible for identifying and addressing environmental health problems, such as rodents, hazardous waste, trash, and abandoned vehicles. The Vital Records Office is also part of the Health Services Division, although it is located in City Hall. The office issues marriage and civil union licenses and birth, death, marriage, and civil union certificates for such events occurring in Hartford since 1852.

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Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD)
(860) 543-8820, TDD 722-6713

Tuberculosis (TB) Clinic
(860) 543-8827

AIDS/HIV Testing and Education
(860) 543-8822, TDD 722-6748

Services for people living with AIDS/HIV
(860) 543-8806

Other Communicable Diseases &
Public Health Nursing
(860) 547-1426, ext 7128 or 7133

Environmental Health and Food Sanitation
(860) 543-8815

Lead Poisoning Prevention and Education
(860) 543-8817

Maternal & Infant Outreach
(860) 543-8834

Rambuh Family Center
(860) 543-8840

Women Infants and Children (WIC)
Nutrition Program
(860) 543-8835, TDD 722-8061

Vital Records (located in City Hall)
(860) 543-8538

Human Services Division

2 Holcomb Street
(860) 543-8860

The Human Services Division provides referral, advocacy, and direct services to Hartford residents of all ages. For children, the division operates nine day care centers, including one for infants only. Fees are on a sliding scale. For children and teens, the division operates thirteen playgrounds, eight gymnasiums, nine recreation centers, and nine swimming pools (also open to adults). Teens, young adults, and their families can receive counseling and referrals through the Youth Services Bureau. For adults, the division provides job training and placement and operates the McKinney Shelter, a shelter for homeless men.

Elderly Hartford residents may take advantage of a host of services provided by the division that are intended to help older people remain independent. Services include home care, employment training and placement, assistance with tax relief applications, transportation (also available to people with disabilities), entertainment, recreation, and socialization opportunities. The division man-

ages the multi-purpose North Hartford Senior Center and oversees contracts with eleven smaller senior centers.

The Human Services Division also provides mental health, addiction, and other social services to individuals who have been referred to the Community Court for **quality of life crimes**, e.g. public drinking, breach of peace, prostitution, etc. These services complement the required hours of community service, which such offenders must complete as part of their sentence.

Community Services
(860) 543-8850

Early Learning Centers (Day Care)
(860) 543-8890

Elderly Services
(860) 722-6940, TDD 722-8332

Recreation and Youth Services
(860) 543-8875, TDD 722-6494

Human Relations Department

550 Main Street
(860) 543-8595
(860) 722-8331 TDD

The mission of the Office of Human Relations is to improve the social and economic quality of life for all persons by advocating for equal opportunity and human rights, promoting diversity, eliminating discrimination, and supporting a harmonious environment among City employees, city residents, and city businesses. The department undertakes and manages programs to increase employment and training opportunities for minorities, women, trades workers, people with disabilities, and Hartford residents. This office also works to increase construction jobs obtained by minority and small businesses. With the City's Personnel Department, Human Relations manages the City's Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity programs. The Human Relations Department also monitors the wages contractors pay and conformance of development projects with accessibility guidelines as well as fair housing issues. The department also provides staff support to the Commission on Human Relations, Commission on Disability Issues, Permanent Commission on the Status of Hartford Women, Commission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Issues, and the Civilian Police Review Board.

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Personnel Department

550 Main Street
(860) 543-8590

The Personnel Department recruits, tests, and establishes the eligibility of qualified candidates for vacant positions and promotions within City Government. The department also provides and/or arranges appropriate training for City employees. It administers collective bargaining agreements and the Pay Plan, assists the Office of Human Relations in affirmative action matters, and assists departments with personnel concerns, processes, and questions.

Police Department

Headquarters: 50 Jennings Road
(860) 527-7300 Non-emergency calls only
To report an emergency, call 911

The mission of the Hartford Police Department is to enhance the quality of life in the city. The department uses a community-policing plan with four districts (Northwest, Northeast, Southeast, and Southwest) each with its own substation and commander. Police respond to emergencies and other calls for service, enforce traffic laws, investigate crime, and work to prevent and suppress all types of crime. The department operates a Police Academy, sponsors a Police Explorer Troop, and is responsible for animal control.

Police Operator (860) 527-6300
Animal Control (860) 543-8741
Records Division (860) 543-8730
Traffic Division (860) 543-8635

Public Works Department

Headquarters: 525 Main Street
(860) 543-8660
(860) 722-8327 TDD
(860) 543-8765 Dispatcher
(For public works emergencies only)

The Department of Public Works is responsible for maintaining the city's physical infrastructure, including streets, traffic controls, parks, most public buildings, and the flood control system. Public Works provides ongoing maintenance and custodial services for 38 City-owned buildings. It repairs, repaves, sweeps, plows, and sands city streets. It maintains nine major parks, 29 smaller parks, horticultural medians, Elizabeth Park's gardens and greenhouse, 70 athletic fields, 20,000 street trees and 5 cemeteries. Burial services are provided at the City's four active cemeteries. Snow removal is also provided for parks, playgrounds, City building sidewalks, City day care centers, and City-owned parking lots.

Public Works maintains parking meters and the computerized traffic signal system. The department collects and disposes of trash and recycled items, leaves, Christmas trees, and bulky waste, such as furniture, and cleans and boards up private property when the owner fails to do so. The department carries out the City's construction programs, including school construction, and provides a variety of maps and surveys to the public. It also maintains the six pumping stations and associated ponds that are the flood control system for the city. Department employees also provide waste and recycling education, a variety of support services to city events organized by others, and storage for the belongings of people who have been evicted from their homes.

What other agencies provide City services?

The following entities, while not City departments, provide municipal services in Hartford

DIAL-A-RIDE

One Union Place

(860) 724-5340 Reservations

(860) 722-8332 TDD Reservations

(860) 722-8480 Customer Service

Hartford Dial-A-Ride is operated by the Greater Hartford Transit District. Dial-A-Ride provides safe and reliable transportation for Hartford's seniors over 60 and any resident with a permanent disability. The service is intended to reduce isolation and promote independent living.

Hartford Board of Education & Department of Education

153 Market Street

(860) 695-8000

The mission of the Hartford Public School system is to ensure that Hartford's schools are a community of active learners that nurtures self-confidence, respect, and excellence in all its members. The school system is directed by the Hartford Board of Education, which consists of nine members, four of whom are elected and five of whom are appointed by the Mayor. The Board sets policy and hires a Superintendent of Schools who oversees all aspects of public education in Hartford, including curriculum, teaching, administration, funding, special programs, security, and conformance with State and Federal policies. Thirty-two schools (plus six magnet schools) make up the Hartford public school system. Board of Education meetings are open to the public. Call 695-8000 for meeting dates, times, and locations.

Hartford Community Court

80 Washington Street

(860) 756-7020

Hartford Housing Authority

140 Overlook Terrace

(860) 723-8400

The Hartford Housing Authority (HHA) is responsible for operating, maintaining, and building of public housing. It also provides homeownership opportunities to HHA residents and assists residents and their families to become independent. HHA also administers a program of housing vouchers, which provide subsidies to low income people to live in private housing.

Hartford Parking Authority

155 Morgan Street

(860) 527-7275

The Hartford Parking Authority was created in December 1998 by a City Council ordinance and is a separate "body corporate and politic" to the municipality of Hartford. The Authority is responsible for creating, establishing, maintaining, and operating City-owned parking facilities and is currently maintaining and operating the Church Street, MAT, and Morgan Street Garages. The Hartford Parking Authority is governed by five members, who are nominated by the Hartford City Council and appointed by the Mayor.

Hartford Probate Court

250 Constitution Plaza

(860) 757-9150

The **Probate** Court is part of the State court system but in Hartford, is located in a City office building. The Probate Court proves the genuineness of wills, handles the estates of people who have died, and appoints conservators for individuals who cannot manage their own affairs.

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Hartford Public Library

Central Library: 500 Main Street
(860) 695-6295 Main Number
(860) 695-6340 Library on Wheels

The mission of the Hartford Public Library is to promote and support literacy and learning, to provide free and open access to information and ideas, and to help people participate in our democratic society. Residents can obtain books, tapes, and CDs, use computers and access the internet, enroll in classes and workshops, and attend lectures and concerts. The Library operates a Library on Wheels (formerly known as the Bookmobile), which visits every Hartford neighborhood. There are nine library branches throughout the city. Addresses and phone numbers are listed below.

Albany Branch
1250 Albany Avenue
(860) 695-7380

Barbour Branch
281 Barbour Street
(860) 695-7400

Blue Hills Branch
649 Blue Hills Avenue
(860) 695-7420

Camp Field Branch
30 Campfield Avenue
(860) 695-7440

Dwight Branch
7 New Park Avenue
(860) 695-7460

Goodwin Branch
460 New Britain Avenue
(860) 695-7480

Mark Twain Branch
256 Farmington Avenue
(860) 695-7540

Park Branch
744 Park Street
(860) 695-7500

Ropkins Branch
1750 Main Street (in SAND School)
(860) 695-7520

Infoline Dial 2-1-1

Infoline, a service of the United Way of Connecticut, is a statewide, comprehensive phone-based service that provides information about and referrals to community services, including childcare options, crisis intervention, and suicide prevention. Infoline operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What should I do if there is an issue I think the Council should consider or action I want them to take?

A. Call one or several Council members and/or their staffs. Be prepared to explain in detail why your issue should be considered by the Council. If the Council member(s) agree(s), they will then prepare a resolution concerning your issue and submit it for inclusion on an upcoming Council agenda. The general number for Council members is (860) 543-8510.

Q. How do I know which Council member represents my neighborhood?

A. Council members are elected at-large to represent the entire City. All Council members are responsible for every neighborhood.

Q. If I want to build an addition to my house, do I need a building permit?

A. Yes. The Licenses & Inspections Department reviews plans and conducts inspections for new construction, existing buildings and renovations, to ensure compliance with the Connecticut State Building Code and Municipal Ordinances. The Building Inspector can be reached at (860) 757-9221.

Q. My home is located in an historic district. If I want to make a change to my home, do I need permission to do so?

A. Yes, if the changes are to the outside of your home. Changes the exterior of your home, such as replacing the porch or installing new windows require permission from the Historic Properties Commission before a building permit will be issued. Changes to the interior of your home are subjected to this requirement. Contact the Planning Division at (860) 757-9055 for more information.

Q. How do I obtain a copy of my birth certificate, a death certificate, a marriage or civil union license?

A. If the birth, death, or marriage occurred in Hartford, contact the Bureau of Vital Records at (860) 543-8539. You can obtain the record in person or by mail. Records are subject to agency and shipping fees.

Q. Who do I contact to report or remove graffiti?

A. Call the graffiti hotline at (860) 541-2015. This hotline helps area residents get quick action to remove graffiti anywhere in the city.

Q. My sidewalks are cracked or uneven. What should I do?

A. Property owners are responsible for the sidewalks in front of their house or land. The City maintains only the sidewalks on City-owned land. If you see a dangerous sidewalk, you may report it to the Department of Public Works at (860) 543-8671 and they will instruct the property owner to repair or replace the sidewalk.

Q. How do I register to vote?

A. Contact the Registrars of Voters in person, by mail, fax, or e-mail to request a mail-in application. Applications can also be picked up at various public places such as post offices, libraries, and the Department of Motor Vehicles. Applications must be signed and mailed to the Registrars of Voters, 550 Main Street, Hartford, CT 06103. There is no fee to register. Call (860) 543-8585 for more information.

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Q. I have an old TV (refrigerator, metal bed frame, lawn mower, small appliance, etc.) that I need to get rid of. Who do I call to come collect it?

A. Such items, called “bulky waste” by the City, may be put out by the curb on your regular trash collection day and the Public Works Department (DPW) will pick it up. If the items are not picked up, call the Waste and Recycling Division of DPW at (860) 543-8750.

Q. I have leftover paint remover and bug spray that I want to get rid of. Can I put it in the trash?

A. No, you cannot put such items in the trash, as they are hazardous to everyone’s health if they are put in the landfill. However, you can dispose of them for free by taking them to one of the Household Hazardous Waste Collections, held on Saturdays in the Spring and Fall in Hartford and surrounding towns. These collections are sponsored by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC). To find a convenient day and location, call the MDC at (860) 278-3809 or visit the MDC website: www.themdc.com/hazwasteschedule.

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Glossary

Abatement	a lessening, reduction, or removal. For instance, the amount of taxes owed may be abated (reduced) or a house may undergo lead abatement (removal or otherwise removing the danger).
Abstain	to choose not to vote either in favor of or against a motion
Action Agenda	items on the Council agenda, which the Council votes for or against
Adjourn	to end a meeting
Agenda	a list of items of business to be brought before a meeting
Amend	to add, delete, or change language, as to amend a motion
Appointment	the naming of an individual to a position or as a member of a group, as in to appoint Jane Doe as the Planning Director or as a member of the Human Relations Commission
At-large	representing the entire city and not a district or other smaller area, as in City Council people are elected at-large in Hartford
Call the Question	a motion made to end the debate and vote immediately on the pending matter
City Charter	a document setting forth the boundaries of a municipality and the powers and responsibilities of City Government
Consent Calendar	a group of resolutions that the Council votes on all at one time rather than with individual votes
Conservator	a guardian appointed by a judge to protect and manage an individual's financial affairs and/or daily life due to the person's physical or mental limitations or old age
Enrollment	the entering of a person's name in a register, record, or roll, such as enrollment as a voter or student
General Statutes	the laws of the State of Connecticut
Motion	a formal proposal made by a member of a decision making body to take action or state a position
Municipal Code	a systematically arranged and comprehensive collection of laws for a town or city
Neighborhood	An area of a community designated by its town or city government as an NRZ under
Revitalization	Connecticut Public Act 95-340, which created a mechanism for revitalizing neighborhoods
Zone (NRZ)	with many run-down properties. Each NRZ has created a strategic plan, which is part of the Municipal Code. Fourteen NRZs have been formed in Hartford.
Ordinance	a statute enacted by the legislative body of a city government
Parliamentarian	an individual who advises the presiding officer and other participants in a meeting

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- in the rules and practice of Robert's Rules of Order
- Postpone** a motion made to delay action to a particular day
 - Preside** to act as the chairperson of a meeting
 - Public Hearing** a meeting held so that the public can address the Council on one or more issues
 - Quality of** misdemeanor offenses such as petty larceny and prostitution and/or certain violations of the
 - Life Crimes** Municipal Code, such as excessive noise and disorderly conduct
 - Quorum** the number of persons required to be in attendance at a meeting in order for the group to legally conduct business
 - Recess** to interrupt the business of a meeting for a short period of time
 - Resolution** a formal statement of policy, intent, or direction considered by the Council for action. A resolution does not require public comment and, if adopted, is not a law.
 - Roll Call Vote** the process of calling each Council member's name in alphabetical order so they can indicate their vote ("aye"/yes, "nay"/no), or their decision not to vote (abstain)
 - Second** an indication by a member that he/she wishes a motion, made by another individual, to be discussed. A motion that is not seconded "dies" and will not be discussed further or considered for a vote.
 - Statute** a law
 - Supplemental Agenda** a list of agenda items received by the Town Clerk after the agenda deadline. The items can only be considered during the meeting if the Council votes to suspend the rules (overlook the rule that requires agenda items by a certain date and time) and add the items to the meeting agenda.
 - Table** to remove an item from consideration indefinitely
 - Veto** the disapproval by the Mayor of a resolution or an ordinance passed by the Council. A veto may be over-ridden by the Council with at least seven votes in favor.
 - Voice Vote** a method of voting in which members vote aloud with no roll call. The chair usually says "All those in favor say, 'Aye.' All those opposed say 'Nay.' Any abstentions?"
 - Waive** to give up the right or requirement for action, such as to waive the reading of an agenda item.

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City of Hartford Neighborhoods

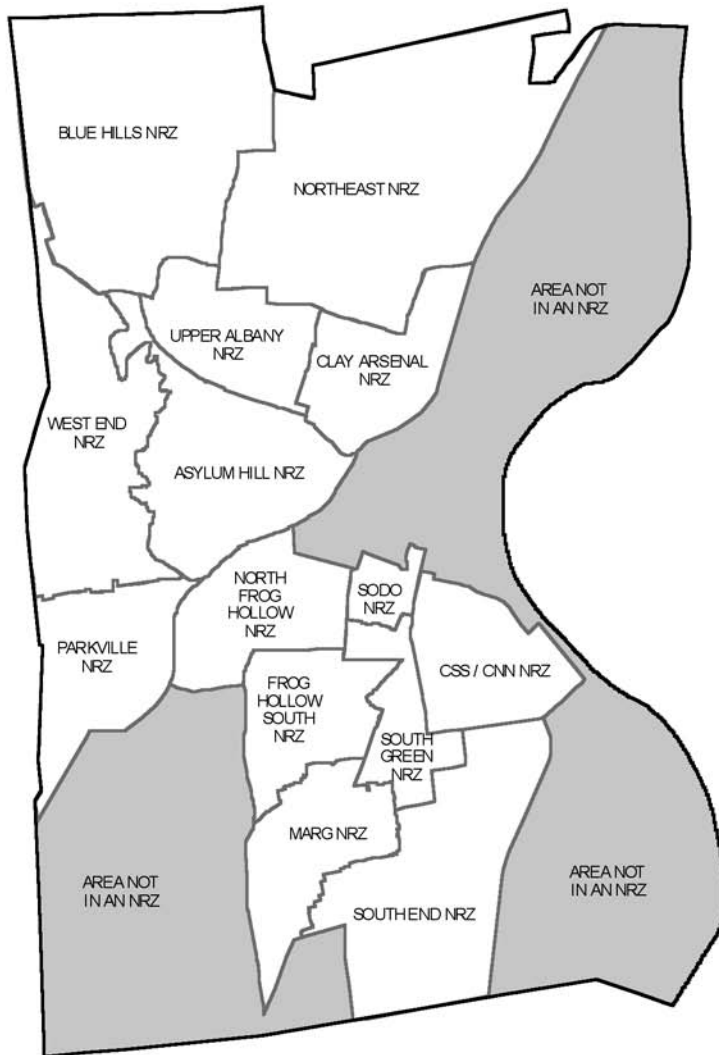


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Map prepared by the City of Hartford Department of Housing and Community Development, Planning Division, October 2003.

City of Hartford Neighborhood Revitalization Zones

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JULY 2002