

Town of Clinton Business Resource Guide

The [Town Manager's Office](#) and the Clinton [Economic Development Commission \(EDC\)](#) is a great place to get connected with the right organizations and to find out how to get support and direction from the town. We compiled a list of organizations that are knowledgeable about business resources locally and at the State level. Below are some of these resources available from the Town of Clinton Business Resource Forum as well as a summary of questions asked and answered.

Karl Kilduff, Town Manager, kkilduff@clintonct.org, (860) 669-9333.

John Allen, Chairman EDC, jva315@gmail.com, (203) 550-0526

[Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development](#) – The Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development is the state's lead agency responsible for strengthening Connecticut's competitive economic position in the rapidly changing knowledge based global economy by, among other actions, providing a wide range of programs in areas such as financing, technical assistance, workforce development, and Brownfield remediation, all designed to help companies prosper here. The [New Business Check List](#) is another helpful resource.

Sheila Hummel, Business Development Program Manager

(860) 500-2405 sheila.hummel@ct.gov

ADVANCECT– [AdvanceCT](#) (formerly Connecticut Economic Resource Center) is a private nonprofit corporation that drives job creation and new capital investment in Connecticut through high-impact economic development including business attraction, retention, and expansion. How does AdvanceCT assist your business:

- We connect you to resources (state and local officials and agencies, peer organizations, professional associations, business resource organizations, funding partners, etc.)
- We provide you with information to support your business decision making (economic data, industry data, transit data, workforce data, etc.)
- We work to help you manage the challenges you face as a result of regulations and policies
- We support you when your business grows, during the process of business expansion (finding real estate opportunities, the land use regulatory process, acquiring incentives)

Tell us about the challenges your business and industry are facing. Brief us on your business's pain points, your industry needs and opportunities. When you share information about your operating environment, regulatory and policy related issues you are experiencing, we will work to advocate for you. Watch our [new Connecticut video](#) to hear about the many reasons to live, work and play in our great state!

Contact: Sadie Colcord, (860) 571-6204 | scolcord@advancect.org

805 Brook Street, Building 4, Rocky Hill, CT 06067 | www.advancect.org

[Clinton Chamber of Commerce](#) – The Clinton Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to enhancing local economic vitality and quality of life in Clinton by promoting leadership, support, and networking within the business community and the town's EDC. We can provide you with valuable local contacts. We are here to help!

Paul Orsini, Executive Director

(860) 669-3889 paul@clintonctchamber.com

[Community Investment Corporation](#). - The Community Investment Corporation is an economic development lender contributing financial expertise and practical guidance to small business entrepreneurs in Connecticut who have powerful ideas and need more resources to grow them. If you currently own your own business or are looking to start one, we invite you to look through our website to learn more about how we can help you. For bankers, realtors, CPAs and other economic development professionals, CIC is enthusiastic about partnering with you to provide the best outcomes for your customers.

Business Advisors

(203) 776-6172 ext 143 or 120, - also En Español (203) 776-6172 ext 141

info@ciclending.com

[Connecticut Procurement and Technical Assistance Center](#) provides marketing and procurement assistance to Connecticut businesses interested in selling their goods or services to federal, state, or local governments. CT PTAC is a statewide program serving all cities and towns in Connecticut. PTAC's services are provided at no charge.

This service is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the Defense Logistics Agency. Additionally, funds are also provided by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development.
Frank Dixon, Director (860) 437-4659 ext. 208
Email: ptac@ctptac.org or yyang@secter.org

[Connecticut Small Business Development Center](#) – The Connecticut Small Business Development Center provides advising, training, and resources to help Connecticut’s businesses start, grow, and thrive through a team of advisors that provide no-cost support to new and existing businesses.

Jim Jackson, Business Advisor
(860) 347-6924 ext. 249 jim.jackson@uconn.edu

[Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce](#) – The Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce is a dynamic business organization with over 2,175 member companies that provides opportunities for professional development, workforce development support, and networking with other businesses in Middlesex County.

Johanna Bond, Vice President
(860) 347-6924, Johanna@middlesexchamber.com

[Middlesex County Revitalization Commission](#)

The Middlesex County Revitalization Commission was created by a special act of the CT General Assembly in 1993. Its mission is to encourage and stimulate economic development in Middlesex County by providing low interest loans and/or matching grants to small and mid-sized businesses in the region. Loan and grant funds may be used for buildings, building improvements, equipment and working capital. The members of the Middlesex County Revitalization Commission (MCRC) are the chief elected official, or a designee, from each of the fifteen towns in Middlesex County, plus a representative from the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce. Applicants are encouraged to discuss their project with their local officials. For further information on MCRC, please contact Jeff Pugliese, MCRC administrator, at the Middlesex County Chamber, (860) 347-6924 X234, jpugliese@middlesexchamber.com

[SCORE](#) – SCORE’s mission is to foster vibrant small business communities through mentoring and education. With the nation’s largest network of volunteers and expert business mentors, SCORE has helped more than 11 million entrepreneurs since 1964. In Conn., SCORE provides free business advice and ongoing mentoring through a network of over 40 local business professionals who volunteer their time to help build small businesses.

Main # - (860) 240-4700

Score Veteran’s Advocate: Frank Alvarado, Sr. Area Manager Bridgeport

(203) 335-0427 Frank.alvarado@sba.gov

Score Veteran’s Advocate: Tanisha Baptiste, Administrative Officer

(203) 240-4671 Tanisha.baptiste@sba.gov

[US Small Business Administration](#) – The Connecticut Office of the Small Business Administration is responsible for the delivery of federal programs such as financial assistance, business counseling, and minority-, woman-, and veteran-owned business support.

Catherine Marx, District Director CT Office, SBA
(860) 240-4640, Catherine.marx@sba.gov

[Workforce Alliance](#) – Workforce Alliance is a policy and oversight agency tasked with improving the delivery of workforce services in close collaboration with business, education, and training providers, and local elected officials through the coordination of a variety of employment and training initiatives. One such program which assists with on the job training are grants to employers that offset 50-75% of eligible new-hire wages while they learn essential job skills through employment. Jobs must be permanent and full-time with a clear career pathway. Eligible candidates may include dislocated workers as the result of COVID-19, low income adults or youth, or participants in sector-based training programs. The Alliance is currently working with Clinton on providing real world training to students who want to be placed in manufacturing job.

Steve Johnson, Business Services/Skill Up For Manufacturing

(203) 867-4030 ext. 233, sjohnson@workforcealliance.biz

Wanda Lary, Business Services Coordinator - (203) 867-4030 ext. 254, wlary@workforcealliance.biz

[US Small Business Administration](#) (Veteran Services)

What SBA programs are available to veteran-owned businesses? Are there special loans?

The US Small Business Administration ([SBA](#)) has loan programs which are provided through banks. The bank does the lending, and SBA guarantees a portion of the loan so the bank's risk is lower. However, the bank must show SBA that it would not make the loan without the guaranty. SBA's veteran loan program is called the Veteran's Advantage Loan. SBA also has a [VBOC](#) – Veteran's Business Outreach Center. CT is part of Region 1. The Center is in RI but covers all of the New England States. Also look at the following site for additional information.

<https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/grow-your-business/veteran-owned-businesses>

This office has two Veteran Advocates: Frank Alvarado and Tanisha Baptiste. Both are veterans; working with the veteran small business community, connecting them to the appropriate resources. These contacts can handle or refer you on any SBA related issue including non-veteran. Conn. also has a [Veteran's Chamber of Commerce](#).

Frank Alvarado, Sr. Area Manager Bridgeport

(203) 335-0427 Frank.alvarado@sba.gov

or

Tanisha Baptiste, Administrative Officer

(203) 240-4671 Tanisha.baptiste@sba.gov

What is available for women-owned businesses?

Programs that are available for woman owned businesses mainly pertain to the contracting arena.

Designations/certifications have different eligibility criteria for the State of Connecticut, the federal government, and the private sector. The common denominator for all is that the business has to be 51% controlled, owned, and operated by a woman or women. She holds the highest position in the company, makes the day to day businesses decisions, etc. With the State of Connecticut ([Department of Administrative Services](#)), this certification process is called the "Supplier Diversity Program". This would be a minority business enterprise (MBE) because a woman is considered a minority within the State regardless of ethnicity. This only pertains to contracting, and there is no fee. The private sector may require certification through the Women's Business Enterprise National Council ([WBENC](#)). There is a fee for this membership. For the federal government, it is a process done through the SBA. There is no fee for this.

What resource can be created for public officials to have at their fingertips?

The Town should create a business resource guide that includes contact information and an overview of the variety of organizations tasked with assisting businesses in Connecticut. This document is a first step and must be a "living document".

[Describe some tourism initiatives being led by the State.](#)

The Connecticut Office of Tourism is currently undertaking a variety of marketing programs designed to increase Connecticut's visibility, boost visitor spending, and increase the positive economic impact of tourism as a result. Advertisements are focused largely within the major markets of the Northeast such as Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, as well as the surrounding areas. Additionally, social media advertisements reach a national audience, as does the very successful State-run website, ctvisit.com. The office offers a broad range of services, including marketing, research, hospitality services, direct sales and business marketing assistance. The Office of Tourism has also partnered with other New England States and an organization called [Discover New England](#) to market the region's assets to European and Asian customer bases. These efforts are designed to spread the word about the countless cultural and recreational amenities that Connecticut has to offer.

How can we market our town to remain competitive? Is there outside funding available to the town?

The Town must market its assets to remain competitive – its skilled workforce, central location along the shoreline between major markets, transportation access, robust inventory of commercial-industrial properties, and the welcoming small-town atmosphere are all essential components of Clinton's appeal. But the most important process will be the streamlining of the end to end regulatory development process in Clinton. The funding options that the Town can utilize to accomplish this marketing are through either the Small Town Economic Assistance Program ([STEAP](#)) or economic development funding within the Town budget.

However, calls for STEAP applications are made on an annual basis, depending on CT budget funding availability. Clinton should also continue to consider the formation of an economic development corporation.

How can we aggressively deal with business vacancies?

Creating a marketing plan is essential for dealing with vacancies. First task is to know what vacancies exist or are about to exist and be proactive by communicating with land lords when opportunities arise and mate them. Spreading the word that Clinton is a viable town for both large and small businesses is extremely important, as many firms looking for space may not immediately consider Clinton. Additionally, creating and sustaining relationships with commercial real estate professionals is critical so that Clinton is foremost in their thought process when they are assisting their clients.

What should Clinton do to help developers with the regulatory process and environment?

One action that should be undertaken by the Town Manager through the EDC and the Town of Clinton [Land Use Office](#) is to support developers going through the regulatory process by the creation of a process document, flow chart and/or checklist. This document would outline each step and include contact information as well as information on process intervals and required documents to be presented at each stage in the process. Town land use staff and relevant board and commission members would work together on this document to ensure that all voices are heard and that the process is streamlined and understood by all involved.

What is the best practice or road map for a Town to follow?

The Town should dedicate resources to economic development in order to proactively retain businesses and help them grow locally while also maintaining the character of the community. Resources will require budget support which most likely will be money well spent. The town should also provide clear information and documentation on the regulatory process for development/business expansion.

What local funding is available for the EDC function?

Funding is dependent on the yearly town fiscal budget process and will vary year to year depending on need and the availability of funds derived from budget surpluses and/or tax revenue.

What do you see the role of the [EDC](#) to be? [Commission information](#) as of 1/1/2021.

The role of the Economic Development Commission should be one to promote local commercial development and to be ambassadors between the local business community and the municipal government. An example of the work the EDC has done is to coordinate efforts between the Clinton Manufacturing Coalition (CMC) (formed largely thru EDC efforts) and the Clinton School System to introduce a Science, Technology, Engineering & Manufacturing (STEM) curriculum into the school system. This effort has gained traction with the goal of providing new career options for students and workforce support for local manufacturers. EDC members should also answer questions, solve problems, and guide businesses through the regulatory process as necessary.

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