



Waterbury Regional Chamber



2020 Municipal Agenda For the City of Waterbury

Municipal Agenda for the City of Waterbury 2020

Mayor

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Chief of Staff

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Economic Development Director

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Advisors to the Mayor

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Board of Aldermen, by District

1st District:

Ernest M. Brunelli (D-Majority Leader)

Christian D'Orso (D)

Mary Grace Cavallo (R)

3rd District:

Paul Pernerewski, Jr. (D-President)

Michael R. Salvio (D)

Kelly Zimmerman (R)

5th District:

Brenda L. Cotto (D)

Sandra Martinez-McCarthy (D)

Roger L. Sherman, Jr. (R-Minority Leader)

2nd District:

Victor Lopez, Jr. (D)

Vernon R. Matthews, Jr. (R)

Belinda Weaver (D)

4th District:

Michael DiGiovancarlo (D)

Jetlir Kulla (D)

George Noujaim (R)



Waterbury Regional Chamber
driving business to business

Dear Member,

The Waterbury Regional Chamber is committed to the future of Waterbury as a premier place to live, work, invest and conduct business. The Chamber is proud of its strong record of success in partnering with city administrations past and present to move Waterbury forward.

The Chamber's Municipal Agenda for 2020 focuses on issues important not only to the business community, but to the Greater Waterbury community as well. Our priorities are in the areas of fiscal management, economic development and the quality of life, which includes public health & safety and education. These are vital components to the economic and social wellbeing of our city. By focusing on these issues, we can position Waterbury to become a strong, viable location for continued business and job development. Through marketing and ongoing solicitation, developers and businesses continue to express a great deal of interest in working collaboratively with the city, the Chamber, the Waterbury Development Corporation and Main Street Waterbury.

We also continue to focus on assuring that neighborhoods, neighborhood businesses, and commerce & industry remain engaged in the city's future.

By establishing Waterbury as a highly desirable business location and one that is responsive to the needs of the business community, we are building a foundation for future growth and investment that will benefit both businesses and the community, enhance Waterbury's value and image, and facilitate economic development.

Sincerely,

William J. Palomba
Blasius Chevrolet Cadillac
Vice Chairman Public Policy
Waterbury Regional Chamber

Fiscal Control and City Management

The Chamber continues to support responsible and transparent fiscal oversight, prudent fiscal measures, and effective financial management processes, all of which have rebuilt accountability and performance standards for all city departments. We expect the administration to maintain the gains made in recent years and to remain committed to the goals of prudent financial management, which benefit residents and businesses alike.

The Chamber recommends the city administration continue to support the following:

- Sound financial management and accountability practices paired with prudent public investment.
- Reducing pension liabilities and transparently reporting employee obligations.
- Seeking legislative reform of binding arbitration and relief from unfunded mandates at the state level.



Economic Development

The Waterbury Regional Chamber supports initiatives and programs that seek to expand the commercial and industrial value of the city's grand list. Business growth and capital expansion require a commitment to achieving and maintaining a reasonable tax rate that enables existing businesses to remain, thrive and grow here, and attracts new business investment and jobs.

The Chamber recommends the city administration continue to support the following:

- Policies that promote job creation.
- Leveraging state and federal brownfields revitalization funds to prepare sites for redevelopment.
- Promoting private investment in the city's Opportunity Zones.
- Highlighting and promoting the leverage gained by the Grants Office and expanding its ability to leverage future grant funding and opportunities on projects throughout Waterbury, especially capital improvements.
- Completing the Multi-Modal Regional Transportation Center project.
- Improvements, both in infrastructure and service, to the Waterbury Rail Line.
- Prioritizing recommended safety improvements to the I-84/Route 8 interchange (the Mixmaster) while working to minimize adverse effects on local businesses as the work is performed; monitoring the rebuilding project for the interchange to ensure it minimizes the impact on local businesses.
- Aggressively working with public and private partners to rehabilitate underutilized and abandoned spaces in the city to increase the inventory of industrial and commercial space available and optimize potential tax revenues and economic development.
- Prioritizing coordinated efforts against blight to help improve the safety and security of neighborhoods and increase property values.
- The efforts and initiatives of the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board, including the Apprenticeship Connecticut Initiative, to meet the workforce training needs of local businesses and manufacturers.
- Partnering with the Waterbury Development Corporation and Main Street Waterbury in their efforts to revitalize the city, the downtown business district and Freight Street.
- Continuing to implement the new regional economic development agency to leverage state government funding.
- The Waterbury NEXT Initiative's goals for improving the Central Business District.
- Recognizing and working with the arts and culture sector as a valuable asset to the community that has a positive impact on and contributes to the quality of life in the city, while also creating jobs and serving as a stimulus for economic development.

Public Education

The public school system is a critical component of economic growth and development. Public education produces our future business leaders and employees. Apart from the intrinsic benefits of creating opportunities for students, improving the public schools helps maintain property values, retains and attracts residents committed to enhancing education, and supports business investment and growth in Waterbury by providing a skilled and ready workforce. Together, we will continue the dialogue on the state of public education to chart a course for continued value improvement.

The Chamber recommends the city administration continue to support the following:

- An open, ongoing dialogue with the Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools to ensure student learning targets are reached and students demonstrate consistent progress toward achieving required academic skills at or above their grade levels.
- Working with public, private, charter, magnet and technical schools to improve academic performance and parental participation.
- Working with public and private local post-secondary schools to ensure city students have opportunities to continue their education despite financial hardships.
- Building upon the neighborhood school concept to create strong, engaged and education-committed neighborhoods.
- Promoting STEM & Trade training opportunities to middle and high school students as a viable option for a post-high school career.
- Developing career and technical training opportunities, either for pay or academic credit, for Waterbury students outside of school.
- Working with members of the region's state legislative delegation to correct the inequities in the Educational Cost Sharing formula.
- Leveraging a marketing/public relations campaign promoting Waterbury as a place for minority educators to work and thrive.
- Extending the robotics program to all city public high schools and middle schools, as well as the fifth-grade level.
- Continuing to find ways to serve and support refugees without overburdening city schools.
- Integrating electronic tablet technology (such as iPads or Chromebooks) to improve delivery of curriculum and learning experiences for students.



Waterbury Regional Chamber
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Quality of Life

The business community is committed to continually improving the city's Quality of Life in order to make it a desirable environment and location for businesses, families and consumers. The Chamber has built a vibrant partnership with the city and remains committed to that partnership.

The Chamber recommends the city administration continue to support the following:

- The city Health Department continuing to work with the two city hospitals and other stakeholders to ensure access to health care for all residents.
- Leveraging an online marketing/public relations campaign portal promoting Waterbury.
- Sustaining comprehensive marketing efforts that enhance Waterbury's image and facilitates economic development initiatives, such as Waterbury NEXT and the Waterbury Active Transportation and Economic Resurgence (WATER) project, which showcase the city's ability to move forward on key projects that increase the quality of life and attract new investment and jobs.
- Utilizing the Waterbury Police Department and public & private social services agencies to address gang violence and the opioid epidemic.
- Increasing participation in addiction treatment services by opioid abusers and working to reduce overdoses and overdose deaths in the city.
- Continuing to improve city services and the value provided by departments promoting ownership and pride in what Waterbury offers daily.
- Continuing and, when possible, expanding the Waterbury Police Department's community policing program.



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Connect with your city



Public Policy Committee

Chairman

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Lynn Ward, *Waterbury Regional Chamber*

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Dana Elm, *Naugatuck Valley Community College*

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Mary Ann Hanley, *Saint Francis Care/Trinity Health of New England*

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Lenese Robinson, *Life's Precious Moments-Orthopedic Massage Therapy*

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