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Bradley Development League - a partnership between towns to further economic development

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Many think of economic development as a dog-eat-dog world where communities are fighting against their neighbors to land the next big development or raiding each other of existing businesses. Well, it does not have to be that way. Our reliance on property taxes to pay for local services certainly puts pressures on local governments to compete so as to grow grand lists. However, there is a tremendous advantage to be gained when communities work together towards economic development. The Bradley Development League, Inc. (BDL) is an example of a cooperative relationship among several towns to further economic development in a region. BDL is a consortium of the towns of East Granby, Suffield, Windsor and Windsor Locks which share a common economic development engine - namely Bradley International Airport. By working together, these four towns are maximizing the economic benefits to be derived from their location surrounding the airport. The amount of new and planned-for development in the four towns is a testament to the benefits of a cooperative spirit.

Since its creation in 1995, the BDL has actively promoted and assisted in the development and growth of business in the vicinity of Bradley Airport. It has partnered with the Department of Transportation, Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), Connecticut Economic Resource Center, Northeast Utilities, Connecticut Development Authority and the Metro Hartford Alliance (Alliance) to further important development projects. BDL was formally incorporated as a non-profit corporation in 2000, adding business representatives to the board to reflect the combined public/private nature of this endeavor.

The members of the BDL Operating Committee, made up of the economic development professionals in the four towns, provide an extensive array of services to those companies considering relocation or expansion. The BDL will assist companies by helping them locate suitable existing or build to suit facilities, work with other Connecticut agencies to develop a comprehensive incentive package, facilitate the development of a private and/or public financing package and streamline the approval process.

Strategic planning is one way in which League members work to promote Bradley Airport regional development. The BDL has assisted the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) in the completion of The Bradley Area Transportation Study designed to ensure the transportation network around the airport is prepared for future economic development growth. Several of the recommendations in the study have moved to the planning or implementation phase.

The League joint markets the Bradley area through attendance at trade shows, through distribution of a shared brochure, and by its website: www.bradleydevelopment.com. We have designed the website to provide the information any business would need to make an intelligent location decision.

All of the CT SiteFinder listings for our four towns are available on the BDL site, as well as regional

and town demographic information and a listing of our major businesses. We have provided a summary of the approval process and important contacts in each town. Other helpful information includes: the latest business news and announcements, workforce data, economic development links, and Foreign Trade Zone benefits.

An Economic Impact Analysis conducted by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development found that "Bradley is the centerpiece of the I-91 transportation corridor, and the greatest opportunity for future economic growth in the state." The BDL believes that Bradley is a tremendous asset to the Hartford-Springfield region and its success as a competitive industry is critical to economic development in the four member towns. In addition to Bradley International Airport, the four towns share the important highway access provided by Rte. 20 and I-91. It is only natural that these communities work together for their common benefit. By acting together the communities, area businesses and the Airport can realize greater economic and community benefits than are possible through separate efforts. CRCOG has recognized BDL for its exemplary inter-town cooperation because town officials "share information and market the area without regard to municipal boundaries."

For more information on the League visit our newly updated website at www.bradleydevelopment.com. The website is designed to give prospects immediate access to all that the four towns and Bradley International Airport have to offer.

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