Hartford
New England's Rising Star℠
WINTER 2005
Eddie A. Perez, Mayor

The Mayor's UPDATE

CRIME DOWN...
NEIGHBORHOOD POLICING BEGINS

Last June Mayor Eddie A. Perez appointed Patrick Harnett as Police Chief, a 30 year police veteran with a national reputation for innovative leadership with one goal in mind—to begin a new era for the Hartford Police Department.

"A commitment to public safety for the citizens of Hartford starts with police officers fighting crime and working with communities to make neighborhoods safer and more livable," stated Hartford Mayor Eddie A. Perez. Under the Police Chief's leadership, the Hartford Police Department has been hard at work creating a Neighborhood Policing Plan.

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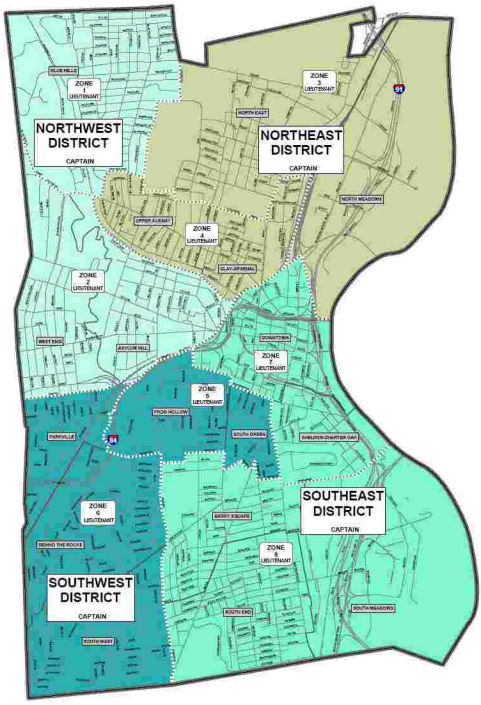

THE NORTH DIVISION includes:

Northwest District with Zone 1 (Blue Hills) and Zone 2 (West End and Asylum Hill).

Northeast District made up of Zone 3 (Northeast and North Meadows) and Zone 4 (Upper Albany and Clay Arsenal).

THE SOUTH DIVISION Includes:

Southwest District with Zone 5 (South Green and Fog Hollow) and Zone 6 (Parkville, Behind the Rocks and Southwest).

Southeast District with Zone 7 (Downtown and Sheldon/Charter Oak) and Zone 8 (South Meadows, Southend and Barry Square).

In 2005, it is my hope that all of us remain healthy, safe, and prosperous. As your Mayor, I will continue to look onward for our City's bright future.

In January the Metro Hartford Alliance invited me as their keynote speaker at their Rising Star Breakfast. Those in attendance included Hartford business owners, corporate and civic leaders, media, and of course Hartford residents. It was a terrific way for me to share my own reflections on what we've accomplished in the city, challenges we have addressed, but more importantly what's next and on the rise here in Hartford for the coming year.

As Mayor of this city I resolve to you that I will continue to make government much more effective and accountable, grow our economy, and make Hartford a safer city.

Hartford's Mayor,

Eddie A. Perez

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SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION:
Historic Noah Webster School Becomes a Magnet

Real progress continues with school construction in our city. The newly energized Hartford school construction effort is adding new magnets to the city school system in an effort to achieve greater racial, ethnic and economic integration.

In January 2003, the Sheff plaintiffs and the State of Connecticut reached an agreement that called for eight new magnet schools for Hartford over four years. Since that time, five new magnet schools have opened, with 3 more on the way.

On October 26, 2004 Mayor Perez officially announced that the historic Noah Webster School in Hartford's West End is now the Noah Webster MicroSociety Magnet School, one of seven Hartford schools targeted for completion in March 2006, three of those are magnets. Approximately $286 million will be spent on seven schools.

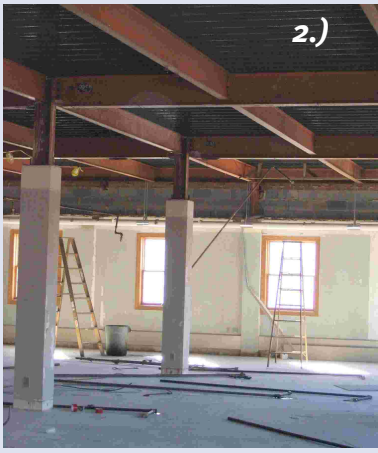
"We are not only building new facilities with these magnet programs, but promoting new opportunities for learning. With so many families from both the City and its surrounding suburbs eager to attend magnet schools, it's more important than ever that we try to build these facilities quickly," said Mayor Perez.

On October 26, 2004 Mayor Perez, along with, Hartford Superintendent of Schools, Robert Henry; Bob Long, Board of Education Chairman, Robert Long; Noah Webster Principal, Freeman Burr

WHAT IS A MICROSOCIETY PROGRAM?

Microsociety is an innovative school design where students create a microcosm of the real world and each student has a role in running that world. Entrepreneurs produce goods and services, elected officials establish laws, peacekeepers keep the peace, judges arbitrate disputes, reporters track down stories. All citizens earn wages in the school's "micro" currency. They invest in product ideas, deposit and borrow money in micro banks, pay taxes, tuition and rent.

School Construction on Course



HARTFORD TEACHER WINS OSCAR OF TEACHING AWARD

In October 2004 Annie Fisher Elementary School teacher Anitra Woodard was presented with the Milken National Educator Award and $25,000.00. Woodard was chosen for her ability to raise her students' test scores, consistent leadership, and her passion/energy for her chosen profession–teaching. At an assembly and reception in Anitra Woodard's honor at Annie Fisher School Mayor Perez presents Ms. Woodard with an official citation in her honor. Back row: Frances DiFiore, Asst. Superintendent, Mrs. Annie Woodard (Woodard's Mom), Anitra Woodard, Mayor Perez, Vice Principal Shirley Harrison, Principal Percalee Morris, and Jackie Hardy (Hartford Public Schools), along with Woodard's Third Grade class.

NORTHEAST UTILITIES & THE KINSELLA SCHOOL PARTNER UP

Mayor Perez along with Hartford School Superintendent Robert Henry participated in the official kickoff on October 28, 2004 for a new academic enrichment program at Hartford's Kinsella School and financed by Northeast Utilities. The NU Foundation generously approved a $509,000 grant to Kinsella to address educational disparities. In partnership with the Hartford Board of Education, Hartford Public Schools, City of Hartford, and the South End Community Services components of the program include: Parental Involvement, Etiquette Enrichment, Academic Enrichment, and Character Development.

Superintendent, Robert Henry, Theresa Hopkins-Staten (President of the NU Foundation), and Mayor Perez

Hartford continues to improve your schools. Phases of construction are underway at seven schools. Here's a look at the progress being made to construct or renovate 21st Century schools in our City:

1.) Sarah J. Rawson Elementary School
2.) Hartford Classical Magnet School
3.) Breakthrough Magnet School
4.) Breakthrough Magnet School
5.) Noah Webster Elementary School
6.) Alfred E. Burr Elementary School
7.) James H. Naylor Elementary School
8.) Hartford Public High School

"Shop til you drop"

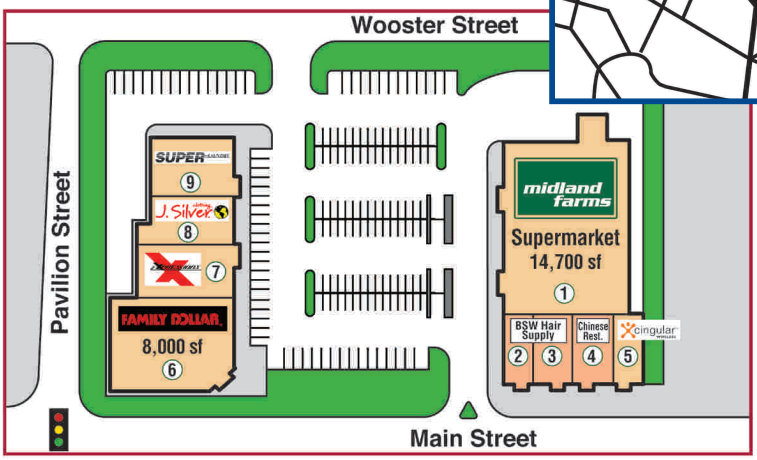
AT UPTOWN'S METROCENTER SHOPPING CENTER

Mayor Perez not only wants to improve economic growth in Downtown but in every neighborhood. It's been two decades since the North Hartford neighborhood has seen a development project underway. This community won't have to wait much longer– a retail shopping center at the corner of Main Street and Pavilion Street is currently under construction.

This 40,000 square foot shopping center in Hartford's North End also now known as Hartford's "Uptown" neighborhood will open in Spring 2005—that's this year! Concerned residents, organizations such as the Public Housing Residents Going Places, Inc. (PHRGP, Inc.) and the Community Economic Development Fund (C.E.D.F.) collaborated with the City's Development Services Department to help move this important economic development project forward.

Hartford's new shopping destination will anchor the Midland Farms Supermarket and Family Dollar, a well-known discount store chain in the region. The Northeast Retail Leasing & Management Company, the selected developer for the project has fully leased all spaces in the shopping center. Some of the other retailers include: Expressions Footwear and Clothing, J. Silver Women's Clothing, Super Laundry, BSW Beauty Supply, Main Wah Chinese Kitchen and Cingular Wireless.

The $4.5 million in funding for this project was provided by Peoples' Bank, Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the City of Hartford.



MI CASA COMMUNITY CENTER EMBARKS ON $3 MILLION CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

For over 12 years the Mi Casa Family Service and Educational Center, Inc. has provided a full range of educational, recreational and enrichment opportunities for residents of Frog Hollow/South End neighborhoods of Hartford. Their mission has been to enhance the quality of life for underserved Puerto Rican/Latino youth and families.

Currently known as the Mi Casa Community Center (Solomon Building), located on 590-596 Park Street this facility has embarked on an aggressive capital campaign of $3 million dollars to expand their current space of 3,400 square feet to 24,000 square feet. Mi Casa's goal is to provide additional services to youth and their families and have a greater positive economic impact on the neighborhood.

New Features will include:

- *Organizational headquarters/office space*
- *8 classrooms*
- *Fitness Center w/sauna*
- *Computer/Technology Lab*
- *Designated Art Room*
- *Auditorium with portable stage*
- *Fully equipped Lounge/Kitchen space*
- *Elevator*

HARTFORD'S ECONOMIC PRODUCTIVITY ON TOP

With the concentration of businesses and people in this area it was no surprise to Mayor Eddie Perez that Hartford has made a substantial contribution to the U.S economy. On December 10, 2004 Mayor Perez announced a recently released report prepared for the U.S Conference of Mayors that confirmed it. Hartford is ranked as the #2 metropolitan area in the nation based on per capita economic activity; second only to San Francisco, CA.

According to the study, Hartford is ranked 32nd of 318 metropolitan areas in total economic production and generates more economic activity than sixteen U.S states. The report underscores U.S metropolitan areas of the nation's economy and affirms Hartford's national benchmark levels of productive capability per resident. The federal government defines Hartford's metropolitan region as Hartford, Middlesex, and Tolland counties and in 2003 this region produced $73,700,000,000.

"This ranking affirms our strong business climate and enhances the appeal of what Hartford has to offer—skilled labor and consumer markets which drive competition and innovation," stated Mayor Perez. Examples of companies who are among those driving Hartford's economic productivity ranking include Aetna, The Hartford, St. Paul's Travelers, and the United Technologies Corporation.

MAYOR PEREZ FIGHTS FOR WORKING FAMILIES

In November 2004, Mayor Perez outraged by the IRS intent to audit a total of 8,200 Hartford area working families, 4,250 who reside within the City of Hartford decided to do something about it.

On behalf of those working families, the majority primarily African-American and Latino the City of Hartford has filed a Civil Rights action in the U.S District Court to block the IRS from denying and delaying payments to these families who receive the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

Prior to the City of Hartford filing the lawsuit Connecticut's congressional delegation comprised of Senator Joseph Lieberman, Senator Christopher Dodd, and Congressman John Larson obtained a three-week delay on behalf of our citizens who are being targeted for this IRS audit.

As a working taxpayer making $34,000 or less, you would be required to provide certification from third parties (ministers, daycare workers, etc.) proving that your children have resided with you for more than six months in the year. If you receive the EITC and are contacted by the IRS you are not suspected of fraud, however, your refund will be held up or delayed until you provide sufficient documentation acceptable to the IRS. In Hartford this could represent more than $7 million in taxpayer refunds denied and over $14 million in the Hartford County.

Why? Last year the IRS made a decision to target 25,000 EITC taxpayers nationwide for a pre-audit of their children's residence. One third (8,200) of the national test conducted in Hartford/Hartford County. This effort has been done simply because these hardworking taxpayers have been identified for participation in a test of "error reduction techniques."

"To conduct a pre-audit on primarily Latino and African-American taxpayers, who may have their tax refunds denied or delayed simply because the IRS needed to experiment with the pre-audit technique on a community is indeed a violation of their Civil Rights, and an unacceptable burden on our city and region." Individuals subjected to this pre-audit, please contact John Rose, Corporation Counsel for the City of Hartford at (860) 543-8575.

In 2003 the EITC program provided tax payments for 20 million working families nationwide that file tax returns and make less than $32,000. In the City of Hartford alone, 16,329 families received $29,225,084 in tax payments. The majority of those working families made between $10K-$30K in income a year. For more information about the Earned Income Tax Credit call InfoLine 2-1-1 or (860) 236-3617 ext. 123.

MORE NEW POLICE RECRUITS SWORN-IN

Mayor Perez Greets New Class of Police Recruits at the Hartford Police Academy on December 13, 2004

At the end of 2004 Hartford's violent crime dropped in the following categories:

Murder	- **61.4%**
Rape	- **21.6%**
Robbery	- **13.6%**
Aggravated Assault	- **15.2%**

CRIME DOWN *continued from cover*

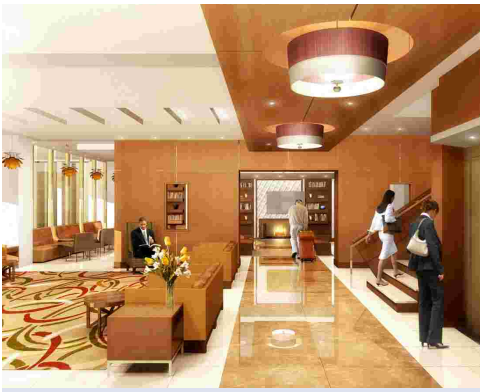
The wait is now over; this February the police department unveiled their new plan implemented and comprised of two divisions, four districts and eight zones. In addition, a police captain will command a district and a lieutenant will command each zone.

The overall goal of the Neighborhood Policing Plan is to increase the accountability of the Hartford Police Department and reduce crime in specific neighborhoods. Residents will know respective police command staff – deputy chief, captains, lieutenants and officers assigned to their community. They will also be made aware of specific resources allocated to address quality of life issues.

(PHOTO BY ANDY HART)

On January 21, 2005, Hartford Mayor Eddie A. Perez and Police Chief Patrick Harnett announced the City's Neighborhood Policing Plan.

The Mayor's Update is a quarterly newsletter published by the City of Hartford, Office of Mayor Eddie A. Perez. If you have questions, please contact **Billie C. Scruse,** Press Secretary to Mayor Perez at **(860) 543-8500** or email: **bscruse@ci.hartford.ct.us**



HILTON HARTFORD REOPENS - MARCH 1:

The new and improved $33 million dollar Hilton Hartford is now a state-of-the-art, 392-room luxury hotel with all the benefits and convenience of a downtown location that will attract both business, convention and leisure travelers.

Mayor Eddie A. Perez is very excited about the renovation of this luxury hotel in downtown Hartford. Thanks to his tireless dedication, the Mayor negotiated a new contract with a new developer - The Waterford Group. This not only renovated the hotel, but saved jobs for more than 120 Hartford residents.

"Development in Hartford can directly benefit not only private investors but also workers and citizens in our community." said Mayor Perez.

THE RED SOX CAME TO TOWN

In celebration of their 2004 World Series win the Boston Red Sox came to Hartford on November 17, 2004 for their World Series Trophy Tour. On hand was our very special guest the World Series Trophy.

Over 1,000 loyal fans greeted and congratulated them on the Old State House lawn. The Boston Red Sox organization also thanked the fans for their support to win the World Series Championship.

Left to Right: Lieutenant Governor Kevin Sullivan, Councilman James Boucher holding Red Sox flag, Councilwoman rJo Winch, and Hartford Mayor Perez.