Hartford
New England's Rising Star℠
FALL 2004
Eddie A. Perez, Mayor

The Mayor's UPDATE

Welcome to the Mayor's Update, a quarterly publication. We are fast approaching the first year of my first term as Mayor of the City of Hartford under our new charter. As we continue to transition city government, it's more important than ever to keep you informed about issues and concerns which impact you as Hartford residents.

My goal is to also share with you my primary goals, objectives, and accomplishments which I believe will help grow economic opportunity for the City we call, "New England's Rising Star." Whether it's working to identify and recruit key leadership to move Hartford forward—a new Corporation Counsel, Director of Development Services, and Police Chief; increasing the number of Hartford homeowners, enhancing safety for city residents through community policing, or implementing a plan to increase the number of Hartford students attending four year colleges –it's all about the success of Hartford. I'd also like to thank our community organizations, legislators, and corporate stakeholders who have also been instrumental in the strategic plan for Hartford.

Enjoy this edition of the Mayor's Update and thank you for the opportunity to serve as your government leader whether you live, work, learn, and play in the City of Hartford.

More photos of the Swearing In Ceremony on page 4.

REVITALIZATION: ECONOMIC IMPACT A WIN/WIN

HILTON HARTFORD HOTEL

The Waterford Group, LLC are the new owners of downtown's Hartford Hilton and will newly refurbish the 392 room hotel as a state-of-the-art, high tech, four-star quality hotel to attract business, convention , and leisure travelers.

Due to Mayor Perez's steadfast position to identify a new developer; this hotel investment went from $20 million to $31 million and saved a total of 160 hotel jobs, 80 held by Hartford residents.

RE-OPENING DATE: EARLY 2005

HARTFORD 21

(Formerly known as Town Square) This summer the Northland Investment Corporation began its $160 million redevelopment of the Hartford Civic Center Mall.

The transformation of the Civic Center Mall into Hartford 21

continued on page page 6

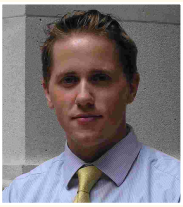
550 Main Street • Hartford, CT 06103 • Tel. (860) 543-8500 • Fax (860) 722-6606
www.hartford.gov

OFFICE OF *Constituent Services*

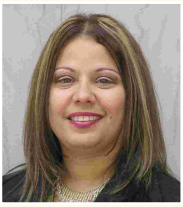
Here are the names of the Community Liaisons within the office:

Renee Richards

Edison Silva



Brad Stewart



Nereida Perez

"Why wasn't my garbage picked up today?"

"I got this parking ticket and I didn't deserve it!"

"Where can you go to get a job in this city?"

These are just examples of some of the inquiries we receive in Mayor Perez's new Office of Constituent Services. While many people call departments directly for information or assistance, often there are those who either don't know who to call, or aren't satisfied with the information received. That is where we come in. In January, Mayor Perez created a new division within the Office of the Mayor, to provide better and quicker responses to community concerns.

Our office is now fielding hundreds of cases each month, and we have also incorporated the former Action Line and Citizens Service Center lines into our operation. Our goal is to provide top-notch customer service – for after all, Hartford residents are our customers! We provide services and you let us know what you like – and what you don't like!

In addition, our Customer Service Representatives handling our busy phones are: Rita Ballestas, and Betty Smith. Whether you have a question or a complaint, please feel free to give us a call at 522-4888 (press 5 for the Mayor's Office).

OPEN OFFICE HOURS

Mayor Perez is now holding **"Open Office Hours."** This is an opportunity for residents to meet directly with the Mayor about an issue or concern. "Open Office Hours" are scheduled from **5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. on a first-come-first serve basis.** Our next one takes place at the West End Civic Association on November 9.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES...

Flag Raising Ceremony held on August 11, 2004 for Black Veterans at the Horace Bushnell Congregate Home on Vine Street.

continued on page 2

COLLEGE: The Economic Road to Success

Raising the bar, academic success and economic opportunity are some of the buzzwords being used around town these days. Hartford is home to 70,000 jobs and Mayor Eddie A. Perez wants to make sure that our neighborhood children have meaningful ways of accessing those jobs. Already in its implementation stage, Mayor Perez launched an aggressive initiative to ensure that Hartford children receive a quality education that will help them earn a Bachelor's degree and secure their future economic success.

In January 2004, Mayor Perez charged a Blue Ribbon Commission on Higher Education with an ambitious goal:

"To open the doors of economic opportunity for Hartford residents by increasing the number of Hartford youth obtaining bachelor's degrees by 25% over a five-year period."

The Commission, Co-Chaired by Connecticut State University Vice-Chancellor Estela Lopez and Hartford Public Schools Superintendent Robert Henry, was made up of public and private school administrators, presidents of area colleges and universities, business leaders, representatives from philanthropic organizations, a parent and a student.

First Day of School and Flag Raising ceremony at the Mary J. Hooker School on Sept. 7, 2004.

The Commissioners published a report outlining recommendations in three critical areas for intervention:

CURRICULUM

Ensure that all students experience a college preparatory curriculum that prepares them to succeed in college preparatory courses during their high school years.

EXPERIENTIAL, LEARNING AND ADVISING

Provide comprehensive college counseling focusing on the expectations that all students are going to college through challenging experiences throughout a student's school career.

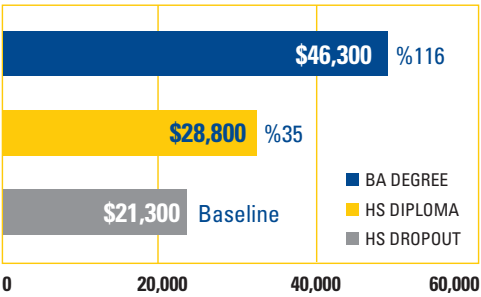
COLLEGE ADMISSION AND COMPLETION

Provide the necessary support for Hartford school graduates to complete a college degree and return to Hartford for employment in their chosen field and ensure that high school and college expectation are entirely aligned.

In addition, the commission recommended the inclusion of Connecticut private schools as a way to reach Mayor Perez's goals. Numerous independent and parochial schools have made a commitment to Hartford students by providing as many as possible the opportunity to attend their schools. Connecticut independent schools have some of the highest college attendance rates and completions in the country.

"For far too long minority students have been held to standards that can only be described as substandard, as Mayor Perez I have taken an approach that will ensure Hartford students have the opportunity to live, work and play in the City of Hartford," states Mayor Eddie A. Perez.

Increase in Earnings Relative to High School Dropouts and Median Earning



ENHANCING YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE...

CIVIC RADAR

There's a new way to contact City Hall online: Go to www.hartford.gov and then click on "Service Request." You will be able to report problems or ask questions of your City government such as potholes, missing signs, and illegal dumping. When you utilize this service you must set up an account the first time; this will allow you to log in with your user name and password from then on. Once you have reported your problem you will receive an email giving you an ID number for the issue, and another email when the assigned department has taken care of it.

TRAINED NEIGHBORHOOD MONITORS

We will be starting a "Neighborhood Monitor Training Program" this fall through HART and the Blue Hills Civic Association. This will train residents to recognize what is and is not a code violation. The group will then send a letter to any code violator, instructing them as to what the violation is, and asking them to repair the condition. If they do not, the group will then notify the Mayor's Office of Constituent Services so they can follow up.

SPEEDING/RACING

The City has just received word that we have won a new grant that will give us additional funding to target streets prone to speeding and racing with additional resources.

POLICE RESPONSE TO QUALITY OF LIFE CALLS

The director of Dispatch Center has committed to making quality of life calls for police service (for noise, etc.) more of a priority. While we cannot always guarantee immediate responses when there are life threatening circumstances to be dealt with, Dispatch has been instructed to process quality of life calls as soon as humanly possible.

IMPROVING YOUR SCHOOLS

Hartford is moving forward with several school construction initiatives. Mayor Perez took the reins of the state mandated Hartford School Building Committee in 2002 when he assumed the chairmanship—under his leadership, the construction process was jumpstarted. A total of 20 schools will be constructed or renovated; $800 million will be spent on building 21st Century schools in the City of Hartford. The school construction project utilizes state bonding money earmarked for the improvement of city schools; the money is bonded by the city, with a substantial reimbursement from the state ranging from 70-100%.

Below is the projected cost for all 7 schools under the First Phase of Construction:

Hartford Public High School	$105 M
Burr Elementary School	28 M
Naylor Elementary School	30 M
Rawson Elementary School	33 M
Webster Elementary School	32 M
Breakthrough Magnet	26 M
Classical Magnet	32 M

Mayor Perez with Rawson School students and construction workers at the groundbreaking ceremony.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES...

Shown below are photos of the Swearing-In Cermony and Mayor Perez pictured with Chief Harnett and Attorney General, Richard Blumenthal.

A Department on the Move

The Department of Development Services, a brainchild of Mayor Perez, is aggressively moving forward to coordinate all city planning and development functions in an effort to streamline revitalization initiatives. The City of Hartford's Planning, Housing, Zoning, Permitting, Code Enforcement, Grants Management, and Property Management functions are now a part of the consolidated Department. Mayor Perez recently announced that he has approved a plan to merge the Hartford Economic Development Commission's (HEDC) operation, as well, into the Department as a new Division.

According to the Mayor, the integration of these core services will make it easier for the City to respond effectively to development proposals, and enable the City to coordinate the various reviews that are required when the City collaborates with its partners in advancing downtown and neighborhood development initiatives.

As the Department improves systems, creates operational efficiencies, and refines its strategic operating plan, it has begun to assume a leadership role in improving economic conditions for Hartford's neighborhoods. Projects of significance include the $110 million Colt Gateway Project in the CSS/CON neighborhood, Main and Pavillion's shopping center development, and Parkville's 350,000 sq. ft. Charter Oak shopping center, anchored by a Walmart store. Several planned development initiatives are being advanced in collaboration with our NRZ's, neighborhood groups and community development corporations. These neighborhood revitalization activities are complimented by an active development program in Downtown.

Sale of the American Airlines building to a private developer for office use, and parcel 12B to Meredith Broadcasting for the relocation of WFSB, signal renewed interest in City development sites and augment the significant public/private partnerships now underway to transform the face of our City.

The Department Development Services will serve as the vehicle through which sound urban policy and the Mayor's neighborhood economic development initiatives can be realized.

GOOD NEWS ON THE HOME FRONT

Mayor Perez's Homeownership Initiative is showing real results by opening the doors for Hartford residents to owning a new home.

Since 2001, the number of new home-owners has **increased by 35%** and approximately **800 new homes** have been built in the City.

Neighborhood Pride Day Events were held in September & October on:

- **Milford Street**
- **Capen Street**
- **Ridgefield Street**
- **Oxford Street**

Mayor Perez visits the Park Street neighborhood on August 25, 2004... "Who's Policing Your Neighborhood" Hartford's Government Access Program on Channel 21.

NEW FACES IN THE MAYOR'S OFFICE

Derek Donnelly
Legislative Aide

Raul DeJesus
Intern

Glendowlyn Hall
Asst. to the Mayor

Rita Ballestas
Customer Service Representative

REVITALIZATION *continued from cover*

will include 262 luxury apartments. Other development features include: 53,000 square feet of retail/restaurant space, 93,000 square feet of office space, 800 parking spaces, 35,000 square feet of public space with a 50-ft. high atrium and entrance to the 16,600 seat Veterans Memorial Coliseum and Exhibition Center.

COMPLETION DATE: 2006

WFSB CHANNEL 3

In August the Meredith Corporation, the Parent Company of WFSB – Channel 3 and the City of Hartford reached an agreement to build a new $20 million digital broadcast facility on Main Street.

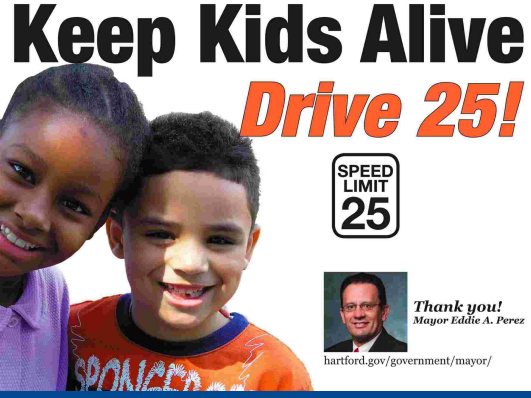
The benefit was to keep a 50 year media outlet in the Capitol City, expand Hartford's tax base, and retain 200 jobs. Rather than moving to the suburbs and by Mayor Perez providing the incentives to remain in the City, WFSB-Channel 3 also realized the value of reinvesting in Hartford as a viable business anchor for the 21st century.

COMPLETION DATE: 2007

TOPPING OFF THE MARRIOTT HOTEL

On September 24, 2004, Mayor Eddie Perez speaks at the press conference to celebrate and congratulate the Waterford Group on building as well as placing the final piece of steel in the 800 room quality hotel next to Hartford's new Convention Center.

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**



KEEP KIDS ALIVE DRIVE 25®

Mayor Perez's safe driving message (in English and Spanish) will raise awareness about the need for drivers to slow down in school zones, parks, and in our neighborhoods. Over 500 signs have been posted in visible spots on streets around schools.

Hartford
New England's Rising Star™

Office of the Mayor
550 Main Street
Hartford, CT 06103