

Mayor Anita Dugatto
City of Derby, Connecticut

PRESS RELEASE

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Launching Downtown Now! Derby's Blueprint for Progress

The City of Derby is excited to announce the start of *Downtown Now! Derby's Blueprint for Progress*, an initiative to successfully position the south side of downtown Main Street for development.

With full funding from a grant from Connecticut's Department of Community and Economic Development, the City of Derby has selected the consulting firm DPZ Partners to lead the program. DPZ's work will involve an analysis of a broad range of issues including land use, the economy, transportation, infrastructure, and design.

"*Downtown Now!* is one of the most comprehensive initiatives ever undertaken for the south side of Main Street," said Derby Mayor Anita Dugatto.

"Not only is it comprehensive, it is unlike any previous effort. Past attempts to revitalize this area were developer-driven. This effort will be inspired by citizens and will be rooted in real world economics, giving it the greatest opportunity for implementation," Dugatto said.

The first steps in *Downtown Now!* will consist of two public workshops to gather ideas from stakeholders and residents. The first, called the *Community Voices Workshop*, is scheduled for **Thursday, September 22**. At this workshop, facilitators will collect ideas from community members on the future of downtown and the south side of Main Street. Using maps, participants will identify what works, what does not, and what can be done to make downtown better. All ideas presented will be collected and organized into preliminary goals and principles to guide the plan.

The second workshop, called the *Community Choices Workshop*, is scheduled for **Wednesday, October 26**. Goals and principles gathered at the first workshop will be reviewed. Then, the conversation will expand to include presentations and a discussion of current design, land use, transportation, and economic conditions.

“Understanding what’s on the mind of those who live and work in Derby is tremendously important to the development of the plan. Building consensus is important, too, since the plan will be easier to implement if residents are in support of it,” said Marina Khoury, leader of the DPZ Partners.

Following the two initial workshops, the consultant team will return to Derby for the entire **week of November 14** to conduct the *Derby Charrette*. At the charrette, residents will get the opportunity to provide input on redevelopment and design alternatives. **The design team will be working in full view of the public and will be able to respond to comments and concerns with data and visual representations.**

Both workshops and the *Derby Charrette* will be open to the public and will take place at The Ballroom, 33 Elizabeth Street, Derby.

The City of Derby has appointed a citizen Advisory Committee to guide the development of the plan. Advisory Committee members include: Shane Mangado, Jack Walsh, Christian Meagher, Jim Gildea, Christina DiMartino, Natasha Kelly, Virginia Russo, Willetta Capelle, Beth Colette, and Sarah Widomski.

“This inclusive planning process provides a unique opportunity for residents to help shape the future of downtown Derby,” said Shane Mangado, Derby resident and Advisory Committee member. “All of us who deeply care about Derby should make it a point to attend the workshops. Our support is critical to restoring downtown to the vibrant center of economic and community activity it once was,” Mangado said.

With offices in Miami and Washington, D.C., DPZ Partners is one of the country’s preeminent urban design and planning firms, having designed over 400 new and existing communities in the U.S. and abroad.

For *Downtown Now!* DPZ Partners has joined forces with CDM Smith who will provide infrastructure and environmental engineering support; **The Williams Group** who will conduct market analysis to determine what the market can support, develop, and finance; **Urban 3** who will analyze the tax revenue implication of proposed alternatives; Gianni Longo and Associates who will lead public engagement; New Haven-based Robert Orr Associates who will focus on the unique character of Derby’s urbanism and architecture; and Good Earth Advisors (GEA), also based in Connecticut, who will assist with community outreach and act as a local liaison.

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