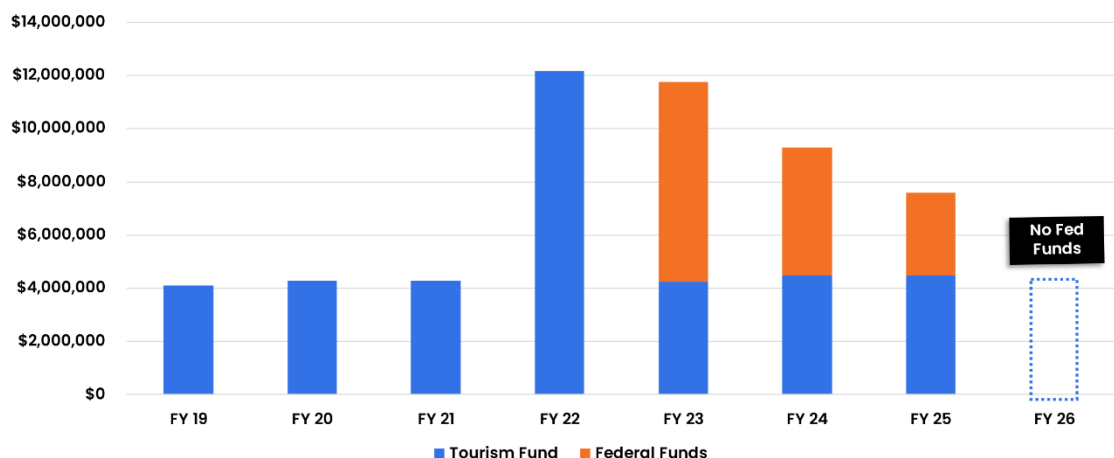


**Statewide Marketing.** Last five years of expenditures and the ROI on those expenditures

### Total Tourism Marketing Spend YoY



Total Tourism Marketing Spend YoY

CONNECTICUT

We cannot provide an **annual Return on Investment (ROI)**. The last time a ROI study was conducted was in 2012 – at that time ROI was \$3 to \$1. The current national average of 200 states and cities/towns is \$8 to \$1. We have contracted Tourism Economics and Longwoods to do an up-to-date ROI study and anticipate it to be completed in late April or early May.

The Office of Statewide Marketing and Tourism has included a copy of the FY 25 Strategic Plan, which provides a snapshot of the State's marketing goals and drills down on the strategies and tactics to achieve these goals.

**CTNext.** Provide update on the CTNext transition plan, including a status update on the bond funds that were allocated, number of positions eliminated. What is DECD plan to replicate the work of CTNext within the agency?

CTNext was formally dissolved by the General Assembly on June 30, 2024 through Sections 4-21 of [Public Act 24-149](#) and Section 29 of [Public Act 24-151](#), making DECD the successor agency for CT Next.

The agency maintains a bond authorization of \$20 million for future initiatives.

**MRDA.**

- Details on how the Governor's proposed increases (\$500,000 in FY 26 and \$700,000 in FY 27) will be spent.

MRDA's budget for FY 25 covers the Executive Director's salary and benefits as well as the full complement of operational expenses including accounting, audit, IT, insurance, legal, communications, travel and supplies. Now that the entity is established and up and running, the proposed increases will enable the hiring of additional staff and leasing of office space. It is anticipated that two people will be hired in FY 26, bringing the total number of employees to three. It is anticipated that an additional person will be hired in FY 27 bringing the total number of employees to four.

- Describe the mission of MRDA. Which towns may opt into the MRDA program? Which fall under CRDA?

MRDA's purpose is to support member municipalities' efforts to "stimulate economic and transit-oriented development" and "encourage residential housing development" by "stimulating new investment within vibrant, multidimensional downtowns." It does so by providing technical and financial support for public infrastructure and private development within "development districts" established in partnership with member municipalities. MRDA is a voluntary and opt-in program. Municipalities, through resolution by their local legislative bodies, can decide to "join" MRDA. After joining, MRDA will work with its members to enact "Housing Growth Zones" within their downtown(s) and/or station area(s) that will meet area housing demand. MRDA then enters into MOUs with member municipality chief elected officials to establish "development districts" within which MRDA can invest in projects that further the municipalities development objectives. In addition to technical and financial support for member municipalities' development districts, MRDA will

provide municipalities support on resident engagement, marketing of development opportunities, and state permitting.

Any municipality that is not within the CRDA region can join MRDA. The CRDA region includes Bloomfield, East Hartford, Hartford, Newington, South Windsor, West Hartford, Wethersfield, and Windsor. Any of the other 161 municipalities of the state can join MRDA as long as they have a rail station (existing or planned by DOT), a bus rapid transit station (existing or planned by DOT), or a "downtown." MRDA is already in discussion with over thirty municipalities who have expressed an interest in joining. As of March 5, 2025, five municipalities have formally joined MRDA (Naugatuck, Derby, New London, Seymour, and Torrington). It is anticipated that this number will grow significantly in March and April, and additionally each month going forward.

**Arts/Culture Grants.** Provide attendance/admission of grantee recipients.

We don't have official or formal data on individual grantee attendance or visits to their locations. We can provide the following data:

- Hits to CT Visit, the state's tourism website.
- Annual visitation through 2023. Numbers for 2024 will not come until June when our Tourism Economics report arrives.
- Annual economic impact through 2023. Same as above for 2024 numbers.
- Annual industry employment through 2023. Same as above for 2024 numbers.
- Occupancy numbers Year over Year (YoY) and Year to Date.

Attached, please find the Office of Statewide Marketing and Tourism's latest report to the Connecticut Tourism Council, which includes data on Traffic into Connecticut YoY on slide six.

**Quasi-public agencies.** List the quasi agencies that are receiving appropriations through the DECD budget, including AdvanceCT. Why do they receive appropriations, rather than use their own funding. When did these appropriations start?

### **Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA)**

On June 15, 2012, the Connecticut General Assembly officially established the Capital Region Development Authority, (CRDA), replacing the quasi-public entity formerly known as the Capital City Economic Development Authority, (CCEDA).

[Public Act 12-147](#) not only re-designated CCEDA as CRDA, but it also allowed the new Authority the same powers as CCEDA to plan and implement specified Capital district projects. The Act also expanded the original CCEDA district and permitted CRDA to plan and implement some of these projects outside of the district.

CRDA has received a line-item appropriation since then.

### **Municipal Regional Development Authority (MRDA)**

Began receiving an appropriation in FY 24 to support the establishment and ongoing operations of this new quasi. (See additional details above.)

### **Advanced CT (private nonprofit/not a quasi)**

Began receiving an appropriation in FY 24 to support the state's business recruitment and retention efforts.

**CT Convention and Sports Bureau.** What is their funding level and what results do we see from their work?

They are funded through the Statewide Marketing budget at \$550,000. You can find their annual data and economic impact through their website, [CT MEETINGS](#).

Please bring details on **overtime expenditures**

DECD spent \$39,574 on OT in FY 24 and \$7,248 so far in FY 25.

Provide overview of **Boost Program**, constituencies it serves, and data on outcomes

Please see attached December 2024 monthly report, which demonstrates:

- 14% above the goal of 50% Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs)
- 12 New Loans for the Month of December 2024 = \$2,292,160
- 558 Loans = \$70,156,354
- Average Loan Size Amount = \$125,728
- Most Loans: Hartford = 30, Bridgeport = 26, New Haven = 27, Norwalk = 24
- 34% of the Loans are funded in Distressed Municipalities