

Testimony Presented to Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee
Bonding Subcommittee
March 18, 2026

Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA)

Senator Miller, Representative Napoli, Senator Hwang and Representative Piscopo, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the status of bonding authority, both unallocated and allocated to and being spent by the Capital Region Development Authority. My name is David Steuber, the authority's Executive Director and I am here today with Joseph Geremia, the authority's Chief Financial Officer.

CRDA was created in 2012 as the successor agency to the former Capital City Economic Development Authority. CRDA has been tasked with a variety of responsibilities including: managing the State's large entertainment and sports venues including Rentschler Field, the Connecticut Convention Center and the PeoplesBank Arena; we are responsible for nearly 18,000 parking spaces spread across seven garages including four in the Front Street District, three others in the downtown plus surface lots in East Hartford; we've invested in over 4,000 housing units in downtown Hartford; CRDA has undertaken a variety of neighborhood projects including the reconstruction of housing and the redevelopment of former industrial sites like Fuller Brush; and per our statutory authority we have undertaken several projects in nearby communities including East Hartford, Newington and Wethersfield. At times we have carried out projects on behalf of other state agencies as well as General Assembly directives such as the transfer of the CT Regional Market from the Department of Agriculture to CRDA, and the former site of the MIRA Dissolution Authority to CRDA, both located in the South Meadows of Hartford.

At the moment, CRDA has approximately 23 projects in construction that are funded in part by state bonding including 8 housing projects; 4 projects in East Hartford; 6 Economic Development projects as well as ongoing capital work on Front Street, at the Convention Center, CT Regional Market, Rentschler Field, and the PeoplesBank Arena. Additional activity includes renovations and repairs to three of the parking garages that is estimated to occur over the next few years and priced at \$24M of which we have Fiscal Year 2027 bonding authority in the amount of \$5M that we hope to draw next year for the garages.

With the Connecticut Convention Center and the Rentschler Field stadium at twenty years old, these major venues demand increased maintenance and capital investments to not only keep them functional, but to also keep them current with today's technology and amenities to attract patrons to them including the updating of the public security software, roof membrane replacement, HVAC, kitchen equipment replacement, as well as exhibit hall and loading dock resurfacing.

At Rentschler Field, our capital budget request relates to funding the third and fourth years of work catalogued in the Populus Engineering assessment of that facility. That assessment called for over \$60M in capital needs with CRDA recommending that the work be performed over a five-year period.

The remaining East Hartford allocation of \$45M is planned for a variety of large-scale economic development projects. These projects consist of redeveloping the Silver Lane corridor, the old Showcase Cinema site, and Founders Plaza, all are multi-year complex projects representing nearly 1,000 housing units and new commercial growth.

The 8 housing projects currently in construction represent over 830 units. These projects consist of \$63M of public funding leveraging total development cost of \$288M with private funding. There are also 7 housing projects representing an additional 515 units consisting of \$39M of public funding leveraging \$514M in total development costs with private funding. In addition to these projects, there are numerous city-wide neighborhood projects which are in their early stages of development and have not matured enough to present to the bond commission.

There are also several non-housing projects currently being managed, three of which are renovations and expansion of Real Art Ways, construction of critical infrastructure in support of the Village at Park River in conjunction with the City Housing Authority, and the start-up of a commercial tenant fit-out program in conjunction with the City Chamber.

We anticipate to draw down funds during the remaining biennial budget for parking garages, Front Street, Rentschler Field, and the Convention Center as well as General Obligation requests as previously noted. We are happy to answer specific allocation or spend down questions about any of the items mentioned here or of interest to the members.