

TOWN OF WINDHAM



**JEAN de SMET
FIRST SELECTMAN**

979 MAIN STREET
WILLIMANTIC, CT 06226-2200

February 17, 2009

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND THE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT ACT

The State of Connecticut has made a strong commitment to Responsible, Smart Growth practices. Regionalization initiatives emphasize the need to plan for our future and create a sustainable lifestyle.

The Community Investment Act is a critical piece which will actualize the vision. The real estate transfer tax devotes a separate source of funding, with proceeds divided evenly among historic preservation, farmland protections, open space acquisition, and affordable housing.

As a First Selectwoman in a small city, I can testify to the critical, immediate need for investment in our historic properties. My requests for federal and state assistance focus mostly on saving our historic buildings. These beautiful architectural monuments are suffering from failing roofs, old infrastructure, lack of maintenance. But if we are to bring people back into the cities, as Responsible Growth principles promote, these same buildings can provide housing, the latest technology, convenience. Willimantic is surrounded by historic colonial villages, forests, clean rivers and open agricultural fields, which we also work to preserve. We are the model of responsible growth, and we must invest to protect that.

Building a new society must begin now, especially in difficult economic times. This is when decisions can be made to truly guide our future. We must prioritize funding for programs that restore historic properties, clean up Brownfields, finance transit oriented development, subsidize affordable housing, preserve farmland, and protect open space.

Investing in Responsible Growth now will have long-term benefits for our economy, environment and quality of life.

Sincerely,

Jean de Smet
First Selectwoman

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