

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

*April 2022*

The following summarizes Economic Development Division activities for April 2022.

Additional news specific to Groton Economic Development is found here:

<http://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/news>

### **Economic Development Activities:**

- American Recovery Plan (ARPA) Programming: Staff presented the final categories “buckets” to the COW for endorsement on April 26<sup>th</sup>. This was in line with the guidance provided on March 23<sup>rd</sup> by the Long-Term Recovery Committee. The “Budget Simulator” information and overall public input over the past several months was highlighted. Town Council authorized staff to advance the community application process in May coinciding with the closure of the “Budget Simulator” tool. It was also referenced that the community needs these funds and that federal reporting would occur by April 30<sup>th</sup>. Town Council will hold a public hearing on May 3<sup>rd</sup> regarding the final categories “buckets.”
- GreaterGroton.com Public Engagement Tool: Staff continues to promote the GreaterGroton.com engagement platform to solicit public input. Staff is now focused on engaging with other departments within the town to start using the platform as well (see attached info sheet). Please register today at [www.greatergroton.com](http://www.greatergroton.com) to help promote this important tool.
- Exploremoregroton.com Economic Development Website: Staff is finalizing edits with Golden Shovel, web contractor, for our website refresh. We are looking forward to promoting a new [www.exploremoregroton.com](http://www.exploremoregroton.com) site in early May.
- Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA): Staff received applications were by the March 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. Staff processed them and forwarded to the COW in April. A public hearing will be held in May followed by a local vote. The submittals will then be sent to the state for final approval.
- Community Challenge Grant: Staff presented the CT Community Challenge Grant opportunity to the COW on April 12<sup>th</sup>. The next grant round is summer/fall of 2022. Staff recommended pursuit of a project targeting the downtown and Poquonnock neighborhood to target economic, infrastructure, and community investments. [https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Business-Development/05\\_Funding\\_Opportunities/CT-Communities-Challenge-Grant](https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Business-Development/05_Funding_Opportunities/CT-Communities-Challenge-Grant)
- Eastern Chamber Business Breakfast: On April 27<sup>th</sup>, staff attended the Business Breakfast with speaker Dr. Raja Mangipudy who provided an overview and update from Pfizer. He announced that Pfizer would be investing over \$40 million in upgrades and expansions of their Groton campus over the next 10 years. The Day covered the event <https://www.theday.com/business/20220427/new-pfizer-site-lead-shares-role-groton-employees-played-in-covid-19-drug-development-x2014-and-whats-next>
- Groton Business Roundtable: Staff worked with members of the EDC to coordinate logistics of this event held on April 28, 2022. The event was well attended. The majority of discussion was on hiring issues, occupying space that became vacant due to the pandemic, and the perception that Groton is not business friendly. The next Groton Business Roundtable will be held on May 26<sup>th</sup>.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

April 2022

- CTIndex: On April 7th, staff partnered with New London in presenting a funding pitch to CCM for a digital business database. CT communities lack a vibrant database for all existing businesses. Data of this type does not exist and is not provided by state or federal sources.
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): Staff has been preparing a grant proposal to be submitted by May 20<sup>th</sup> for \$2 million targeting housing rehabilitation at Grasso Gardens in partnership with the Groton Housing Authority. This submittal will also be combined with additional state funding from the CT Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) to ultimately bring multi-millions to the project. This information has been provided to the COW and a public hearing will occur in early May prior to Town Council approval.

### Public Property Redevelopment:

- Public Property Redevelopment (Mystic Education Center): During April, there has not been any new activity beyond mediation. Blue Lotus Group advised of its pending purchase of Respler Homes. They launched a project website including their plans (<https://www.bluelotusmystic.com/>). It is Groton's understanding that the developer plans on having a significant public outreach campaign to gain input and to educate the public regarding their identity and intent. The property today has 160,000 square feet of existing building space including a 40,000 indoor recreation facility plus the site holds environmentally contaminated land. Any future redevelopment will preserve half of the 80+ acres as public open space. The state, as the property owner, has been closely following this project and inquiries about its progress.
- Public Property Redevelopment (Groton Heights): No change in April. ThayerMahan has been completing final internal review. ThayerMahan has grown from three to over 70 employees in three years. They are committed to the project in making this their future world headquarters. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>
- Public Property Redevelopment (517/529 Gold Star Highway): No change in April. PJ&A has selected A.R. Builders as their regional housing development partner to build on the four parcels. A.R. is both a national builder with a strong regional focus in Connecticut and Rhode Island. A.R. has projects in Groton and New London. The project envisions less than 300 apartments on 17.75 acres encompassing four lots (two town-owned and two private-owned). Anticipated tax benefits will be in the order of \$1 million annually. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>
- Triton Square (former Seely School): No change in April. The project awaits final resolution on the zoning approval appeal. The proposed site plan for multi-family housing has been approved by the Groton Planning & Zoning Commission. Ground breaking is anticipated for a 305-unit multi-family apartment development. Targeted future tenants are both young professionals and "empty-nesters." Anticipated future property tax revenue is in the magnitude of \$1 million annually. <https://www.seelyschool.com/>
- Public Property Redevelopment (Colonel Ledyard School): No change in April. Bellsite LLC presented to the COW on March 22<sup>nd</sup> to compare the refined plans with the initial concepts. The COW was supportive of the project and the detailed plans for a total of 64 units. Next step is to

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

April 2022

submit the final site plans for City of Groton PZC review. Phase I will modify the existing school building for residential unit development. Phase II will include new buildings and apartments on the rear of the site. <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/project-updates>

- Public Property Redevelopment (Pleasant Valley School): No change in April. Staff is anticipating future discussion with the Town Council. Staff will be modifying the draft RFP prior to reissuance for solicitations. Meanwhile, interest in the property has been indicated by the development community.

### Economic Development Metrics:

#### Trade Name Metrics:

- There were 5 trade name certificates this month in the Town of Groton.

#### Social Media Metrics:

- 841 Facebook followers, a negligible change from March.  
\*\* Please follow the Facebook page and share our posts to your network:  
<https://www.facebook.com/GrotonEconomicDevelopment/>
- 91 LinkedIn page followers, negligible change from March.  
\*\* Please follow the LinkedIn page and share our posts to your network:  
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/groton-economic-development/>  
\*\* Please like and SHARE posts on social media to expand the reach!
- Website Metrics (Mar 30-Apr 28) [www.exploremoregroton.com](http://www.exploremoregroton.com)
  - Total Sessions: 1,621 (1,394 new/227 returning), 20 pct. above 12-month avg.
  - Pages per session: 2.04, 17 pct. above 12-month avg.
  - Total Page Views: 3,307, 42 pct. above 12-month avg.
  - Average Time Duration: 1 min 8 sec, 2 pct. above 12-month avg.
- There are 611 subscribers on the Newsletter Mailing List, minimal change from March. Email addresses collected from meetings and events are being added to the mailing list.  
(<http://www.exploremoregroton.com/groton/news-and-media/sign-up-for-our-newsletter>)
- GreaterGroton.com Activity (Mar. 30-Apr. 28, 2022) [www.greatergroton.com](http://www.greatergroton.com)
  - Total Visits 278
  - Max. Visitors Per Day 31
  - New Registrations 7
  - Engaged Visitors 27
  - Informed Visitors 84
  - Aware Visitors 189
- Top Projects

Project	Engaged Participants	Informed Participants	Aware Participants
How should Groton spend our Federal Recovery Dollars?	5	24	63
2022 4 <sup>th</sup> of July Parade Theme	10	19	61

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION UPDATE

April 2022

Parking in Mystic	3	27	43
Housing in Groton	3	8	20
Small Business Forum	5	8	15

### Unemployment Data (Percent %)

	<b>Groton</b>	<b>Norwich-New London- Westerly Labor Market Area</b>	<b>Connecticut</b>
January 2021	9.1	9.5	8.5
February 2021	8.7	9.4	8.3
March 2021	8.8	9.4	8.3
April 2021	8.2	8.7	7.6
May 2021	6.6	6.8	6.0
June 2021	6.9	7.5	6.9
July 2021	6.8	7.3	6.9
August 2021	5.9	6.6	6.1
September 2021	5.4	6.0	5.4
October 2021	4.9	5.9	5.3
November 2021	4.2	5.3	4.8
December 2021	3.8	5.1	4.4
January 2022	3.8	4.9	4.4
February 2022	4.6	5.7	5.0
March 2022	4.2	4.7	4.3

Keep up to date on town meetings including agendas, minutes etc. by visiting the Calendar on the town's website here: <http://www.agendasuite.org/iip/groton>

Click here for events going on around Groton: <https://www.exploremoregroton.com/events/?v=list>

Keep up to date on news pertaining to Groton & Economic Development by going to the website here: <http://www.exploremoregroton.com/news-and-media/news>

Got something  
to say? Share it with

# GREATER GROTON



## Greater Groton Forum Update

April 13, 2022

### SITE STATISTICS

Date Range: Oct. 18, 2021 to Apr. 13, 2022

**6,101** Total  
Visits

**11,512** Page  
Views

**255** Registered  
Users

### TOTALS BY PARTICIPATION LEVEL

**Engaged Participants:** Visitors who  
comment or participate in using one of  
the online interfaces - **2,363 Total**

**Informed Participants:** Visitors who  
viewed multiple projects or downloaded  
files - **2,911 Total**

**Aware Participants:** Visitors to the site  
or a single project page - **4,171 Total**

### REGISTERED USERS

**90%**

of registered users  
live in Groton

- Seven percent work  
in Groton
- Three percent are  
frequent visitors

**34%**

of registered users  
who live in Groton are  
from Mystic

- 24 pct. live in the City  
of Groton
- 11 pct. live in Noank

**57%**

of registered users  
are between 55  
and 74 years old

- 24 pct. are 35-54
- 13 pct. are over 74

### SUMMARY

- Greater Groton ([greatergroton.com](https://greatergroton.com)) is the community's online discussion forum. The digital platform collects public feedback on important local issues.
- For example, the tool gathers input on how to spend the \$8.6M *American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)* funding [[link](#)]. Town projects like the Downtown Mystic Parking Study [[link](#)] are also featured on the platform.
- Department heads & elected officials are invited to suggest topics to be added. For more information, please contact Lauren Post at [lpost@groton-ct.gov](mailto:lpost@groton-ct.gov).

Top Projects	Engaged	Informed	Aware
Suggestion Box	1,930	1,978	2,339
ARPA Funding	325	591	1,207
Parking in Mystic	99	375	734