

**Statement of Purpose
for the
Simsbury Business Incentive Program**

In an ongoing effort to attract, retain and expand local businesses, the Town of Simsbury has adopted an incentive and abatement program. Created in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes 12-65b and 12-65h, the program allows the Town to enter into written agreements with owners and/or lessees of certain real property where targeted businesses are located or could be properly located in accordance with adopted plans in certain locations in Simsbury.

The decision to approve a request for tax abatement or any benefit described in this Policy is within the sole and exclusive discretion of the Simsbury Board of Selectmen. The filing of an application under this Policy or any recommendation of the Business development Committee or any other Town Agency is not binding on the Board of Selectmen and creates no rights for the applicant or any obligation for the Town.

This Business Incentive Program is completely separate from the statutorily required local land use approval process.

DRAFT

**Resolution Regarding the Establishment of a
Business Development Incentive Policy
("the Policy")**

WHEREAS, The Board of Selectmen of the Town of Simsbury seeks to encourage the growth and expansion of resident businesses as well as the initial location of specific types of businesses within the Town of Simsbury; and

WHEREAS, to help accomplish this goal the Town of Simsbury, acting through its Board of Selectmen, hereby establishes a process to take advantage of available economic development incentives as found permissible by the Connecticut General Statutes, and

WHEREAS, the Town may offer qualified applicants temporary tax abatement pursuant to CGS § 12-65b. and § 12-65h., and

WHEREAS, the Town may also offer applicants other incentives as included herein if the proposed new development or expanded existing development are deemed to be in the best interests of the Town as described in this Policy, and

WHEREAS, the Town acting through the Business Development Committee (BDC) will review specific business development incentives on a case-by-case basis and will base the decision to grant any incentives to any specific project applicant on the requirements of this adopted policy and the overall best interests of the Town based on the required application materials, and

WHEREAS, in the event of unusual or extraordinary circumstances presented in writing by the applicant, the Business Development Committee may recommend to the Board of Selectmen approval of the waiver, if requested in writing by the applicant, of any requirement contained in the Policy so long as the development is found to be consistent with the stated goals and objectives of Simsbury's adopted economic development plans.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the following program of incentives is hereby adopted and shall be implemented as indicated hereafter:

THE TYPES OF BUSINESSES or INDUSTRIES TARGETED BY THIS POLICY:

The Business Development Incentive Policy Program will be used to target the following types of high quality businesses that generate substantial tax revenue to the Town of Simsbury:

1. Corporate headquarters and satellite offices
2. Retail uses
3. Campus-style office development
4. Research and development and high technology and information technology facilities, especially those which are environmentally sustainable.
5. Manufacturing facilities as defined in Chapter 588 of CGS. (CGS 12-81, Subdivision 72 defines mfg. facilities.)
6. Existing Simsbury business expansion as defined in §12-65b(b). including office use, retail use, permanent residential use, transient residential use, manufacturing use, warehouse, storage or distribution use , structured multilevel parking use necessary possibly in connection with a mass transit system, information technology, recreation facilities, transportation facilities, or mixed- use development as defined in Section 8-13m. In order to be eligible the business use must be consistent with the list of types of businesses or industries targeted by this Policy (on Page 3).
7. Mixed Use Development which contains at least 25% of its floor area designated for commercial use if combined with a specific plan for the timely, acceptable, sequential development of the entire site and located in the Simsbury Town Center Code area, and existing area zoned for business use, an approved Planned Area Development (PAD) Zone or in an established Village District.
8. New or existing recreational or entertainment businesses which are in keeping with an adopted goal or plan.

The Town is interested in attracting sustainable businesses which will:

1. Generate additional tax revenue through real estate and/or personal property taxes
2. Provide lasting employment opportunities.
3. Provide high quality goods and services
4. Improve the aesthetics of the community or a particular area of the community so designated for such development.
5. Occupy, use and/or preserve a historic site.
6. Provide desirable recreational and entertainment opportunities.

The following types of enterprises shall receive priority in consideration for recommendation for abatement or incentives as outlined in this policy:

1. Those within targeted locations as identified in this Policy, the current Comprehensive Plan or adopted Economic Development Plan.
2. Those proposing a project that forwards a stated goal or objective which will bring about a substantial, positive impact on the Grand List.
 - a. For new businesses a substantial impact will be defined as contributing at least an additional one and one-half (1.5) million dollars in real estate value to the grand list.
 - b. For those businesses that are expanding and meet the above criteria as defined and contributing a minimum *increase* of one (1) million dollars in real estate value to the grand list or an *increase* of 50% of the current real estate value, whichever is greater.

TAX ABATEMENT SCHEDULE*

Minimum Investment	Period of Abatement Not More than
(1) Not less than \$3 Million	7 years
(2) \$500,000 - \$2,999,999	2 years
(3) Equal to 50% of the increase in the assessment	3 years
(4) For retail businesses: To be set by Ordinance	To be set by Ordinance

* Maximum abatement possible, may not be granted for all applications. Percentage abatement applies to the increase in assessment. (example: 50%/40%/30%)

* Varies based on specifics of application and determination of positive contribution to town.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE GUIDELINES:

Overview and Background:

- A. The objective of offering a tax abatement or business development incentive as stated in the Purpose above is to encourage the attraction or expansion of specific types of businesses through the establishment of a public/private partnership, which results in growth expansion consistent with the Town of Simsbury’s adopted plans, codes or regulations.
- B. Any proposed abatements or incentives are subject to final approval by the Board of Selectmen after referral to the BOS by the Business Development Committee.
- C. The Board of Selectman, in adopting these incentive guidelines hereby establishes the following objectives consistent with adopted plans and sound economic growth.

The project must:

1. Provide a clear benefit to the Town as determined by:
 - a. Staff review of application facts and completeness, based on program policy, objectives and guidelines, and
 - b. Recommendation of the Business Development Committee, and
 - c. Approval of the Board of Selectmen.
2. Create substantial, long term tax base growth.
3. Provide stimulation of the local economic conditions for existing businesses, and the development of future related or unrelated industry groups.
4. Accomplish community goals as stated in the current Comprehensive Plan, Plan of Conservation and Development or adopted economic development plan.
5. Must have a solid financial base and growth potential as determined by the Director of Finance.
6. Have parent or subsidiaries of businesses which are the subject of or connected to such applications which must have a satisfactory record of environmental compliance as may be documented, or not, by Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP).

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

1. The proposed project is a permitted use, or may be permitted by the Zoning Commission through a process established in the Simsbury Zoning Regulations. If rezoning is required, the abatement/incentive may be conditional.
2. Delinquency in any fees or taxes that have not been waived and that are otherwise due to the Town of Simsbury from the applicant or any related entity shall render the applicant and application ineligible.
3. If the end user of the proposed facility is a lessee, tax benefits must be clearly reflected in the lease as accruing to the Applicant entity for at least the term of the abatement period.
4. Applicant must not be in violation of any law, regulation or agreement with town, state or federal government, notwithstanding any tax lien with governmental forbearance.
5. Applicants must be committed to make a significant investment in new or renovated real property in Simsbury.
6. Applicant's project must provide new employment opportunities or enhancement to the tax base or encourage technological innovation and/or investment and address a goal(s) or objective identified in the Town's adopted plans.
7. A statement is to be provided by the applicant as to the ownership structure of the real property, personal property and operating company including information as to the ownership of any applicable subsidiary companies.
8. There is a firm commitment to remain in the Town beyond the length of the abatement or other incentive period, if applicable.
9. All tax obligations to the Town by the applicant must be current except in the case when the applicant is seeking approval to purchase existing tax liens.

10. The project should meet goals and objectives identified in the adopted Plan of Conservation and Development and the adopted 1995 Economic Development Strategic Plan as it may be amended.
11. An agreement entered into pursuant to this Policy shall not be subject to assignment, transfer, or sale without the written consent of the Simsbury Board of Selectmen.
12. After approval of an application by the Board of Selectmen and approval of a final site plan by the Simsbury Zoning Commission, construction shall commence within twelve (12) months and shall be completed within twenty-four (24) months unless otherwise extended by the Board of Selectmen in its sole discretion.
13. In the event that the applicant, during the period of its participation in this program:
 - a. relocates its business from Simsbury,
 - b. becomes delinquent in taxes or fees,
 - c. closes its operation, or
 - d. declares bankruptcy,

then any tax abatement or incentive benefit enjoyed by the applicant under this program shall be forfeited and the applicant shall be required to pay back all taxes that would have been assessed had the applicant not participated in the program.

14. If benefits were obtained fraudulently, the town may pursue any recourse allowed by law including prosecution and obtaining penalty fees.

TYPES OF ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE:

Tax Abatement: The assessment of the real property and all improvements to be constructed thereon may be reduced for a period of time and under the conditions set forth in the above information chart.

The period of reduced assessment shall commence with the Grand List immediately following the issuance of a final certificate of occupancy for the new or expanded construction and upon the execution of an agreement satisfactory to the Town Attorney that will set the terms and conditions of the abatement/incentive based on the established parameters.

Waiving or Reduction of Any Town Permit Fees for targeted businesses and industries:

The BDC Committee may recommend to the Board of Selectmen waiver of up to 50% of any Town permit fees or a smaller portion of such fee upon request and determination that such a fee waiver would encourage the development or expansion of quality businesses especially those of the targeted industries. The Board of Selectmen may upon recommendation of the BDC agree to waive a portion up to 50% of the entire fee as it may determine necessary to encourage the desirable development. The development must have been determined to meet the applicable desirable criteria as outlined herein. The Town and the applicant shall enter into an agreement which will set forth the terms and conditions based upon the established guidelines. The agreement shall be approved by the Town Attorney.

Infrastructure Rebate Program:

An applicant who is applying for a complying new or expanded existing business development that meets the criteria herein may also apply for a partial rebate for infrastructure which is located in the public right of way and approved by the appropriate Town Departments, Town Engineer, and the Board of Selectmen for the construction of infrastructure which the Town Engineer determines will serve a valid public purpose, be in the best long term interest of the Town and may also, in certain developments, clearly contribute to the creation of a more walkable, sustainable community. Note that only improvements that are public and are constructed in the public right of way are eligible for any potential rebate. Parking facilities, for example, which are available to the public may be determined to be eligible for this program.

The percentage rebate which may be applied to any given development under this infrastructure rebate program is to be determined and recommended by the Town Engineer. The maximum percentage of rebate is to be 50% of the cost as determined acceptable by the Town Engineer. Certification of actual cost shall be made to the satisfaction of the Town Engineer. The actual approval of the infrastructure rebate including percentage shall be determined by the Board of Selectmen and also be based on available funding.

Application Requirements and Procedures:

1. Applications shall be made to the Director of Planning and Community Development.
2. Applications shall be reviewed by the First Selectman.
3. Applications shall be referred to the Director of Finance.
4. Applications shall contain at least the information specified herein as required by this policy.
5. For purposes of reviewing these Applications, there is established a **Business Development Committee (BDC)**. The Committee shall consist of five (5) members. The First Selectman shall serve as the Chairperson of the Committee. The remaining four (4) members of the Committee shall be appointed by the First Selectman and one member shall be chosen from each of the then existing membership of the Economic Development Commission, the Board of Finance and the Zoning Commission. The remaining member of the Committee shall be chosen at large.
6. The First Selectman shall refer applications that meet the minimum requirements as set forth in this document to the BDC for consideration and recommendation to the Board of Selectmen.
7. Upon receipt of a complete Application the BDC shall report the findings and recommendations of the Committee to the Board of Selectmen for action.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

STEP 1:

Applicant submits a written report, application and Economic Development Impact Statement to the Director of Planning, who will then suggest to the BDC, a Business Development Incentive, based on the report, the development's direct and indirect economic and fiscal impacts and compliance with the overall Business Development Policy.

The applicant's request should include at least the following types of information:

1. Specific Assistance Requested and rationale for the request.
 - a. Tax assessment reduction specifics on a year to year basis, estimated as closely as possible.
 - b. Waiving or reduction of any Town permit fee, specifying the amount of requested waiver
 - c. Any infrastructure rebate request specifically the amount of request with all construction details.
2. Description of the project including an estimate of the number of jobs to be created and their wages.
3. Description of the applicant's business including a listing of its officers.
4. Description of the application and its products or services.
5. An estimate of the value of the proposed improvements.
6. An estimate of employment provided, full-time and part-time.
6. An anticipated project construction schedule.
7. Identification of any other public incentives, financial or otherwise, which have been requested and are included in the project financing.
8. A statement of the benefits to the Town for granting an incentive including an estimate of local taxes to be paid on a year to year basis for as long as the requested incentive lasts.
9. All other information requested by the BDC and /or per the Minimum Criteria/Information of this Policy.

STEP 2:

1. The Planning Director shall refer the application to the Business Development Committee (BDC) for review and recommendation to the Board of Selectmen.
2. The BDC shall review and discuss the application. Questions of fact shall be answered by the applicant or the Director of Planning.

STEP 3:

The BDC shall make a recommendation to the BOS on the application.

STEP 4:

Upon preliminary approval by the Board of Selectmen and at the direction of the First Selectman, the Planning Director and if applicable, the Town Engineer, will work with the applicant, and the Town Attorney to draft a legal contract that assures that all provisions of the Business Development Incentive program as preliminarily approved by the BOS will be met. Contract details will be on a case by case basis depending on the project specifics.

STEP 5:

In order for the incentives to become official, the Board of Selectmen must approve the final Business Development Incentive(s) in contract form by majority vote.

STEP 6.

The BOS shall also authorize the First Selectman to sign the proposed contract once approved as to form by the Town Attorney.

Appendix A

Application Minimum Requirements:

<u>Does the application contain:</u>	YES	NO
Specific assistance requested:		
a. Tax abatement		
b. Reduction of Fees		
c. Infrastructure rebate		
Project Description.		
Description of Business.		
Description of application products & services.		
Est value of proposed improvements.		
Employment to provided (Estimated or Actual).		
a. Full time (by year)		
b. Part time (by year)		
Estimated project relocation or construction schedule.		
Other requested incentives.		
Statement of benefits to Town.		
All other requested info.		