

**Retail: Issues and Opportunities for the Route 34 West Area, New Haven**  
**A Summary of the October 6, 2008 Presentation**  
by Alissa K. DeJonge

The City of New Haven's Development Commission is working on a municipal development plan for a 37 acre corridor along Route 34 between Howe Street and Ella T. Grasso Boulevard. City staff and residents generally agree that a combination of retail and residential uses would work well for this area. The City is encouraging public participation with the economic development planning by hosting a series of workshops each month from October 2008 through March 2009.

CERC was asked to present information regarding New Haven retail trends and potential retail opportunities for the Route 34 West area. Alissa DeJonge, Assistant Director of Research, presented the findings at the first municipal workshop on October 6.

For almost 10 years, growth in New Haven worksites has been relatively flat. That means that closings were being replaced by startups, but there was not much growth beyond that. Meanwhile, Connecticut grew 4 percent.

Retail comprised 10 percent of businesses in New Haven in 2007. More than one-third of retail sales in New Haven in 2007 were from building materials stores, with none of the sales being generated from general merchandise stores.

Almost 40,000 people in more than 13,000 households live within one mile of the proposed development. There were relatively high shares of school-aged children in this area, much more so than the state average. About 40 percent were between the ages of 25 and 64.

High school was the highest degree attained for about 40 percent of the residents in the area, with almost another one-third having an associate's degree or higher.

What do people spend their money on? Consumer expenditure patterns showed annual spending by type for people living within 1 mile of development, with food and entertainment topping the list, followed by apparel.

No retail, personal service or business services are located within the boundaries of the neighborhood. The neighborhood is close to St. Raphael's Hospital, Yale-New Haven Hospital, and some clinics. What types of items do the hospitals purchase from local suppliers? Many retail items are purchased locally by hospitals in addition to more space for health care, and restaurants.

Based on the data, some potential retail opportunities that would warrant a more thorough market analysis include retail that supports residents (grocery store, hardware store, appliance store, laundromat, pet supplies store, clothing store and restaurants). Industries that support healthcare industry and visitors may also thrive in the area (health and personal care store and a café/coffee shop).