

4. THE COMMISSION COMMENDS THE DEPARTMENT FOR ITS SOLICITATION OF INNOVATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR A NEW PARKING GARAGE AT NEW HAVEN'S UNION STATION. SUCH PROPOSALS FOR PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC FACILITIES, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE REVENUE GENERATING POTENTIAL OF THE FACILITIES TO LESSEN OR ELIMINATE THE USE OF PUBLIC FUNDS FOR THEIR CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION, CONSERVE TAX DOLLARS AND ALSO BRING ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEEDED TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE SOONER THAN WOULD BE POSSIBLE IF EXCLUSIVELY PUBLIC FUNDING NEEDED TO BE BUDGETED FOR THE FACILITIES.

In the case of the New Haven parking garage, two private development proposals are being evaluated for the construction of a 1,000 space parking garage adjacent to Union Station in New Haven. Management of Union Station would also be incorporated into the contract with the developer. The combination of the parking fees and Union Station tenant rents will provide a revenue stream which will allow the private developer to build, operate and maintain the garage at greatly reduced, or possibly without any, expense to the State. Without such private participation, this needed parking facility would not be constructed for at least several more years, and would involve considerably greater public expense.

In its 1997 Annual Report (Recommendation # 10), the Commission called for the exploration of just such development partnerships as the New Haven proposal. In addition to the development of parking facilities, development rights at airport property or the sale of air rights over ConnDOT facilities may be able to be exchanged for the private construction of needed transportation infrastructure either adjacent to these areas or even at totally separate locations. The willingness of ConnDOT to explore and employ innovative development and financing arrangements is commended by the Commission. Additional future development proposals beyond the New Haven garage are eagerly anticipated. Expanded parking capacity at the Stamford Railroad station might be one of the more apparent possibilities for another public/private development partnership.