

# **PROFESSIONAL PROFILE**

FOR

**DONALD J. POLAND, MS, AICP**

PLANNER – URBAN GEOGRAPHER – COMMUNITY STRATEGIST

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# **DONALD J. POLAND, MS, AICP**

## **PLANNER – URBAN GEOGRAPHER – COMMUNITY STRATEGIST**

### **PROFESSIONAL BIOGRAPHY**

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Mr. Poland is a nationally recognized planning consultant and urban geographer with over fifteen years' experience in land use planning, neighborhood reinvestment, and executive level management. He has worked in public, private, and non-profit sectors as a municipal planning director, planning and development consultant, and as executive director/CEO of a non-profit neighborhood reinvestment corporation. In addition, Mr. Poland has extensive experience in public policy, government relations, advocacy, and lobbying at the state level of government.

Mr. Poland was the Executive Director/CEO for The Neighborhoods of Hartford, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, Mr. Poland had the exciting challenge of starting a company and building a successful neighborhood reinvestment organization implementing a "Healthy Neighborhoods" strategy. He is recognized as a leader and expert on neighborhood and housing issues and has written and self published a book on the Healthy Neighborhoods approach to neighborhood reinvestment.

Mr. Poland previously held the position of Director of Planning and Development for the Town of East Windsor. As Director, he reorganized the planning, zoning, wetlands, building, and economic development departments into one agency, facilitated the creation of the Town's Plan of Conservation & Development and drafted a comprehensive rewrite of the zoning regulations.

As a dedicated professional and leader, Mr. Poland is President of the CT Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA) and past Chairman of the CCAPA Government Relations Committee. Mr. Poland is a founding member, Secretary, and Executive Director for the Connecticut Partnership for Balanced Growth. He also serves on the Board of Trustees for the CT Trust for Historic Preservation.

Mr. Poland has established himself as a leader in planning and public policy. As Government Relations Chair for CCAPA he assisted the Legislature's Planning and Development Committee with bill screening and drafting legislation. Mr. Poland worked on APA's development of a smart growth policy guide and was a member of the National Delegates Assembly that adopted the APA Smart Growth Policy Guide. He also presented a lecture titled "Steering States Towards Smart Growth" at the APA national conference in Denver.

Mr. Poland earned a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in both Geography and Psychology, from Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) and studied at the University of Bolton, Bolton, England. He earned a Master of Science degree in Geography, concentrating in Planning, from CCSU, is a certified member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), and is a certified member of the Connecticut Association of Zoning Enforcement Officials (CZEO).

Mr. Poland has taught world regional geography as an adjunct lecturer at Saint Joseph College and teaches an introduction to geography and urban geography at Manchester Community College. Mr. Poland also teaches an introduction to planning at CCSU. He was awarded the Connecticut Homebuilders 2003 Outstanding Land Use Official Award and was recognized by the Hartford Business Journal as one of Hartford's Forty Under Forty business and community leaders (2004). Mr. Poland is a licensed private pilot and lives in the city of Hartford.

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE****Planning and Development Consultant**

CONNECTICUT PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, LLC

**2002 - Present**

HARTFORD, CT

*Responsibilities:* Provide planning, development, and neighborhood reinvestment consulting services to developers, government agencies, and non-profit organizations.

**Executive Director/CEO**

THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF HARTFORD, INC.

**2004 - 2008**

HARTFORD, CT

*Responsibilities:* Was charged with the organizational start up including securing insurance, hiring staff, developing employee policies, and developing and implementing a home improvement loan fund. Developed and implemented the "Hartford Model" for the "Healthy Neighborhoods" reinvestment strategy. Manage six staff, administered an \$850,000 annual budget, and implemented a \$750,000 loan fund. Additional responsibilities included fund raising, grant writing, and public/government relations.

**Director of Planning & Development**

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR

**2000 - 2004**

EAST WINDSOR, CT

*Responsibilities:* Administrate all planning, zoning and land use policies. Directed the Planning & Development Department. Provide administrative and technical support for the Planning & Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Economic Development Commission. Encouraged balanced development that met the town's needs.

**Associate Planner**

PLANIMETRICS - PLANNING, ZONING, &amp; DEVELOPMENT CONSULTING FIRM

**1998 - 2000**

AVON, CT

*Responsibilities:* Provided planning, zoning, and development consulting services to public agencies and private clients. Consulting services included zoning regulation updates, preparing Plans of Conservation and Development, and representing private clients for land use approvals.

**Zoning Enforcement Official**

TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD, INSPECTIONS &amp; PERMITS DEPARTMENT

**1996 - 1998**

EAST HARTFORD, CT

*Responsibilities:* Performed all functions related to zoning and code enforcement.

**Research Planner**

AMADON &amp; ASSOCIATES, INC.

**1994 - 1996**

HARTFORD, CT

*Responsibilities:* Managed Research/GIS Department and worked as staff planner.

**EDUCATION****Master of Science Degree, Geography**

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

Concentration: Urban and Regional Geography

**2000**

NEW BRITAIN, CT

**Bachelor of Arts Degree, Geography & Psychology**

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

Study Abroad: University of Bolton, Bolton, England (1992-1993)

Honors: Gamma Theta Upsilon - International Geographical Honors Society

**1995**

NEW BRITAIN, CT

**AFFILIATIONS**

American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP)

**1999**

American Planning Association (APA)

**1995**

Connecticut Chapter - American Planning Association (CCAPA)

**1995**

Connecticut Association of Zoning Enforcement Officials (CAZEO)

**1995**

Connecticut Partnership for Balanced Growth (CPBG)

**2003**

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation (CT Trust)

**2006**

**PROFESSIONAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT****Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association**

|                                |                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| President:                     | 2007 - Present |
| President Elect:               | 2006 - 2007    |
| Vice President (2 Terms):      | 2003 - 2006    |
| Government Relations Chairman: | 2001 - 2004    |

**Connecticut Partnership for Balanced Growth**

|                            |                |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| Secretary/Founding Member: | 2002 - Present |
|----------------------------|----------------|

**Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation**

|               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| Board Member: | 2006 - Present |
|---------------|----------------|

**American Planning Association**

|                             |                |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Chapter Presidents Council: | 2007 - Present |
| State Legislative Liaison:  | 2001 - 2005    |
| Chapter Delegates Assembly: | 2002 - 2003    |

**Planning Connecticut Political Action Committee (PAC)**

|                    |             |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Treasurer/Founder: | 2005 - 2006 |
|--------------------|-------------|

**Connecticut Association of Zoning Enforcement Officials**

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| Executive Board: | 1999 - 2004 |
|------------------|-------------|

**State Taskforce on Compliance with the Clean Air Act Amendments**

|         |             |
|---------|-------------|
| Member: | 2002 - 2006 |
|---------|-------------|

**Capitol Region Council of Governments**

|                                                                          |             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Policy Board, Transportation Committee, & Executive Committee Alternate: | 2000 - 2004 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

**Metro Hartford Alliance**

|                                      |                |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| Neighborhood Development Committee:  | 2004 - Present |
| Regional Economic Development Forum: | 2001 - 2004    |

**City of Hartford**

|                                  |             |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Historic Preservation Taskforce: | 2004 - 2006 |
|----------------------------------|-------------|

**Connecticut Trolley Museum**

|                    |             |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Board of Directors | 2001 - 2002 |
|--------------------|-------------|

**The Hartford Club**

|                        |             |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Food & Wine Committee: | 2004 - 2007 |
| Membership Committee:  | 2004 - 2005 |

**North Frog Hollow Neighborhood Revitalization Zone**

|                                     |                |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Board of Directors:                 | 2004 - 2007    |
| Neighborhood Development Committee: | 2003 - Present |

**Mortson Street/Putnam Heights Block Watch**

|                      |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
| Block Watch Captain: | 2004 - 2006 |
|----------------------|-------------|

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**PROFESSIONAL & PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS****The Hartford Business Journal – Forty Under Forty**

Greater Hartford's 40 Under Forty Award: 2004

**Homebuilders Association of Connecticut**

Outstanding Land Use Official Award: 2003

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**Education, Teaching & Training****Manchester Community College – Social Sciences Department**

Adjunct Lecturer – Introduction to Geography: 2006 - Present

**Saint Joseph College – Social Sciences Department**

Adjunct Lecturer – World Regional Geography: 2000 &amp; 2001

**Connecticut Association of Zoning Enforcement Officials**

Certification Program Instructor – Land Use Administration: 2003 - 2004

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**Freelance/Published Writing****Hartford Business Journal**

In Praise of Sprawl: 2007

Suburbanization, Not Sprawl: 2007

**The Hartford Courant – Place**

Smart Growth Strategy Must First Embrace Real Growth: 2008

Hartford's Bad Rep Is Bad Rap: 2006

Hartford Needs to Lighten Up: 2005

Six and the City: 2004

Building from Strength: 2004

Where Growth is Concerned, Denser May be Smarter:

2004

Betting the House: 2003

A Question of Character – Go With Building All Homes: 2003

**American Planning Association – Planning & Environmental Law Journal**

Kelo in Connecticut – Co-Author: 2005

**Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association – Planning Newsletter**

Book Review – The Complete Guide to Zoning, By Dwight Merriam: 2005

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**Radio/TV Appearances****HGTV – Restoring America & National Trust for Historic Preservation PSA**

Guest – Victorian Lady, Ashley Street Pride Block, NHI Healthy Neighborhoods:

2005

**WJMJ – Faith Works**

Guest – NHI Healthy Neighborhoods Program: 2005

**The Metro Hartford Alliance – Hartford's Rising Stars**

Guest – NHI Healthy Neighborhoods Program: 2004

**University of Hartford Radio – Housing Policy Program**

Guest – NHI Healthy Neighborhoods Program: 2004

**PUBLIC SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>UCONN Geography Department – Graduate Seminar, Storrs, CT</b><br>Guest Lecturer – Urban Sprawl and Suburbanization:                                                                                                                                                                                               | 2008                                 |
| <b>UCONN Geography Department – Introduction to Planning, Storrs, CT</b><br>Guest Lecturer – Planning Issues in Connecticut:                                                                                                                                                                                         | 2008                                 |
| <b>Community Builders Institute – Berlin, CT</b><br>Speaker – The Healthy Neighborhoods Approach to Neighborhood Reinvestment<br>2007                                                                                                                                                                                |                                      |
| <b>1000 Friends – Connecticut Smart Growth Conference, New Haven, CT</b><br>Speaker – Is it Sprawl or Suburbanization?                                                                                                                                                                                               | 2007                                 |
| <b>Clark University – Community Development Graduate Program – Worcester, MA</b><br>Guest Lecturer – Alternatives to Affordable Housing Production in Distressed Neighborhoods                                                                                                                                       | 2006                                 |
| <b>New England Chapter – National Community Development Association – Hartford, CT</b><br>Speaker – NHI’s Healthy Neighborhoods Strategy:                                                                                                                                                                            | 2006                                 |
| <b>Southern New England Planning Conference (CT, MA, RI) – New Haven, CT</b><br>Speaker – NHI’s Healthy Neighborhoods Strategy:                                                                                                                                                                                      | 2006                                 |
| <b>The Community Development Network National Conference – Baltimore, MD</b><br>Speaker – NHI’s Healthy Neighborhoods Strategy:                                                                                                                                                                                      | 2005 & 2006                          |
| <b>The Connecticut Housing Coalition – Housing Forum</b><br>Panelist – Neighborhood Reinvestment – Hartford Case Study:<br>2005<br>Panelist – A Tale of Two Cities, Hartford & Stamford:<br>2004                                                                                                                     |                                      |
| <b>CCAPA, HBA, &amp; CPBG – Land Use Symposium</b><br>Moderator – Land Use & Municipal Fiscal Impacts:                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 2005                                 |
| <b>Connecticut Bar Association – Real Estate Section</b><br>Presentation – Smart Growth in Connecticut:<br>2004                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                      |
| <b>Connecticut Bar Association – Planning &amp; Zoning Section</b><br>Presentation – Legislative Issues:                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 2002 - 2008                          |
| <b>Connecticut Association of Zoning Enforcement Officials</b><br>Presentation – Neighborhoods and the Role of Zoning Enforcement:<br>Presentation – Flexible Zoning Techniques:<br>Presentation – Drafting Zoning Regulations:<br>Panel Member – Accessory Structures & Uses:<br>Presentation – Lot Size & Density: | 2007<br>2002<br>2001<br>2000<br>1999 |
| <b>Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association</b><br>Presentation – Smart Growth in Connecticut:<br>2003<br>Presentation – Legislative Review:                                                                                                                                                         | 2002 - 2005                          |
| <b>Center Edge Coalition</b><br>Town of Ellington – Fiscal Disparities & Growth Management:<br>Panel Member – Growing Smart in Connecticut:                                                                                                                                                                          | 2004<br>2003                         |

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Homebuilders Association of Connecticut – Developers Council</b>                 |             |
| Smart Growth & Development in Connecticut:                                          | 2002        |
| Working With Planners/Mock Hearing:                                                 | 2003        |
| <b>Connecticut Community Development Association</b>                                |             |
| Presentation – CCAPA Legislative Issues:                                            | 2002 - 2004 |
| <b>American Planning Association – Legislative Conference (Washington D.C.)</b>     |             |
| Presentation – The Connecticut Legislative Story:                                   | 2003        |
| <b>American Planning Association – National Conference (Denver, CO)</b>             |             |
| Panelist – Steering States Towards Smart Growth:                                    | 2003        |
| <b>Metro Hartford Alliance- Neighborhood Development Committee</b>                  |             |
| NHI Healthy Neighborhoods Program:                                                  | 2004        |
| <b>The Greater Hartford Real Estate Exchange</b>                                    |             |
| Panelist – Achieving Balanced Growth in Connecticut:                                |             |
| 2003                                                                                |             |
| <b>Connecticut Business &amp; Industry Association – Connecticut Economic Forum</b> |             |
| Panelist – Achieving Balanced Growth in Connecticut:                                |             |
| 2003                                                                                |             |
| <b>Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association</b>                     |             |
| Presentation – Smart Growth in Connecticut:                                         |             |
| 2003                                                                                |             |
| Presentation – Legislative Review:                                                  | 2002 - 2004 |
| <b>Capitol Region Council of Governments – Housing Committee</b>                    |             |
| NHI Healthy Neighborhoods Program:                                                  | 2004        |
| <b>Metro Hartford Alliance- Neighborhood Development Committee</b>                  |             |
| NHI Healthy Neighborhoods Program:                                                  | 2004        |
| <b>The Greater Hartford Real Estate Exchange</b>                                    |             |
| Panelist – Achieving Balanced Growth in Connecticut:                                |             |
| 2003                                                                                |             |
| <b>Connecticut Business &amp; Industry Association – Connecticut Economic Forum</b> |             |
| Panelist – Achieving Balanced Growth in Connecticut:                                |             |
| 2003                                                                                |             |
| <b>The City of Hartford – Public Library Community Conversations</b>                |             |
| Panelist – Adriens Landing – Impact on Hartford’s Neighborhoods:                    | 2004        |
| <b>East Windsor – Board of Education Community Conversations</b>                    |             |
| Presentation – Planning for Future Development:                                     | 2000        |
| <b>East Windsor Chamber of Commerce</b>                                             |             |
| Presentation – East Windsor Plan of Conservation & Development:                     | 2003        |
| Presentation – East Windsor Development:                                            | 2002        |
| Presentation – East Windsor Economic Development Opportunities:                     | 2001        |

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**NON-PROFIT & ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

Mr. Poland has significant experience in the management and operation of not-for-profit organizations. As the first Executive Director/CEO for the Neighborhoods of Hartford, Inc. he built the organization from the ground up and enhanced his skills in the following areas:

**Board Development & Management**

Mr. Poland has developed and maintained an effective working relationship with the NHI Board. During his tenure he implemented a board member orientation program and a board committee structure.

**Staff Development & Management**

Mr. Poland hired all of NHI's staff and assembled a successful team to implement NHI's programs and projects. During Mr. Poland's management of NHI only one staff person moved on from NHI for other employment. Mr. Poland's leadership and management skills provided NHI's Outreach Staff with the skills, resources, and tools they needed to make this program successful.

**Organizational Administration**

Mr. Poland is a hands-on manager and leader. At NHI, he managed the day-to-day operations, and the implementation strategy for "Healthy Neighborhoods," and he ensured that the organization (including the Board) remained focused on NHI's mission, objectives, and vision.

**Budget & Revenue Development**

Mr. Poland managed annually, a \$500,000 general operations budget, \$150,000 neighborhood program budget, a \$750,000 revolving loan fund, and \$1 million of CDBG funds. Mr. Poland was responsible for all grant writing and fund raising and successfully secured over \$1.6 million in funding from grant writing. Mr. Poland also played a critical leadership role in managing NHI through difficult times when grants and donations were limited and NHI needed to reduce spending and streamline its budget. NHI's financial audits were all successful and demonstrate Mr. Poland's fiscal responsibility.

**Competency in Financial Packaging**

Mr. Poland has successfully packaged the finances required for implementation of each of NHI's program areas, projects, and loans.

**Project Management**

Each of NHI's program areas (neighborhood projects, loans and construction/rehab, and design services) required significant project management skills and abilities. Mr. Poland designed, developed, implemented, and facilitated each of these programs and specific projects within them.

**Non-Profit Real Estate Lending**

Mr. Poland designed, developed, and implemented NHI's Home Improvement Loan Fund. This included the design of the loan product and lending policies, the development of the application process and contracting for underwriting services, and implementing the program and managing the day-to-day activities and portfolio of loans. Mr. Poland closed over 38 loans totaling more than \$750,000.

**Government & Public Relations**

Mr. Poland was the spokesman for NHI and responsible for developing and maintaining positive relationships with government agencies, funders, the corporate community, other non-profits, neighborhood residents, and the media. He was very successful in these responsibilities and maintained a positive image for NHI.