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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Second Annual Danbury Project Homeless Connect to Convene
More than 50 Human Services Agencies on One Day in One Place**
Will Provide Dozens of Services to Homeless

DANBURY, CT (November 20, 2008) – The 2nd annual Danbury Project Homeless Connect, a one-day, community-wide event to deliver services for people who are homeless or in danger of becoming homeless, will take place on Wednesday, December 3rd from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Elks Lodge grand hall on Main Street.

More than 50 human services agencies from around greater Danbury will participate in the event, offering services such as medical referrals, flu shots, and eye & dental exams. Services will also include counseling on housing, employment, legal issues, education, veterans' services, benefits, mental health, and much more. An Opening Kickoff will take place at 9:30 a.m., and will be attended by Mayor Mark D. Boughton and local & state representatives.

The event is being planned through the greater Danbury Continuum of Care in conjunction with the City of Danbury's Housing Partnership (DHP).

Milena Sangut, Assistant Director of the Greater Western Connecticut Mental Health Network, Danbury Office, is heading it up. "The response from the area's human services agencies and businesses has been even greater than last year," said Ms. Sangut. "We're looking forward to once again having so many of these services in one place for a day. It will go a long way toward showing people who are homeless in our community that we truly care, and that we can help."

Last year's Project Homeless Connect included more than fifty-five agencies providing a wide variety of services, over thirty-five volunteers assisting for the day and 27 organizations and individuals who contributed funding, goods or services to run the event. Major sponsors in 2007 included the United Way of Western Connecticut, the Danbury Elks Lodge and the Lions Club of Danbury. At the end of the day, 82 people were linked with services, housing or other assistance.

A major sponsor this year will be the City of Danbury, which received \$5,000 in CDBG funding for the event. Other sponsors include the Danbury Elks Lodge, The Bridge, the Non-Profit Rental Housing Corporation, Macerich Corporation, United Way of Western Connecticut, Walsh

Catering, Webster Bank and the Danbury Housing Partnership.

The December 3rd event will continue to focus on a goal set forth in Mayor Boughton's 10-year plan to end homelessness. The Danbury Housing Partnership, a group appointed by the Mayor to move his plan forward, has again demonstrated strong support. "An event like this can contribute to the success of our plan to end homelessness, especially if it happens annually and builds year-to-year," said Mark Nolan, Co-chair of the Danbury Housing Partnership. "As we've seen from recent reports on homelessness, it is a *real* thing that is touching more people, many of whom would never have dreamed that they would be in this situation."

The Project Homeless Connect Planning Workgroup would welcome volunteers who would like to help with the event. The Workgroup would also welcome contributions of funding or goods and services from businesses, organizations or individuals. Among items needed are food, coats, socks, gloves, phone cards and other items to be provided for our guests. Anyone interested in volunteering or contributing to Project Homeless Connect is encouraged to call 778-1640.

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THE DANBURY HOUSING PARTNERSHIP is a group of local experts on housing and social issues appointed by Danbury Mayor Mark Boughton to move forward on the city's 10-year plan to end homelessness. Mark Nolan, President of Nolan Enterprises, and Carolyn Sistrunk, Executive Director of the Danbury Housing Authority, are Co chairs of the Partnership.

THE GREATER DANBURY CONTINUUM OF CARE is a collaborative group made of key people from the area's social service agencies, headed up by Milena Sangut, Assistant Director of the Greater Danbury Mental Health Authority.

PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT (PHC) originated in San Francisco in October 2004 and has been identified by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) as "an innovation that mobilizes civic will to end homelessness." According to information at the USICH website, communities replicate this model to move people more quickly toward housing and stability and to help further the goals of their 10-Year Plans to end homelessness.

PHC is implemented in more than 100 cities across the United States as well as Canada, Puerto Rico and Australia. Every other month over 1000 community volunteers partner with city government, non-profits and the private sector to provide a one-stop shop of health and human services for homeless San Franciscans. Services include medical, mental health, substance abuse, housing, dental, benefits, legal, free eyeglasses, California ID, food, clothing, wheelchair repair and more. The goal of PHC is to provide easy access to services that support the transition of the City's homeless off the streets and into housing.