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### **LEGO Legacy Represents Rare Opportunity in New England**

*By TJ Sullivan / [www.TJSullivanLA.com](http://www.TJSullivanLA.com)*

When children's toy manufacturer LEGO Systems Inc. first arrived in the town of Enfield, Connecticut, in the mid 1970s, it had big plans for the Hartford bedroom community of 46,000.

LEGO, whose Danish name translates as "play well," not only proposed a six-phase, 500,000-square-foot project, it also expressed interest in expanding by another 160,000 square feet after that (plans that ultimately more than doubled in size).

Despite the potentially daunting magnitude, town approval was swift by any measure. Less than a year after the start of the site selection process, LEGO held groundbreaking ceremonies. A year after that, the first phase — a warehouse and distribution center — was ready for occupancy.

A great deal has changed since then. Nearby Hartford's population, for example, has dropped by more than 20 percent since 1970, but Enfield remains a community of about 46,000, as well as a standout for its appreciation of manufacturing jobs and its abundance of skilled workers

Enfield has endured the same challenges as many American communities in the past decade, some of the most significant of which have been the result of major changes within LEGO Group.

Five years ago, LEGO Group initiated a seven-year strategy to rebuild its company and revitalize its brand, a move that required the relocation of existing production sites. That meant a reduced presence in Enfield, and on the sizable campus the company built there.

As a result, Enfield now represents a rare opportunity, both because of the town's enviable proximity to resources and markets, and due to the characteristics that make the property unlike any other.

The distribution center, for instance, features one of the highest clearances in the region — 48-foot ceilings — which made it possible for the toy maker to stack 40,000 pallets at one time, utilizing much of the 20 million cubic feet of space.

Of the available space, the bulk is prime warehouse and distribution space, which besides the high ceilings boasts 56 dock doors, as well as easy access to Interstate-91 and Bradley International Airport in nearby Windsor Locks, Connecticut.

Among the attributes highlighted by listing agent Sean Duffy is its capacity for automated material handling systems. Indeed, LEGO was one of the first companies of its size to use

computer-assisted, wire-guided turret trucks to automatically unload cargo and to track its location on site.

“The distribution center is among the cleanest and newest in New England,” says Duffy, a salesperson with Cushman & Wakefield of Connecticut, Inc., in Hartford. “The height of the distribution center is double that of almost every other warehouse in New England.”

LEGO Group continues to maintain a presence on the campus, not simply in the offices it occupies, but in the architecture and art. Beside the warehouse, for example, sits a 30-foot-long Lego-brick model of the US Capitol.

“People who worked for LEGO recall it with great affection,” says Raymond L. Warren, director of the Town of Enfield Economic Development Department. “They were a wonderful employer.”

Looking to the future, Warren asserts that the town is eager to see the campus rejuvenated by the presence of new and different businesses.

“It’s just such a tremendous facility, such a great corporate campus,” he says. “It offers a lot of opportunity for any number of companies.”

Warren says the town remains committed to quickly approving new projects, same as when LEGO’s plans were approved 35 years ago.

“What we’ve tried to do here is to reduce the risk,” says Warren. “A lot of companies just have to make a decision very, very quickly and cannot tolerate elongated approval procedures. We work hard to make sure that projects get approved in as expeditious a process as possible.”

The distribution building is designed to accommodate more than 86,000 pallet positions, just under half of which are already in place. Moreover, it features expandable trailer storage areas.

“This is a tremendous space, exceptional architecture in a prime location with a highly skilled workforce,” says Michael Hackman, founder and Chief Executive Officer of Hackman Capital Partners, LLC, one of the ultimate investors in a joint venture which recently acquired the property from LEGO. “This site is one of the most cost-effective in most of the country, and certainly unmatched in the Northeast.”

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Enfield Business Park ([www.enfield-businesspark.com](http://www.enfield-businesspark.com)) is a joint venture among entities formed by KBS Real Estate Investment Trust (KBS REIT) ([www.kbsreit.com](http://www.kbsreit.com)), Hackman Capital Partners ([www.hackmancapital.com](http://www.hackmancapital.com)) and Calare Properties ([www.calare.com](http://www.calare.com)). Enfield Business Park is currently leasing space at 300 Shaker Road and 555 Taylor Road in Enfield, CT. For leasing information, visit [www.enfield-businesspark.com](http://www.enfield-businesspark.com) or call Cushman & Wakefield at (800) 249-0900.