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## Groton and New London Focus on Thames River for Development Opportunities

New London and Groton are two cities (and a town) connected by a river.

The Chamber welcomed leaders from New London and the town and city of Groton to provide updates at a State of the Thames River Region on July 19, appropriately held at the riverfront Submarine Force Library and Museum. Linked rather than separated by the 4,000-foot wide river, these municipalities are looking to make the most of their waterfront locations.

With a grant from Thames River Innovation Place, New London and the City of Groton engaged Ninigret Partners to conduct the Thames River Reconnection study, analyzing redevelopment opportunities. City of Groton Mayor Keith Hedrick stated their goal coming out of the study is to create a walkable, mixed-use neighborhood on Thames Street and Bridge Street that embraces the city's history and waterfront. "Three-quarters of the city of Groton is surrounded by water. I think we underutilize that," said Hedrick.



*Groton and New London are building economic bridges with riverfront development.*

To promote redevelopment and growth, the city's focus is on creating business opportunities, streamlining regulatory processes, promoting community improvements, and forecasting transportation needs as Electric Boat continues to grow and ThayerMahan looks to develop Groton Heights School. There is a prospective buyer for the Garbo Lobster facility and Mystic Oyster Company is expanding its Noank operation into the city, leading Hedrick to

solicit restaurateurs for a seafood farm-to-table concept.

On the other side of the river, New London Mayor Michael Passero focused on housing development and transportation as interest in urban lifestyle is on the rise.

New London offers a hub of transportation and city amenities and beautiful open spaces

*Continued on page 3*

## Integrated Approach Reflected in Transportation Update



*DOT Commissioner Joseph Giuliatti*

Albeit a cheeky title, the Chamber's By Land, By Sea, By Air: Transportation Update at our July Business Breakfast described the multi-faceted approach being applied to pressing transportation issues in Connecticut. Churchill's marshalling the troops in a coordinated effort to attack the problem on all fronts seemed even more apt after

hearing from representatives from the Department of Transportation, Connecticut Airport Authority and the Connecticut Port Authority.

The overarching theme is creating a seamless experience for multimodal travel in Connecticut. The vision is far-reaching, but some practical steps in that direction are underway. DOT Commissioner Joseph Giuliatti began by assuring the audience of local business owners, "The governor is fully invested in this area of the state." In a changing landscape of commuting patterns and lifestyles, the goal is connecting rails, seaports, and airlines logically to provide alternatives to the congested roadways for people and cargo.

The vision for intermodal travel is embodied in the \$210 million ground transportation center being built at Bradley Airport. It

creates an easy transition from plane to rental car or bus. A rapid transit bus service to Windsor Locks is the first step in making the case for a light rail connected to Windsor Locks train service.

Groton-New London Airport is a focus of the Connecticut Airport Authority as they work to restore commercial service, which ended in 2004. CAA Executive Director Kevin Dillon encouraged businesses to share annual travel expenditures through a survey being conducted by the Chamber. "That information is invaluable to me as I go out and interact with airlines. They really crave that level of data, and it's that data that they will be making decisions on," said Dillon. With limited runway length, he said good fits would be direct service to Washington D.C. and service to a major airline hub.

*Continued on page 5*

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actikare.com/Norwich

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80 Broadway, Norwich | 860.859.5366 | cafeotis.com

**Communications Plus LLC**

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84 Salem Turnpike, Norwich | 860.886.4408  
commplus.org

**Connecticut Coastal Academy**

A non-profit, private special education program that recognizes the gifts of people with physical, intellectual, social/emotional and learning differences.  
192 Westbrook Road, Essex | 860.304.9303  
ctcoastalacademy.org

**Crocker House Ballroom**

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35 Union Street, New London | 860.444.6464

**Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation**

The members of the Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation, pledge to protect our sovereignty, conserve and develop our tribal resources and promote the self-sufficiency of our people and our descendants.  
P.O. Box 208, North Stonington | 860.535.1868  
Easternpequottribalnation.com

**FamilyWise Behavior Solutions**

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FamilyWise.biz

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PO Box 310, Hopkinton, RI | 860.599.2559  
fieldsofdreamslandscaping.com

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Crystal Mall, Waterford | 860.437.0133 | jjill.com

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7 Hurlbutt Road, Gales Ferry | 860.303.6700  
jacscleaningservice.com

**Jake's Diner on State Street**

Locally owned family restaurant, serving breakfast favorites, fresh pressed burgers, and home cooked comfort foods every day for breakfast and lunch.  
138 State Street, New London | 860.574.9310

**Maxim Skin, LLC**

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blazinbbqnorwich.com

**Westerly Education Center**

A public-private collaboration designed to bring together higher education, business, industry, and community partners to provide high-quality educational programs to meet projected workforce growth in the region.  
23 Friendship Street, Westerly, RI | 401.584.4933  
westerlyedcenter.org

## MEMBER NEWS

**Silver / Petrucelli + Associates Welcomes New Staff**

Silver / Petrucelli + Associates (S/P+A) has announced that three new designers have recently joined the firm. S/P+A welcomes James Paul Dixon, RA, LEED AP as senior architect, Jennifer Lipset, NCIDQ as interior designer, and Humza Afzal as design professional.

Dixon brings nearly 15 years of design experience throughout southeastern Connecticut and will manage the firm's New London office. He is a technically skilled architect and is active with local civic and business organizations in the area. James is a former adjunct professor at Connecticut College where he taught architectural studies and AutoCAD. He earned a Master of Architecture from Roger Williams University.

Lipset began her 20-year career as a graphic designer and transitioned her eye for visual presentation to interior design with corporate and residential design firms in Fairfield county. Her skill set includes space planning, finish selection, millwork design and detailing, FF&E selection, and specifications. Jennifer attended Syracuse University and earned a Certificate in Interior Design from Fairfield University.

Afzal brings design experience at both architecture and M/E/P firms giving him the flexibility to work on the full breadth of S/P+A projects; wherever he may be needed most. His technical skills include concept development through FF&E using AutoCad and Revit design softwares. Humza earned a Bachelor of Interior Architecture from Boston Architectural College.

**About Silver / Petrucelli + Associates**

Silver / Petrucelli + Associates provides sustainable, creative design solutions for financial, commercial, industrial, educational, municipal, and institutional clients throughout New England. Visit us at silverpetrucelli.com.

**Eastern Connecticut Leadership Seeking Service Project**

The Chamber is inviting member nonprofits to apply to be the beneficiary of our Leadership Program capstone community service project. As part of the two-year leadership program, participants work together to raise funds and complete a

service project in the region. Projects have included building a large shed and filling it with equipment for The Arc Eastern Connecticut's client-run microbusiness and refurbishing community spaces at Madonna Place in Norwich. Class of 2020

is celebrating an outdoor renovation at The Light House. Proposals will be accepted until September 2, 2019. Program participants will review and select one project from the proposals received. To learn more and apply, visit ChamberECT.com/service-project.

# Thames River Innovation Place Welcomes New Executive Director

Growing things takes water. There was plenty of water when Liz Pasqualini's career in leading a nonprofit sprouted. A rainstorm turned flood hit in 2010, just four days after she assumed the role of interim Executive Director for the Jonnycake Center in Westerly. The dams in the Pawcatuck River were overwhelmed and the water rose. With five-feet of water in the basement, no power and no refrigeration, the Center handled their own crisis as well as helping their clients who were also suffering the effects of the flood, coordinating efforts from under tents in the parking lot.

"My board said instead of a trial by fire, I had a trial by flood," said Pasqualini.

She went on to lead the human services organization for eight years, through a period of unanticipated growth during the 2008 financial crisis to the successful transition of the organization's business model to a stronger foundation. Staffing increased from 12 to 35, and the annual budget, from \$400,000 to \$1.3 million. Transforming the thrift store from a nonprofit function to a profitable business, she secured a stable funding source covering up to 90% of the organization's administrative and overhead costs, leaving them room to fundraise for specific programs.

Pasqualini is bringing her talents to the banks of another river as the new executive director of Thames River Innovation Place. Appointed in late May after earning her master's in public administration from Brown University, this southeastern Connecticut native is excited to be part of growing businesses and nurturing innovation in New London and Groton.

Thames River Innovation Place, a designation from CTNext, is an alliance of public, private, and nonprofit sectors working together to tap industries, businesses, and ideas that form the region's future growth and provide some of the seed money. Thames River Innovation Place is working with RD86 Space, a food incubator in New London. This test kitchen gives entrepreneurs the room to learn, explore, and establish a following before launching a restaurant or other food enterprise—a business that typically requires two years' capital before becoming self-sustaining.

Thames River Innovation Place is looking to support up-and-coming entrepreneurs. She puts it this way, if you are a startup looking to scale up, a business looking to expand or venture into new territory, a company ready to engage in a public-private partnership, or a mentor looking to guide someone in this process—she would like to talk to you.

She sees the value of reaching out and bringing partners together. In Westerly, she engaged closely with nonprofits in her own sector, developing mutually beneficial programs, and she looked outside the regular channels to find ways to connect with the community in new ways.

"I think it's exciting the things that can happen when you bring a diverse group of people to the table," said Pasqualini.

Pasqualini thinks broadly about who these partners can be and the role Thames River Innovation Place can play in connecting

provide the city housing experience sought by employees moving in the region while meeting the needs of a broad spectrum of economic diversity.

Groton Town Manager John Burk reported on redevelopment efforts that include economic development tools such as marketing, opportunity zones, zoning regulation reviews and redevelopment of existing buildings. Exploremoregroton.com markets the town to visitors and serves prospective businesses, outlining incentives and business assistance



*Liz Pasqualini, Executive Director, Thames River Innovation Place*

people to opportunities. Thames River Innovation Place, heading into their third year of funding projects, is able to engage with small businesses who need support for unique programs, or the organization can be a conduit to make connections with other entities who can provide support like the Chamber or Women's Business Development Center.

"It's important to think of innovation as something that doesn't have to happen inside a lab or behind a computer. It can happen in so many different places," said Pasqualini.

Leveraging local and state resources, Pasqualini will be helping innovation take root in Groton and New London and grow along the banks of the Thames River.

To learn more about Thames River Innovation Place or to reach out to Executive Director Liz Pasqualini, visit [thamesriverinnovation.org](http://thamesriverinnovation.org) or call 860-383-5939.

## Thames River Development Opportunities (Continued from front page)

within a short bike or Uber ride. Facilitating people's desire to rely less on cars, the city is investigating a micro transit system based on systems piloted in Norwalk and Stonington.

Housing, said Passero, is the story of New London for the past two years: "Our goal is to become more densely populated because that's where we believe our success is." New London is working with developers to

and providing links to departments and available real estate.

Thames River Innovation Place Executive Director Liz Pasqualini contributed to the regional conversation. Joining the nonprofit in late May, Pasqualini provided updates on the projects underway: Community Concierge, RD86 cultivator kitchen, the Naval Maritime Consortium, and roll out of funded projects in the program's third year.

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### Transportation Update (Continued from front page)

The airports are seen as integral to economic growth in the state. Currently, they are providing significant economic impact and jobs. Dillon stated that Bradley has seen a 30% increase in passenger travel, handling 7 million passengers last year, and he believes that could increase to 10 million annually. The connection with Aer Lingus has been valuable for international travel, and work on expanding nonstop flights is focusing on Seattle, a strong business destination for our aerospace and tech industry.

Opportunity and innovation are the guiding principles for the Connecticut Port Authority, presented by Bonnie Reemsnyder, Old Lyme First Selectwoman and CPA chair. Adopting a maritime strategic plan in 2018, the CPA seeks to maximize the use of the state's three deep water ports and plentiful small harbors—on the coast and inland—to move people and cargo and alleviate pressure on congested highways.

Innovation is happening in Norwalk where produce from 3,000 farms makes its way to Long Island via boat across the Sound. New London's State Pier will be the beneficiary of \$93 million in investment under a deal being negotiated that equips it for heavy lift operations, facilitating the wind power project and future work. Dredging, identified as essential by the CPA in a number of locations, will make New Haven harbor safer and able to handle more cargo. Shipping cargo from Connecticut ports to New York and Boston can have a measurable impact on traffic on the I-95 corridor.

The current administration acknowledges the need for infrastructure improvements as an essential component of economic growth. Giulietti is looking to leverage federal funds by showing a clear ROI for projects and emphasized the value of regional solutions.

Giulietti addressed the current infrastructure and budget challenges facing the DOT. Of 5000 bridges in the state, 300 are in poor repair and highways designed 50 years ago are not equipped to handle today's traffic loads. With 40% of the budget dedicated to debt repayment and revenue growth falling behind bonding costs, the need for a new revenue stream is essential to future bonding, while he was unable to say if tolling in some form would be part of the solution.

A question on climate change impacts led Giulietti to confirm the profound challenge rising waters present. He said that development around railroad tracks makes moving them difficult. but work and planning is taking into account 50 year projections. He added that portions of I-95 are also in danger from the effects of climate change.

## Nation needs a sensible approach to immigration

Op Ed by Tony Sheridan, President & CEO  
Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut

*Originally published July 21 in The Day.*

In recent weeks, immigration has been at the center of our national conversation. The essential role immigrants play in our country and economy, however, is not receiving the attention it deserves in this vital debate. We may not perceive the impact of this issue in eastern Connecticut, but I would like to explain why this debate is important to our region and our state.

Recently, the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut joined 59 chambers from across the country to sign a letter to congressional leadership in support of working in a bipartisan fashion to reach a sensible solution for Dreamers and those with temporary protected status.

The Dreamers are those young adults who, as children, were brought into the country outside the legal process. Those with

“It’s time we recognize the vital role that immigrants are currently playing in America’s economic future.”

temporary protected status are from certain designated countries who are given legal, but not permanent status in the United States because their native countries are affected by armed conflict or natural disaster.

The letter, sponsored by New American Economy (NAE), makes a compelling argument about how these long-term U.S. residents contribute to the economy and pay taxes, open businesses and create jobs, and add to a diverse and talented labor force. As a group they represent \$5.8 billion in spending power and over \$4 billion in tax revenue. Conversely, their deportation would cost taxpayers \$63 billion, as well as billions in future economic growth.

It’s time we recognize the vital role that immigrants are currently playing in America’s economic future. As U.S. birth rates decline, 48 percent of population growth in 2018 is attributable to immigrants, and as a nation we are becoming increasingly dependent



on immigrants to fill jobs and fund programs, including Social Security and Medicare, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

Immigrants are essential to economic growth as major contributors to the workforce. Immigrants represent 14 percent of the U.S. population, but started a quarter of all new businesses, reports *Time*. That 14 percent of population constitutes 16.9 percent of the workforce because immigrants are younger, balancing out the enormous wave of retiring Baby Boomers. A Brookings report puts the total annual contribution of foreign-born workers at \$2 trillion, or about 10 percent of the GDP.

Connecticut is tracking a population decline of 0.13 percent, but we are seeing a percentage of immigrants slightly higher than the national average, 14.7 percent. It’s important that we see the opportunity in these numbers, by creating a welcoming environment for immigrants looking to locate in Connecticut, particularly in eastern Connecticut, where we are trending below the state average at 7.1 percent, according to NAE.

Many of these immigrants bring youth and enthusiasm to a labor market eager to train workers in needed skills, while 17.9 percent hold bachelor’s degrees and 19.2 percent have advanced degrees.

When we as a region are facing challenges in meeting labor market demands, it is common sense to look objectively at the positive impact immigrants are making on the economy and labor force. We need to encourage elected officials to enact a fair and sensible immigration policy that allows us to benefit from the value immigrants bring our country and economy.

*Tony Sheridan is president and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut and a former first selectman of Waterford. He emigrated from Ireland at age 19.*

## Liberty Bank Foundation Seeks Willard M. McRae Community Diversity Award Nominations

Liberty Bank is soliciting nominations for the 2019 Willard M. McRae Community Diversity Award. This annual award is designed to recognize an individual who has made a significant and ongoing contribution to the cause of promoting and celebrating diversity, equity, and inclusion in the communities served by Liberty Bank.

The bank is looking to the public to nominate local residents who are leaders in building positive relationships between different people, whether those differences are of race, economic status, culture, religion, or any other aspect of diversity. Nomination information and a link to the online nomination form are available on the bank's web

site, [www.liberty-bank.com](http://www.liberty-bank.com), as well as the Liberty Bank Foundation web site, [www.LibertyBankFoundation.org](http://www.LibertyBankFoundation.org). Nominations must be received by Friday, September 6, to be considered. For more information about the award, call (860) 704-2181.

Introduced in 2000 as the Liberty Bank Community Diversity Award, the award was renamed in 2009 in honor of the late Willard McRae, past chairman of the Liberty Bank Board of Directors and a founding member of the Liberty Bank Foundation Board of Directors. A lifelong Middletown resident who passed away in early 2016, Mr. McRae was the co-founder of the Middlesex Coalition for Children, the Middlesex Child

and Adolescent Service System Program, and the Upward Bound program at Wesleyan University. Mr. McRae was known for his extraordinary commitment to equal access and opportunities for all, regardless of economic status, race, background, disability, or other factors. His contributions to children's mental health, education, and human services made a positive difference in the lives of thousands of people.

The 2019 award recipient was Chandler Howard, past president and CEO of Liberty Bank and the Liberty Bank Foundation. A list of other past recipients is available on the foundation web site.

## General Dynamics Awarded \$174 Million Contract for Submarine Work

The U.S. Navy awarded General Dynamics Electric Boat a \$174 million contract for nuclear-submarine work. Electric Boat is a wholly owned subsidiary of General Dynamics (NYSE: GD).

Under the terms of the contract, Electric Boat will provide design agent, planning yard, and engineering services, as well as technical support for active nuclear submarines and submersible systems. The contract could be worth more than \$1 billion over five years if all options are exercised and funded.

Seventy percent of the work will be performed at Groton; 13 percent at Kings Bay, Ga.; 10 percent at Bangor, Wash.; 3 percent at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; and 2 percent at Newport and Quonset Point, R.I. Work performed under this contract is expected to be completed by September 2023.

General Dynamics Electric Boat has established standards of excellence in the design, construction and lifecycle support of U.S. Navy submarines. In its position as an industry leader, Electric Boat remains

committed to applying its technical and business expertise to effectively manage the challenges of nuclear-submarine production. The company's three primary locations are in Groton and New London, Conn.; and Quonset Point, R.I. Its current workforce is approximately 17,000 employees.

More information about Electric Boat is available at [www.gdeb.com](http://www.gdeb.com).

For more information about General Dynamics, please visit [www.generaldynamics.com](http://www.generaldynamics.com).

## Chelsea Groton Foundation Awards Over \$182K in Grants to Area Organizations

The Chelsea Groton Foundation awarded \$182,654 in grants to 65 non-profit organizations from Connecticut and Rhode Island this spring. Inclusive of these donations, the Foundation has provided over \$3.4 million in total grants to the community since 1999. The Foundation reviews applications and awards grants two times per year.

"For 165 years, improving the quality of life in our community has been at the core of Chelsea Groton's values," said Michael Rauh, President and CEO of Chelsea Groton Bank. "Through the Foundation, we are able to support non-profits who play a critical role in our communities. These organizations work to provide education, alleviate hunger

and homelessness, improve healthcare, support economic growth, deliver arts and cultural experiences, and more. Our team is always honored to contribute to our shared community and during this, our 165th anniversary year, we are grateful to once again help worthy organizations get the funding they need for projects that will have a significant impact on those around us."

Spring grant awards included: \$7,500 to FRESH New London for the Edible New London program; \$5,000 to Operation Fuel for emergency energy assistance for New London County; \$5,000 to Westerly Area Rest Meals, Inc. for the Children's Summer Lunch Program and Anita's Kitchen; \$2,500 to Southeastern

Connecticut Enterprise Region for economic development strategy implementation; and \$1,500 to the Norwich Community Backpack Program to provide students with the supplies they need in order to be successful during the school year.

Each year, Chelsea Groton Bank and the Chelsea Groton Foundation support more than 200 local organizations through monetary gifts, grants, sponsorships, scholarships and employee volunteerism. More information, including a list of all spring grant recipients, is available at [chelseagroton.com/CGFoundation](http://chelseagroton.com/CGFoundation).

## 2019 Mohegan Wigwam Festival to be held August 17 & 18

The public is invited to join the Mohegan Tribe at their annual Mohegan Wigwam Festival at Fort Shantok, Village of Uncas, on Saturday, August 17 and Sunday, August 18 from 10 am to 7 pm.

Learn more about Mohegan culture and traditions including Native American crafts,

foods, dancing and drumming. The festival is open to all ages, is family-friendly and admission is free. No pets, please.

Parking is at Mohegan Sun's Thames Garage and shuttles will run throughout the day, each day (including for handicapped guests). There is no onsite parking available.

Learn more about the Mohegan Wigwam Festival at [www.mohegan.nsn.us/explore/heritage/2019wigwamfestival](http://www.mohegan.nsn.us/explore/heritage/2019wigwamfestival) or on Facebook at [facebook.com/themohegantribe](https://facebook.com/themohegantribe).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

<b>AUG 5</b>	<b>Ribbon Cutting: Vesta Salon</b> 4:30 - 6:30 pm   256 Boston Post Road, Waterford
<b>AUG 6</b>	<b>Business Before Hours and Ribbon Cutting with UCFS Healthcare</b> 7:45 am - 9:00 am   351 North Frontage Road, New London
<b>AUG 7</b>	<b>Business After Hours: The Spa at Norwich Inn</b> 5:30 - 7:30 pm   607 West Thames Street, Norwich
<b>AUG 8</b>	<b>Ribbon Cutting: Leadership Program Capstone Project for The Light House</b> 10:00 - 11:00 am   125 Shaw Street, New London
<b>AUG 15</b>	<b>Let's Go Local: Willimantic 3rd Thursday Streetfest</b> 6:00 - 9:00 pm   Main Street, Willimantic
<b>AUG 22</b>	<b>YPsocial at Hilton Mystic with Back-to-School Supply Drive</b> 5:30 - 7:30 pm   20 Coogan Boulevard, Mystic, CT
<b>SEPT 5</b>	<b>Business After Hours at Project O. w/ Fuss &amp; O'Neill and Robinson + Cole</b> 5:30 - 7:30 pm   1084 Shennecossett Road, Groton

Pre-registration is suggested for most events. Call (860) 701-9113 or visit ChamberECT.com to learn more about any event.

Cancellation Policy: Notice must be given at least three business days prior to event.

No-shows or those unable to cancel in time will be billed.



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SECWAC arranges 8-10 meetings within our annual speaker series between September and June; the meetings range in topic and are hosted at venues along the I-95 corridor, welcoming members and guests from Stonington to Old Saybrook, and beyond.

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**TUES., SEPTEMBER 17**

Gordon Chang, Journalist & Author  
"America's Grandest Wager: China"  
@ Crozier Student Center, Connecticut College



**WED., OCTOBER 2 — QUARTERLY COLLOQUIUM**

Emma Sky, Jackson Institute, Yale  
"In a Time of Monsters – A Middle East in Revolt"  
@ First Congregational Church of Old Lyme



**THURS., OCTOBER 24**

Stephen Flynn, Global Resilience Institute, Northeastern U.  
"Neutralizing the Politics of Fear: The Case for Bolstering Societal Resilience"  
@ First Congregational Church of Old Lyme

Explore future meeting speakers  
and topics at [SECWAC.ORG](http://SECWAC.ORG)

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