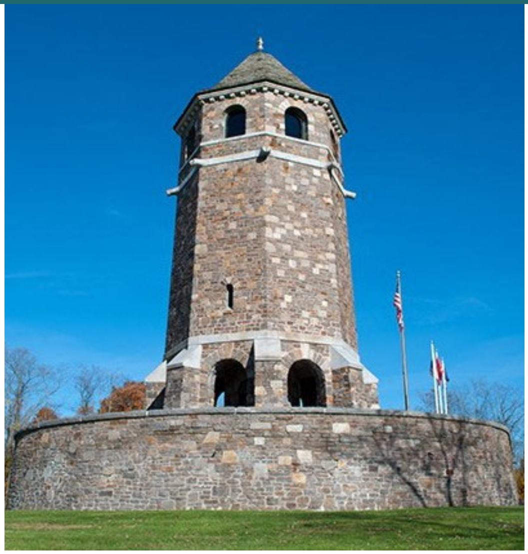
ACT GREATER HARTFORD

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Growth and Equity in the Capitol Region



2023

CRCOG
CAPITOL REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

METRO ★ HARTFORD ALLIANCE

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1 INTRODUCTION

A Boost of Confidence and the Start of Something Big

A five-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Hartford, Connecticut region was prepared. Titled *Metro Hartford Future, Accelerating Shared, and Sustained Economic Growth*, it portrayed the budding optimism of a community that would build its future on a foundation of inclusive economic growth.

At about the same time, two complementing urban development strategies were completed outlining ambitious visions to transform the City of Hartford and the surrounding region. It was the start of something big.

That was in 2019. One year later, the world's economy would come to a virtual standstill.

The CEDS strategy represented the collective efforts of the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), the MetroHartford Alliance (MHA), and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (HFPG). New leadership at the helm of the MHA and HFPG helped rally the region around a focused and actionable set of goals and strategies that it hoped would "truly move the needle on creating inclusive economic growth for the Hartford region."

Metro Hartford Future laid out three goals. They were to: a) educate, train, and retain talent - with a focus on underserved and underrepresented populations - to better meet the needs of the region's employers and to create jobs paying a family living wage; b) enhance the quality of place amenities throughout our region to retain and attract talent; and c) strengthen collaboration to support and promote the region's industry strengths. The operative word for the strategy was inclusive and the three words used to describe its goals were talent, invest, and brand.

Soon after the completion of the CEDS, the City of Hartford's Planning and Zoning Commission released City Plan Hartford, with a 2035 timeline, which included eight overall priorities, ten key recommendations, and ten transformative projects. Five action areas included in that plan were to realize a sustainable environment (Green), a more prosperous economy (Grow), a more equitable community (Live), more mobile transport (Move), and a more vibrant culture (Play.)

At the same time, a complementary initiative, several years in the making, was unveiled. Known as Hartford400, it involved widespread public input and was applauded as an ambitious vision and action plan to transform area highways and the riverfront by 2035, the year Hartford turns 400 years old. Hartford400 builds on the successes of an existing organization, iQuilt Partnership, which has worked with design professionals and hundreds of community groups, corporations, and individuals on projects that promote walking, culture, and innovation.

Metro Hartford Future, City Plan Hartford, and Hartford400 have much in common. They are all in alignment with their goals and objectives: to transform and position the city and its metropolitan area as a vibrant location in which to live and conduct business. These efforts generated enthusiasm and provided a much-needed boost of civic confidence.

Changes were also being made at the state government level. In early 2019, Capital Workforce Partners (CWP) established the

Capital Area Pipeline Partnership (CAPP) in response to the state's Apprenticeship Connecticut Initiative (ACI). That year, Governor Lamont established a revamped Governor's Workforce Council (GWC), which quickly began pursuing new and innovative initiatives. Also, in 2019 and into 2020, the Connecticut Economic Resource Center was transformed into AdvanceCT and began working closely with the GWC and the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD).

Together, these changes to the state's economic development infrastructure helped launch a number of new initiatives and placed a greater emphasis on workforce and talent development that directly related to *Metro Hartford Future*.

Tripped Up By a Global Pandemic

The pandemic threw a monkey wrench into everything. The region lost valuable early traction toward meeting its 2035 goals. Or did it?

In the two years that followed the onset of COVID-19, the state and region witnessed an influx of recovery-related assessments and new resources that slowly produced renewed, albeit cautious, civic resolve and understanding for tackling shared challenges.

In September of 2021, the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development and AdvanceCT produced *Connecticut's Economic Action Plan: Driving Inclusive Growth*. The plan included input from business, labor, government, higher education, and the community and was a key part of Governor Lamont's response plan for directing resources of the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

The Governor's plan centered on four familiar pillars: broadening the base of skilled workers, attracting and retaining residents in vibrant communities, supporting opportunities within targeted industries, and improving the business climate for startups and growing businesses.

The COVID-19 response and financial support from state and federal governments helped accelerate some parts of the city and regional strategies in ways known, specifically for federal infrastructure and monies for some public works projects.

Other issues, however, surfaced, such as weakening business resilience, remote work transitionary challenges, real estate vacancy rates, and inflationary price increases, which exacerbated ongoing issues like housing affordability, increasing crime, wealth gaps, and social inequities.

Given the known and unknown impacts of the pandemic, CRCOG (which also experienced a change in leadership in early 2020), successfully approached the U.S. Economic Development Administration for support in funding an updated CEDS. The stated purpose of the project was to reassess assumptions and build upon the 2019 CEDS and other city and regional plans with grounded data and focused input to develop a new, broad-based strategy focusing on:

- strategic situational assessment of the metropolitan region
- identification of a limited set of "game changer" initiatives
- organizational and partnership capacities that will be necessary to implement these initiatives

The updated CEDS would be designed to accelerate inclusive economic growth by raising incomes across the income spectrum with particular attention given to opportunities for engaging those who have often been left behind. The strategy would be actionable, specific, and focused with an emphasis on building upon the region's assets that hold the greatest promise for long-term change.

Guiding the planning and implementation is leadership from the MetroHartford Alliance, Hartford Foundation for Giving, and the Capitol Region Council of Governments, supported by a diverse and representative committee of public, private, and institutional stakeholders.

An Unyielding Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Civic, private, and public sector leaders throughout the Capitol Region are unified in their strong commitment to creating a fair and inclusive environment where everyone, regardless of their background, identity, or experiences, has an equal opportunity to succeed and thrive. This is more than just talk; it is a defining characteristic of the central Connecticut community.

The core principles for this CEDS are that diversity, equity, and inclusion must be integral to all strategic planning efforts, recommendations, and implementation actions.

With that in mind, DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) relates to every page of the report, as well as having its own section of targeted action strategies.

For clarity, the Hartford CEDS steering committee refers to diversity as the representation of a wide range of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences. It is not just about visible differences like race, ethnicity, or gender, but also includes diversity of thought, educational backgrounds, skills, and more. The committee knows that diversity is imperative for bringing needed fresh ideas, innovation, and creativity to the region. It fosters richer and more dynamic communities and work environments where people can learn from each other and make better decisions.

The committee views equity from an understanding that not everyone starts from the same place or has had the same opportunities in life. It is about acknowledging and addressing systemic barriers and biases that have historically disadvantaged certain groups. By promoting equity, the Capitol Region aims to level the playing field and ensure that everyone has access to the resources, support, and opportunities they need to succeed. This does not mean treating everyone the same but providing them with access to resources to succeed.

Inclusion is about creating a sense of belonging and actively involving people in the decision-making processes and culture of the Capitol Region. It's not just about having a diverse workforce, but also fostering stronger communities where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives. The steering committee understands that inclusive regions tend to be more innovative, productive, and better able to serve diverse needs.

These core principles are rooted in fairness, justice, and creating a positive environment for all. By embracing DEI, the Capitol Region can tap into the full potential of its workforce, foster stronger relationships, and better serve residents and communities.

The Capitol Region has been walking this talk and is not afraid to stumble and get back up. It's an ongoing journey that requires open dialogue, learning, and continuous improvement. For that reason, the effective implementation of this CEDS is based on firm commitments to create a more inclusive and equitable region where everyone can thrive. By doing so, the Capitol Region will become stronger, more resilient, and better positioned for long-term success.

DEI relates to every page of the report, as well as having its own section of targeted action strategies.

Kickstart Plans for Shared and Sustainable Economic Growth

The updated CEDS for 2023-2028 picks up on the inclusive themes of the prior city, regional, and statewide economic and workforce planning initiatives, noting that while some progress has been made, new challenges and more focus are needed in five areas. For each of these areas, a "game-changing" initiative is included.

The five priority areas of focus are:

1 | Adapt the physical environment to meet the current and future needs of businesses and residents.

Game-Changer: Develop a 360-degree regional future housing strategy that addresses supply, affordability, and availability to advance equitable, environmentally friendly, and healthy residential development.

2 | Break down barriers to encourage entrepreneurs and small businesses to take root and grow.

Game-Changer: Establish a networked navigation system for entrepreneurs and small businesses so that they can more easily access information and resources by location/distance, specific needs, target populations, business type (innovation-led, main street, second stage), growth stage, peer advisors, investment partners, and more.

3 | Give hyperfocus on existing businesses which includes addressing immediate workforce needs, nurturing young adults, attracting talent, supporting high-growth business owners, and implementing highly structured business expansion and retention programs.

Game-Changer: Conduct a national talent attraction campaign for hard-to-fill positions within target industries and provide workforce development programming for young adults as a key part of a business retention and expansion program.

4 | Provide intense, continued attention to economic inclusion, especially regarding neighborhood-based development and in fixing the "broken rung" of increasing workforce participation rates and providing workplace advancement opportunities for women and underrepresented employees.

Game-Changer: Conduct a 360-degree career pathways analysis and strategy for the region's economy. Identify barriers to entry and advancement along the career pathways for underrepresented and undersupported communities and develop a framework to break down these barriers.

5 | Restructure the organizational framework for success which centers on a highly-engaged Implementation Committee and hiring a highly talented manager to coordinate the implementation of the CEDS and serve as a catalyst for change by brokering collaborative relationships and driving the nuts and bolts of the Greater Hartford economic agenda.

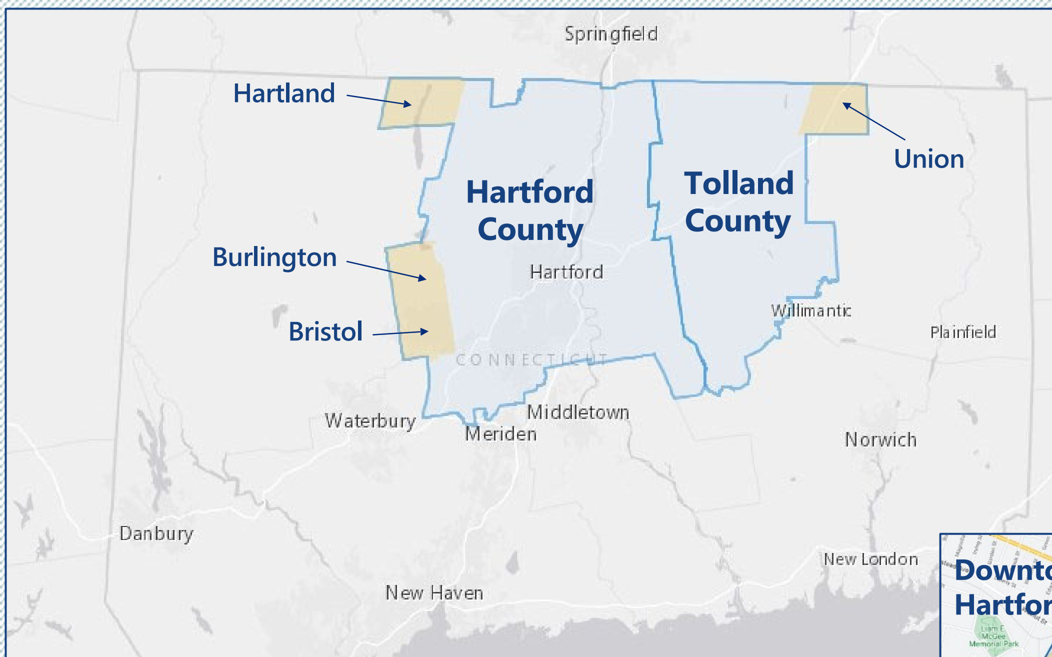
Game-Changer: Focus on getting things done by hiring an independent, highly skilled executive whose mission is to advance the goals and objectives of the CEDS and assist with the implementation of transformational initiatives.

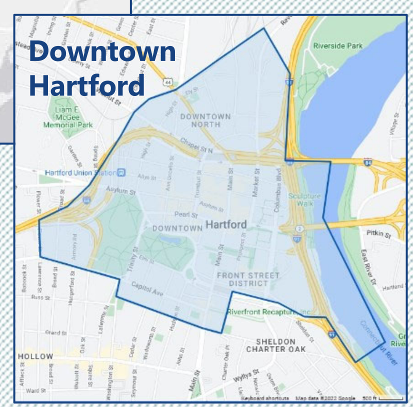
This updated CEDS begins and ends with one enduring truth: strategies are for naught if they cannot be embraced and executed.

The Hartford metropolitan area has historically proven itself reticent to making bold changes that cross jurisdictional boundaries. While this has helped preserve some quintessential family-oriented communities, continued resistance to new world realities will place all communities in extreme fiscal and social jeopardy and threaten the enviable, high quality of life that has always been a hallmark of Greater Hartford.

In response, this plan places a spotlight on hiring an extremely talented executive to work in a collaborative, cross-functional manner with the city and surrounding communities to help kickstart new programs and initiatives and help advance existing ones to realize the shared goals for inclusive growth and place the region once again among the nation's top locations for health, wellness, opportunity, and economic prosperity.

Regional Map





The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) serves 38 cities and towns in north-central Connecticut within Hartford County and Tolland County.

There are four municipalities within the two counties that are not within the CRCOG service area: City of Bristol, Town of Burlington, Town of Union, and Town of Hartland. Altogether, these four communities represent 7% of the total population in the combined Hartford County/Tolland County region of analysis.

Stakeholder Engagement

A wide variety of voices were heard to identify assets, challenges, and opportunities in the Capitol Region.

CEDS Update Committee

The Capitol Region Council of Governments, as the regional planning agency for Hartford and Tolland counties, assembled the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee or "CEDS Update Committee." This volunteer-staffed committee includes diverse regional representation, allowing for fair and equitable advocacy in the community and economic development planning process.

Interviews

One-on-one interviews were conducted with service providers working in the economic development, workforce development, and community development systems as well as with elected officials and others who were not able to attend the focus groups.

Industry Leaders Sub-Group

Local business leaders from the region's major employers – including advanced Manufacturing, Finance/Insurance, Healthcare, and Professional Services – served as a sounding board during the planning process. This group met at key points during the planning process to offer perspectives, vet potential solutions, and guide strategy development.

Business Leader Survey

A digital business survey was developed and provided to the Industry Leader Sub-Group. This survey was designed to be a conversation starter around what is and is not working in the region's economic development system.

Small Business Focus Groups

A series of small focus groups were conducted garnering input from about 20 small business owners and entrepreneurs from across the region. Most of the founders engaged were women and/or people of color. The focus groups provided individuals an opportunity to express their views of what it is like to start, manage, and grow a small business in the Capitol Region, as well as a chance to hear the perspectives of others.

2 CURRENT AND EMERGING TRENDS

The discovery phase of this strategic planning process included research and analysis of economic and demographic data combined with a robust stakeholder engagement process. Findings from this process that informed strategy development are summarized below.

Findings

1. Racial equity is improving in the Capitol Region, but there are significant areas for improvement.
2. The Capitol Region is struggling with resilience relating to the economy, infrastructure, housing, community capital, and institutions.
3. As older workers retire in large numbers, attracting and retaining young people will be critical to the health of the Capitol Region's workforce.
4. The office space sector is declining rapidly while housing costs threaten the residential sector.

What We Learned From the Data

Understanding the makeup of the community and the ways in which the population, economy, labor force, and real estate are changing is crucial in setting the stage for economic development strategy.

Attachment A of the CEDS contains the complete Regional Background Report, which is a comprehensive assessment of the region's demographics, economy, labor force, and real estate. It also includes an analysis of equity and inclusion, resiliency, and performance relative to peer metro areas.

What follows are the key takeaways from the data analysis used in strategy development.

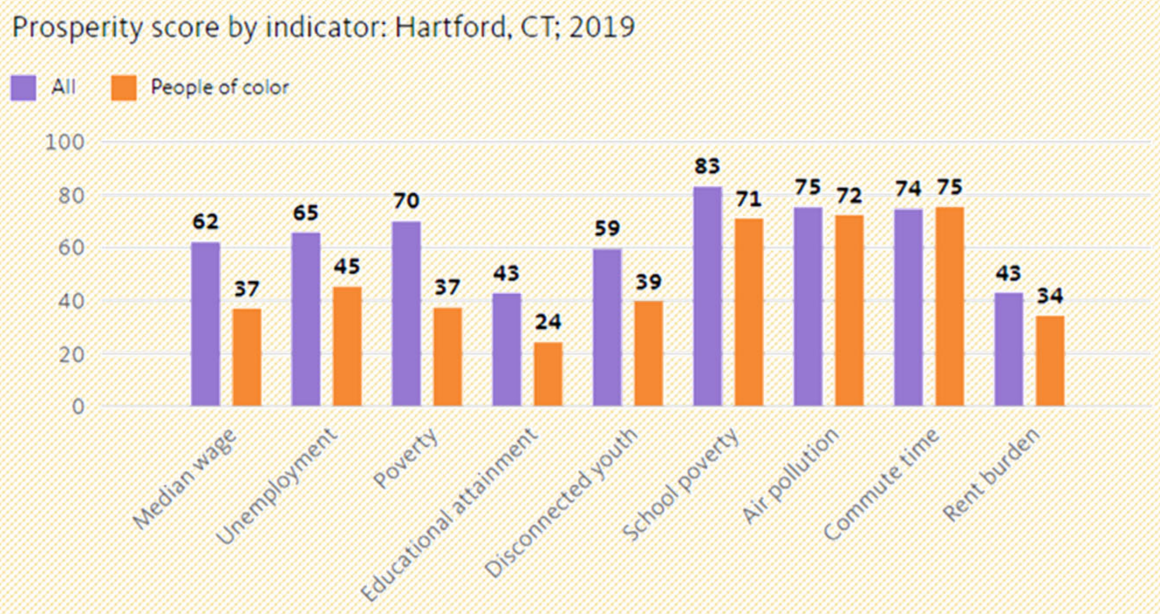
FINDING 1: Racial equity is improving in the Capitol Region, but significant gaps remain.

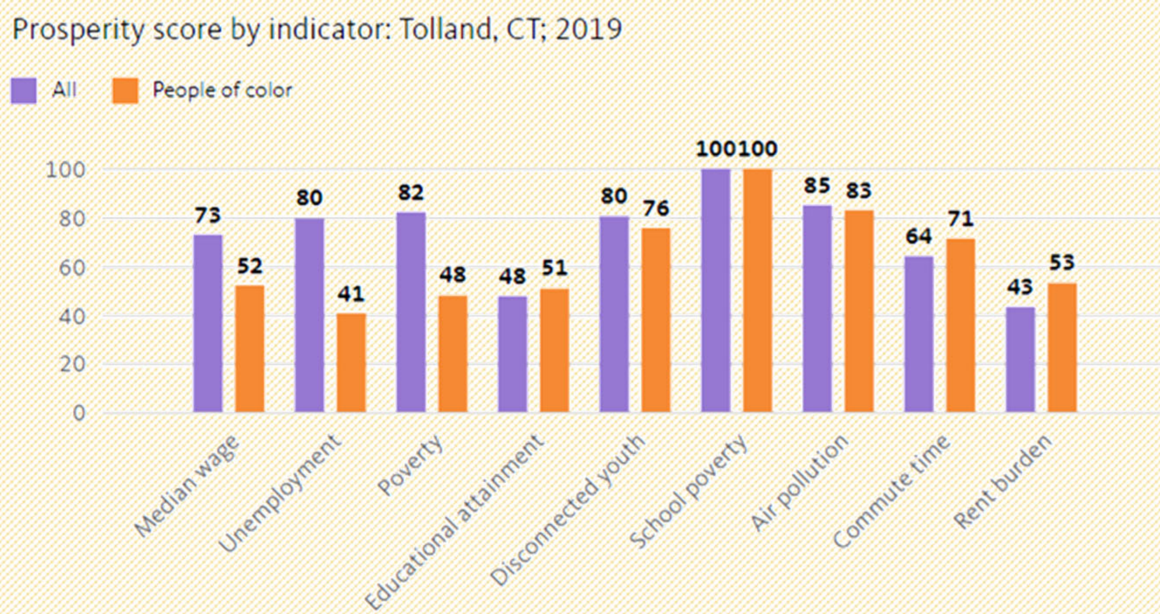
Hartford and Tolland counties both have relatively high prosperity scores for people of color relative to the nation — with Tolland County ranked at #25 and Hartford County at #121 out of 421 counties in the US, as of 2019.

The prosperity gap between people of color and the total community has been decreasing slightly over time:

- In Tolland County, there was a total prosperity gap of 15 in 2000, which had reduced to nine by 2019.
- In Hartford County, the total gap of 25 in 2000 had reduced to 17 by 2019.

Hartford and Tolland counties have similar trends within individual indicators of poverty. Indicators with the highest prosperity score for people of color in the region are school poverty, air pollution, and commute time. Indicators that need the most improvement to help people of color catch up with the overall population in the Capitol Region include median wages, unemployment, poverty, educational attainment (Hartford County), disconnected youth, school poverty (Hartford County), and rent burden (Hartford County).





Finding 2: The Capitol Region is struggling with resilience.

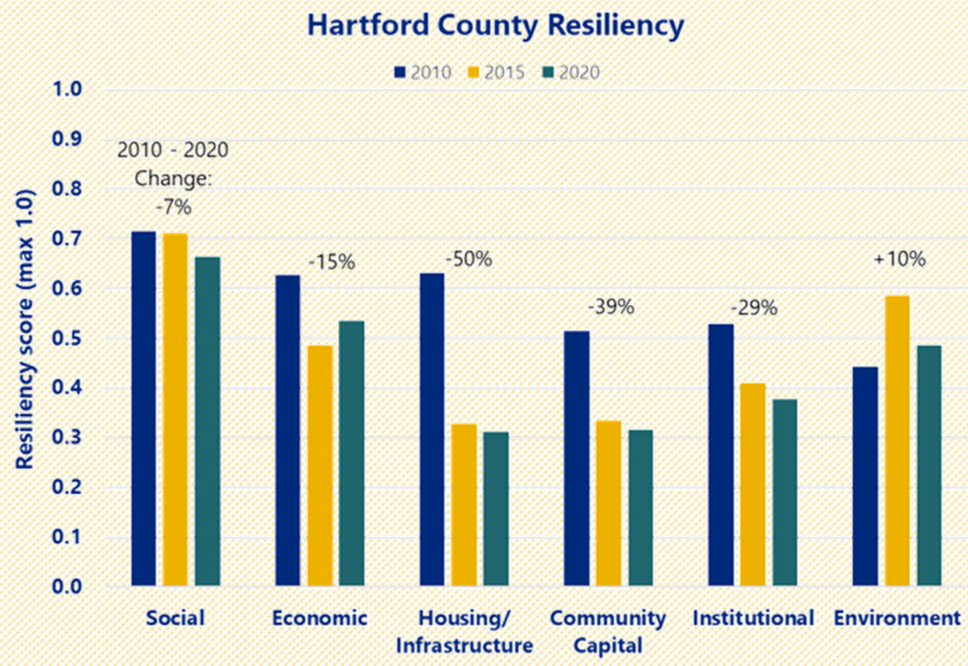
Prior to the pandemic, the Capitol Region's resilience was decreasing across most measures: Social, Economic, Housing/ Infrastructure, Community Capital, Institutional, and Environmental.

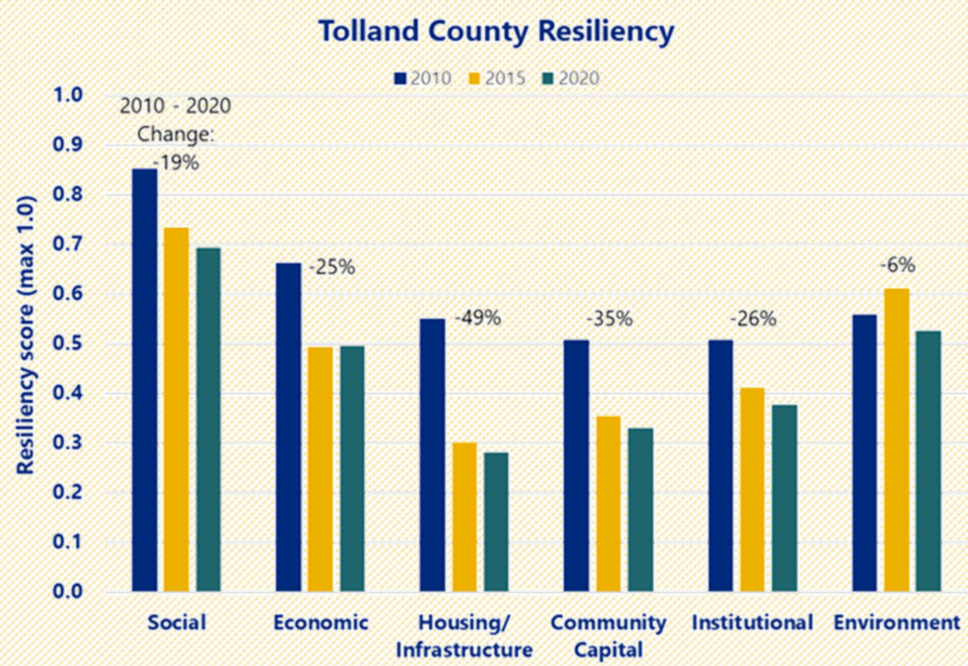
While the two counties in the Capitol Region were performing better than the majority of counties across the US, both counties are becoming less resilient over time.

Hartford County's aggregate resiliency score decreased by 22% between 2010 and 2020, while Tolland County's score decreased by 26%. This data predates the pandemic, and it is likely that the Baseline Resilience Indicators for Communities (BRIC) Index scores for the Capitol Region have decreased even further over the past two years. These decreases were primarily due to underperformance and decreasing scores for resilience in:

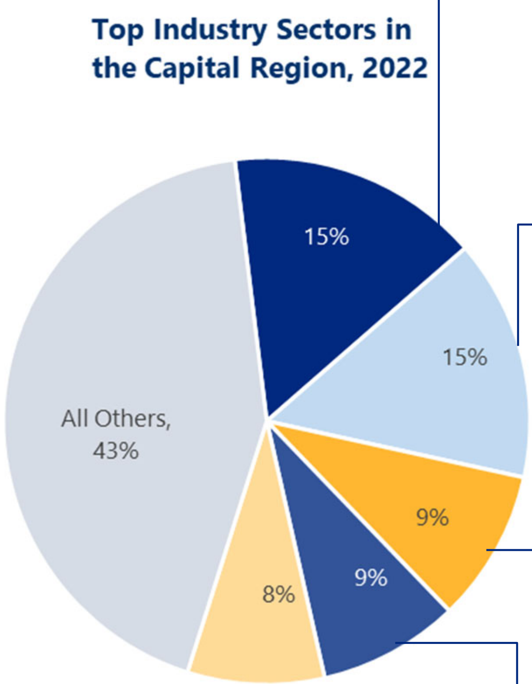
- Housing/infrastructure/the built environment, which includes variables like housing stock construction quality, availability of temporary shelter, and capacity of the medical care system
- Community capital, which includes variables such as volunteerism, religious affiliation, attachment to place, and political engagement
- Institutional/governance, which includes variables like jurisdictional fragmentation, disaster aid experience, and population stability

From an industry perspective, the Capitol Region's top five industry sectors – which altogether account for 57% of all jobs — all show signs of weakening resilience over the past five years.





Top Industry Sector Risk Factors



Health Care and Social Assistance

- With 8% growth, the region is adding jobs slower than the national level (13%). Industries with the most job loss: *Nursing Care Facilities* (-2,810) and *General Medical and Surgical Hospitals* (-2,018).
- At 21%, earnings growth for this sector is significantly slower than the national level (32%). This may make it harder for the region to attract and retain talent. Industry with the lowest earnings growth: *Offices of Mental Health Practitioners* (-14%).

Government

- Major job losses (-2,390), driven primarily by cuts in *State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals* (-2,283). This could impact service delivery and real estate vacancies, as workers lose a valued source of stable jobs.
- At 21% earnings growth, the region is less competitive than the nation (30%) for workers.

Manufacturing

- Major job losses (-2,331), driven primarily by cuts in *Other Aircraft Parts and Auxiliary Equipment Manufacturing* (-1,392) and *Turbine and Turbine Generator Set Units Manufacturing* (-1,098).
- 70% of demand met by imports, compared to 48% for the regional economy overall.
- High retirement risk, with 35% of the workforce aged 55 and over, compared to 27% for the regional economy overall and 28% for the nation's Manufacturing sector.
- At 17% growth, wages are increasing significantly slower than the regional economy overall (24%) and the sector at the national level (27%). This may make it harder for the region to attract and retain talent. Industries with the lowest earnings growth: *Saw Blade and Handtool Manufacturing* (-27%) and *All Other Miscellaneous Electrical Equipment and Component Manufacturing* (-18%).

Retail Trade

- Significant job losses, with a 10% reduction in employment (-5,720), primarily driven by losses in the following industries: *Supermarkets and Other Grocery Stores* (-1,413), *Department Stores*, (-845) and *Electronics Stores* (-575).
- Significant importer, with 59% of the sector's demand fulfilled by suppliers outside of the region, compared to 48% for the regional economy overall.

Finance and Insurance

- Significant job losses, with a 12% reduction in employment (-6,944), primarily driven by losses in the following industries: *Direct Life Insurance Carriers* (-6,944), *Portfolio Management* (-2,226), *Savings Institutions* (-1,927), and *Direct Health and Medical Insurance Carriers* (-944).

Source: Lightcast
All data as of 2022
Growth rates from 2013 – 2022

Finding 3: As older workers retire in large numbers, attracting and retaining young people will be critical to the health of the Capitol Region's workforce.

The Capitol Region's labor force has been decreasing over time. Between 2012 and 2021, the population grew by 2.4% while the labor force decreased by 1.1%.

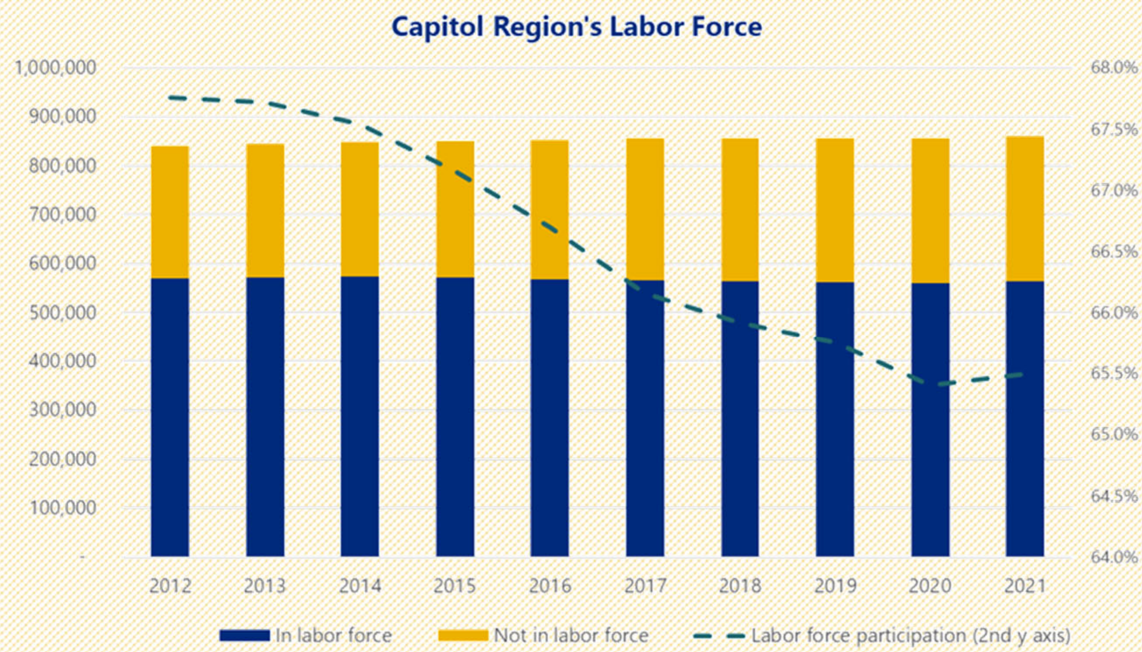
Meanwhile, the portion of the population age 16 and over that is not participating in the workforce increased by 9.5%. As of 2021, there was a labor force participation rate of 65.5%, a 2.3% decrease from the participation rate of 67.8% in 2012.

Decreasing labor forces and labor force participation rates are a national trend resulting from a number of structural and cultural changes in our society, including declining birth and immigration rates, longer life spans, the prioritization of higher education over part-time jobs for teens, and a lack of childcare accessibility.

However, one of the largest causes is the aging and ongoing retirement of the Baby Boomer generation. The share of the labor force that is age 55 and over has been increasing over time: in 2012, older workers accounted for 24% of the labor force, but by 2021, that share had risen to 27%.

Meanwhile, 61% of residents over the age of 16 who are not currently participating in the workforce are over the age of 55.

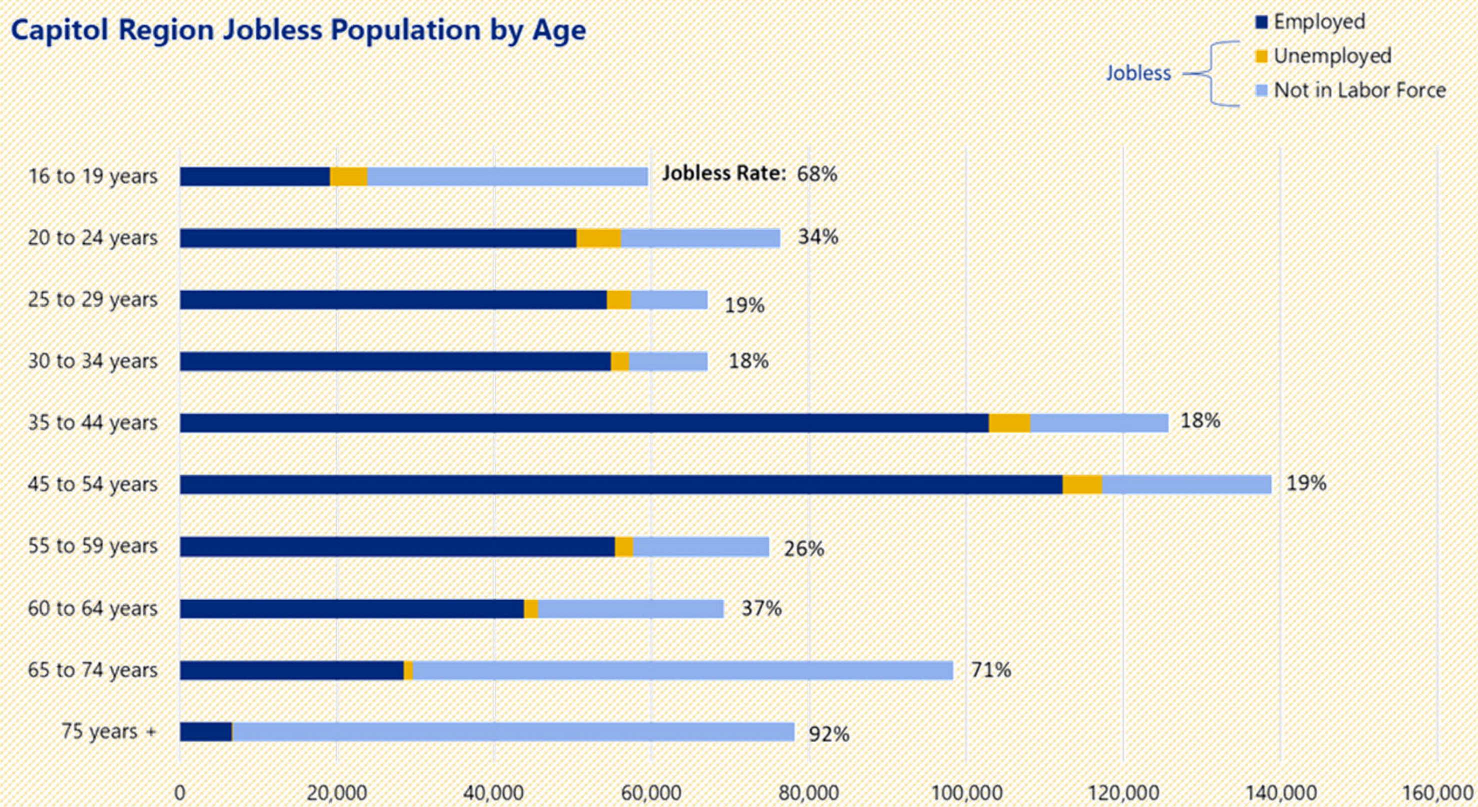
Altogether, there are 78,780 workers still in the labor force who are very near or at retirement age (60 years and older) and another 55,327 workers who will be reaching retirement age in the near future (55-59).



Source: ACS 5 year estimates; population 16+

This means just over a quarter of the workforce will be near or past retirement age within the next five years. To combat this coming mass exodus from the labor force, the Capitol Region needs to expand labor force participation across other age demographics, particularly teens and young adults. Of the 141,357 jobless in the working-aged population between the ages of 16 and 54, 47% are under the age of 24. Potential workers between the ages of 16 and 24 should be targeted for career technical training or vocational training initiatives to fill critical workforce gaps in the trades and manufacturing industries, which are likely to provide good wages and opportunities for advancement.

Further exacerbating the labor force issue is the fact that college enrollments in the region are in decline — down 7% in the past five years — and the Capitol Region is losing relatively large numbers of youth and young adults due to out-migration. In 2021, 13,366 residents between the ages of 18 and 24 moved out of the region. Strategies to attract and retain youth and college students will be crucial to the economic health of the region.



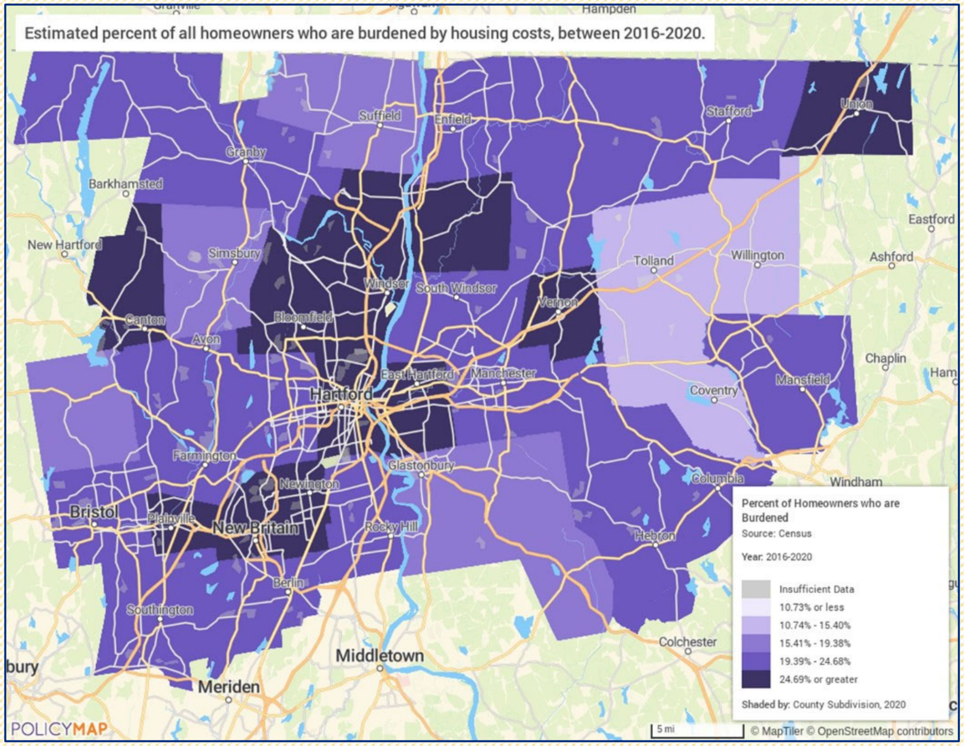
Source: ACS 2020 5-year estimates for the full civilian, noninstitutional population aged 16+

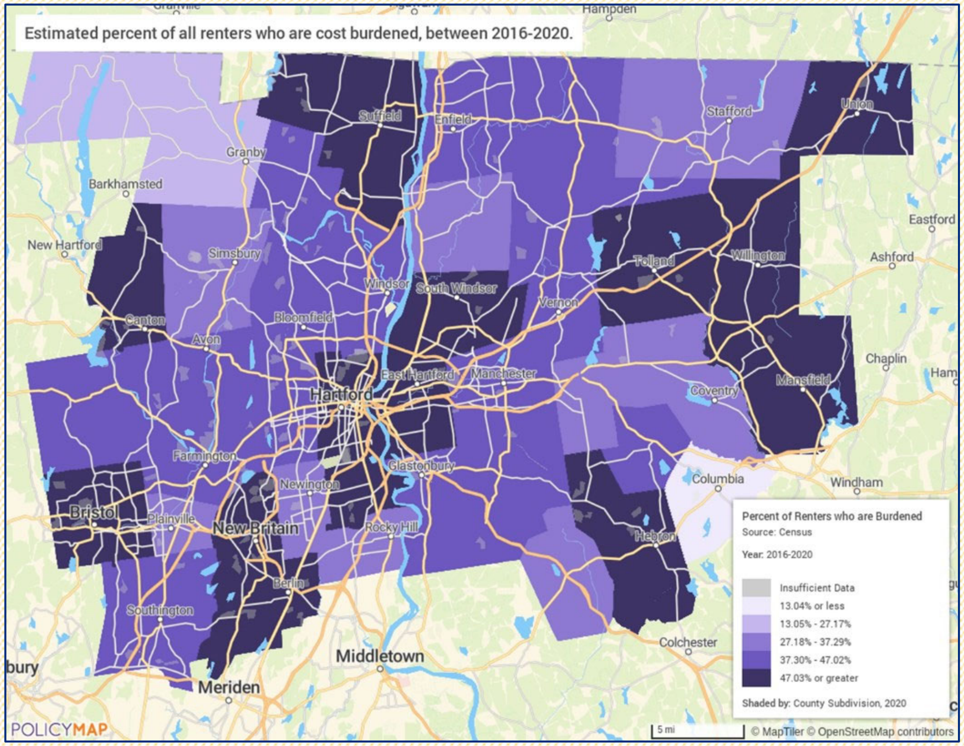
Finding 4: The office sector is declining rapidly while housing costs threaten the residential sector.

The office sector is declining rapidly, particularly in the downtown area. Although the region has a steady inventory and a healthy vacancy rate with enough stock to meet demand (but not so much that there is a significant amount of vacant buildings), there are a number of indicators that point to distress:

- Lease rates are significantly lower than the national average and growing much more slowly than the national rate
- There is significantly less construction and fewer deliveries than the average for the Capitol Region
- Net absorptions are negative and have been decreasing rapidly
- Downtown Hartford has larger buildings, accounts for nearly a quarter of the office square footage in the region, and has significantly higher vacancy rates (14.9%, compared to 9.6% for the overall)

Capitol Region Housing Cost Burden





What We Learned From Stakeholders

The project team embarked on a multi-faceted engagement process that included surveys, interviews, focus groups, hybrid meetings, etc. with businesses, service providers, elected officials, and others from throughout the region and the State. Issues and opportunities that rose to the top during these many discussions include:

CEDS implementation: This is seen as the biggest hurdle. The region needs to come together, act regionally, and be focused. The past CEDS never amounted to much action. Municipalities act individually. Capacity-building is needed.

Small businesses and entrepreneurs: The Region needs to do better in supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs. Better connections to existing resources are needed, and a better understanding of barriers. Changing regulations is a hurdle. There is a lack of a hub/coordinator to bring the community together and stop competition among service providers.

Marketing: The Capitol Region needs to tell its story better (internally and externally) for talent recruitment and business attraction. Nobody owns marketing currently. There is a lack of sense of place regionally.

Workforce: This is THE critical issue that businesses throughout the region, across all sectors, and of all sizes are facing. The region needs to scale existing programs such as Dual Track, build stronger private-sector partnerships, and create more apprenticeships.

Skills in-demand: Top skills needed in the workforce include Healthcare, CDL, Tech, and Manufacturing. There is a mismatch between labor force skills and the needs of employers.

High school: Needs significantly more attention. The region's youth need to be a priority.

Attraction potential: The region has strength and opportunities to attract Finance, Insurance/Insure-Tech, Life Sciences, and Advanced Manufacturing businesses.

Midsized companies: The region's midsized companies are struggling the most to attract and retain workers. These businesses are in the position of making investment decisions and, if better supported, will choose to stay in the region.

Infrastructure: Prioritize second track to increase rail access and continue to make regional connections. Elevate the airport as an asset.

City of Hartford: Equitable and inclusive growth is key. As Hartford goes, the region goes. Need to prioritize quality of life in the city. Established a long-term vision with Hartford 400, needs short-term action.

Higher-ED: Demographic cliff on the horizon by 2025 (15-20% drop in enrollment). There is an opportunity to connect into workforce development.

Equity: Housing and resource access is an issue in terms of who benefits from financial resources coming in. There is a need for stronger local networks to distribute resources and information. Define what equity is, not just use the words. Prioritize growing from within.

Office space conundrum: Thousands of square feet coming onto the market, but no workforce availability. What is the future use of all of this space?

Housing market: The active market is an opportunity and a challenge. There is a significant need for affordable workforce housing. The region needs to prioritize homeownership.

Quality of place: Critical for talent attraction and retention. Prioritize bike lanes and assess the viability of converting the old rail line downtown to a bike corridor. Continue investing in connections to the river, arts, and culture.

Assets

Beyond issues and opportunities, the stakeholders engaged during this process noted the many strengths and assets within the Capitol Region to prepare for and respond to challenges and create economic opportunities:

- Advanced Manufacturing, Insurance/Finance, and Technology
- Entrepreneurial energy and culture
- Education and workforce development system
- Community hubs of small and local businesses
- Engaged nonprofit sector in support of economic development
- Basic infrastructure (highways, airport, broadband, water/sewer)
- Recreation opportunities (cultural, natural, and programmed)
- Commitment to equity and inclusion
- And more!

Imperative for Action

The economic and workforce data analysis reveals significant challenges with potential current and future implications. These challenges were reiterated and expanded upon in the process of gathering input from community members and stakeholders. These include:

- Shrinking skilled labor pool to meet demand, including industry sectors and public services
- Competition for labor is high and expensive
- Employers prioritize talent attraction, but with a high cost of living and lack of a strong regional brand, success is limited
- As businesses consider other regions for expansion, retention increasingly becomes a priority
- Poverty is increasingly concentrated in under-supported, disconnected neighborhoods, widening the wealth gap
- Rate of disconnected youth increases, perpetuating above trends

When taken together, what do these trends mean for the future of the Capitol Region? Predicting the future with any certainty is impossible, but considering plausible future scenarios based on current and emerging trends is critical for informing strategy development and action.

3 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The CEDS Strategic Direction builds on findings from the analysis of current and emerging trends and incorporates elements from other regional plans and ongoing initiatives. The CEDS Strategic Direction identifies the overall themes and principles, priorities, goals, and strategies to guide the implementation of the CEDS.

Themes

Themes are connected to challenges we are trying to overcome or opportunities we are trying to advance. The following themes provided a framework for designing projects and initiatives:

- **Workforce Development**
- **Small Business and Entrepreneurship**
- **Housing**
- **Placemaking**
- **Business Environment**
- **Organizing for Action**

Principles

The Principles set forth what we value as a region and therefore what will guide our actions:

- Equitable and inclusive
- Representative of the region and its communities
- Connected to existing plans and initiatives
- Built from strengths
- Accountable
- Adaptable
- Resilient and sustainable
- Human-centric
- Regionally collaborative, edgeless-ness
- Focused
- Action-oriented
- Transparent
- Future-oriented
- Bold, transformative

Summary of Goals & Initiatives

The goals and initiatives are summarized below, and specific actions related to each initiative are detailed in the following pages. Attachment B contains the Action Plan Matrix, which includes potential leads and partners for each action.

GOAL 1 Adapt the physical environment to meet current and future needs

A. Focus on adaptive reuse of buildings in urban and suburban core areas

B. Reshape the regional housing market

C. Advance RiverLink and related East Coast Greenway projects

GOAL 2 Break down barriers for entrepreneurs and small businesses

A. Take the pulse of the entrepreneurial ecosystem

B. Grow youth entrepreneurship opportunities

C. Create a front door to the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem

D. Expand access to capital for entrepreneurs and small businesses

GOAL 3 Hyperfocus on existing businesses

A. Significantly expand business retention and expansion (BRE) efforts

B. Prioritize investment into training and retaining the future workforce

C. Support industry-led workforce development efforts for business-driven outcomes

D. Establish consistent messaging that is regionally shared

E. Launch a 'smart' data-driven talent attraction campaign

F. Focus business attraction on emerging opportunities

GOAL 4 Create equitable economic opportunity

A. Embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) regionally

B. Take a collaborative, place-based, neighborhood-scale approach to development

C. Fix the broken rung to advance women and underrepresented employees into more senior roles

GOAL 5 Restructure the CEDS implementation framework

GOAL 1 Adapt the physical environment to meet current and future needs

Purpose: Maintain and invest in infrastructure and the built environment to support the economy and well-being of all residents. The attraction and retention of talent and business are in large measure tied to the quality of the place. Amenities that improve the quality of life in a community matter. This includes recreational, cultural, and natural attributes of a community as well as the built physical spaces that provide diverse housing options throughout the region for all ages and incomes, a variety of goods and services, and workplaces that are inviting and inspire creativity and a sense of belonging.

The Capitol Region has an abundance of quaint neighborhoods, quality education, and strong communities in which to live and raise a family. All of these are critical assets for attracting and retaining talent. What the region needs to do now is fill voids in the housing market. Specifically, it is critical for the Capitol Region to develop smaller to mid-sized rental and mixed-single and multi-unit homes to retain and attract young professionals, first-time homeowners, working adults, empty nesters, and seniors. These needs exist for all communities throughout central Connecticut and are top on the list of priorities for immediate place-based action items.

Entire floor plates of office and commercial structures are vacant and face uncertain futures. This post-pandemic situation is evident in communities across America. However, given that the industry concentration in the Capitol Region is highly conducive to remote work arrangements, together with facilities that need significant improvements to meet workplace demands, the conditions appear to be much more evident than in some competing markets. The "office glut" and changing nature of the workplace are predicted by most commercial brokerage firms to remain challenges for at least several more years.

In the meantime, the Capitol Region and its competitors must give diligent thought and aggressive action to reimagining the built environment to keep the best of what it has while positioning itself as an attractive location for new generations of talent.

1.A) Focus on adaptive reuse of buildings in urban and suburban core areas.

1. **Develop more collaborative workspaces,** such as co-working spaces and innovation centers, to provide flexible, affordable office space for startups, freelancers, and small businesses. This will require altering office design in some buildings to establish remote work hubs that support workers by encouraging socializing, collaboration, recreation, creativity, and innovation. Large commercial office brokers (Cushman Wakefield, CBRE, JLL, PWC, Colliers, Gensler, and others) all predict that work-from-home (WFH) will continue to have a major impact on office space and development for the foreseeable future. Most conservative estimates place the percentage of the workforce that will WFH partially or full-time at 20%. This trend will increase as companies consider adopting four-day and flexible work hours to attract talent. Early evidence suggests that such moves might increase productivity among younger workers, but it is not yet certain.

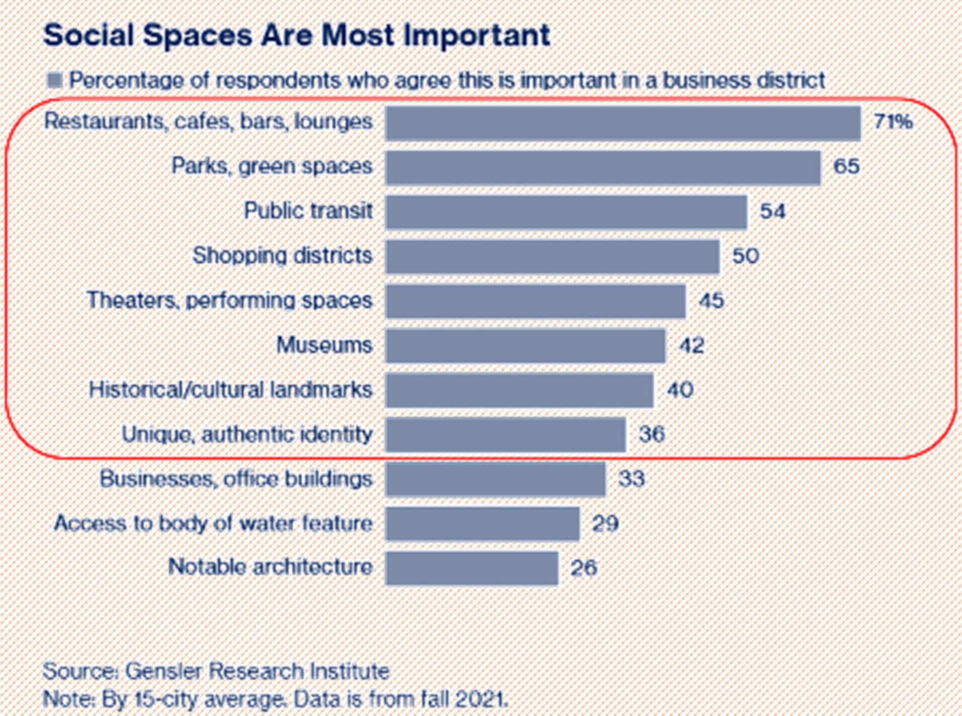
The kinds of positions for which WFH is most prevalent are in the types of jobs that the Capitol Region has in abundance: information gathering and processing. McKinsey & Company concludes that Finance and Insurance have the highest potential for remote work.

2. **Create downtown neighborhood districts.** For thousands of years, urbanized areas have successfully adapted to new economic realities. In our times, the downtowns and small city centers that "roll up the sidewalks" after 5 p.m. and on the weekends struggle. The ones that thrive move beyond one-dimensional central business districts and office corridors designed just for workers. They include a variety of mixed-use amenities.

   Successful downtowns and commercial centers create the feeling of smaller downtown neighborhood districts. In January 2023, the editorial board of the Washington Post noted, "Cities must adapt to this new reality or risk a downward spiral of falling commercial property values, lower taxes on those buildings, and ghost downtowns that could lead to increased crime and homelessness."

   These areas should have an abundance of amenities of restaurants, culture, entertainment, shopping, sports, and recreation, with unobtrusive parking, and other services within walkable distances along greenway streets and open-space plazas. Such areas foster connections that prove beneficial in a modern society that many find isolating, especially with greater proportions of people working and living in remote environments.

3. **Provide spaces that create a strong network for spurring creative talent** (e.g., artists, designers, culinary arts, entrepreneurs, and other creative professionals) to support the growth of creative industries. It has been over two decades since Richard Florida wrote the book The Rise of the Creative Class. In a 2019 update to that book, he writes that the creative class spans science and technology, traditional knowledge workers and the professions, and the arts, media, and culture. By his estimate, in leading metropolitan Areas, the Creative Class now makes up roughly 45 to more than 50 percent of the workforce. In a 2022 ranking of every metropolitan city in the United States with a population over 100,000, the City of Hartford ranked 13 for its creative economy (workamajig.com). This suggests that the Capitol Region has assets that inspire creativity and inspiration that need to be nurtured and expanded.



Red accent added by Camoin Associates.

4. **Target young professionals and empty nesters by facilitating mixed-use developments** in downtown Hartford and the broader Capitol Region that incorporate residential, commercial, and office spaces into a single development. The goal is to create vibrant, walkable neighborhoods that offer a wide range of amenities and services, while also supporting the existing businesses and infrastructure.

5. **Create a fund for small-scale developers** to fill the gap in financing for challenging mixed-use rehabilitation and infill projects. Approach the region's insurance companies to support establishing this fund.

1.B) Reshape the regional housing market.

1. **Develop a 360-degree regional future housing strategy** that advances equitable, environmentally friendly, and healthy residential development throughout the region by addressing housing supply, affordability, and availability. This should be a highly collaborative effort with a long-term commitment to this work among many stakeholder groups including city/town leaders, community members, real estate developers, planners, and the CRCOG. Stakeholders should be resourced with real estate market intelligence focused on the current and future needs of the workforce to support the design of actionable policies, programs, and initiatives to advance locally defined priorities.

2. **Create a program geared toward first-time homebuyers** to assist with reducing housing finance and transaction costs. This could include providing one-time relocation payments to underwrite some costs associated with leasing apartments. An emphasis of such a program would be geared toward out-of-state remote workers committing to live and work for an extended period in the region. Consider establishing

BEST PRACTICE: **RELOCATION INCENTIVES**

A senior economics writer with the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, Matthew Wells, cites impact assessment studies of the **Tulsa Remote** and **Vermont's New Relocating Employee Incentives Program** that demonstrate positive economic impacts of the programs.

- Tulsa selected 1,700 remote workers for the project and offered $10,000 as well as co-working space, networking, and housing assistance. The study showed participants accounted for $62 million in local earnings which led to the creation of 592 jobs, or one new job for every two remote workers who moved to the city.

- Vermont's program attracted 307 participants and created 115 additional jobs, with an economic impact of $17.1 million over two years.

relocation incentives for attracting workers within prescribed sectors. Even before the pandemic's height, some communities offered incentive programs to encourage young workers – including hybrid office-remote employees - to move to their communities using cash, vouchers, working space, entertainment discounts, and more. Several programs were created and funded by philanthropic institutions and high-wealth individuals while others were supported by universities and the government. Examples include Tulsa, OK; Evansville, IN; Charleston, SC; Benton Harbor, MI; Greater Rochester, NY; Louisville, KY; Wichita, KS; Virginia Beach, VA; and the state of Vermont. The website MakeMyMove is one resource that serves as a clearinghouse for such programs to assist young workers to find places to move. The Capitol Region's civic leaders, led by philanthropic interests, are encouraged to consider creating a similar project with an emphasis on assisting industries that rely on creative talent.

3. **Support mixed-income housing development throughout the region.** Vertical (multiple uses in a single building) and horizontal mixed-use (multiple uses in separate structures on a single property) property development is needed to help address the need for diverse, affordable housing and to provide easily accessible, walkable, smartly designed, and environmentally sensitive communities. An abundance of mixed-use products is more readily available in many competing markets and is an important feature for attracting and retaining talent. These developments should complement existing neighborhoods and help develop unique residential communities that have a mix of commercial, retail, entertainment, and recreational amenities as central design features. In some communities, there is a need for flexibility with existing zoning and regulations to allow such uses. Aggressive incentives to encourage higher density, reduced parking, expedited permitting, attractive financing, and favorable tax considerations should be considered. The key consideration for developing any mixed-used development in the Capitol Region should be the inclusion of affordable housing units. Arrowhead Gateway, a 43-unit complex with 25 percent affordable units, is planned in the City of Hartford. Other recent developments throughout the state include the former News-Times building on Main Street and the former Union Carbide HQ in Danbury, a mixed-use development with four affordable units in the affluent downtown Darien (The Corbin District); and a new apartment complex (the first in 50-years) in East Hartford.

1.C) Advance study and design for the RiverLink and the related East Coast Greenway projects.

1. **Support Hartford400 vision.** Continue to move forward with core elements of Hartford400's vision for a comprehensive, river-centered action plan that integrates environmental, economic, social, transportation, and cultural aspirations.

GOAL 2 Break down barriers for entrepreneurs and small businesses

Purpose: Creating opportunities for ANYONE with a good idea to start a business will unlock the region's innovation potential, creating a more resilient, diverse, and equitable economy that is grounded locally and grows from within. Entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in fostering innovation by creating new products, services, and business models; creating jobs; and stimulating economic growth. Entrepreneurship also plays an important role in community development by creating jobs for local underemployed and unemployed individuals, facilitating local investment, empowering members of the community to take charge of their own future, and creating businesses that address environmental or social challenges.

National research shows that entrepreneurship can narrow the racial wealth gap: annual rates of return on business investment for entrepreneurs are around 20% for Black households, 17% for Hispanic households, and 15% for white households.[1]

2.A) Take the pulse of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The availability of resources and support for entrepreneurs in the region is relatively robust, especially for those working in the core sectors (i.e., Insurance, Advanced Manufacturing, and Technology). However, over the past few years, there have been many starts and stops with different programs and policies as priorities have shifted at the neighborhood, municipal, and state levels. The region's entrepreneurial ecosystem is complex and confusing, even for business support organizations that are on the inside of the system. There is an overall lack of leadership, and a stable, long-term vision backed by an actionable multi-year strategy is needed.

1. **Conduct a regional ecosystem assessment** to sort out where the support system is today, where it is headed, and where there are disconnects between the supply and demand for resources. The assessment should consider a range of perspectives, from high-growth, high-opportunity sectors to main street businesses, as well as the experiences of different types of founders (women, people of color, veterans, individuals with disabilities, youth, etc.). The primary audience for this analysis is the many organizations and stakeholders in the region that provide support to entrepreneurs and small business owners looking for technical assistance, capital, mentorship, market access, etc.

   The need for a comprehensive ecosystem analysis should not prohibit action where the action is needed. During the CEDS planning process, several opportunities were identified to meet the needs of small businesses and entrepreneurs. The following strategies are designed to meet several large gaps in the system that exist today and should be adapted to align with the overall vision for the region as that emerges through the ecosystem mapping process.

[1]Jacob Hager, Barış Kaymak, "Racial Differences in Returns on Business Ownership", Economic Commentary, Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, February 6, 2023, https://www.clevelandfed.org/collections/press-releases/2023/pr-20230206-racial-differences-returns-business-ownership.

2. **Convene an advisory group of underrepresented entrepreneurs and business** owners to provide input on existing resources and programs, guide the development of new programs, enhance reach into local underserved communities throughout the region, and engage in an ongoing conversation with service providers about issues and opportunities for business owners and entrepreneurs throughout the region. Economic conditions shift rapidly and constant engagement between the support organizations and the entrepreneurs they serve is needed to ensure that the ecosystem can adapt quickly to the changing needs of the business community.

2.B) Grow youth entrepreneurship opportunities.

1. **Build a pipeline of young entrepreneurial talent** by investing in and expanding youth entrepreneurship offerings. There are several organizations actively working in youth entrepreneurship in the region, including Urise Ventures and Junior Achievement of Southwest New England. However, these programs are limited in their scope and reach.

2. **Weave entrepreneurship skills and experiences throughout the education and workforce development system** from K-12 to higher education to adult education programs. All education stages should include a curriculum that focuses on the core skills of starting and running a business, including business planning, marketing, finance, and leadership. Educators should be trained on fostering an entrepreneurial mindset in students by encouraging them to think creatively, get comfortable with risk, and develop problem-solving skills – all tools that will benefit students in any career path they end up on, whether or not they go on to found their own company.

3. **Highlight entrepreneurship as a viable career option.** Parents, teachers, educators, and career counselors should be encouraged to discuss the benefits of entrepreneurship as a career option for students, just like any other career path. Include information about being an entrepreneur along with other career-related information and invite local entrepreneurs to career fairs to talk about their experiences.

BEST PRACTICE:
YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

InvestAtlanta created a 12-week paid internship program to give college students direct experience in entrepreneurship while helping local startups fill short-term tech-talent needs.

The Students2Startups program places Atlanta college students in internships with Atlanta-based tech startups that typically cannot afford to pay for interns. Intern salaries are paid by the startups with program subsidies, which helps disadvantaged students participate who typically would not have the luxury of interning for free.

4. **Create experiential opportunities in entrepreneurship.** Expand opportunities for the region's youth to connect with the entrepreneurial community by partnering with area co-working spaces, incubators/ accelerators to host events, internships, and apprenticeships.

2.C) Create a front door to the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem.

One of the biggest hurdles entrepreneurs and small business owners face in the region is knowing where to go for the type of help they need along their business journey.

1. **Create a digital resource navigator.** Regional entities should collaborate to create an online hub where entrepreneurs in the region can search for resources and information they need at any stage in their business journey, from startup to exit. The user should be able to search for the information they are specifically looking for, as well as be presented with information that they need and perhaps did not know to search for. Much of the content exists online already, spread across many websites of various support organizations. For example, Innovation Destination Hartford contains news and business profiles in lists and blog-style Posts; the Community Economic Development Fund provides training and education information in the form of podcasts, articles, and information about upcoming training opportunities; and the City of Hartford has information about how to navigate the permitting process and establish a business.

BEST PRACTICE:
DIGITAL RESOURCE NAVIGATORS

Launch NY's Resource Navigator includes a cultivated network of 262 resources to support entrepreneurs. Users can search for resources by funding opportunity (debt/loans, equity/investment, or grant awards), by region, by minority- or women-owned status, by industry, and by keyword.

Klamath IDEA's Resource Navigator includes 22 resources for entrepreneurs, searchable by location/ distance, specific needs, target populations, business type (innovation-led, main street, second stage), business stage, industry, and keyword.

2. **Hire an in-person resource navigator.** The resource navigator should be the champion of entrepreneurship for the Hartford region, working with underserved business owners to connect them to resources and bringing together partners to meet the needs of the business owners. This person should act as the convener and manager of the Hartford region's entrepreneurial support ecosystem, proactively connecting with entrepreneurs and small businesses throughout the region, evaluating their needs for support, and connecting them to the region's support system. Maintaining and updating the digital resource navigator would also be a responsibility of the individual(s) in this role. The Connecticut Small Business Development Center has a proven track record of providing early-support for small businesses and will be an important partner for the Hartford region's resource navigator.

2.D) Expand access to capital for entrepreneurs and small businesses.

1. **Work with area lenders to review loan application processes, assess biases, and simplify the application process.** Access to the right type of capital at the right time is a persistent problem for entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs and small business owners engaged in focus groups for this work (many of whom were underrepresented founders) expressed significant frustration with the process of applying for business financing.

2. **Deepen relationships with the region's local Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFI)** to elevate their work, and expand their portfolios and influence. CDFIs are critical for creating financing opportunities for entrepreneurs who are not ready for traditional bank financing. The region's local CDFIs are doing great work, but are a bit disconnected from the regional economic development system.

3. **Long-term goal: Attract and grow minority-owned and operated lending institutions and fintech companies.**

BEST PRACTICE:
INCLUSIVE ACCESS TO CAPITAL

The **New Economy Initiative's Inclusive Small Business Support Network Fund** provides grants to nonprofit business support organizations in southeast Michigan to provide small, underserved businesses with access to capital, technical assistance, and resources.

The $19.5 million fund is supported through donations from major foundations in the area, including The Kresge Foundation, Ford Foundation, and W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

GOAL 3 Hyperfocus on existing businesses

Purpose: Support sustainability, resiliency, and emerging opportunities of advanced Manufacturing, Insurance/Finance, and Technology as well as Business Support sectors in the Capitol Region. Across the region's economy, businesses of all sizes and from all sectors are desperate for workers, a problem that is only going to get worse as more Baby Boomers near retirement in the coming years.

3.A) Significantly expand business retention and expansion (BRE) efforts through collaborative, coordinated, and structured programming.

While there is some limited business retention and expansion (BRE) activity occurring in parts of the region, there is not a formal BRE program that covers the Capitol Region as a whole. The State Department of Economic Community Development (DECD) occasionally conducts BRE visits with major employers and invites local economic developers to participate, while some municipalities in the region conduct some of their own business visits. MetroHartford Alliance recently cut back its BRE activity due to limited capacity and resources; however, staff does participate in some business visits with partners.

BRE is a critical gap that needs to be filled immediately as many businesses in the region are being left to fend for themselves. Given the strained resources available to launch a robust BRE initiative, it is recommended that a newly designed effort focuses first on manufacturers, and then expands to other sectors with Regional Sector Partnerships (Manufacturing, Healthcare, Construction, Insurance and Financial Services, Information Technology, and Bioscience).

The manufacturing industries represent the second largest contributors to the gross regional product of the Capitol Region, at nearly $12 trillion, second only to finance and insurance, and greater than the overall impact of government. In 2021, this accounted for 54,668 jobs, not including positions in other sectors related to the manufacturing process, such as specialized engineering, production, marketing, and logistics.

"Did you know that about 80% of new jobs and capital investment come from companies that already exist in your community?"

"Why a Business Retention and Expansion Program Matters," International Economic Development Council, Economic Development Research Partners

1. **The workforce and economic developers in the region should work together to design a collaborative BRE program built on trust and backed by business intelligence.** The program's mission should be to understand the immediate and future needs of Capitol Region businesses, with a focus on deeply understanding the region's current and emerging workforce needs and taking collective action to respond to those needs.

In beginning with manufacturers, the BRE program should involve officials at the local municipal level, with support from Advance CT and the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development's Office of Manufacturing resource center. These professionals would want to better understand the manufacturing process, the types of jobs it creates, and the skills and training required for those jobs. Such an effort will result in a deeper understanding of the economic impact of the sector and help identify opportunities to assist growth and expansion. By visiting manufacturers, decision-makers will stay up-to-date on industry trends and identify opportunities for new investment and growth in the community. They can help facilitate partnerships between businesses and local organizations to promote economic growth and development.

A recommended structure for the program is as follows:

Businesses to Engage:

- Economic base sectors: Advanced Manufacturing and related supply chain businesses
- Manufacturing businesses with aging leadership or businesses otherwise at risk for acquisition, specifically within the Aerospace Defense sector
- Major manufacturing employers and those representing a significant impact on the tax base
- Mid-sized businesses in emerging Advanced Technology and related Manufacturing sectors
- Companies entering a growth phase or uniquely positioned to grow from reshoring opportunities
- Newly established businesses
- Businesses that recently underwent an expansion or relocation in the region
- Specialized clusters, such as Aviation, and the Medical Device cluster, which experienced recent growth of 8%

Communications: The message to businesses that participate in this program is first and foremost "How can we help?" The goal is to cultivate relationships, connect businesses with resources and information, and collect information that can be used to understand regional trends and issues. Beyond in-person visits, businesses should be provided with updates about the outreach program, including actions the economic and workforce development partners are taking based on the information collected.

Business Engagement Partners: Local, regional, and state economic development officials, workforce development professionals, community colleges, and higher education institutions (public and private). Others on a case-by-case basis: District managers, Chambers, local elected officials, K-12 board members/ administrators/guidance counselors.

Partner Training: Train all participants on the process of conducting business visits, how to use the digital survey, etc.

Data Collection: Design a digital survey tool with quality questions that can be completed by partners during business visits or by businesses themselves online. Any and all businesses in the region should be invited to complete the digital survey themselves once a year. The tool should populate a Customer Relationship Management system (CRM).

Data Sharing: Participants will have access to the business data they collect, as well as aggregated regionwide data. Reporting should include:

Partner Reports: Custom reports for specific geography are provided to partners who participate in the program. Dashboards created in the CRM should be automatically updated and provided to partners quarterly.

Annual Regional Program Report: Comprehensive report on the BRE program, inputs, outputs, and outcomes. Created annually by analyzing data in-depth and providing recommended actions for the region.

Collective Action: This is the most important element of the program. BRE partners should meet quarterly to discuss program coordination, review and analyze business intelligence collected, create plans for following up with individual businesses, and develop strategies for refining existing and/or developing new programs and actions in response to emerging needs.

Additional Resources: Beyond the Survey: How EDOs Add Value through Business Retention & Expansion, by the International Economic Development Council: Economic Development Research Partners (EDRP).

3.B) Prioritize investment into training and retaining the future workforce (i.e., youth).

1. **Expand Dual Track programs.** Dual-track programming was a key strategy in the 2016 CEDS and that emphasis continues in this update. Since 2016, this model has been proven, and it is now time to expand its footprint to increase the number of students and businesses participating. Awareness of dual-track programming has increased through concentrated efforts led by Capitol Resource Partners; however, K-12 educators are overburdened and have limited capacity and resources to commit to this type of intensive workforce development program. Public-private partnerships need to be developed and expanded to further engage the K-12 education system and expand opportunities for local students to participate in dual-track programs.

2. **Expand K-12 career exploration.** Go beyond traditional career fairs to strategically help middle and high school students begin to build local professional networks and mentor relationships with area professionals.

Create immersive experiences that engage and inspire students to consider local career pathways, building professional networks around them to support them on their journey.

3. **Continue to advance career navigation efforts.** The Hartford Career Navigation Report and Recommendations outlines a series of steps that need to be taken to ensure that opportunity youth (16-24-year-olds not in school or working) gain equitable access to the region's training and workforce development resources. Implementation of the recommendations is underway, including progress toward funding to support hiring a Career Navigation Systems Coordinator. An additional $25,000 is needed to complete the funds needed to support the recruitment and hiring of the coordinator.

4. **Collaborate around data.** Currently, workforce development programs are tracked at the individual program level by the entities that manage them. While this current system meets the needs of funding sources for various programs, it does not provide a full picture of the region's workforce development system, where it has been, or where it is headed. A systematic tracking system is needed to gauge the performance and health of the workforce development system. The region should establish, track, and share metrics across the workforce development and economic development systems to allow comprehensive collaborative analysis, reflection, and refinement of programs and policies. At a minimum, update the data annually and assess progress on key metrics related to key workforce development strategies.

3.C) Support industry-led workforce development efforts for business-driven outcomes.

1. **Continue to prioritize public and private sector support for the Regional Sector Partnerships.** The Capital Area Pipeline Partnership includes three sector-focused, employer-led partnerships that focus on skills training and education systems to meet workforce needs: Advanced Manufacturing Employer Partnership, MetroHartford Alliance for Careers in Health Care, and Jobs Funnel Construction & Transportation Partnership. Ensure leadership continues to be engaged in partnership activity to address cross-sector issues comprehensively.

2. **Elevate discussions around emerging trends to create a future-ready workforce.** Utilize the partnerships as a forum to look ahead and engage with the private sector about what key trends are on the horizon in the near-term and long-term so the workforce system can quickly ramp up and adapt training to meet ever-changing talent needs. Employ near-term scenario modeling to discuss which jobs can be automated, which skill sets are rising, what new skills are needed for existing employees, which types of events might disrupt the system and force a shift in workforce needs, etc.

3.D) Establish consistent messaging that is regionally shared.

The Capitol Region has a rich history as one of the oldest communities in the U.S., but does not have a strong regional identity either internally with residents or with people outside of the region or state. The lack of a strong brand identity inhibits the region's ability to attract and retain residents, visitors, students, talent, and businesses. This is a perpetual, well-recognized issue; the brand was one of three pillars in the region's 2016 CEDS framework, and it came up in nearly every interview conducted for this CEDS Update.

1. **Form an image and identity partnership.** This partnership would include individuals and organizations engaged or who have a vested interest in marketing and promotion of the region. This might include economic development professionals, workforce development professionals, higher education institutions, arts and culture organizations, human resource departments, and other relevant partners. This partnership would guide the development of a regional marketing and branding campaign.

2. **Develop an open-source regionally generated brand identity.** Conduct market research to understand internal and external perceptions of the region through the lens of talent attraction and retention. Test out existing messaging used by various stakeholders. Understand shared values and principles that create the foundation for the brand identity. Recurring themes during the CEDS process that should be further vetted include:

    - Equitable accessible opportunities, regional commitment to creating prosperity for all
    - Right-sized middle market for creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship
    - Proximity to two major markets (New York City and Boston)

3. **Implement a new collaborative regional branding and image campaign.** A brand identity should be promoted throughout the region and adopted by the residents and organizations first before an external marketing campaign is initiated. Connect into existing regional initiatives such as Hartford400 to build off ongoing efforts around placemaking and vibrancy.

BEST PRACTICE:
COLLABORATIVE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

RVA Creates was an effort between over 100 stakeholders to create a shared identity for downtown Richmond, Virginia, around arts, culture, and creativity. This process, referred to as an open-source experiment, prioritized community engagement and ownership in the brand identity.

3.E) Launch a 'smart' data-driven talent attraction campaign.

Area employers are embarking on their own individual talent attraction efforts, with little success. Instead, the region's economic development and workforce professionals should lead a coordinated talent attraction campaign that is data-informed, collaborative, and geographically targeted.

1. **Identify top gap occupations to attract and create unique profiles for each.** Through business retention and expansion tactics, connect with area employers who are trying to attract talent to understand the exact skills and competencies that are most in demand. Support the qualitative research with labor market analytics to identify a set of target occupations to be the focus of the talent attraction campaign. Once the occupations have been identified, develop customer profiles for the type of person that typically has the desired skill set.

2. **Conduct a geographic competitive analysis** to identify areas of the U.S. where there are concentrations of people with the in-demand skills of the top occupations and conditions that are most favorable for the Capitol Region to compete for targeted occupations. Variables used for benchmarking might include wages, jobs in the industry, number of businesses, diversity, equity, etc.

3. **Launch a marketing strategy** designed to target individuals who can fill the top gap occupations from regions that the Capitol Region can compete for. As available, incorporate messaging with the outcomes from the branding and identity development process.

3.F) Focus business attraction on emerging opportunities

For decades, the focus of economic development efforts in the region has been on attracting large businesses within targeted industries, with particular attention given to marketing the comparative operating cost advantages of Hartford over the New York City and Boston regions. The results of late have not been encouraging. Marketing targeted industry sectors must continue. At the same time, efforts must be made to target the messaging and consequent business development efforts to reach fast-growing, midsized business owners as well as corporations examining options for consolidation.

1. **Pursue Midsized, High-Growth Business Opportunities.** Growth for a business is a learning curve: the more times a firm's management goes through an expansion, the more likely they are to do it again and the better they become at making growth decisions. This is true in all industries and all locations – growth is not just within core technology-based sectors. Yet sustained growth is rare. Only 1% of for-profit businesses that survive the initial start-up stage add net new capacity over a five-year period; the rest shrink or stagnate. Those 1% of businesses are *responsible for creating more than 60% of net new jobs in the local economy*. And yet, there is no coordinated effort to target and expand the small number of firms that produce the lion's share of net new jobs in the economy.

The Capitol Region is well positioned to target midsized growth firms (less than 100 employees) – across all industry sectors, not just targeted and technology-based sectors – both within the region and in the Greater Boston and New York City markets. The key here is to offer these companies what they need to continue to grow. In part, it requires highlighting sustained growth practices of existing successful firms, introducing fast-growth firms to one another, and developing new networks, services, and resources that are best suited to help these firms address their challenges so that they successfully reach the next level of growth. Currently, technical assistance efforts are targeted at entrepreneurs, startups, and early-growth enterprises. Implementing targeted outreach efforts for established midsized firms must be done with the engagement of company leaders who have cleared similar hurdles and are able to help others effectively address the most challenging aspects of growth.

2. **Encourage corporations headquartered or with a large operational base in the Capitol Region to assess their out-of-state real estate portfolios to determine if any high-skill, management-related functions can be consolidated in Connecticut.** Even with higher state taxes and operating costs, some firms might conclude that it is more cost-effective to close or downsize out-of-state offices that are underutilized due to remote work, changing work schedules, and new technologies impacting business operations. These efforts should focus on executive-level functions that can be consolidated to help streamline business operations and improve work synergies amongst management teams. This approach of reducing out-of-state real estate footprints and consolidating high-level talent is unlikely to result in an influx of new firms and does not necessitate any significant allocation of business attraction resources. Modest measures made by a handful of existing firms; however, to relocate some existing mid- and senior-level executives to the region could help fill some vacant spaces and generate economic gains for the firms and the community.

GOAL 4

Create equitable economic opportunity

Purpose: Ensuring a sustainable, resilient, and growing economy will require creating opportunities for all residents to gain access to, participate in, and contribute to the regional economy as consumers, workers, and founders.

One of the pillars of economic and community development is to promote economic security and quality of life for all citizens of a community. Creating an equitable economic environment that offers opportunities for underserved and marginalized citizens unlocks the full strength of a regional economy. When compared to other communities in Connecticut and across the nation, the Capitol Region scores average or slightly higher in certain prosperity score categories, including school poverty, air pollution, and commute time. However, the region lags in median wage, unemployment, poverty, education, and rent burden. Implementing plans and strategies to address the equity environment in the Capitol Region is important to creating a thriving economy that ensures all citizens have access to employment opportunities and support services that help move the entire region forward.

4.A) Embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion regionally (DEI) as a competitive advantage

1. **Develop and adopt a DEI Economic Development Agenda** for public and private organizations to commit to and sign. Creating an equitable economy cannot be addressed by a single organization or by a single program. To move DEI efforts forward, public and private stakeholders need to work together to first identify existing challenges, acknowledge those challenges, and develop plans and action items to overcome those challenges. Implementing a community DEI agenda not only ensures that all citizens are represented but also helps to eliminate unintentional biases and barriers that may be present in the region. A focused and targeted DEI agenda also sends the message that all citizens are being heard. The ability of the public, private, and community leaders to develop goals and metrics around DEI generates trust and contributes to relationship building. Communities that were once

BEST PRACTICE: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity's Racial Equity and Social Impact division is responsible for DEI within the organization and in the community. It offers resources and training materials on its website and provides fee-based DEI corporate training via Center. The division also oversees the Generation Next and Tech and Culture Initiatives, which supports the training and retention of diverse talent for the region.

The City of Lansing, Michigan's, Diversity And Equity Dashboard provides transparency, updates on progress, and accountability in addition to being a creative way to tell the Lansing story. It includes an equity matrix and interactive maps and demographics.

underserved and put on the back burner now feel they are truly a part of the community as they have opportunities to interact with community leaders.

When developing the public-private DEI economic development agenda, some key elements need to be present to ensure the process will be successful and inclusive:

- Inclusion is not a box to check, it requires a change in the collective mindset.
- Full commitment and buy-in from stakeholders are crucial. DEI leaders must be at the table when developing the agenda.
- Provide opportunities and multiple formats for citizens to get involved with the process to provide input and to understand how they will be impacted by the agenda.
- Create an agenda that is actionable and holds leaders accountable. Each action item should have a lead organization or stakeholder that is responsible for implementation.
- Set realistic goals and metrics to track progress over the short- and long-term and create accountability.
- Conduct a robust marketing and communications campaign (both internally and externally focused.)
- Create a public dashboard to track goals and metrics, highlight initiatives, make public announcements, and acknowledge champions and stakeholders involved in the DEI process.

2. **Develop a regional equity and diversity dashboard that provides the region's stakeholders and citizens with a visual public tool to track the region's efforts to advance equity and diversity.** A dashboard is a tool that promotes transparency, accountability, and progress measurement. It achieves this by presenting summaries and graphs of the tracked metrics and goals outlined in the region's equity plan. To maintain the dashboard's relevance, it should be updated at least twice a year with new data and progress metrics. Besides being a data tracker, the dashboard can also serve as a public forum for sharing news, initiatives, and programs that promote equity and diversity in the region.

3. **Support the formation of a minority chamber of commerce or other business organization(s) representing undersupported business owners.** The purpose of a Black Chamber of Commerce, for example, is to promote economic development, create opportunities for Black entrepreneurs, and address the unique challenges faced by Black-owned businesses. The region lacks organizations that represent and advocate specifically for minority-owned businesses. There is a statewide Black Business Alliance concentrated in New Haven that would like to expand into the Hartford region and can perhaps begin to fill this gap for Black business owners.

4.B) Take a collaborative, place-based, neighborhood-scale approach to development.

Collaborative, place-based approaches to economic development enhance the quality of life and improve access to opportunities for residents in underinvested neighborhoods. Neighborhoods are the building blocks of a community, so by adequately investing in neighborhoods that have historically been overlooked, the region will be able to revitalize, rehabilitate, and create environments that spur investments and job growth. One of the themes from stakeholder interviews was unequal access to resources and services. Creating stronger lines of communication and placing resources directly where they are needed will help eliminate some barriers to accessibility.

1. **Layer existing development strategies and resources into neighborhoods most disconnected from regional prosperity.** Truly meet people where they are. Weave the DEI agenda into existing economic development, workforce development, entrepreneurship, and community development plans and customize them for specific neighborhoods. Identifying strategies in the DEI plan that align with the goals of the existing plans will help create a cohesive approach to creating regional prosperity for all neighborhoods in the region.

   Collaborate with community organizations and neighborhood leaders to develop customized solutions for barriers to employment and development, such as housing, childcare, mental health, transportation, employment readiness and specialized training, mentorship, career navigation, and entrepreneurship training. The end goal of the collaborative process is to result in solutions that address barriers that are facing many neighborhoods.
2. **Develop housing that is affordable and accessible downtown and in the suburbs.** Seek solutions that encourage the development of livable and affordable housing that promotes equitable access to housing for all income levels within the region, both in the downtown core as well as in suburban communities.

3. **Childcare and health/mental care are either too expensive or access is limited due to pockets of childcare and healthcare deserts.** Giving citizens access to quality care is a critical investment all regions need to address. In the Capitol Region, Hartford is shown to have an adequate supply of childcare, but outside of Hartford, there are large pockets of inadequate childcare to support the community.

4. **Increase the quality of K-12 education in areas of concentrated poverty.** Improving K-12 quality in at-risk neighborhoods requires a comprehensive approach that addresses a range of factors that impact student learning and success. Create a more supportive and engaging learning environment for all students through increased funding, reduced class sizes, expanded after-school programs, increased teacher quality through development and talent attraction, increased access to technology, expanded social and emotional support, engaging families and communities, and other evidence-based interventions to improve educational outcomes.

4.C) Fix the broken rung to advance women and underrepresented employees into more senior roles.

As women and employees of underrepresented races and ethnicities work to climb the organizational ladder they are often met with a "broken rung" preventing them from reaching senior and C-suite opportunities. Although the "broken rung" problem is a national issue, putting strategies in place can help the Capitol Region position its businesses to attract new talent, and more importantly, retain talent that otherwise may leave the region seeking higher roles. McKinsey and LeanIn.org conducted a study that found that for every 100 men that were promoted or hired for senior-level positions, only 87 women were hired or promoted for the same role. For women of color, that number decreased to 82. As a result of the "broken rung" issue, many women either leave their companies or exit the workforce entirely.

1. **Conduct a 360-degree career pathways analysis and strategy for the region's economy.** Examine the career pathways for high-demand occupations that span multiple industries based on related skills. The analysis should identify barriers to entry and advancement along the career pathways for underrepresented and undersupported communities and develop a framework to break down these barriers.

2. **Work with public and private-sector employers to connect, create, and amplify management and career advancement training programs for women and underrepresented employees.** Expanding the capacity of management training programs catered towards women and underrepresented employees will help bring more representation to senior-level positions. Including employees from underrepresented demographics not only creates benefits for the employee, but also for the employer. The employer benefits from having more diverse ideas and opinions in decision-making roles, a broader hiring pool, higher employee morale, and employee retention because they see growth opportunities and support from their company. Begin with a system scan of existing programs, their capacity, and their effectiveness.

3. **Expand events and programming for women and underrepresented managers to build and grow their professional networks of peers and mentors.** The ability to network, learn, and communicate with other professionals creates connections and is crucial to professional development. Organizations like the University of Hartford's Entrepreneurial & Women's Business Center are already doing a great job hosting networking events and workshops for women and underrepresented demographics. These events and programming should be expanded to create even more opportunities for women and professionals in underrepresented races and ethnicities to grow their networks and develop professionally.

4. **Collaborate with area employers to increase accommodations for working parents through adaptable schedules, accommodations for nursing mothers, and emergency childcare backup programs.** The pandemic highlighted the balancing act that working parents, particularly mothers, face performing their jobs while handling unexpected childcare issues. Now, working parents are re-evaluating the importance of work-life balance and placing greater emphasis on being more present for their kids. Businesses that want to attract and retain quality talent need to distinguish themselves from other businesses by providing additional benefits targeted at working parents. A 2022 study published by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce found that 69% of parents are taking advantage of having a more accommodating work schedule to be more present for their kids. This is a 10% increase compared to February 2020. Implementing parent-friendly benefits may entice those who left the workforce to re-enter and retain those thinking of exiting the workforce.

GOAL 5

Restructure the CEDS implementation framework

Purpose: It is imperative that strong focus be given to management and accountability measures to implement the CEDS. In recent years, implementation of CEDS goals was shared among different stakeholder groups without benefit of a centralized, day-to-day point of contact to effectively manage multiple priorities. Achieving the desired outcomes of the updated CEDS requires full-time focus to address systemic challenges, change patterns of behaviors, and secure strong support and commitment from civic champions.

5.A) Implementation Committee

The CEDS Implementation Committee should be restructured. The 2019-2024 CEDS, *Metro Hartford Future: Accelerating Shared and Sustainable Economic Growth*, called for the creation of a CEDS Implementation Committee. It was comprised of 17 members, co-chaired by the Presidents and CEO of the MetroHartford Alliance and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Staffed by the CRCOG, this committee represented the leadership of diverse corporate, civic, institutional, and municipal groups. Its purpose was to serve as the primary advocate and champion for the plan, identify potential funding sources, coordinate working groups, receive quarterly reports from the working groups, and host an annual public meeting.

The global pandemic was largely responsible for stymying these ambitious goals. The CEDS Implementation Committee should be brought together in its current form with adjustments made for any changes in members' organizational leadership. The executive director of CRCOG should also join the implementation committee to help provide diligent, action-oriented management and accountability measures to implement the 2024-2029 CEDS. The committee must meet on a regularly scheduled basis to monitor, help coordinate, and guide the implementation of the game changer projects and recommendations.

5.B) Staffing

Procure multi-year funding to hire an experienced executive who has the experience, influence, authority, and passion to get the job done. This person could be hired as a permanent employee or on a performance-based contract with either the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving or the MetroHartford Alliance (whose executives co-chair the Implementation Committee.) Alternatively, the executive could be an employee or on contract with the Capitol Region Council of Governments. In either case, the chief executive for each of the three organizations should act as the governing group of the Implementation Committee, with the new executive serving as their direct report.

The new executive must demonstrate confidence, high energy, and can-do creativity to help execute the goals and objectives of the CEDS. This will require an individual inherently driven to succeed and skilled at forging beneficial relationships and generating deep trust amongst multiple parties. The executive will execute the CEDS

Action Matrix and develop other tools and techniques for measuring progress, monitoring program and resource needs, as well as proactively managing related programs, policies, and new initiatives. As many of these efforts will be carried out by organizations for which the executive is not directly responsible, this person must be exceptionally skilled at articulating, convening, collaborating with, and motivating others to act for the common good and know how to broker outside resources to address mutual interests.

Some of the professional skills and personal attributes of this person include:

- Problem-solver
- Personality of competence and persuasion
- Ability to keep on point
- Strong strategic thinking capabilities
- Outstanding organizational skills
- Passion for the transformational capacities of people and organizations
- Ability to encourage a culture of innovation, shared learning, risk-taking, and accountability
- Entrepreneurial creativity
- Superior communication skills as an effective speaker and active listener
- Ability to inspire confidence and optimism among those within the community, regionally, and nationally
- Organizational style that is open, collaborative, and results-oriented; a style that inspires trust and motivates others to contribute time, energy, and resources

Evaluation Framework and Performance Measures

Tracking the successful implementation of a strategic plan for economic development requires a crucial element: a set of performance metrics. These metrics should look externally by considering trends compared to the U.S. economy and look internally and track progress toward a more inclusive, equitable, and accessible local economy. This approach will allow the region to maintain a grounded perspective on progress, ensuring a realistic assessment.

Ten core metrics have been selected to track the implementation of the Capitol Region CEDS. To the extent possible, each metric will be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, gender, geography, and/or industry sector, and compared to state and national trends.

1. Average wage of new jobs created
2. Retention and expansion of existing companies in key sectors
3. Retention of college graduates
4. Education attainment of residents
5. Number of housing units added by price, owner-occupied and rental units
6. Homeownership
7. Business revenue
8. Business dynamism (business entries vs. business exits)
9. Labor force participation
10. Office vacancy, downtown and suburban space

The CEDS Implementation Committee will engage local partners, including the Hartford Data Collaborative (HDC) to track, analyze, and report on these metrics. HDC is a network of Hartford area non-profit organizations, government agencies, and philanthropic partners that facilitates data sharing and data integration among its partners.

ATTACHMENT A: REGIONAL BACKGROUND REPORT

Regional Background Report

Capitol Region

Introduction

The Regional Background Report for the Capitol Region provides a foundation for the CEDS. Understanding the makeup of the community and the ways in which the population, economy, labor force, and real estate are changing is crucial in setting the stage for economic development strategy. The results of this analysis are used to determine strategies for economic development, equity, and inclusion.

This report includes overviews of the Capitol Region's:

- Demographics
- Economy
- Labor force
- Real Estate

Methodology

Unless otherwise noted, all data within this report is for 2021, with 2016 – 2021 for historic trends and 2021 – 2026 used for projections.

The majority of data in this report was sourced from Lightcast (formerly Emsi / Burning Glass) unless otherwise noted. Other significant sources of data include the American Community Survey, Costar, and ArcGIS Business Analyst.

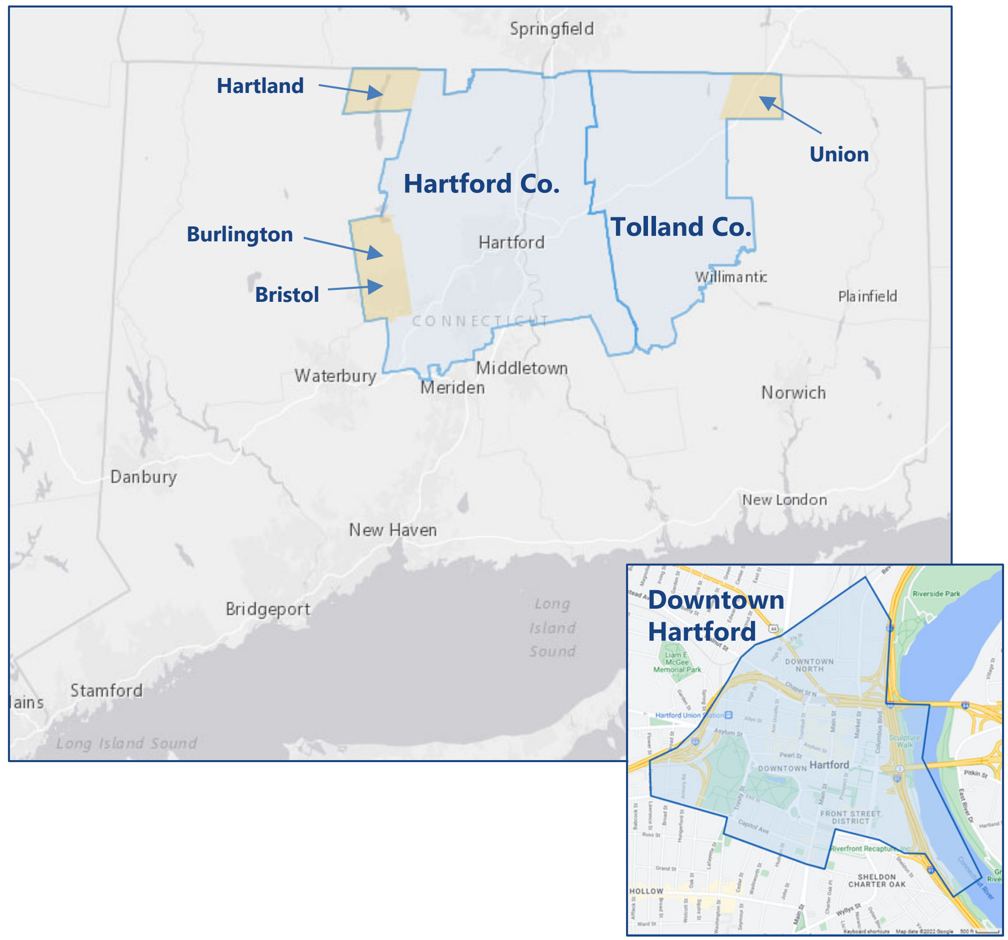
Region of Analysis

The Capitol Region Council of Governments region ("CRCOG") serves 38 cities and towns in north-central Connecticut within Hartford County and Tolland County.

Official public and proprietary data are not consistently available at the city- or town-level, so unless otherwise noted, all data presented here is at the county-level, with the combined Hartford County and Tolland County referred to as the Capitol Region.

Using county-level data means that this analysis does not perfectly align with the boundaries of the COG. Areas that are included in our analysis that fall outside of the COG's boundaries are shaded in yellow on the map to the right and include: Bristol City, Town of Burlington, Town of Union, and Town of Hartland. Altogether, these 4 communities represent 7.0% of the total population in the combined Hartford County/Tolland County region of analysis.

Real estate data for Downtown Hartford are based on the boundaries shown to the right. State and national data are provided for context where appropriate.



Key Takeaways: Socioeconomics

Demographics

- The Capitol Region's population is on a long-term decreasing trajectory, in line with the State's trends.
- The region is younger than the State and nation.
- There are fewer millennials and higher retirement risk than expected.
- Racial diversity is slightly lower than expected for an area of this size.
- Educational attainment is higher than the State and national levels.
- Poverty is lower than the State and the nation; and median household income is higher than the State and national levels.
- The region is a net exporter of population.

Economy

- Jobs have been decreasing over the past 5 years following the State's trends; and are expected to continue to decrease over the next five years.
- While average earnings have increased, they are still lower than the State average but the same as the national average.
- The region's share of the State's GRP is high relative to its share of population and jobs; its workers are less productive than the State but more so than the nation.
- Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities, Corporate, Subsidiary, and Regional Managing Offices, Aircraft Engine and Engine Parts Manufacturing, Other Aircraft Parts and Auxiliary Equipment Manufacturing, and General Warehousing and Storage are the region's top industries in terms of job growth, concentration, and competitiveness.

Labor Force

- Labor force participation is higher than the State and the nation but has not yet recovered to pre-pandemic levels.
- Unemployment has fallen over the last five years but is slightly higher than the national rate.
- There's a misalignment between what employers need (low skill) and what the population has (high skill)
- Enrollments and completions are declining.
- The region is a net importer of workers; most commuters have a relatively short commute time.
- The region has a slightly smaller proportion of older workers than at the State or national levels; and the age of the workforce is increasing, in keeping with State and national trends.
- The Capitol region's workforce is more diverse than the State but less than the nation.
- The following demographics have higher joblessness rates than the overall population (38%): 16 to 19 years, 65 to 74 years, 75 years and older, Males and Females in Poverty, With any Disability, and Less than High School Graduates.
- The demographics that would offer the greatest impact in terms of expanding the workforce due to their size include White, Females, 75+ years, 65 to 74 years, Hispanic or Latino, and All Other Races.

Demographics

Population
1,040,418

- 29.0% of Connecticut's population
- **Decreased by 5,087** over the last 5 years (-0.5%, compared to -0.7% for the State and +2.7% for the US)
- **Projected to decrease by 5,156** over the next 5 years (-0.5%, compared to -1.0% for the region and +2.6% for the nation)

Median Age
37.6 Tolland Co.
40.4 Hartford Co.

- **Both counties are younger than the State (41.1), while Hartford County is older than the nation (38.2)**
- **Fewer millennials than expected** for an area this size (203,648 compared to 214,281), in line with the State trends
- **Higher retirement risk than expected** for an area this size (328,255 aged 55+ compared to 309,479), and higher than the State's risk

Diversity
37.9%
BIPOC Share of Population

- **Increased by 32,005 over the last 5 years** (+8.8% compared to +9.0% for the State and +7.8% for the nation)
- **Expected to increase by an additional 28,453 over the next 5 years** (+7.2% compared to +7.5% for State and +7.8% for the nation)
- **Racial diversity is about average** for an area this size (387,564 racially diverse people compared to 418,825)

Educational Attainment
39.5%
Bachelor's Degree +

- The region's educational attainment is 0.4% lower than the State's rate of 39.9%~~,~~ and 6.4% higher than the national rate of 33.1%
- The high school graduation rate in the State of Connecticut is 89.6%
- This high school dropout rate in the State of Connecticut is 5.2%

* 4-year outcomes, Connecticut State Department of Education

Household Income
$82,034

- **The region's median household income is higher than the State ($79,855) and the nation ($64,994)**
- Hartford County's poverty rate (7.5%) is significantly higher than Tolland County's (3.7%) and slightly higher than the State (6.7%)
- Both counties have less poverty than the nation (9.1%)

Average Net Migration
-4,264
2016-2020

- The region is a **net exporter of population** with an annual average of 30,668 migrating out of the region and 26,278 migrating in per year
- In 2020, top originating counties included: New Haven County, CT (15.6%), Hampden County, MA (7.2%), and Middlesex County, CT (7.2%)
- In 2020, top destination counties included: New Haven County, CT (9.8%), Middlesex County, CT (7.7%), and Hampden County, MA (4.2%).
- 39.0% of inbound migrators and 30.0% of outbound migrators remain in-state

Demographics Spotlight: Migration Trends

Outbound Migration: -29,505 in 2020

- In 2020, 17% of outbound migrators moved to other New England states, with Massachusetts alone accounting for 11%
- Florida was the top out-of-state outbound migration destination, accounting for 13% of all outbound migrants in 2020. Hillsborough, Broward, Orange, and Palm Beach Counties were top Florida destinations.
- Other top destination states were New York (6% of outbound migration), North Carolina (4%), Texas (3%) and California (3%).
- Palm Beach County, FL and Riverside County, CA had the highest net out-migration, netting -205 and -203 residents, respectively

Inbound Migration: +27,305 in 2020

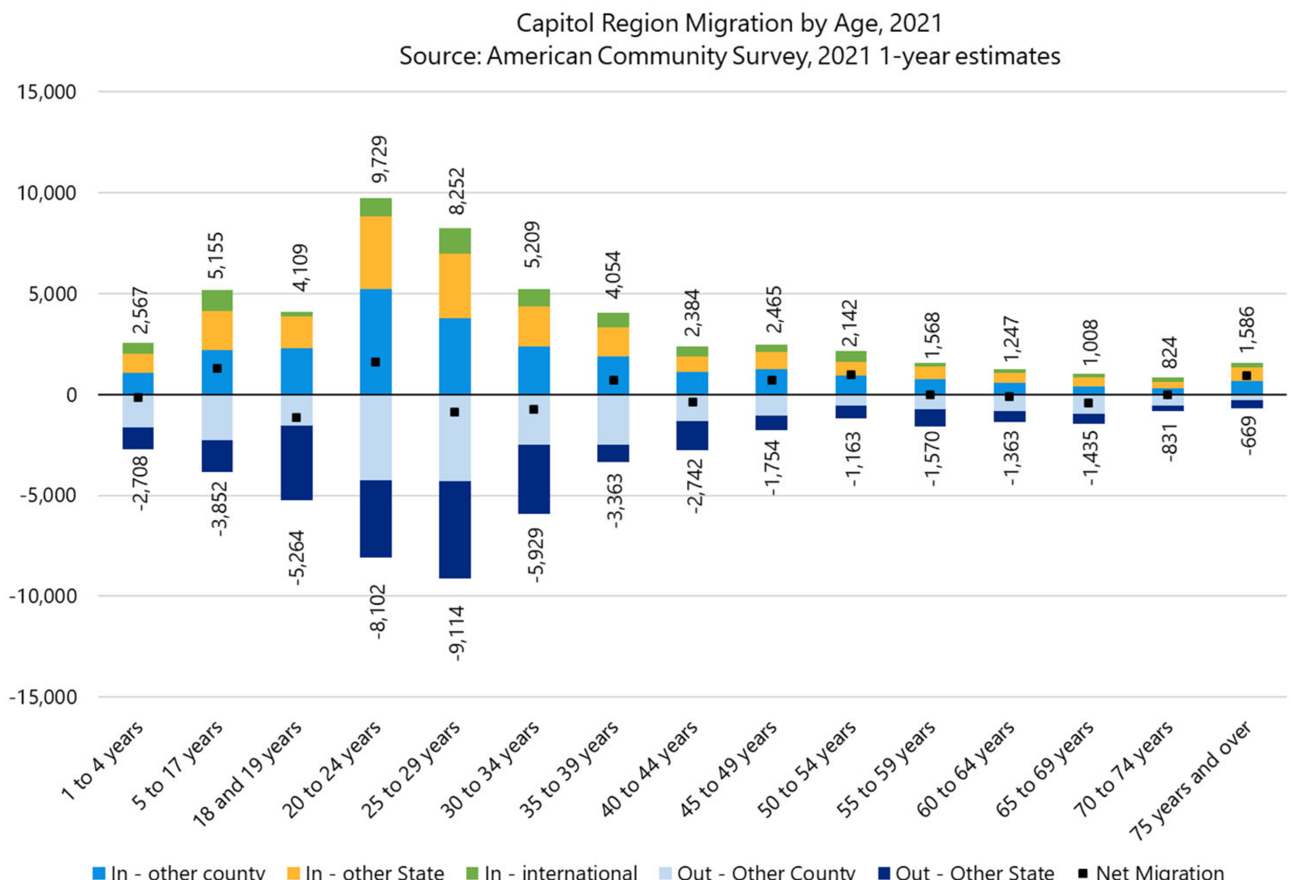
- In 2020, 17% of inbound migrators moved from other New England states, with Massachusetts alone accounting for 14%
- New York was the top out-of-state inbound migration destination, accounting for 14% of all inbound migrants in 2020.
- Other top destination states were Florida (6% of inbound migration), New Jersey (3%), California (3%) and Texas (2%).
- Bronx County, NY (+280), Kings County, NY (+259), Queens County, NY (+243), and New York County, NY (+221) had the highest net in-migration

2021 Census Data shows that many age cohorts have net out-migration rates.

The youngest age cohorts, from 5 to 39 years old, account for the most migration flow overall, while 25- to 29-year-olds account for the most overall out-migration and the highest rate of net out-migration, at 21 per thousand. 20- to 24-year-olds have the highest level of net in-migration, at 21 new residents per thousand population.

College-aged individuals also account for significant levels of in- and out-migration. Overall, 18- to 19-year-olds have the highest rate of net out-migration, at 35 per thousand population, with a majority leaving to go to other states. Much of this is likely college students.

While the levels of in- and out-migration among older age cohorts is relatively small, the 75+ age cohort has a relatively high rate of net in-migration, at 12 per thousand population.



Demographics Spotlight: Migration by Age

The following table details the Capitol Region's migration flows by age. In-migration includes inbound residents from other counties within CT, other states, and international. Outbound migration includes those leaving for other counties within CT and other states.

Migration by Age, 2021

	Total In	Total Out	Total Net	Net Migration Rate
Total:				
1 to 4 years	2,567	-2,708	-141	(3)
5 to 17 years	5,155	-3,852	1,303	8
18 and 19 years	4,109	-5,264	-1,155	(35)
20 to 24 years	9,729	-8,102	1,627	21
25 to 29 years	8,252	-9,114	-862	(13)
30 to 34 years	5,209	-5,929	-720	(11)
35 to 39 years	4,054	-3,363	691	11
40 to 44 years	2,384	-2,742	-358	(6)
45 to 49 years	2,465	-1,754	711	10
50 to 54 years	2,142	-1,163	979	13
55 to 59 years	1,568	-1,570	-2	(0)
60 to 64 years	1,247	-1,363	-116	(2)
65 to 69 years	1,008	-1,435	-427	(8)
70 to 74 years	824	-831	-7	(0)
75 years and over	1,586	-669	917	12

Source: American Community Survey, 2021 1-year estimates

Economy

Jobs
577,510

- 31.9% of the State's jobs
- **Decreased by 19,774** over the last 5 years (-3.3% compared to -3.5% in the State and +1.8% in the nation)
- **Projected to decrease by an additional 5,097** over the next 5 years (-0.9% compared to +1.2% in the State and +4.3% in the nation)

Average Earnings
$86,292

- Earnings are significantly higher in Hartford County ($87,771) than in Tolland County ($68,156)
- $2,549 lower than the State's average ($89,111) but $8,763 higher than the national average ($77,799)
- **Average earnings grew by 15.0% since 2016** (compared to +16.6% for the State and +24.1% for the nation)

Gross regional Product
$97.0 B

- 31.9% of the State's GRP, which is high relative to the region's share of the State's population (29.3%) and equal to its share of the State's jobs (31.9%)
- **Productivity is at $167,892 per worker**, which is just $96 lower than the State and $28,773 higher than the nation

Competitiveness
-29,421

*jobs added or lost due to local factors **

- Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities: +3,479
- Aircraft Engine and Engine Parts Manufacturing: +1,477
- Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools (State Government)+1,468
- Other Aircraft Parts and Auxiliary Equipment Manufacturing: +1,350
- Corporate, Subsidiary, and regional Managing Offices: +1,149

* i.e. job growth or decline cannot be explained by national or industry growth

High Concentration* Industries

- Aircraft Engine and Engine Parts Manufacturing: 43.1
- Cable and Other Subscription Programming: 20.5 (Note: ESPN Headquarters in Bristol, outside of region)
- Direct Life Insurance Carriers: 19.6
- Other Aircraft Parts and Auxiliary Equipment Manufacturing: 14.1
- Spring Manufacturing:12.9

* Compares an industry's share of regional employment with its share at the national level. A LQ of 2.5 would mean the industry is 2.5x more concentrated in the region than the typical region.

High Growth Industries

2016 - 2021

- Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities: +4,987 (84% growth)
- General Warehousing and Storage: +3,666 (69%)
- Corporate, Subsidiary, and regional Managing Offices: 1,711 (16%)
- Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists): +1,628 (14%)
- Couriers and Express Delivery Services: +1,317 (39%)

Economy Spotlight: Capitol Region's Top 10 Industries

The following tables detail the Capitol Region's top 10 industries (at the 6-digit NAICS level) by growth and by number of jobs.

Top 10 Sectors by Growth, Capitol Region

Description	2016 Jobs	2021 Jobs	2016 - 2021 Change	2016 - 2021 % Change	Avg. Earnings Per Job	2021 Location Quotient
Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities	5,972	10,960	4,988	84%	$31,760	1.44
General Warehousing and Storage	5,284	8,944	3,660	69%	$51,569	1.59
Corporate, Subsidiary, and Regional Managing Offices	10,799	12,511	1,711	16%	$152,837	1.56
Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)	11,537	13,146	1,609	14%	$139,791	1.35
Couriers and Express Delivery Services	3,384	4,692	1,308	39%	$50,966	1.35
Aircraft Engine and Engine Parts Manufacturing	10,493	11,624	1,131	11%	$153,252	42.77
Local Messengers and Local Delivery	221	1,203	982	444%	$37,290	1.70
Other Aircraft Parts and Auxiliary Equipment Manufacturing	3,857	4,782	925	24%	$132,181	13.99
Insurance Agencies and Brokerages	4,984	5,849	866	17%	$137,395	1.28
Marketing Consulting Services	239	949	710	297%	$94,822	0.76

Source: Lightcast

The Top 10 fastest-growing sectors include diverse segments of the economy, including services, warehousing, medical offices, manufacturing, and insurance, among others. All except one have location quotients higher than 1.0, and six have average earnings higher than the regional average ($86,292). The top 10 fastest-growing sectors account for about 13% of all jobs in the region.

Top 10 Sectors by Employment, Capitol Region

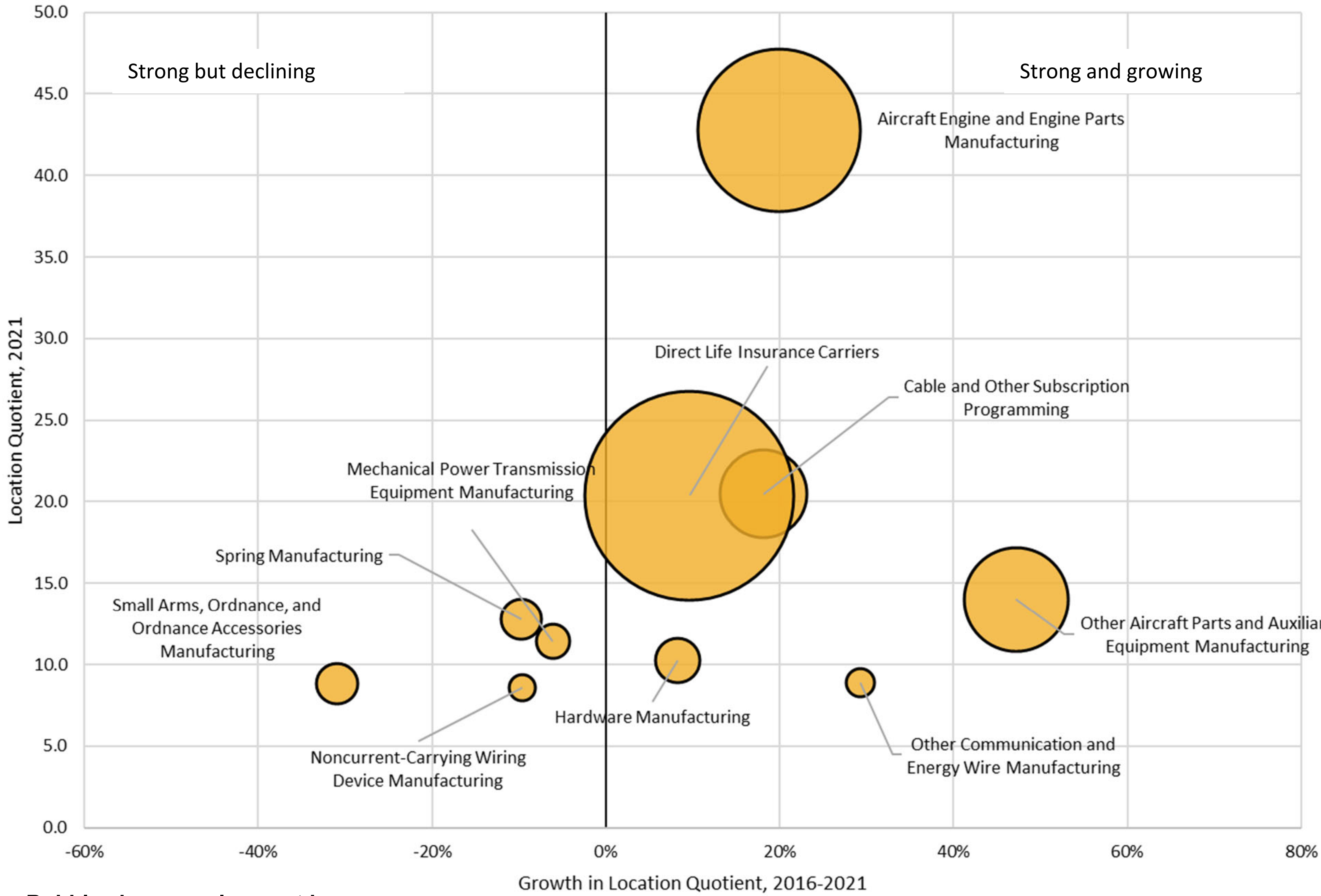
Description	2016 Jobs	2021 Jobs	2016 - 2021 Change	2016 - 2021 % Change	Avg. Earnings Per Job	2021 Location Quotient
Elementary and Secondary Schools (Local Government)	26,953	25,842	(1,111)	(4%)	$93,792	1.05
State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	20,279	19,568	(711)	(4%)	$112,966	2.47
Direct Life Insurance Carriers	18,722	19,234	512	3%	$167,063	20.37
Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools (State Government)	18,244	18,892	649	4%	$82,682	2.10
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	15,542	16,178	637	4%	$86,629	0.95
Full-Service Restaurants	17,508	14,628	(2,879)	(16%)	$32,469	0.88
Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)	11,537	13,146	1,609	14%	$139,791	1.35
Corporate, Subsidiary, and Regional Managing Offices	10,799	12,511	1,711	16%	$152,837	1.56
Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	13,220	12,004	(1,216)	(9%)	$102,033	0.61
Aircraft Engine and Engine Parts Manufacturing	10,493	11,624	1,131	11%	$153,252	42.77

Source: Lightcast

The Capitol Region's top 10 employment sectors account for 28% of total employment in the region. Seven of them have Location Quotients higher than 1.0, meaning they are more concentrated than the national average. Additionally, eight have high earnings, with average earnings per job higher than the regional average of $86,292.

Most of the Capitol Region's largest sectors have grown in the last five years, but four have seen varying levels of decline, including the two largest sectors.

Economy Spotlight: Location Quotients, 5-year View

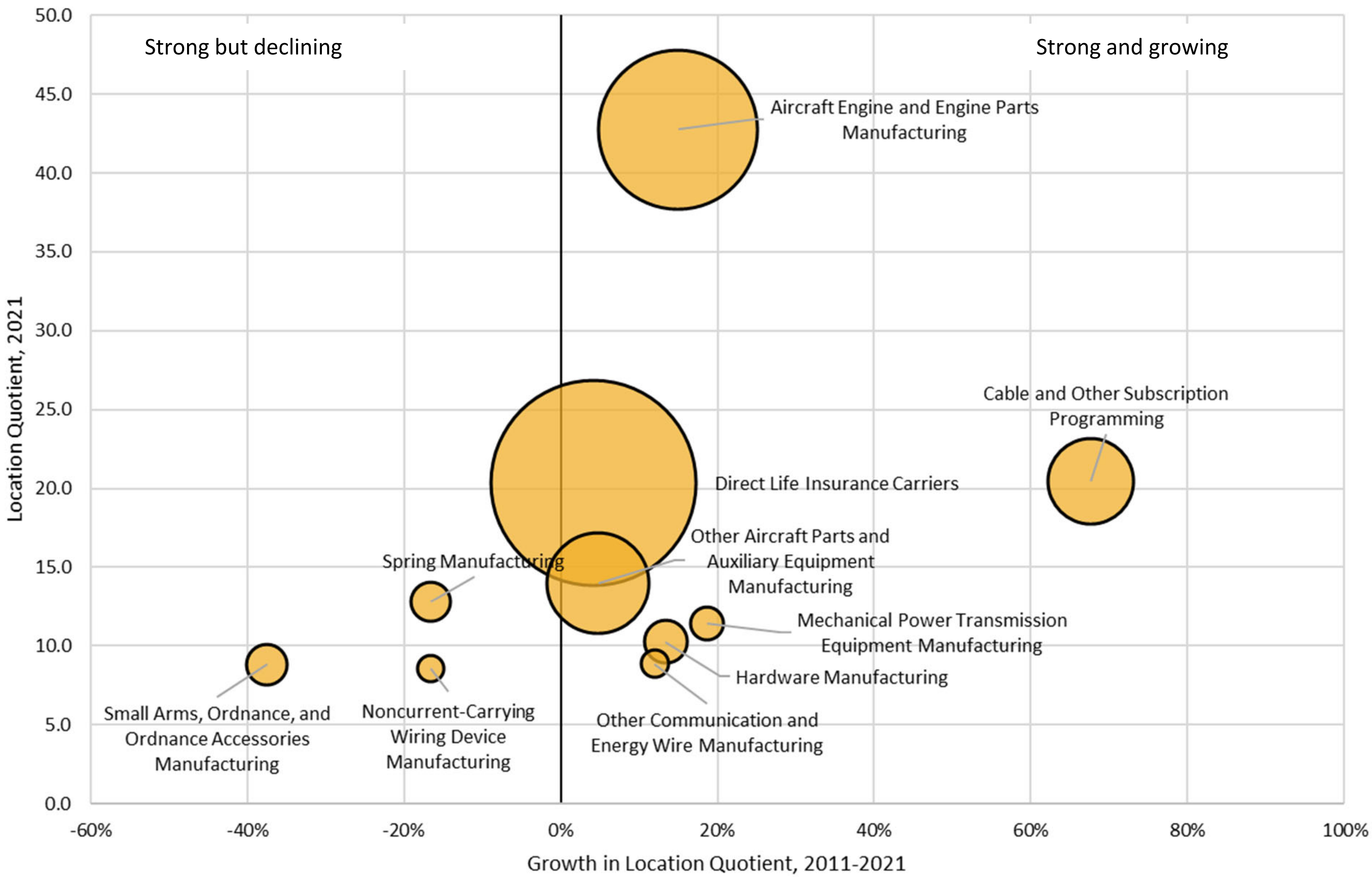


Bubble size = employment in 2021

Over the last five years, the region's top 10 most concentrated sectors have seen mixed outcomes.

- Six of the ten industries have seen continued growth in their Location Quotients, from 8% in Hardware Manufacturing to 47% in Other Aircraft Parts and Auxiliary Equipment Manufacturing.
- Four of the ten industries have seen declines in their Location Quotients, from -6% in Mechanical Power Transmission Equipment Manufacturing to -31% in Small Arms, Ordnance, and Ordnance Accessories Manufacturing.

Economy Spotlight: Location Quotients, 10-year View



Bubble size = employment in 2021

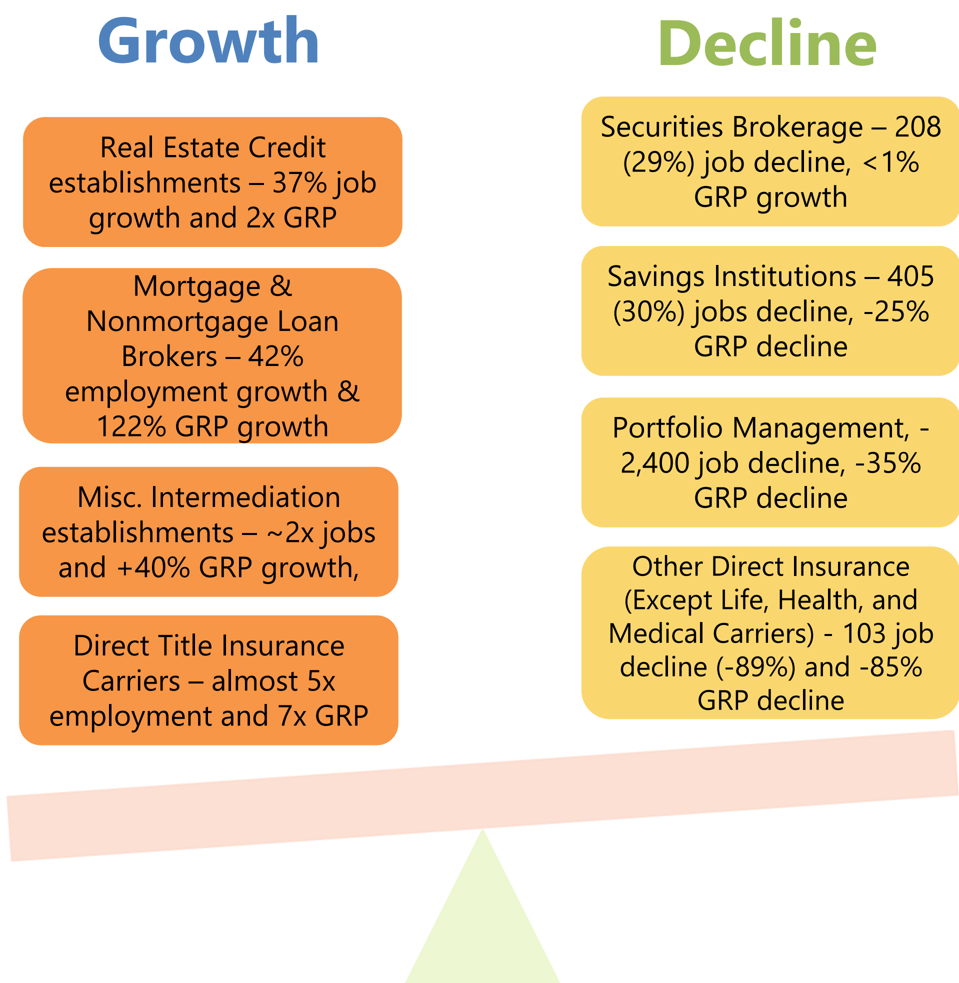
Over the last ten years, the region's top 10 most concentrated sectors mostly grown in concentration.

- Seven of the sectors have seen growth, ranging from 4% in Direct Life Insurance Carriers to 68% in Cable and Other Subscription Programming
- Three of the ten have declined: Noncurrent-Carrying Wiring Device Manufacturing (-16.5%), Spring Manufacturing (-16.6%), and Small Arms, Ordnance, and Ordnance Accessories Manufacturing (-37.4%).

Economy Spotlight: Finance and Insurance Industry Trends, 2016-2021

Overall, the Finance and Insurance industry had 51,299 jobs 2021 (a -6% decline since 2016) and generated $21.3 billion in GRP (a 12% increase since 2016). Generally, the Finance and Insurance sector in the region is adding jobs within the subsectors of real estate and insurance and losing jobs in subsectors related to finance.

Biggest Movers, 2016-2021



Finance and Insurance Sectors, Capitol Region

Description	2021 Jobs	2016 - 2021 Change	2021 GRP	2016-2021 GRP % Change
Insurance Agencies and Brokerages	5,849	866	$1,503,457,092	38.0%
Direct Life Insurance Carriers	19,234	512	$7,348,762,650	7.5%
Mortgage and Nonmortgage Loan Brokers	464	138	$162,216,483	121.6%
Real Estate Credit	496	134	$238,824,502	109.5%
Direct Title Insurance Carriers	157	124	$67,366,211	661.2%
Investment Advice	1,056	72	$417,543,398	45.0%
Claims Adjusting	268	38	$81,531,259	71.6%
All Other Nondepository Credit Intermediation	276	37	$83,622,870	45.5%
Miscellaneous Intermediation	55	26	$39,630,546	48.7%
Investment Banking and Securities Dealing	365	12	$181,234,659	47.5%
Consumer Lending	118	7	$41,014,829	83.2%
Financial Transactions Processing, Reserve, and Clearinghouse Activities	60	0	$22,007,294	42.4%
Sales Financing	109	(4)	$39,738,630	3.3%
Other Activities Related to Credit Intermediation	49	(103)	$8,306,590	-66.4%
Other Direct Insurance (except Life, Health, and Medical) Carriers	13	(103)	$5,379,466	-84.6%
All Other Insurance Related Activities	604	(113)	$148,713,645	-12.6%
Third Party Administration of Insurance and Pension Funds	979	(164)	$204,654,105	6.2%
Reinsurance Carriers	600	(170)	$276,020,478	-26.1%
Direct Health and Medical Insurance Carriers	2,631	(171)	$1,549,346,094	30.7%
Securities Brokerage	501	(208)	$178,654,447	0.8%
Credit Unions	560	(211)	$116,111,029	-11.4%
Savings Institutions	942	(405)	$234,075,828	-24.9%
Commercial Banking	3,375	(479)	$1,214,554,620	20.6%
Direct Property and Casualty Insurance Carriers	10,271	(528)	$4,667,656,343	3.3%
Portfolio Management	2,231	(2,404)	$831,360,524	-35.2%

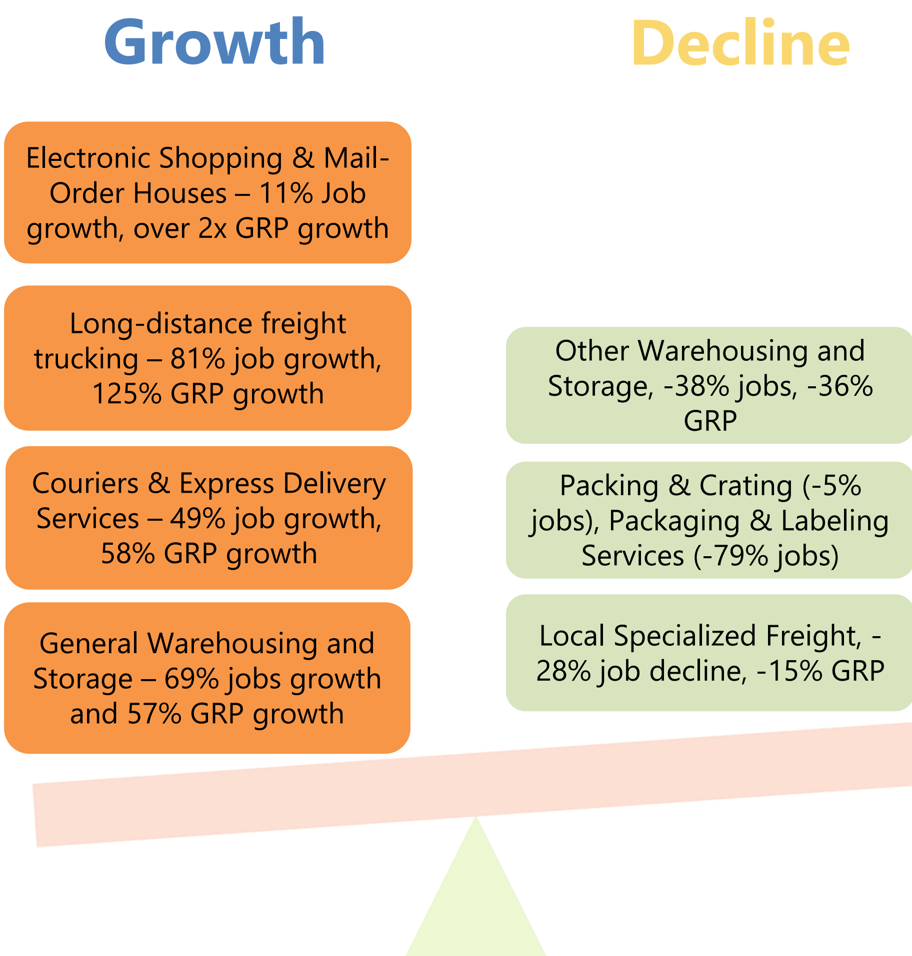
Source: Lightcast

Note: Includes 6-digit NAICS codes with at least 10 jobs in both 2016 and 2021

Economy Spotlight: E-Commerce & Logistics Industry Trends, 2016-2021

The E-Commerce and Logistics industry is growing rapidly, 20,870 jobs as of 2021 (a 52% increase from 2016) and $1.6 billion in GRP (a 61% increase since 2016). The most significant growth was in subsectors related to warehousing, delivery services, and trucking.

Biggest Movers, 2016-2021



Logistics & E-Commerce Sectors, Capitol Region

Description	2021 Jobs	2016-2021 Change	2016-2021 % Change	2021 GRP	2016-2021 GRP % Change
General Warehousing and Storage	8,944	3,660	69%	$506,203,549	57%
Couriers and Express Delivery Services	4,692	1,308	39%	$359,400,345	58%
Local Messengers and Local Delivery	1,203	982	444%	$72,866,681	264%
General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Truckload	1,364	612	81%	$150,843,985	125%
General Freight Trucking, Local	1,015	241	31%	$100,866,368	71%
Freight Transportation Arrangement	513	140	38%	$41,315,816	19%
Specialized Freight (except Used Goods) Trucking, Long-Distance	255	121	90%	$20,809,923	205%
General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Less Than Truckload	697	74	12%	$70,307,258	19%
Process, Physical Distribution, and Logistics Consulting Services	276	69	34%	$26,630,527	17%
Electronic Shopping and Mail-Order Houses	614	59	11%	$186,921,271	114%
Refrigerated Warehousing and Storage	494	43	9%	$39,890,845	14%
Used Household and Office Goods Moving	398	34	9%	$27,016,399	8%
Business to Business Electronic Markets	48	28	144%	$14,708,707	160%
Packing and Crating	21	(1)	(5%)	$1,413,961	(-2%)
Packaging and Labeling Services	10	(38)	(79%)	$768,842	(-82%)
Other Warehousing and Storage	104	(65)	(38%)	$10,779,179	(-36%)
Specialized Freight (except Used Goods) Trucking, Local	215	(84)	(28%)	$24,695,025	(-15%)
Total, All Logistics and E-Commerce	**20,870**	**7,182**	**52%**	**$1,658,517,326**	**61%**

Source: Lightcast

Note: Includes 6-digit NAICS codes with at least 10 jobs in both 2016 and 2021

Labor Force

Labor Force
568,482
June 2022

- 29.6% of the State's labor force
- **Labor force participation rate of 67.1%,** which is 1.4% higher than the State (65.8%) and 4.6% higher than the nation (62.5%)
- **Participation rates have been on a long-term decline in keeping with national trends**, but have not yet recovered to the pre-pandemic rate of 69.2% (2019)
- 278,268 civilian, non-institutionalized residents 16 years + are not participating in the labor force, which accounts for 27.8% of the State's total

Unemployment
4.1%
June 2022

- **23,307 workers are unemployed**, which is 29.5% of the State's total
- Unemployment is equal to the State's rate, but is 0.3% higher than the nation (3.8%)
- Unemployment has fallen by 4.4% over the last five years
- **Unemployment rates are down from their peak of 7.7% during 2020**

Underemployment *
25.8%

- About a quarter of the population is overqualified for the types of jobs employers are offering. This indicates a misalignment between what employers need (low-skill workers) and the population (high-skills)
- Underemployment is slightly lower than the State (25.9%) and the nation (26.3%)
- There are 8% more people with Some College, Non-Degree Awards than required by employers; 6% more with an Associate's Degree; and 12% more with a Graduate Degree or Higher than there are jobs at those levels

* Underemployment = Population at Educational Level – Jobs Requiring Educational Level

Average Annual College Completions
21,283
2016 - 2020

- 36 higher education institutions operating within the region in this time period
- 20,742 completions in 2020 (-1.7%)
- Declining enrollment: 70,696 enrollments in 2020 (a 7.2% decrease since 2016)
- **8.0% of completions in 2020 were in distance programs** (down from 9.9% in 2016)
- **16.9% of completions were for certificates** with 3,499 certificates awarded in 2020, down from 17.7% in 2016

Top Skills
*Based on profile analytics **

2016 - 2021

Specialized:

- Marketing (7%)
- Strategic Planning (6%)
- Process Improvement (5%)
- Project Management (4%)
- Event Planning (4%)

Common:

- Customer Service (16%)
- Management (14%)
- Sales (13%)
- Leadership (10%)
- Microsoft Office (10%)

* Profile analytics mine data from the 476,770 online resumes that list the region as the place of residence (82.6% of all jobs in the region).

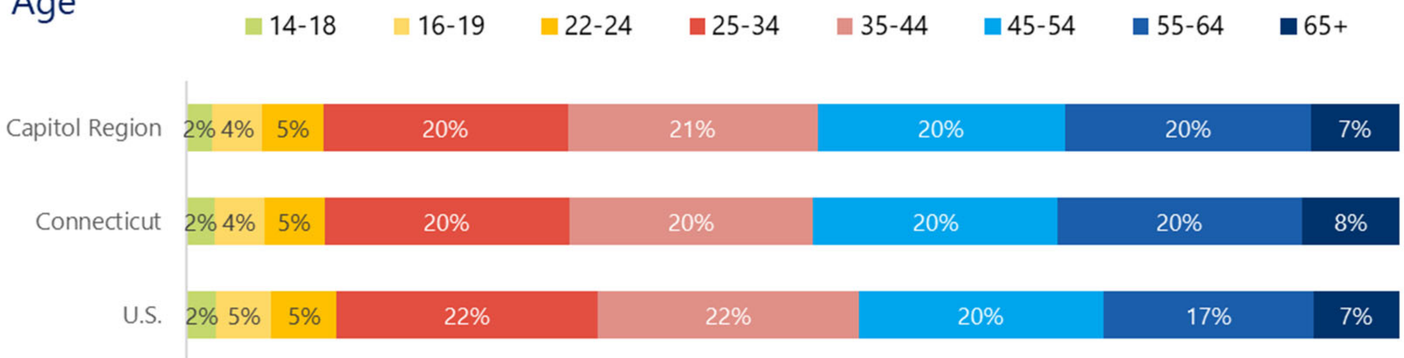
Net Commuters
49,741
2017-2021

- **The region is a net importer of workers** with an average of 173,852 inbound commuters and 124,110 outbound
- Top inbound counties: New Haven County, CT (29.2%), Middlesex County, CT (14.3%), and Litchfield County, CT (12.6%)
- Top outbound counties: New Haven County, CT (30.9%), Fairfield County, CT (14.4%), and Middlesex County, CT (12.5%)
- 80.1% of inbound commuters and 75.0% of outbound commuters remain in-state
- The mean commute time ranges from 23.4 minutes (Hartford County) to 26.6 minutes (Tolland County), compared to 26.7 minutes for the State and 26.9 minutes for the nation.

Labor Force Spotlight: Labor Force Demographics

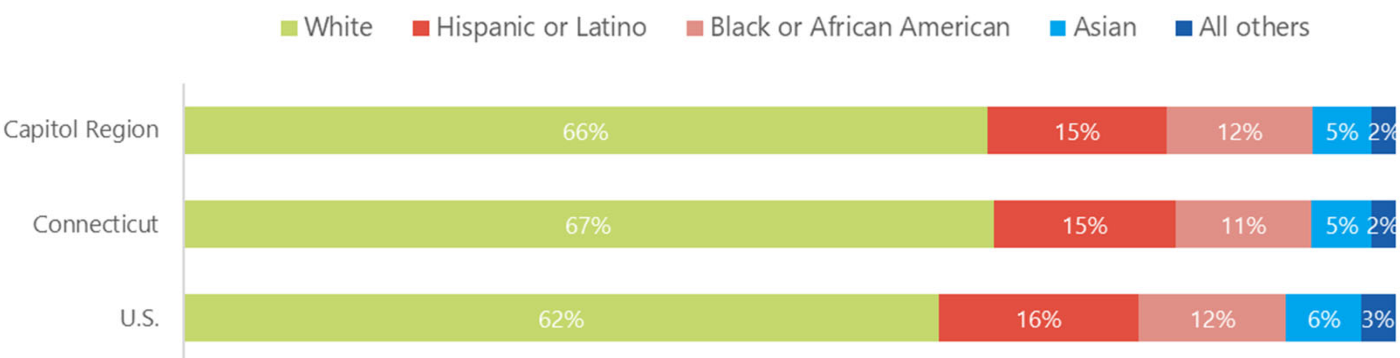
The graphs below show the demographic distribution of the Capitol Region's workforce by age, race, and sex.

Age



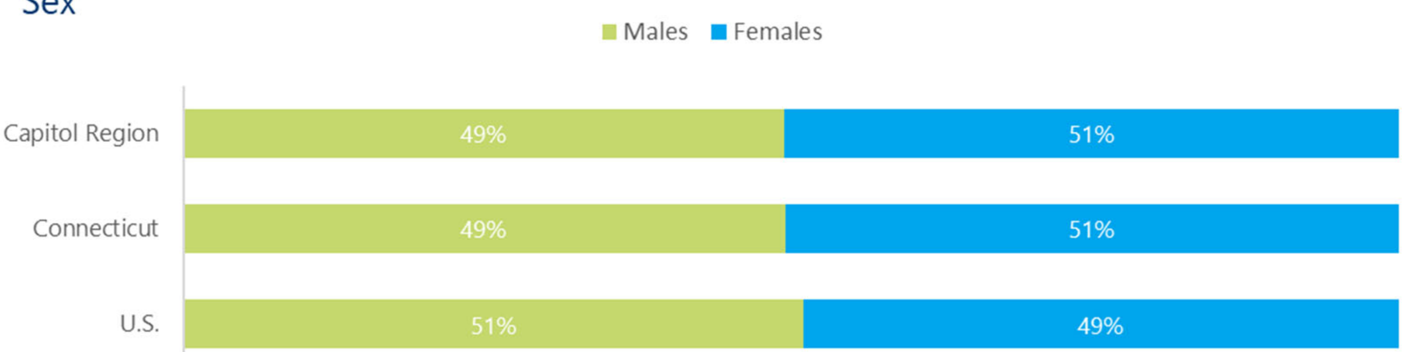
The Capitol Region's workforce aligns with the State's distribution, but it is slightly older than the nation, with older workers (ages 55–64 and 65+) accounting for 28% of the workforce for both the Capitol region and the State and 24% at the national level. This is a long-term trend: in 2016, 26% of the workforce was over the age of 54.

Race



The racial composition of the workforce is slightly more diverse than the State but less diverse than the nation, with 34% BIPOC workers compared to 33% for the State and 38% for the nation. The region's workforce is increasingly more diverse with a 3.9% increase in BIPOC workers in the past 5 years in line with the State (+3.8%) and exceeding national (+2.3%) trends.

Sex



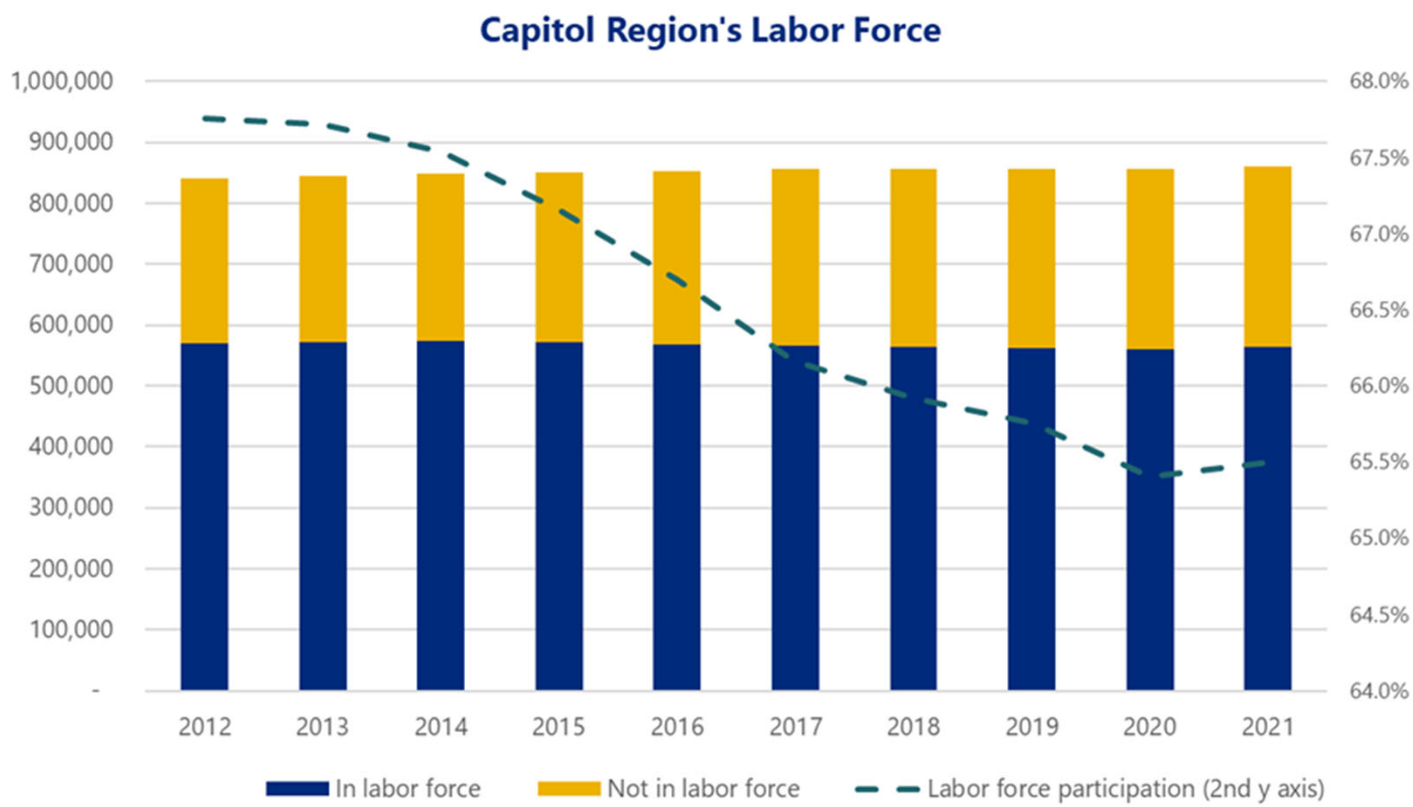
The Capitol Region's workforce is evenly split, in keeping with State and national trends. The distribution of workers has remained consistent over the past 5 years for all 3 regions of analysis.

Source: Lightcast
All data as of 2021

Labor Force Spotlight: Labor Force Trends

The Capitol Region's labor force has been decreasing over time. Between 2012 and 2021, the population grew by 2.4% while the labor force decreased by 1.1%. Meanwhile the portion of the population 16 and over that are not participating in the workforce increased by 9.5%. As of 2021, there was a labor force participation rate of 65.5%, a 2.3% decrease from the participation rate of 67.8% in 2012.

Decreasing labor forces and labor force participation rates are a national trend resulting from a number of structural and cultural changes in our society, including declining birth and immigration rates, longer life spans, the prioritization of higher education over part-time jobs for teens, and a lack of childcare accessibility. However, one of the largest causes is the aging and ongoing retirement of the Baby Boomer generation. The share of the labor force that is 55 and over has been increasing over time: in 2012, older workers accounted for 24% of the labor force, but by 2021 that share had risen to 27%. Meanwhile, 61% of residents over the age of 16 who are not currently participating in the workforce are over the age of 55.



Source: ACS 5 year estimates; population 16+

Labor Force Spotlight: Jobless Population by Demographic

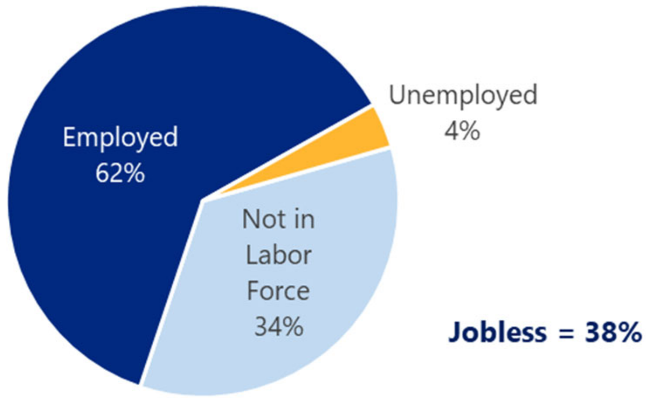
The jobless population includes both the unemployed and those who are not currently seeking employment for a variety of reasons including retirement, being a stay-at-home parent, disability, etc. Particular populations could potentially be activated within the workforce given the right support and circumstances, presenting an opportunity to expand the workforce both in terms of additional workers and in terms of inclusivity and equity.

The overall non-institutionalized, civilian population aged 16 and older has a jobless rate of 38%, with the vast majority of the jobless not participating in the labor force (as opposed to unemployed).

The graph on the next page shows jobless rates for different demographics within the Capitol Region's population. While the demographic groups are not always directly comparable due to different population parameters (see note at bottom of chart), the following demographics have higher joblessness rates than the overall population (38%):

- **16 to 19 years** – this is likely due to the increased emphasis placed on higher education rather than part-time work, which is a national long-term trend
- **65 to 74 years** – this is likely due to retirement; however, a portion of this demographic may still desire work but face barriers (such as ageism, lack of transportation, or ongoing concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic) to re-entering the workforce
- **75 years and older** – likely due to retirement
- **Males and Females in Poverty**
- **With any Disability** – individuals on disability may desire work, but may fear losing benefits
- **Less than High School Graduates**

Capitol Region Employment Status

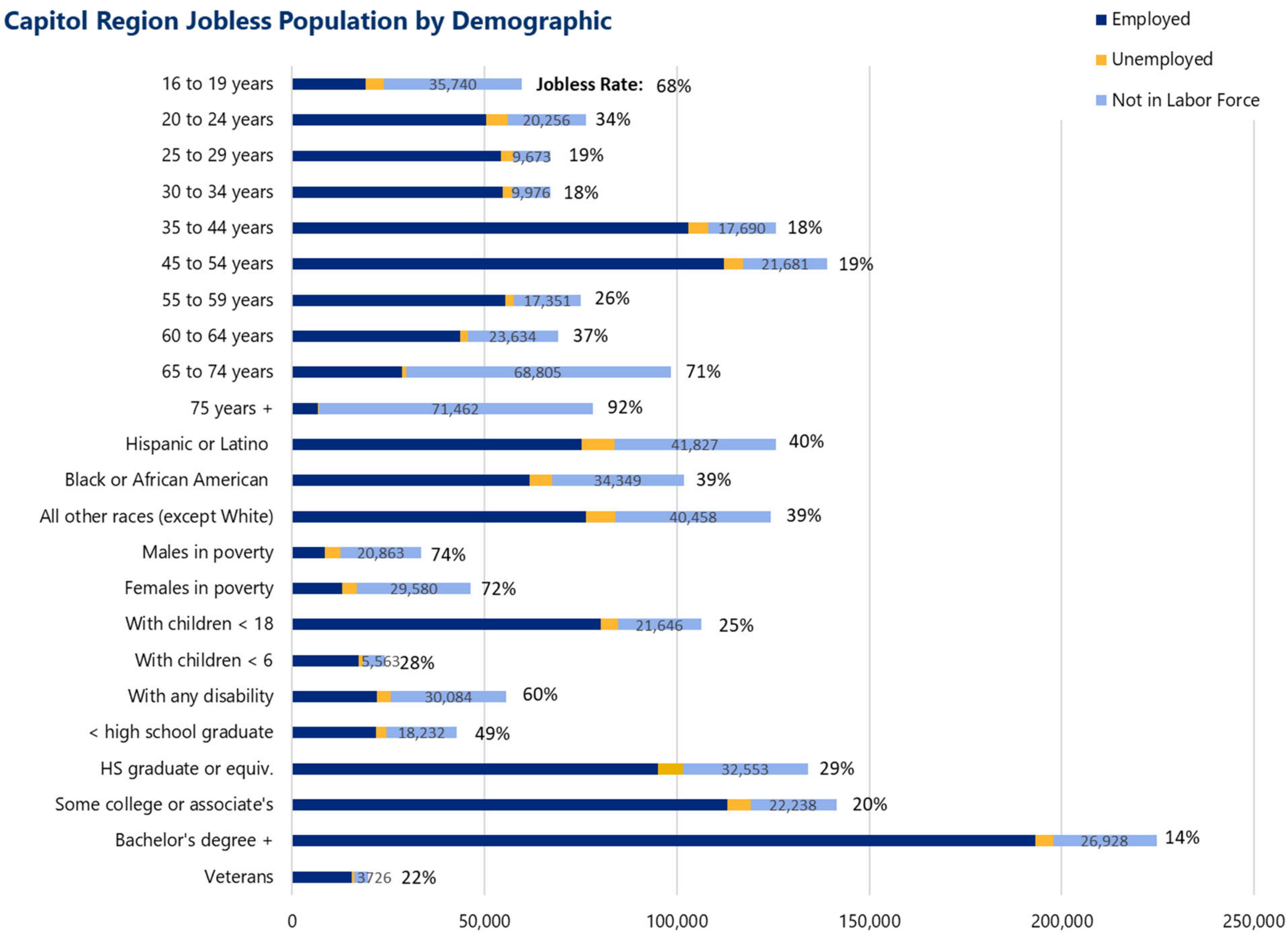


Source: ACS 2020 5-year estimates; note that this data is older than the employment status data used in the Labor Force section of this report
Inlcudes the entire civilian, non-institutionalized population 16+

The demographics with the largest total numbers of joblessness:

- **White population** – 239,737 jobless with the same jobless rate as the overall average (38%) (not pictured in graph due to scale)
- **Females** – 80,000 jobless with a jobless rate of 26% (not pictured in graph due to scale)
- **75+ years** – 71,667 jobless with a rate of 92%, likely due to retirement
- **65 to 74 years** – 69,925 jobless with a rate of 71%, likely due to retirement
- **Hispanic or Latino** – 50,347 jobless with a rate of 38%
- **All Other Races** – 47,990 jobless with a rate of 39% (includes Asian, Some other race alone, Two or more races, American Indian and Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander)

Equity and Inclusion: Employment Status by Demographic

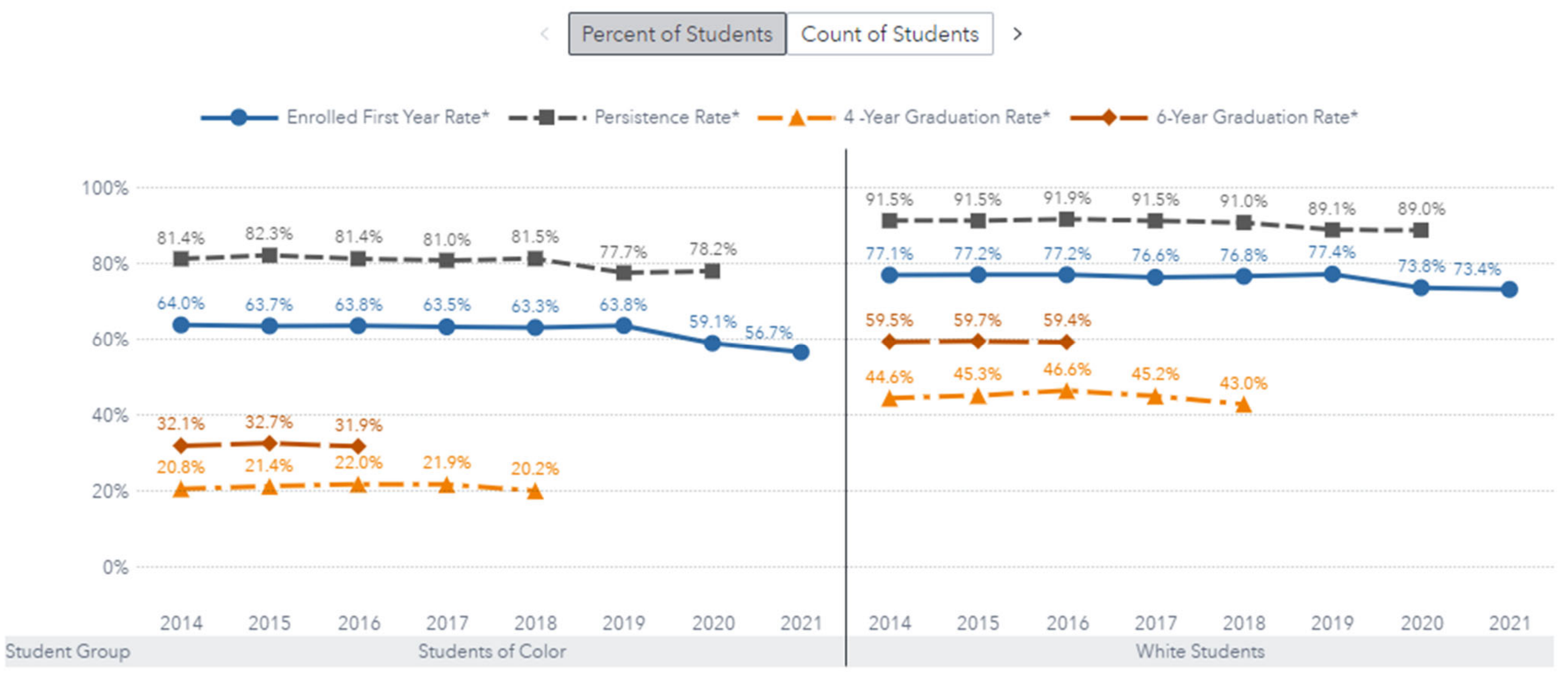


Source: ACS 2020 5-year estimates; note that this data is older than the employment status data used in the Labor Force section of this report.
Labels show the total Not in labor Force and Percent Jobless.
A person could fall within multiple demographic categories (e.g. aged 30-34 and Hispanic or Latino). In addition, certain demographics have different populations the data is drawing from. The data by age, race, and poverty uses the population 16+; the data for parents and disability uses the population 20-64; educational attainment data uses the population 25-64;

Labor Force Spotlight: College Enrollment

Statewide, college enrollment following high school graduation dropped off with the Class of 2020. This trend is more extreme for students of color, dropping 7.1 percentage points from 63.8% to 56.7% between 2019 and 2021. About 73% of white students in the Class of 2021 enrolled in college, compared to 77.4% for the Class of 2019.

Both white students and students of color saw a drop in persistence into their sophomore year of college during the pandemic, and both have seen declines in 4-year graduation rates during the pandemic, where progress had been made earlier in the decade.



Source: ct.gov edsight

Labor Force Spotlight: Enrollment in College

The region has experienced declining college enrollment in recent years

On average, the Capitol Region slightly outperforms the state in sending high school seniors to college

68% of Capitol Region graduates enrolled in college in 2021, compared to 66% in the State

The Capitol Region has seen a similar drop in college enrollment as the State

Compared to 2016, 10% fewer Capitol Region graduates enrolled in college within 1 year. The State also saw about a 10% drop.

Almost every school district in the Capitol Region saw a drop in college enrollment from 2016 to 2021

These declines range from -0.9% in Vernon School District to -48.6% in Bolton School District

Five districts saw increases in 1-year enrollment, from 1.83% in Manchester School District to 29.3% in Canton School District

Enrollment in college, 2016 vs 2021 Senior Classes

District	Class of 2016	Class of 2021	Percentage decline in college enrollment
Avon School District	90.4%	84.9%	-3.7%
Berlin School District	86.3%	79.3%	-9.2%
Bloomfield School District	72.2%	61.2%	-17.4%
Bolton School District	85.4%	64.3%	-48.6%
Canton School District	75.2%	86.6%	29.3%
Capitol Region Education Council	71.4%	75.2%	6.3%
Coventry School District	70.8%	65.2%	-14.9%
East Granby School District	84.5%	78.8%	-13.3%
East Hartford School District	53.0%	50.2%	-0.7%
Ellington School District	81.7%	71.9%	-2.7%
Enfield School District	71.8%	58.0%	-19.1%
Farmington School District	84.9%	83.7%	-3.3%
Glastonbury School District	88.2%	82.9%	-14.5%
Granby School District	81.8%	82.3%	-20.9%
Hartford School District	62.3%	49.5%	-25.8%
Manchester School District	61.2%	58.2%	1.8%
New Britain School District	50.2%	37.9%	-23.6%
Newington School District	78.6%	68.7%	-7.7%
Plainville School District	74.1%	66.5%	-20.4%
Rocky Hill School District	81.4%	81.5%	10.0%
Simsbury School District	87.9%	81.5%	-16.9%
Somers School District	75.9%	78.3%	6.8%
South Windsor School District	87.1%	79.6%	-9.2%
Southington School District	78.4%	76.2%	-1.6%
Stafford School District	61.3%	64.4%	-13.8%
Suffield School District	84.4%	68.6%	-23.2%
Tolland School District	80.8%	77.0%	-2.9%
Vernon School District	69.4%	67.1%	-0.9%
West Hartford School District	85.2%	79.5%	-7.2%
Wethersfield School District	83.1%	80.4%	-13.1%
Windsor Locks School District	63.6%	63.4%	-23.8%
Windsor School District	74.6%	66.7%	-7.0%
Capitol Region Average	**74.5%**	**68.3%**	**-10.3%**
State Average	**72.2%**	**66.1%**	**-9.6%**

Source: CT.gov EdSight

Key Takeaways: Real Estate

The office sector is declining rapidly, particularly in the downtown area

- Steady inventory
- Healthy vacancy rate with enough stock to meet demand, but not so much that there are a significant amount of vacant buildings
- Lease rates are significantly lower than the national average and growing much slower than the national rate
- Significantly less construction and fewer deliveries than average for the Capitol Region
- Net absorptions are negative and have been decreasing rapidly
- Downtown Hartford has larger buildings, accounts for nearly a quarter of the SF in the region, has significantly higher vacancy rates, and higher lease rates that are climbing faster than the overall Capitol Region

The industrial sector is a tight market with stable inventory and rapidly increasing net absorptions

- Steady inventory
- Inventory is tight, but in line with national trends
- Lease rates are significantly lower than the national average and growing much slower than the national rate
- Construction and deliveries are increasing over time
- Positive net absorptions which are increasing rapidly over time
- Practically none of the industrial stock is located in downtown Hartford.

The retail sector is a tight market with steady inventory and rapidly increasing net absorptions

- Steady inventory
- Inventory is tight, but in line with national trends
- Lease rates are significantly lower than the national average and growing slower than the national rate
- Significantly more deliveries than average for the Capitol Region
- Significantly less construction than average for the Capitol Region
- Positive net absorptions which are increasing rapidly over time
- Downtown buildings are larger, prices are double the region's rate and increasing rapidly, and vacancies are higher

The multifamily housing sector is a tight but stable market with slow growth

- Steady inventory
- Inventory is tight, but in line with national trends
- Lease rates are lower than the national average and growing slower than the national rate
- Significantly fewer deliveries than average for the Capitol Region
- About average construction pace for the Capitol Region
- Positive net absorptions which are increasing slightly over time
- Downtown buildings account for a relatively small share of the Capitol Region's stock, with higher lease rates, and significantly higher vacancies

The residential housing sector is a stable market that is primarily owner-occupied with slow growth

- Slowly increasing inventory
- Healthy vacancy rate with enough stock to meet demand, but not so much that there are a significant amount of vacancies
- Lease rates are lower than the national average
- The majority of homes are owner-occupied, but growth has been very slow
- Significantly less construction than average for the Capitol Region
- Downtown accounts for relatively few of the Capitol Region's homes, but has significantly higher home values and vacancy rates; the vast majority of the homes in the downtown area are renter-occupied

Office Real Estate

Inventory
66.7 M SF
2021 / Costar

- 3,061 commercial buildings as of 2021
- On average (2012-2021), the region has 3,053 buildings and 66.7 M SF of commercial inventory
- Inventory has been relatively stable since 2012, with +14 buildings (0.5% increase) and -295,692 SF (-0.4% decrease)
- Hartford Co. accounted for vast majority of the inventory in 2021 (92.6% of buildings and 97.5% of SF); and 92.9% of the buildings and an average of 97.6% of the SF between 2012 and 2021
- There was a 0.1% increase in buildings and in SF between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic); inventory has remained steady since
- Downtown Hartford accounts for 92 (3.0%) of the total buildings and 14.9 M of the SF (22.3%)

Vacancy Rate*
9.6%
2021 / Costar

- Healthy vacancy rate and lower than the national rate of 12.1%
- 6.4 M SF of vacant retail space as of 2021
- On average (2012-2021), the region has 6.1 M SF of vacant inventory and a vacancy rate* of 9.1%
- Vacancies have been decreasing over time, with -539,251 less SF vacant in 2021 than in 2012 (a 7.8% decrease) with an average annual* 0.5% decrease in vacancies since 2012
- Hartford Co. accounted for 98.9% of the vacant SF as of 2021 and an average of 98.5% of the vacancies since 2012
- Since 2012, Hartford Co.'s average vacancy rate (9.2%) is 3.4% higher than in Tolland Co. (5.7%)
- There was a 1.2% decrease* in vacancies between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic), followed by an 8.7% increase in 2021
- Downtown Hartford's vacancy rate was 12.0% in 2021 and 14.9% as of May 2022

** Weighted average for the two counties*

Average* Lease Rate
$18.51 / SF
2021 / Costar

- Significantly lower than the average national lease rate of $34.84 / SF (which is where it was prior to the pandemic)
- From 2012 through 2021, lease rates averaged* $18.44 per SF
- Lease rates have been fairly stagnant over time, with an annual average increase of 0.6% since 2012, which is significantly lower than the national average annual growth rate of 3.1%
- On average (2012-2021), lease rates in Hartford Co. ($18.56 / SF) are 34.5% higher than in Tolland Co. ($13.80 / SF)
- There was a 0.4% increase in lease rates between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic), followed by a 1.8% decrease in 2021
- Downtown Hartford's lease rates are higher than the overall region at $20.97 / SF and has an average annual growth rate of 2.8%

**Weighted average for the two counties*

Deliveries
23,000 SF
2021 / Costar

- 2 office buildings were delivered in 2021
- There have been 58 buildings and 1.5 M SF delivered since 2012 for an average of 6 buildings and 150,718 SF per year
- Hartford Co. accounted for 50.0% of the buildings and 78.3% of the SF delivered in 2021 and 98.3% of the buildings and 99.7% of the SF delivered between 2012 and 2021
- There was a 66.7% decrease in buildings and a 54.6% decrease in SF being delivered between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic); deliveries have continued to decline since

Under Construction
116,739 SF
2021 / Costar

- 6 buildings were constructed in 2021
- There have been 60 buildings and 2.1 M SF constructed since 2012 for an average of 6 buildings and 213,628 SF per year
- Hartford Co. accounted for 100.0% of the buildings and 100.0% of the SF constructed in 2021 and 98.3% of the buildings and 99.8% of the SF constructed between 2012 and 2021
- There was a 50.0% increase in buildings, but a 47.7% decrease in SF constructed between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic); however, construction has since increased

Net Absorptions
-503,490 SF
2021 / Costar

- On average (2012-2021), the region absorbs 10,977 SF each year
- Absorptions have been decreasing over time with a 371,502 SF decrease between 2012 and 2021 (a 281.5% decrease)
- On average (2012-2021), Hartford Co. accounts for 50.1% of the total absorptions
- There was a 75.9% increase in absorption between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic); however, absorption has since decreased

Industrial Real Estate

Inventory
122.9 M SF
2021 / Costar

- 3,683 industrial buildings as of 2021
- Only 3 buildings (0.1%) and 42,609 SF (0.0%) are located in downtown Hartford
- On average (2012-2021), the region has 3,671 buildings and 120.6 M SF of inventory
- Inventory has been relatively stable since 2012, with +15 buildings (0.4% increase) and +5.2 M SF (4.4% increase)
- Hartford Co. accounted for vast majority of the inventory in 2021 (96.3% of buildings and 97.8% of SF) and 93.3% of the buildings and an average of 97.7% of the SF between 2012 and 2021
- There was a 0.1% increase in buildings and a 0.2% increase in SF between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic); inventory has remained steady since

Vacancy Rate*
4.6%
2021 / Costar

- A tight market, but in line with the national vacancy rate of 4.2%
- 5.6 M SF of vacant industrial space as of 2021
- There is no vacant space in downtown Hartford
- On average (2012-2021), the region has 7.4 M SF of vacant inventory and a vacancy rate* of 6.1%
- Vacancies have been decreasing over time, with an average annual* 5.0% decrease in vacancies since 2012
- Hartford Co. accounted for 98.8% of the vacant SF as of 2021 and an average of 97.7% of the vacancies since 2012
- Since 2012, Hartford Co.'s average vacancy rate (6.7%) is 0.7% lower than in Tolland Co. (6.1%)
- There was an 8.6% decrease in vacancies* between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic); followed by a 11.7% decrease in 2021

*Weighted average for the two counties

Avg.* NNN** Lease Rate
$5.59 / SF
2021 / Costar

- Significantly lower than the national average of $10.00 / SF
- From 2012 through 2021, lease rates averaged* $4.78 per SF which is
- Lease rates have been increased slowly over time with an annual average increase of 2.6% since 2012, which is significantly lower than the national average of 5.9%
- On average (2012-2021), lease rates in Hartford Co. ($4.75 / SF) are 16.8% lower than in Tolland Co. ($5.72 / SF)
- There was a 2.1% increase in lease rates between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic), followed by a 6.0% increase in 2021

*Weighted average for the two counties

**Triple Net Lease, a type of agreement where the tenant pays all the expenses of the property

Deliveries
984,526 SF
2021 / Costar

- 5 industrial buildings were delivered in 2021
- There have been 66 buildings and 7.6 M SF delivered since 2012 for an average of 7 buildings and 758,389 SF per year
- Hartford Co. accounted for 100.0% of the buildings and the SF delivered in 2021 and 97.0% of the buildings and 99.8% of the SF delivered between 2012 and 2021
- There was a 75.0% increase in buildings and a 127.6% increase in SF being delivered between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic); deliveries have continued increasing since

Under Construction
1.9 M SF
2021 / Costar

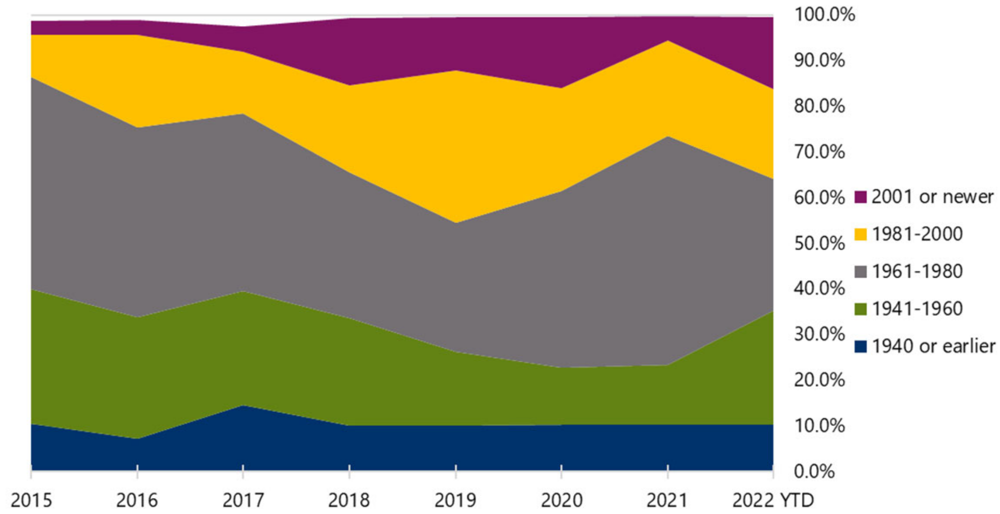
- 13 buildings were constructed in 2021
- There have been 62 buildings and 10.1 M SF constructed since 2012 for an average of 6 buildings and 1.0 M SF per year
- Hartford Co. accounted for 92.3% of the buildings and 98.9% of the SF constructed in 2021 and 98.4% of the buildings and 99.8% of the SF constructed between 2012 and 2021
- There was a 60.0% increase in buildings and 545.6% in SF constructed between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic); the number of buildings constructed has increased since then while the SF has decreased

Net Absorptions
1.5 M SF
2021 / Costar

- On average (2012-2021), the region absorbs 1.0 M SF each year
- Absorptions have been increasing over time with a 745,903 SF increase between 2012 and 2021 (a 102.1% increase)
- Hartford Co. accounted for 98.7% of the absorptions in 2021 and 81.1% of the total absorptions between 2012 and 2021
- There was a 65.9% increase in absorption between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic); absorption has continued to increase since then

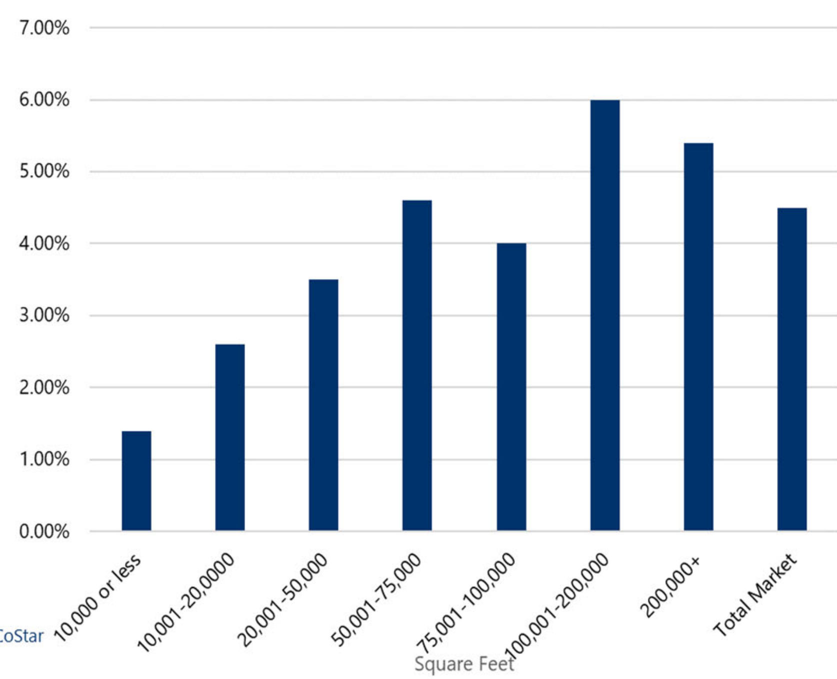
Vacant Industrial Real Estate Detail

Vacant Industrial Space in the Capitol Region, by Age



Source: CoStar

Percent of Industrial Space that is Vacant, by size of space (2021)



Source: CoStar

By Age

In 2021, approximately 74% of the vacant industrial space in the Capitol Region was built before 1980, compared to 35% built since 1980.

Ages of distribution building varies significantly, although buildings from 1961-1980 consistently make up the largest portion of vacant industrial space. On average from over the five years ending in 2021, 38% of vacant industrial space was built during this time period.

By Type

On average from 2017-2021, 60% of vacant industrial space was for warehousing and distribution, compared to 37% for manufacturing and 3% for other industrial uses.

By Size

In 2021, 4.5% of all industrial space was vacant. The vacancy rates for different size spaces varies heavily, from 1.4% for spaces with 10,000 square feet or less to 6.0% for buildings with 100,001-200,000 square feet.

Pipeline

According to CoStar, 10.2 million square feet of industrial space has been proposed across 24 projects in the Capitol Region, including a 2.7-msf space in East Hartford and a 933,000-sf space in East Granby.

1 million square feet of industrial space are currently under construction across six projects in the Capitol Region, including one for 750,000 square feet in Windsor.

Retail Real Estate

Inventory
68.7 M SF
2021 / Costar

- 6,231 retail buildings as of 2021
- On average (2012-2021), the region has 6,200 buildings and 67.8 M SF of retail inventory
- Inventory has been relatively stable since 2012, with +43 buildings (0.7% increase) and +1.7 M SF (2.5% increase)
- Hartford Co. accounted for vast majority of the inventory in 2021 (91.2% of buildings and 91.9% of SF); however, 62.8% of the change in building inventory and 31.6% of the change in SF since 2012 has occurred in Tolland Co.
- There was a 0.2% increase in both buildings and SF between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic); inventory has been increasing since then
- Downtown Hartford accounts for 43 (0.7%) of the total buildings and 1.2 M SF (22.3%)

Vacancy Rate*
4.6%
2021 / Costar

- A tight market, but in line with the national vacancy rate of 4.7%
- 3.2 M SF of vacant retail space as of 2021
- On average (2012-2021), the region has 3.2 M SF of vacant inventory and a vacancy rate* of 4.7%
- Vacancies have been decreasing over time, with 810,031 less SF vacant in 2021 than in 2012 (a 20.4% decrease) with an average annual* 2.2% decrease in vacancies since 2012
- Hartford Co. accounted for 88.7% of the vacant SF as of 2021 and an average of 90.4% of the vacancies since 2012
- Since 2012, Hartford Co.'s average vacancy rate (4.6%) is 1.0% lower than in Tolland Co. (5.6%)
- There was an 10.9% increase in vacancies* between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic), followed by a 3.2% decrease in 2021
- Downtown Hartford's vacancy rate is 6.7% with an average annual decrease in vacancies of 3.6%

Avg.* NNN Lease Rate**
$14.47 / SF
2021 / Costar

- Significantly lower than the average national lease rate of $22.76 / SF
- From 2012 through 2021, lease rates averaged* $13.76 per SF
- Lease rates have been fairly stagnant over time, with an annual average increase of 1.9% since 2012 which is slower than the national rate of 2.5%
- On average (2012-2021), lease rates in Hartford Co. ($13.72 / SF) are 3.9% higher than in Tolland Co. ($13.20 / SF)
- There was a 3.4% decrease in lease rates between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic), followed by a 2.3% decrease in 2021
- Downtown Hartford's lease rates are nearly double the overall region at $34.83 / SF with a rapid average annual growth rate of 12.3%

**Weighted average for the two counties*

***Triple Net Lease, a type of agreement where the tenant pays all the expenses of the property*

Deliveries
556,815 SF
2021 / Costar

- 28 retail buildings were delivered in 2021
- There have been 229 buildings and 3.4 M SF delivered since 2012 for an average of 23 buildings and 343,182 SF per year
- Hartford Co. accounted for 89.3% of the buildings and 97.2% of the SF delivered in 2021 and 77.7% of the buildings and 76.8% of the SF delivered between 2012 and 2021
- There was a 40.9% decrease in buildings and a 68.2% decrease in SF being delivered between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic); however, deliveries have since recovered to 2019 levels

Under Construction
122,150 SF
2021 / Costar

- 16 buildings were constructed in 2021
- There have been 161 buildings and 2.5 M SF constructed since 2012 for an average of 15 buildings and 249,778 SF per year
- Hartford Co. accounted for 87.5% of the buildings and 88.1% of the SF constructed in 2021 and 83.1% of the buildings and 80.6% of the SF constructed between 2012 and 2021
- There was a 70.0% increase in buildings and 56.8% in SF constructed between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic); however, construction has since slowed

Net Absorptions
292,389 SF
2021 / Costar

- On average (2012-2021), the region absorbs 259,629 SF each year
- Absorptions have been increasing over time with a 197,838 SF increase between 2012 and 2021 (a 107.9% increase)
- Hartford Co. accounted for 65.4% of the total absorptions between 2012 and 2021
- There was a 139.7% decrease in absorption between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic); however, absorption has since increased

Housing Real Estate: Multi-Family

Inventory

92,157 units

2021 / Costar

- 3,016 multi-family buildings with 80.7 M SF as of 2021
- On average (2012-2021), the region has 2,974 buildings with 87,878 units and 76.5 M SF
- Inventory has been increasing since 2012, with +8,378 units (10.0% increase) and +76 buildings (2.6% increase)
- There was a 1.6% increase in units and a 0.5% increase in buildings between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic); inventory has climbed slightly steady since
- Hartford Co. accounted for vast majority of the inventory in 2021 (94.5% of buildings and 88.3% of the units)
- Downtown Hartford accounts for a relatively small share of the Capitol Region's multi-family housing stock, with 35 (1.2%) of the total buildings, 2,901 units (3.1%) and 76.5 M of the SF (3.1%)

Vacancy Rate*

3.2%

2021 / Costar

- A tight market and lower than the national rate of 4.9%
- 2,459 vacant units as of 2021
- On average (2012-2021), the region has 3,474 vacant inventory and a vacancy rate* of 4.8%
- Vacancies have been decreasing over time, with 1,201 fewer vacant units in 2021 than in 2012 (a 32.8% decrease) with an average annual* 3.2% decrease in vacancies since 2012
- Hartford Co. accounted the vast majority of vacancies, with 90.7% of the vacant units as of 2021, a trend that has been increasing over time
- Since 2012, Hartford Co.'s average vacancy rate (5.0%) is 1.4% higher than in Tolland Co. (3.6%)
- There was a 16.6% decrease* in vacancies between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic), followed by an 22.8% decrease in 2021
- Downtown Hartford's vacancy rate is higher than the overall region's at 6.3% in 2021 and 11.3% as of May 2022

**Weighted average for the two counties*

Average* Lease Rate

$1,378 / mo

2021 / Costar

- Lower than the average national lease rate of $1,563 / mo
- From 2012 through 2021, lease rates averaged* $1,215 per unit and $1.39 per SF
- Lease rates have been fairly stagnant over time, with an annual average increase of 2.5% since 2012, which is lower than the national average annual growth rate of 3.6%
- On average (2012-2021), lease rates in Hartford Co. ($1,204 / mo) are slightly lower than in Tolland Co. ($1,289 / mo)
- There was a 2.7% increase in lease rates between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic), followed by a 6.1% increase in 2021
- Downtown Hartford's lease rates are higher than the overall region at $1,568 / mo and has an average annual growth rate of 1.7%

**Weighted average for the two counties*

Deliveries

207 units

2021 / Costar

- 6 buildings were delivered in 2021
- There have been 85 buildings and 9,139 units delivered since 2012 for an average of 9 buildings and 914 units per year
- Hartford Co. accounted for 100.0% of deliveries in 2021 and 91.8% of the buildings and 81.0% of the units delivered between 2012 and 2021
- There was a 5.7% decrease in buildings and a 54.6% decrease in units being delivered between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic) followed by a 583.1% decrease in 2021

Under Construction

1,319 units

2021 / Costar

- 14 buildings were constructed in 2021
- There have been 132 buildings and 14,481 units constructed since 2012 for an average of 13 buildings and 1,448 units per year
- Hartford Co. accounted for 100.0% of the buildings and 100.0% of the units constructed in 2021 and 91.7% of the buildings and 80.6% of the units constructed between 2012 and 2021
- Between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic), there was a 135.7% decrease in the number of units constructed, followed by a 54.5% increase in 2020

Net Absorptions

930 SF

2021 / Costar

- On average (2012-2021), the region absorbs 973 units each year
- Absorptions have been increasing slightly over time with a 509 unit increase between 2012 and 2021 (a 1.1% increase)
- On average (2012-2021), Hartford Co. accounts for 82.6% of the total absorptions
- There was a 59.6% increase in absorption between 2019 and 2020 (the 1st year of the pandemic) followed by a 117.6% decrease in 2021

Housing Real Estate: Residential

Inventory
444,223 units
2021 / Esri

- Inventory has grown slowly since 2010, with +12,011 homes, a 2.8% increase compared to 8.5% nationally
- Growth is expected to slow further from 2021 – 2026, with +6,162 homes, a 1.4% increase compared to 2.2% nationally
- Hartford Co. accounted for the vast majority of the inventory in 2021 (86.2%)
- Downtown Hartford accounts for 2,496 (0.6%) of the Capitol Region's homes

Vacancy Rate
7.4%
2021 / Esri

- Stable, with a lower vacancy rate than the nation (10.0%)
- There are 32,660 total vacant housing units
- Vacancies have been rapidly increasing since 2010, with +5,779 vacant homes, a 21.5% increase compared to a 4.8% decrease nationally
- Vacancies are expected to slow through 2026, with +3,639 vacant homes, an 11.1% compared to an 8.0% increase nationally
- Hartford Co. accounted for 86.2% of the vacancies
- Both counties have a vacancy rate of 7.4%
- Downtown Hartford's vacancy rate is 17.5%, a 34.8% increase from 2010

Median Home Value
$254,767
2021 / Esri / ACS

- $28,505 lower than the national median of $283,272
- Housing affordability index of 131
- 74.4% of owner-occupied homes require less than 30.0% of household income
- The median home value for owner-occupied units is $271,684
- The median gross rent is $1,221
- At $337,121, the median home value in Downtown Hartford is significantly higher ($82,354) than the Capitol Region

Owner Occupied
271,267 units
2021 / Esri

- 61.1% of homes are owner-occupied, which is slightly higher than the national rate of 58.2%
- Growth in owner-occupied housing has been stagnant since 2010, with +341 rental units, a 0.13% increase compared to 9.4% nationally
- Growth is expected to pick up through 2026, with +5,454 owner units, a 2.0% increase compared to a 2.7% nationally
- Hartford Co. accounts for 84.8% of owner-occupied housing units in the Capitol Region
- Downtown Hartford has significantly less owner-occupied housing, at 11.0%

Renter Occupied
140,296 units
2021 / Esri

- 31.6% of homes are rentals which is slightly higher than the national rate of 31.8%
- Growth in renter-occupied housing has been slow since 2010, with +5,891 rental units, a 4.4% increase compared to 11.7% nationally
- Declines are expected through 2026, with +2,931 rental units, a 2.1% decrease compared to a 0.5% decrease nationally
- Hartford Co. accounts for 89.0% of the Capitol Region's renter-occupied housing units
- Downtown Hartford has significantly more renter-occupied housing, at 71.4%

Construction
1,297 units
2020 - 2021 / ACS

- 4.2% of units have been built since 2010
- 40.9% built between 1970 and 2009
- 55.0% before 1969
- Hartford Co. accounts for 78.5% of the new construction since 2010
- The median year structures were built is 1965 in Hartford Co. and 1975 in Tolland Co.

Mapping Indicators of Inequity

Household Income Gini Index

The Gini Index is a statistical measure of economic inequality in a population. The coefficient measures the dispersion of income. An index of zero indicates perfectly equal distribution of income or wealth. A higher Gini index indicates greater inequality with high-income individuals receiving much larger percentages of the population’s total income.

The Gini Index for municipalities in the Capitol Region is mapped on the following page. Capitol Region municipalities with the greatest household income inequality include:

- Hartford
- West Hartford
- Avon
- Farmington
- Mansfield

Renter Cost Burden

The percent of renter households for whom gross rent is 30% or more of household income, between 2016-2020 is mapped on page 26 for each municipality in the Capitol Region.

Nearly half of renter households in the Capitol Region are cost burdened (47%), which is just one percentage point lower than the state. Municipalities with the greatest percentage of renter cost burden are distributed throughout the region, and include:

- Mansfield 71.2%
- Willington 65.0%
- Canton 63.9%
- Hebron 62.1%
- Tolland 60.3%

Owner Cost Burden

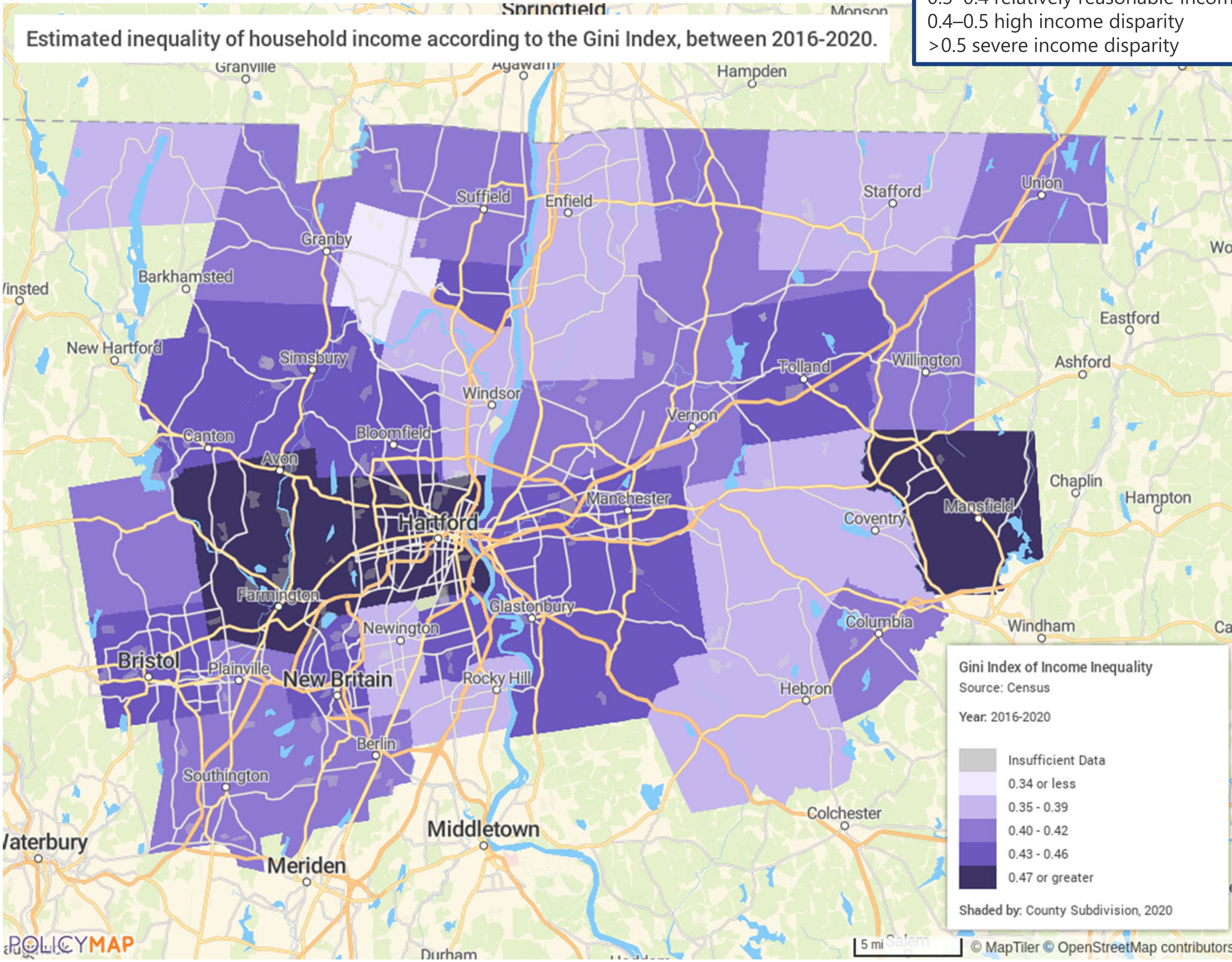
The estimated percent of owner households for whom selected monthly owner costs are 30% or more of household income, between 2016-2020 is mapped by municipality on page 27.

In Hartford County 24% of owner households are cost burdened and 21% in Tolland County, compared to 27% in the state. Municipalities in the region with the greatest percentage of homeowner cost burden include:

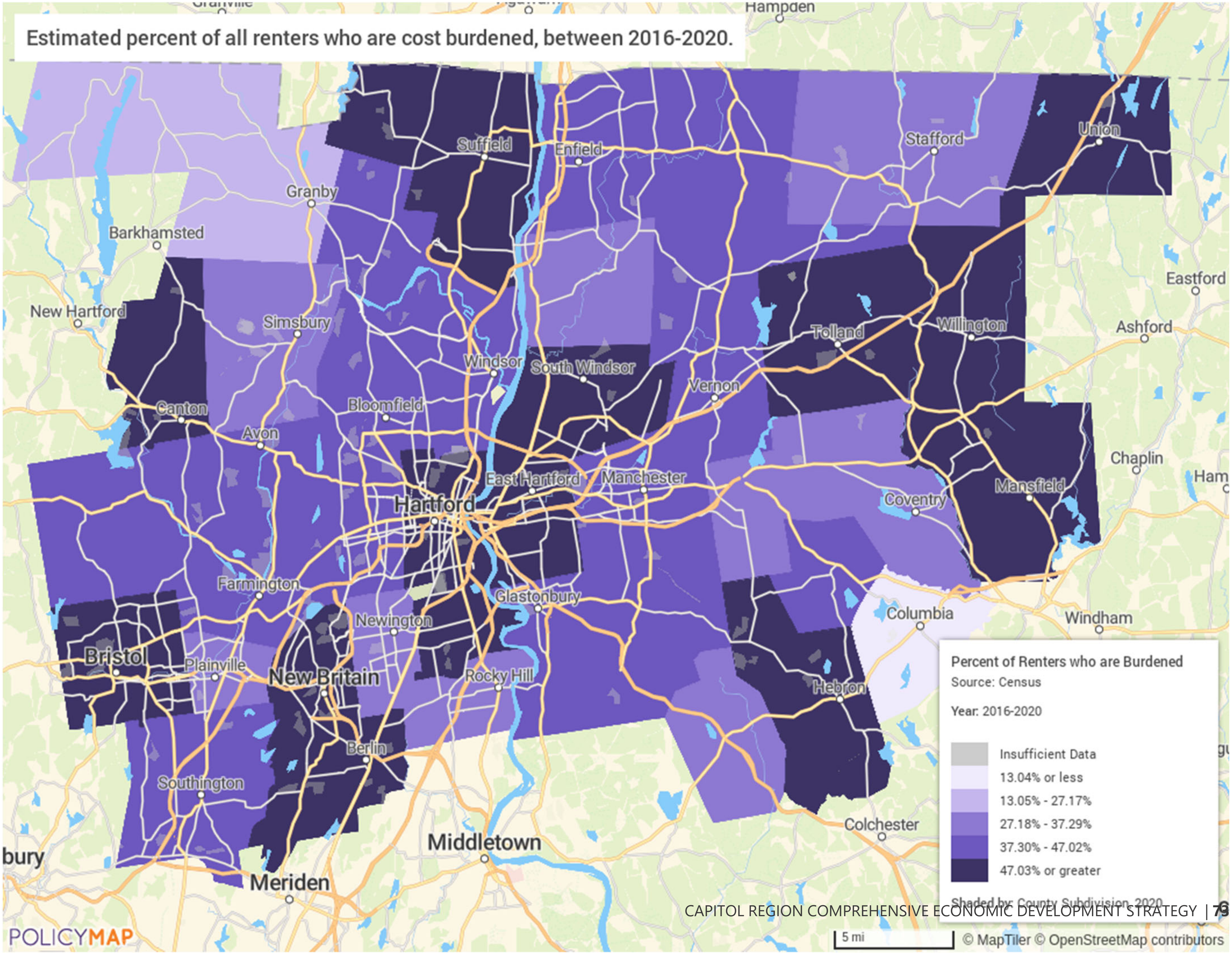
- Hartford 38.8%
- Bloomfield 31.1%
- New Britain 31.8%
- Windsor 29%
- East Hartford 28.8%

Equity and Inclusion: Household Income Gini Index

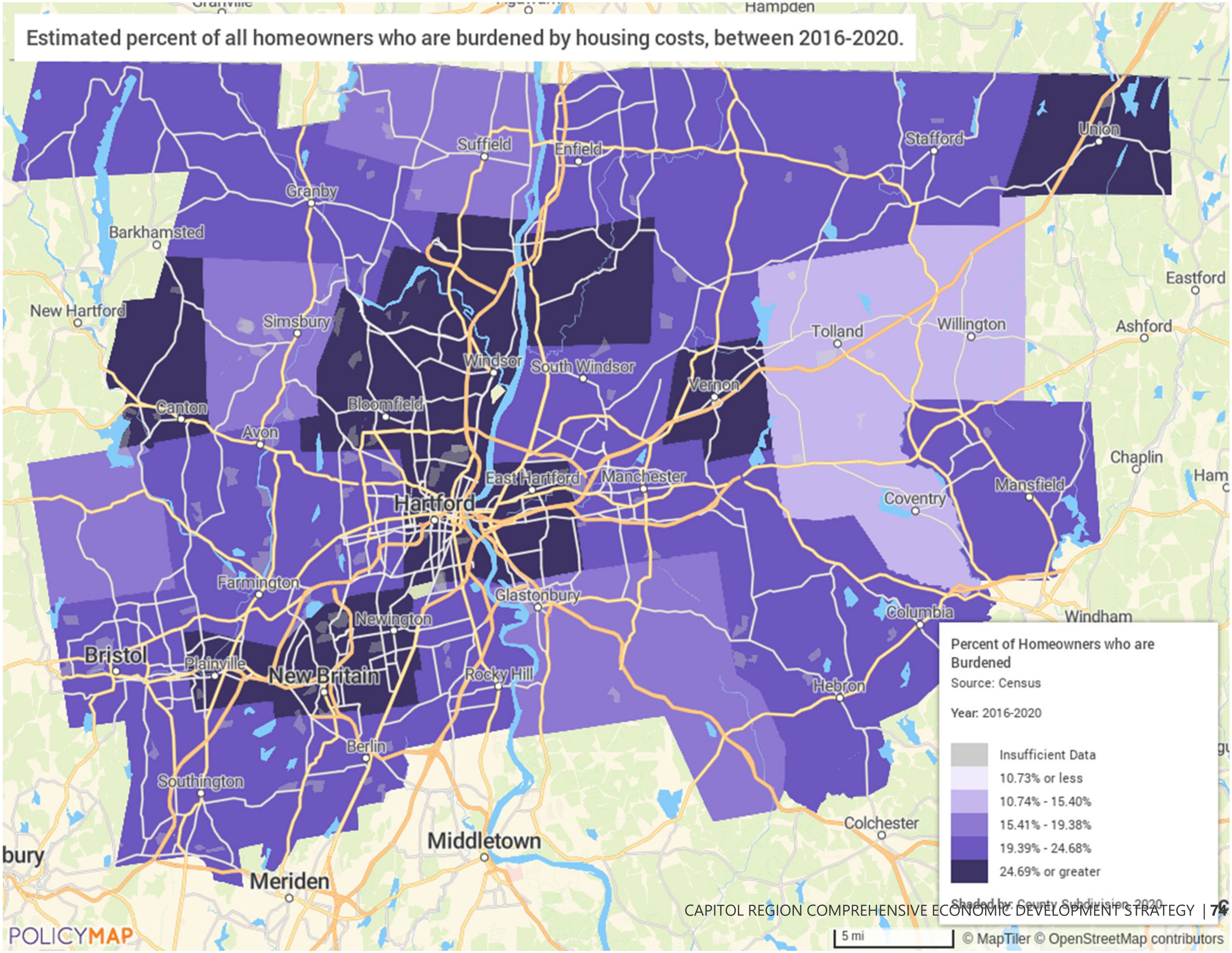
<0.2 perfect income equality
0.2–0.3 relative equality
0.3–0.4 relatively reasonable income gap
0.4–0.5 high income disparity
>0.5 severe income disparity



Housing Real Estate: Renter Cost Burden



Housing Real Estate: Owner Cost Burden



Equity and Inclusion: Prosperity Score, People of Color

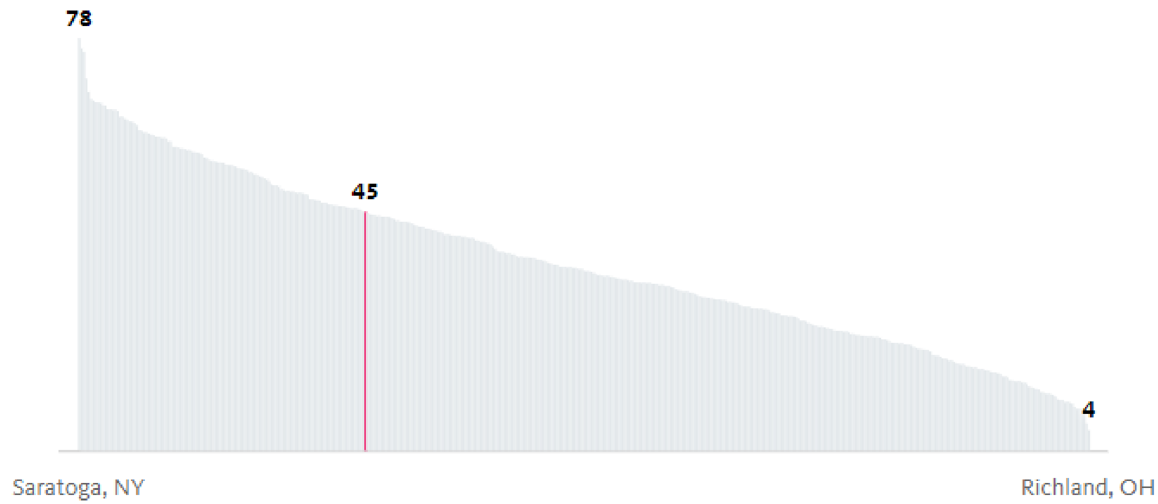
The prosperity score by race/ethnicity shows how different racial/ethnic groups are faring relative to the community as a whole and relative to their counterparts in other communities based on three indicators: Economic Vitality, Readiness, and Connectedness. The minimum possible value is 1 (needs the most work) while the highest is 100 (top performer).

Hartford and Tolland Counties both have relatively high prosperity scores for people of color relative to the nation, with Tolland county ranked at #25 and Hartford County at #121 out of 421 counties in the US as of 2019.

The gap between people of color and the total community has been decreasing slightly over time:

- In Tolland County, there was a total prosperity gap of 15 in 2000, which had reduced to 9 by 2019.
- In Hartford County, the total gap of 25 in 2000 had reduced to 17 by 2019.

Prosperity score, people of color, ranked: Hartford, CT; 2019



Prosperity score, people of color, ranked: Tolland, CT; 2019

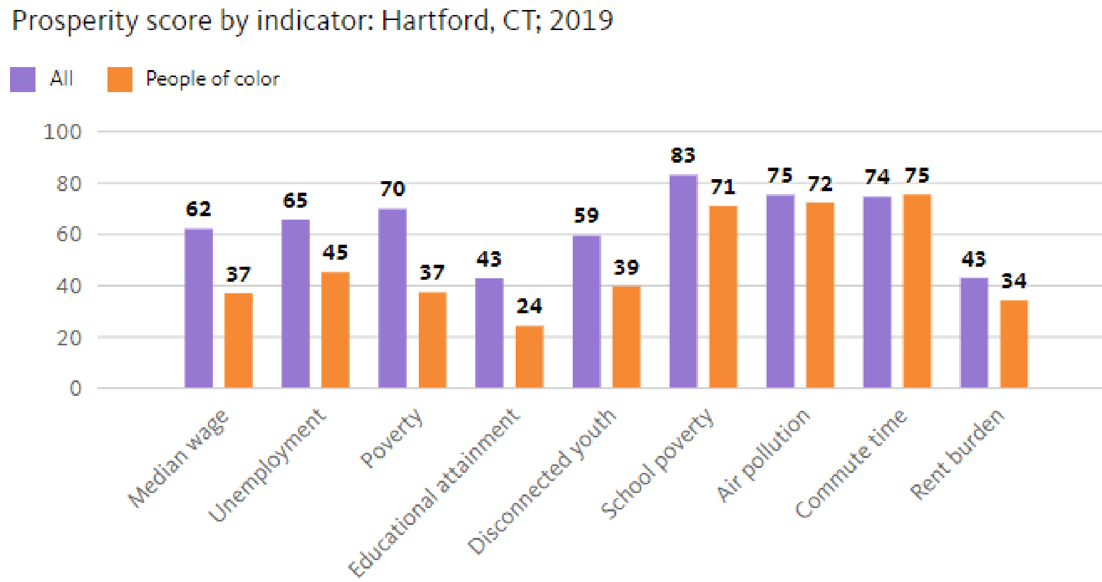
Data source: National Equity Atlas

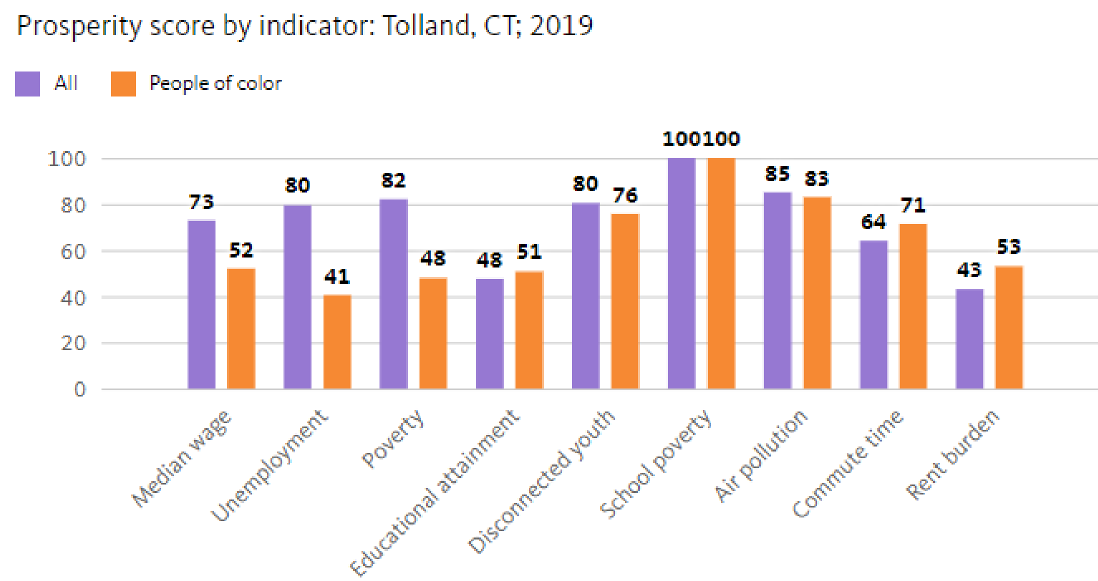
Equity and Inclusion: Prosperity Score by Indicator, People of Color

The overall prosperity score is based on levels of equity indicators for the overall population from the indicators shown in the adjacent charts.

Hartford and Tolland Counties have similar trends within individual indicators of poverty. Indicators with the highest prosperity score for people of color in the region are school poverty, air pollution, and commute time.

Indicators that need improvement to help the people of color population catch up with the average levels of prosperity in the Capitol Region include median wage, unemployment, poverty, education attainment (Hartford Co.), disconnected youth, school poverty (Hartford Co.) and rent burden (Hartford Co.).





Data source: National Equity Atlas

Resiliency

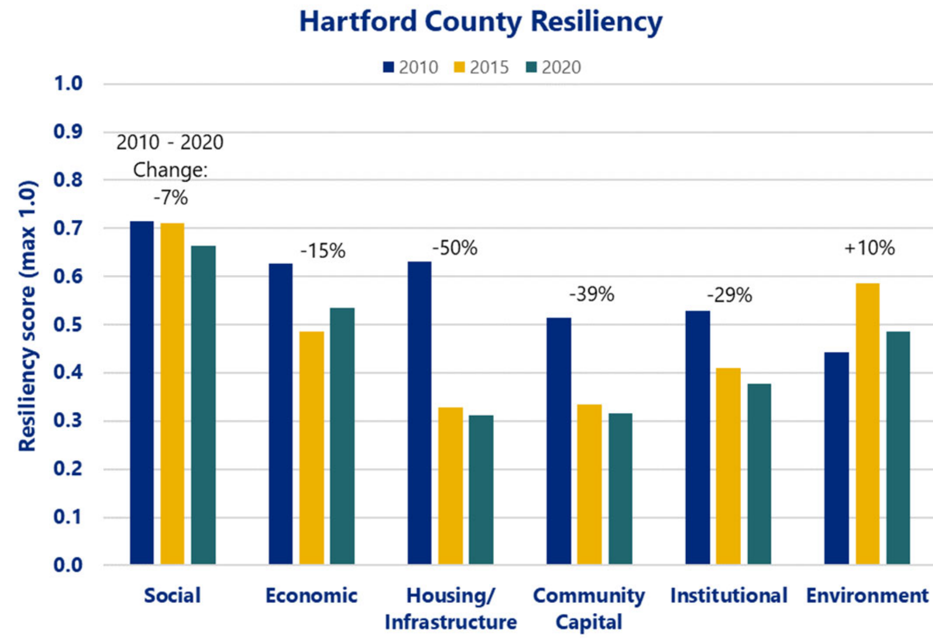
The University of South Carolina's Baseline Resilience Indicators for Communities (BRIC) Index uses 49 variables across six categories to capture community resilience:

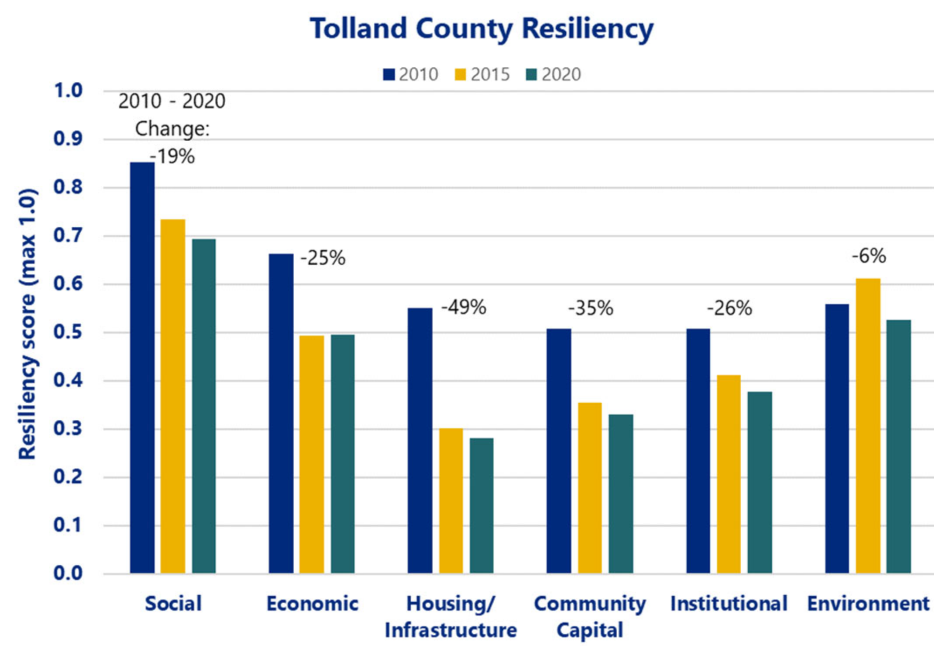
- Human Well-Being/Cultural/Social—physical attributes of populations, values and belief systems (ex: educational equality, food security)
- Economic/Financial—economic assets and livelihoods (ex: employment rate, income inequality, non-dependence on primary/tourism sector)
- Infrastructure/Built Environment/Housing—buildings and infrastructure (ex. housing stock construction quality, temporary shelter, medical care capacity)
- Institutional/Governance—access to resources and the power to influence their distribution (ex. jurisdictional fragmentation, disaster aid experience, population stability)
- Community Capacity—social networks and connectivity among individuals and groups (volunteerism, religious affiliation, attachment to place, political engagement)
- Environmental/Natural—natural resource base and environmental conditions (local food supplies, energy use, perviousness, water stress)

The index is scaled from 0 to 1 with 1 meaning increasing resilience. The six categories are then summed to create an overall BRIC score ranging from 0-6 for each county.

Overall, the Capitol Region's resiliency is decreasing across most categories. This data predates the pandemic, and it is likely that the BRIC scores for the Capitol Region have decreased even further over the past two years.

As of 2020, Hartford County has an overall BRIC Index of 2.69 while Tolland County's is 2.7. Hartford County is in the 74th percentile of counties in the nation in terms of overall resiliency (ranked 808 out of 3,143 counties) while Tolland County is in the 78th percentile (ranked 692). While this means they are performing better than the majority of counties across the US, both counties have been becoming less resilient over time. Hartford County's aggregate resiliency score decreased by 22% between 2010 and 2020 while Tolland County's score decreased by 26%. These decreases were primarily due to underperformance and decreasing scores for housing/infrastructure, community capital, and institutional resiliency.



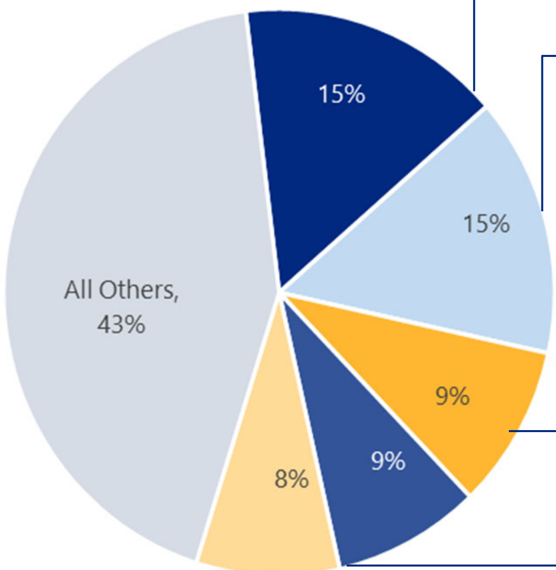


Source: Baseline Resilience Indicators for Communities (BRIC) Index

Resiliency: Top Industry Sector Risk Factors

From an industry perspective, the Capitol Region's top five industry sectors – which altogether account for 57% of all jobs – all show signs of weakness in terms of job growth, earnings growth, import dependence, and/or age of the workforce.

Top Industry Sectors in the Capital Region, 2022



Source: Lightcast
All data as of 2022
Growth rates from 2013 – 2022

Health Care and Social Assistance

- With 8% growth, the Region is adding jobs slower than at the national level (13%). Industries with the most job loss: *Nursing Care Facilities* (-2,810) and *General Medical and Surgical Hospitals* (-2,018).
- At 21%, earnings growth for this sector is significantly slower at the national level (32%). This may make it harder for the Region to attract and retain talent. Industry with the lowest earnings growth: *Offices of Mental Health Practitioners* (-14%).

Government

- Major job losses (-2,390), driven primarily by cuts in *State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals* (-2,283). This could impact service delivery and real estate vacancies, as workers lose a valued source of stable jobs.
- At 21% earnings growth, the Region is less competitive than the nation (30%) for workers.

Manufacturing

- Major job losses (-2,331), driven primarily by cuts in *Other Aircraft Parts and Auxiliary Equipment Manufacturing* (-1,392) and *Turbine and Turbine Generator Set Units Manufacturing* (1,098)
- 70% of demand met by imports, compared to 48% for the Region overall
- High retirement risk, with 35% of the workforce aged 55 and over, compared to 27% for the Region overall and 28% for the nation's Manufacturing sector.
- At 17% growth, wages are increasing significantly slower than the Region overall (24%) and the sector at the national level (27%). This may make it harder for the Region to attract and retain talent. Industries with the lowest earnings growth: *Saw Blade and Handtool Manufacturing* (-27%) and *All Other Miscellaneous Electrical Equipment and Component Manufacturing* (-18%)

Retail Trade

- Significant job losses, with a 10% reduction in employment (-5,720), primarily driven by losses in the following industries: *Supermarkets and Other Grocery Stores* (-1,413), *Department Stores*, (-845) and *Electronics Stores* (-575)
- Significant importer, with 59% of the sector's demand fulfilled by suppliers outside of the region, compared to 48% for the Region overall

Finance and Insurance

- Significant job losses, with a 12% reduction in employment (-6,944), primarily driven by losses in the following industries: *Direct Life Insurance Carriers* (-6,944), *Portfolio Management* (-2,226), *Savings Institutions* (-1,927), and *Direct Health and Medical Insurance Carriers* (-944)

Resiliency: Top Industry Sector Risk Factors (continued)

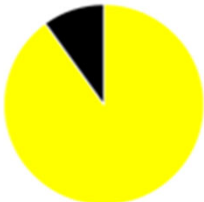
Top Industry Sector Risk Factors

Industry Sector	Employment	Share	Job Growth (2013 - 2022)		Earnings Growth (2013 - 2022)		Demand met by imports (2022)	Share of Workers aged 55+
			Change	Rate	Change	Rate		
Health Care and Social Assistance (62)	90,700	15%	6,408	8%	$13,253	21%	12%	26%
Government (90)	86,594	15%	(2,390)	-3%	$17,157	21%	65%	28%
Manufacturing (31)	54,675	9%	(2,331)	-4%	$16,560	17%	70%	35%
Retail Trade (44)	50,548	9%	(5,720)	-10%	$13,327	38%	59%	23%
Finance and Insurance (52)	49,119	8%	(6,944)	-12%	$36,320	27%	41%	30%
All Industries	586,098	100%	(3,389)	-1%	$17,280	24%	48%	27%

Source: Lightcast

Benchmarking: Core Cities

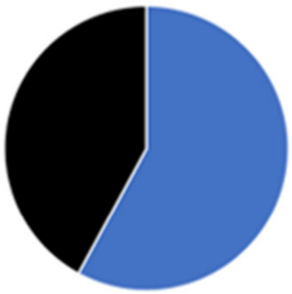
Core Cities as a Percentage of Metro Areas 2020 Decennial Census



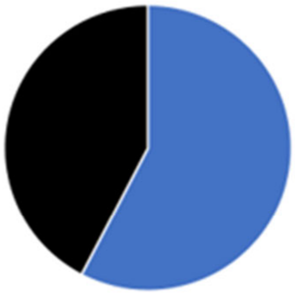
Harford, CT | 10%
Core City: 121K
Total MSA: 1.2M

Springfield, MA | 22%
Core City: 155K
Total MSA: 699K

Providence, RI | 11%
Core City: 191K
Total MSA: 1.7M



Indianapolis, IN | 42%
Core City: 888K
Total MSA: 2.1M



Columbus, OH | 42%
Core City: 905K
Total MSA: 2.1M

Richmond, VA | 15%
Core City: 191K
Total MSA: 1.3M

Oklahoma City, OK | 48%
Core City: 681K
Total MSA: 1.4M

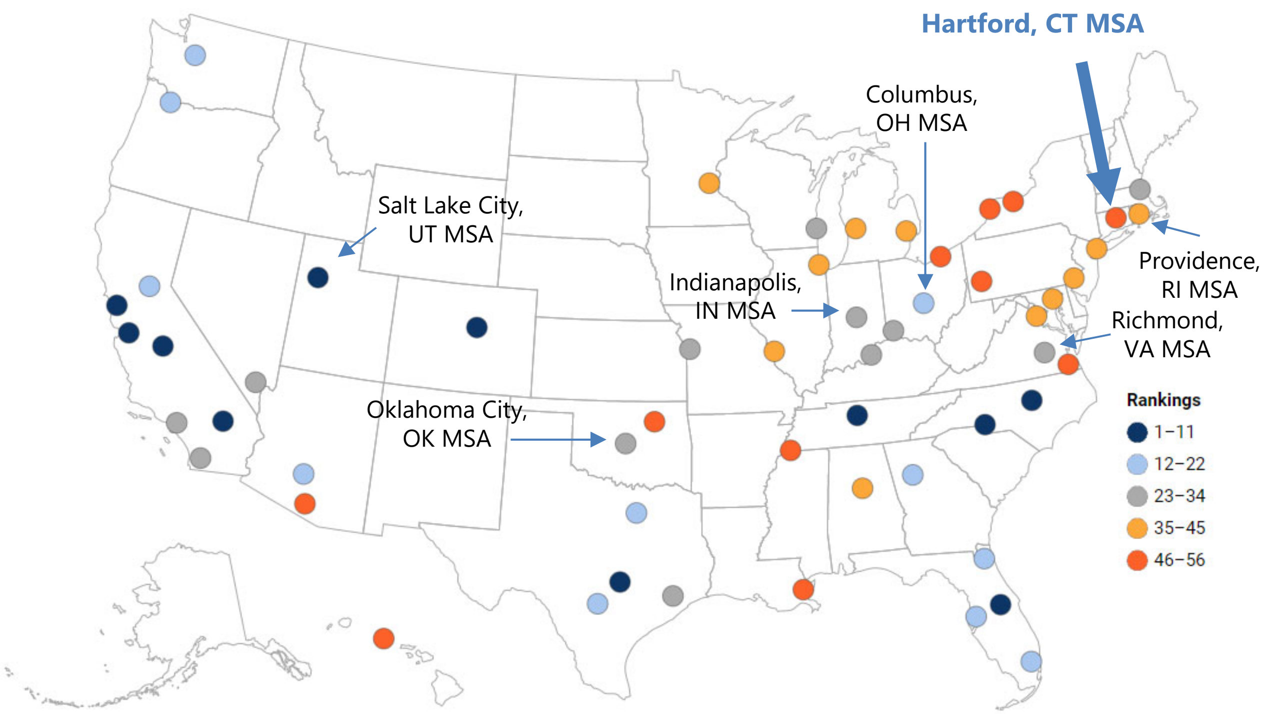
Salt Lake City, UT | 16%
Core City: 200K
Total MSA: 1.3M

Source: ACS 2020 5-year estimates

Benchmarking: Economic Growth

The Hartford-East Hartford-Middletown MSA (Hartford MSA) ranks 52nd out of 56 very large metro areas (i.e. population over 1 million) for overall growth. Components of this score include change in jobs (for which it ranks 50th), change in Gross Metropolitan Product (ranks 53rd), and change in jobs at young firms (ranks 48th).

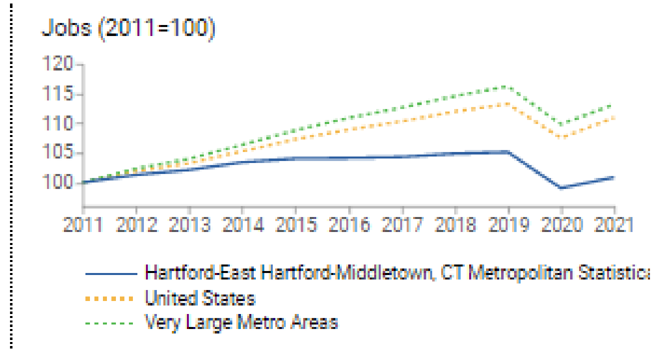
Overall Growth Index by Large Metro Area, 2011 - 2021



Source: Brookings Institution's Metro Monitor 2023

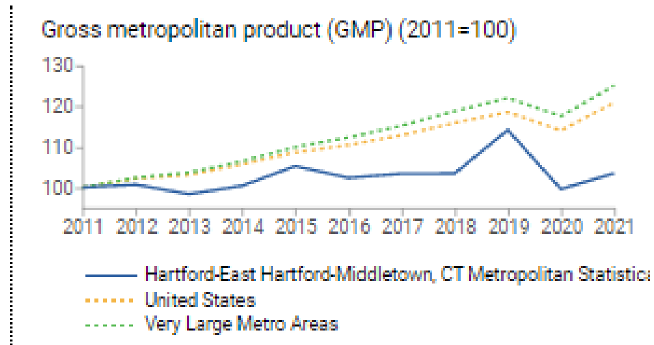
50 Change in jobs (%)

+0.9% Chart



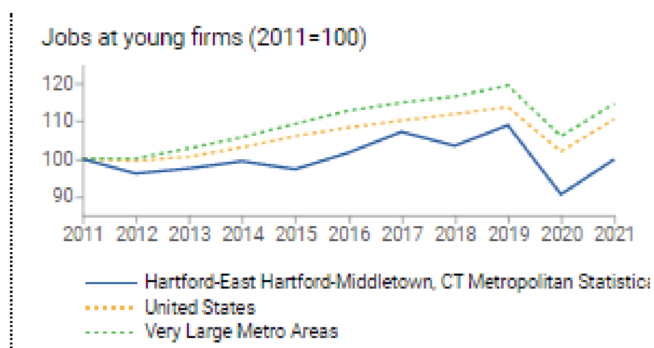
53 Change in Gross Metropolitan Product (GMP) (%)

+3.5% Chart



48 Change in jobs at young firms (%)

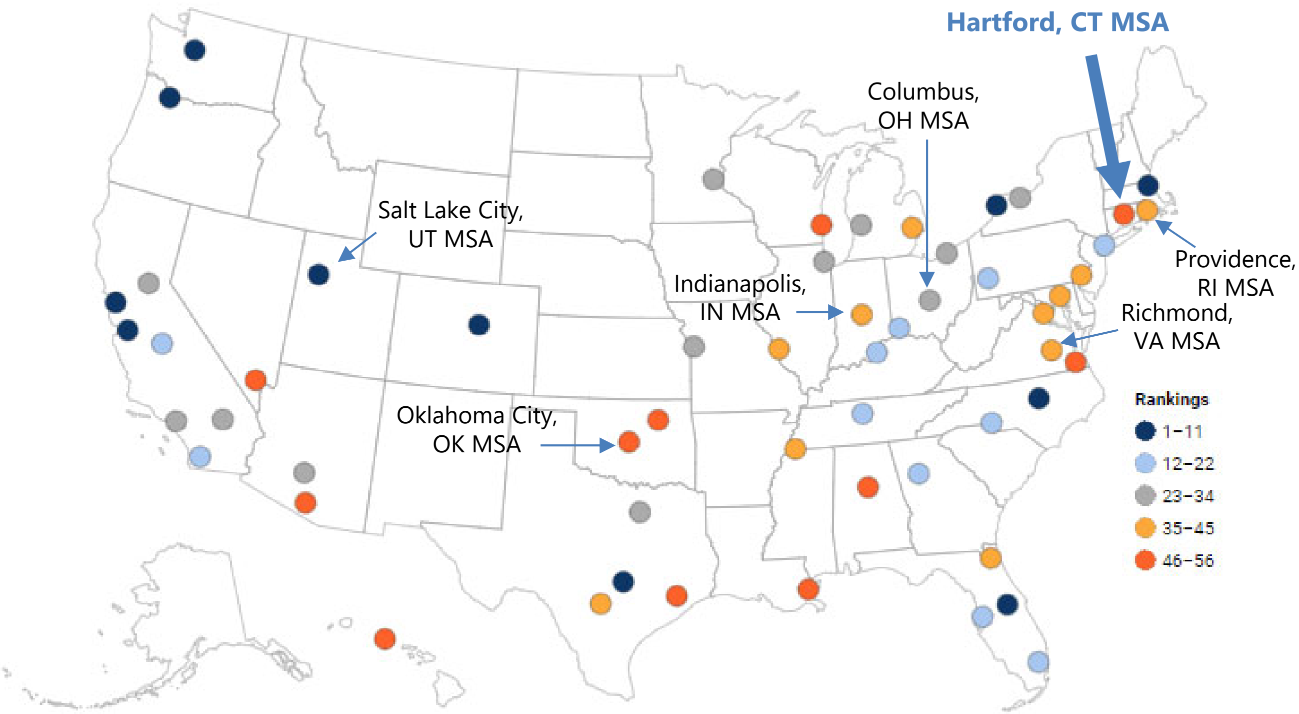
-0.1% Chart



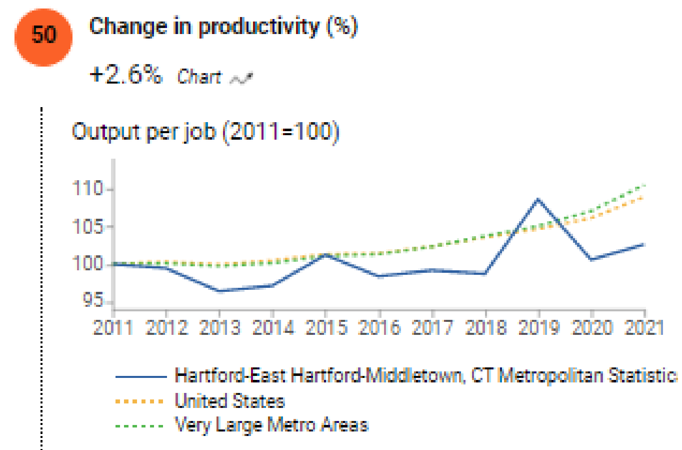
Benchmarking: Prosperity

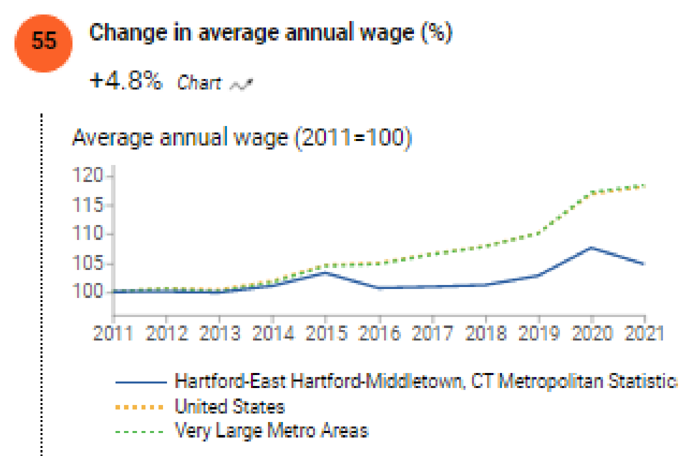
The Hartford MSA ranks 52nd out of 56 very large metro areas for overall prosperity. Components of this score include change in productivity (for which it ranks 50th), change in average annual wages (ranks 55th), and change in standard of living (ranks 48th).

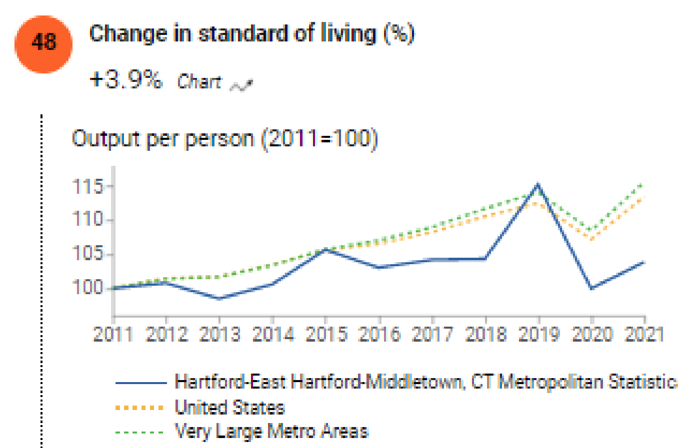
Overall Prosperity Index by Large Metro Area, 2011 - 2021



Source: Brookings Institution's Metro Monitor 2023



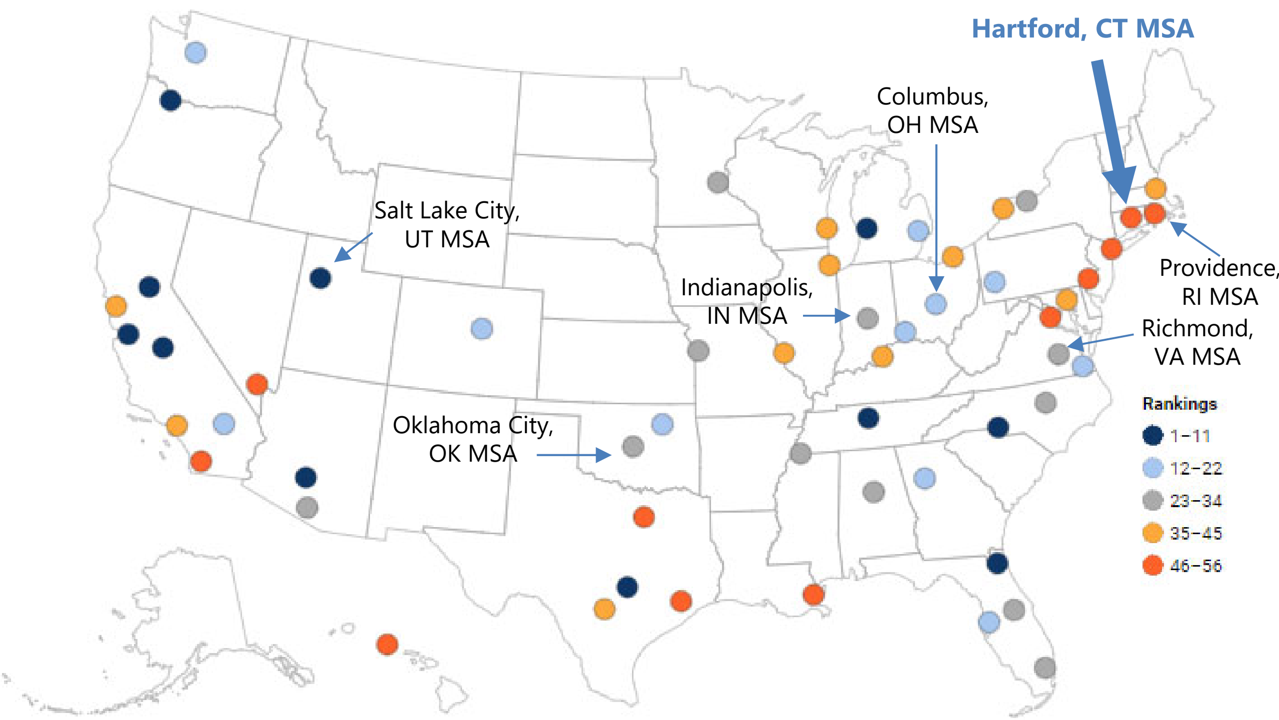


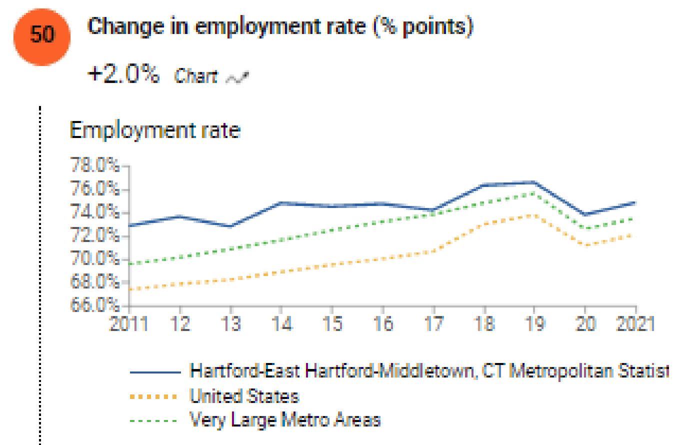


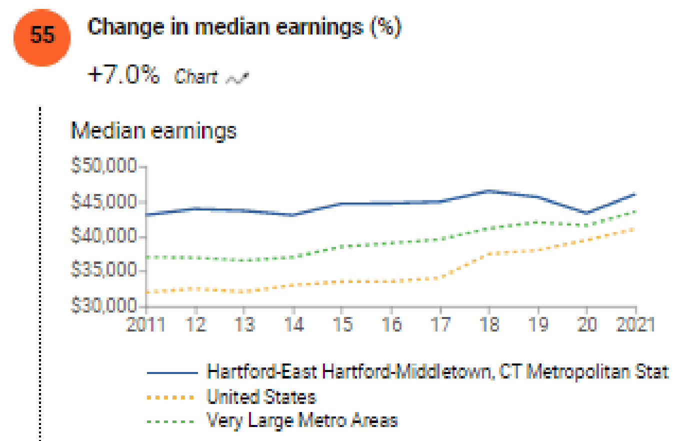
Benchmarking: Inclusion

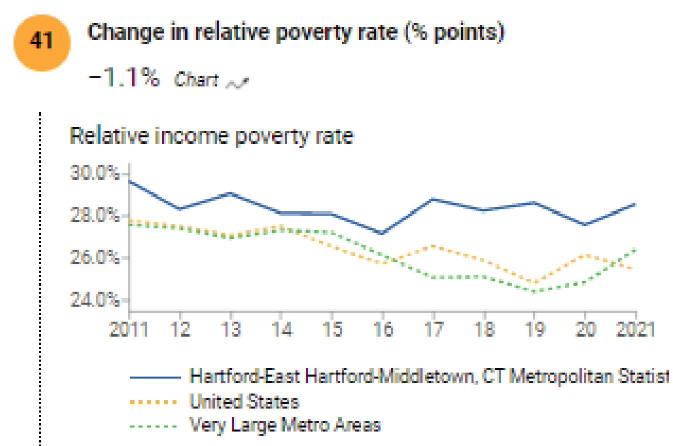
The Hartford MSA ranks 52nd out of 56 very large metro areas for overall inclusion. Components of this score include change in employment rate (for which it ranks 50th), change in median earnings (ranks 55th), and change in relative poverty rate (ranks 41st).

Overall Inclusion Index by Large Metro Area, 2011 - 2021







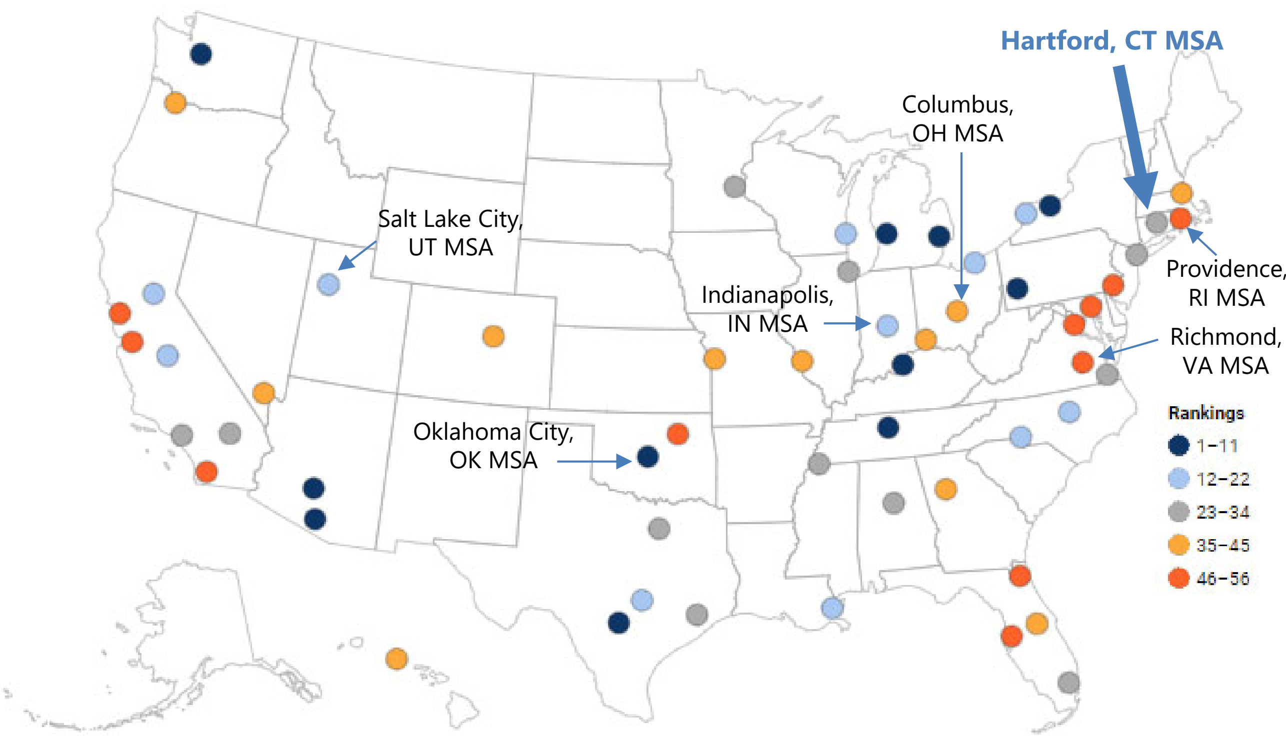


Source: Brookings Institution's Metro Monitor 2023

Benchmarking: Racial Inclusion

The Hartford MSA ranks 26th out of 56 very large metro areas for overall racial inclusion. Components of this score include change in white/people of color employment rate gap (for which it ranks 16th), change in white/people of color median earnings gap (ranks 33rd), and change in white/people of color relative poverty rate gap (ranks 41st).

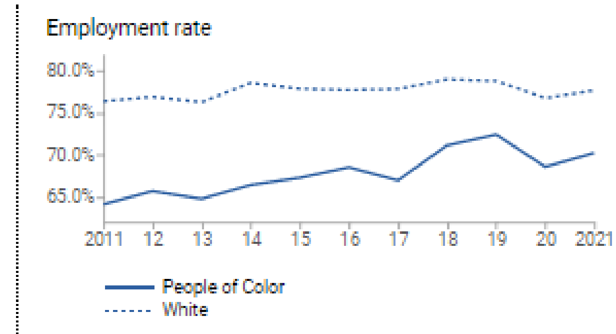
Overall Racial Inclusion Index by Large Metro Area, 2011 - 2021



Source: Brookings Institution's Metro Monitor 2023

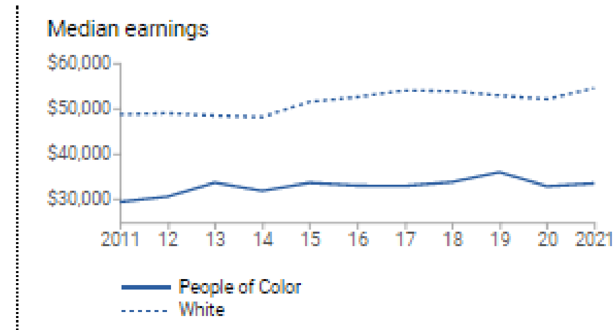
16 Change in white/people of color employment rate gap (% points)

−4.8% Chart



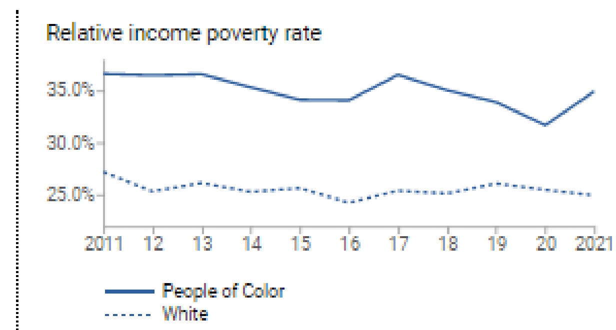
33 Change in white/people of color median earnings gap ($)

+$1,675 Chart



41 Change in white/people of color relative poverty rate gap (% points)

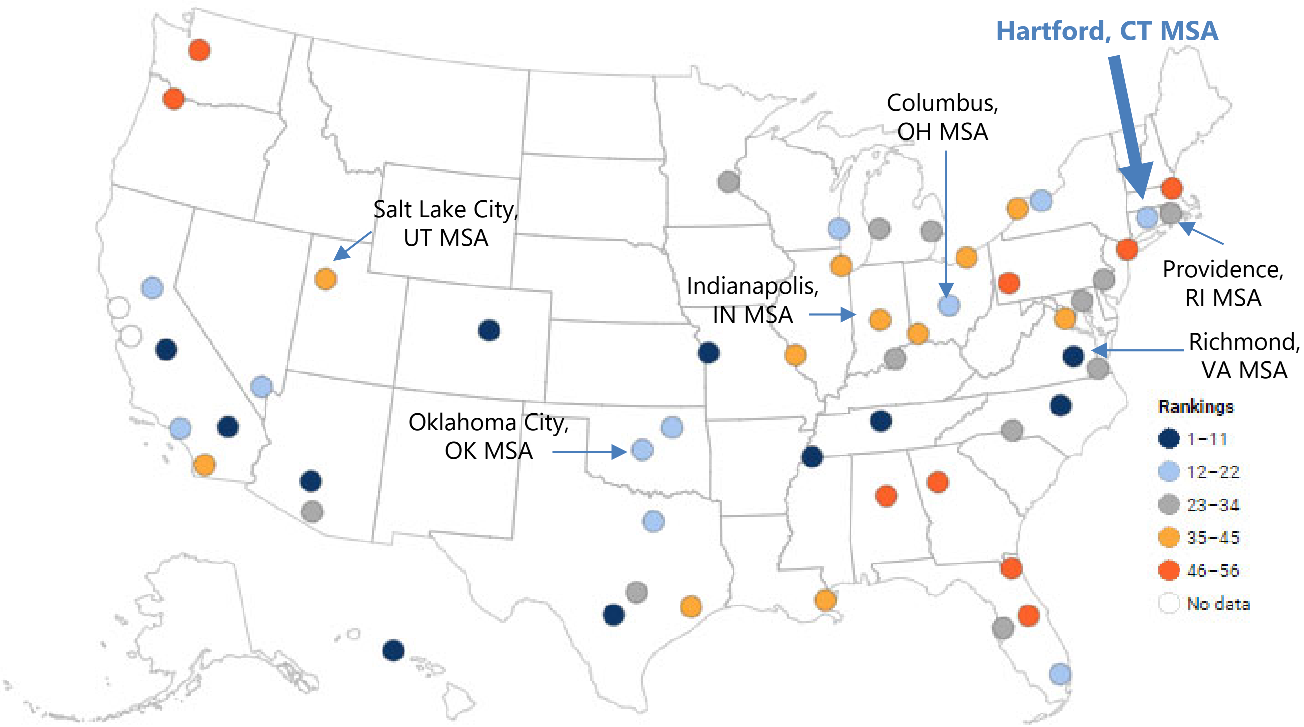
+0.6% Chart



Benchmarking: Geographic Inclusion

The Hartford MSA ranks 17th out of 56 very large metro areas for overall geographic inclusion. Components of this score include change in white/people of color employment rate gap (for which it ranks 16th), change in white/people of color median earnings gap (ranks 33rd), and change in white/people of color relative poverty rate gap (ranks 41st).

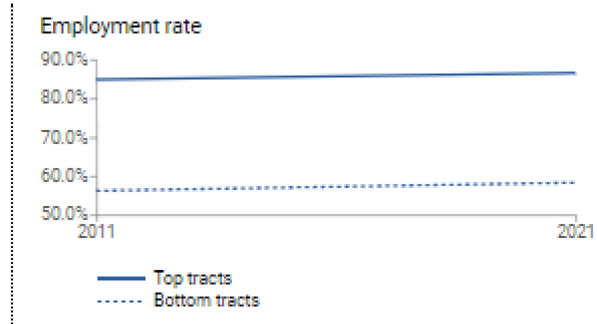
Overall Geographic Inclusion Index by Large Metro Area, 2011 - 2021



Source: Brookings Institution's Metro Monitor 2023

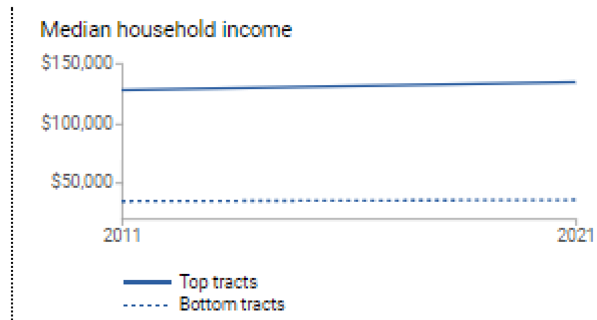
35 Change in top/bottom neighborhoods employment rate gap (% points)

−0.4% Chart



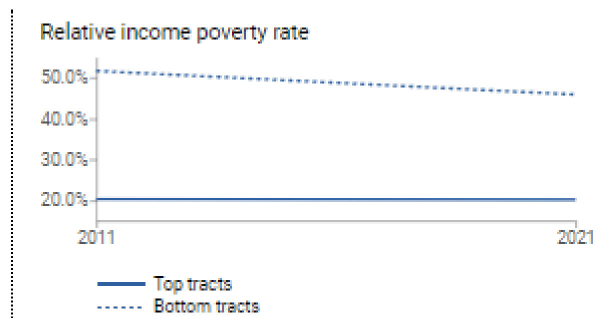
21 Change in top/bottom neighborhoods median household income gap ($)

+$5,526 Chart



12 Change in top/bottom neighborhoods relative poverty rate gap (% points)

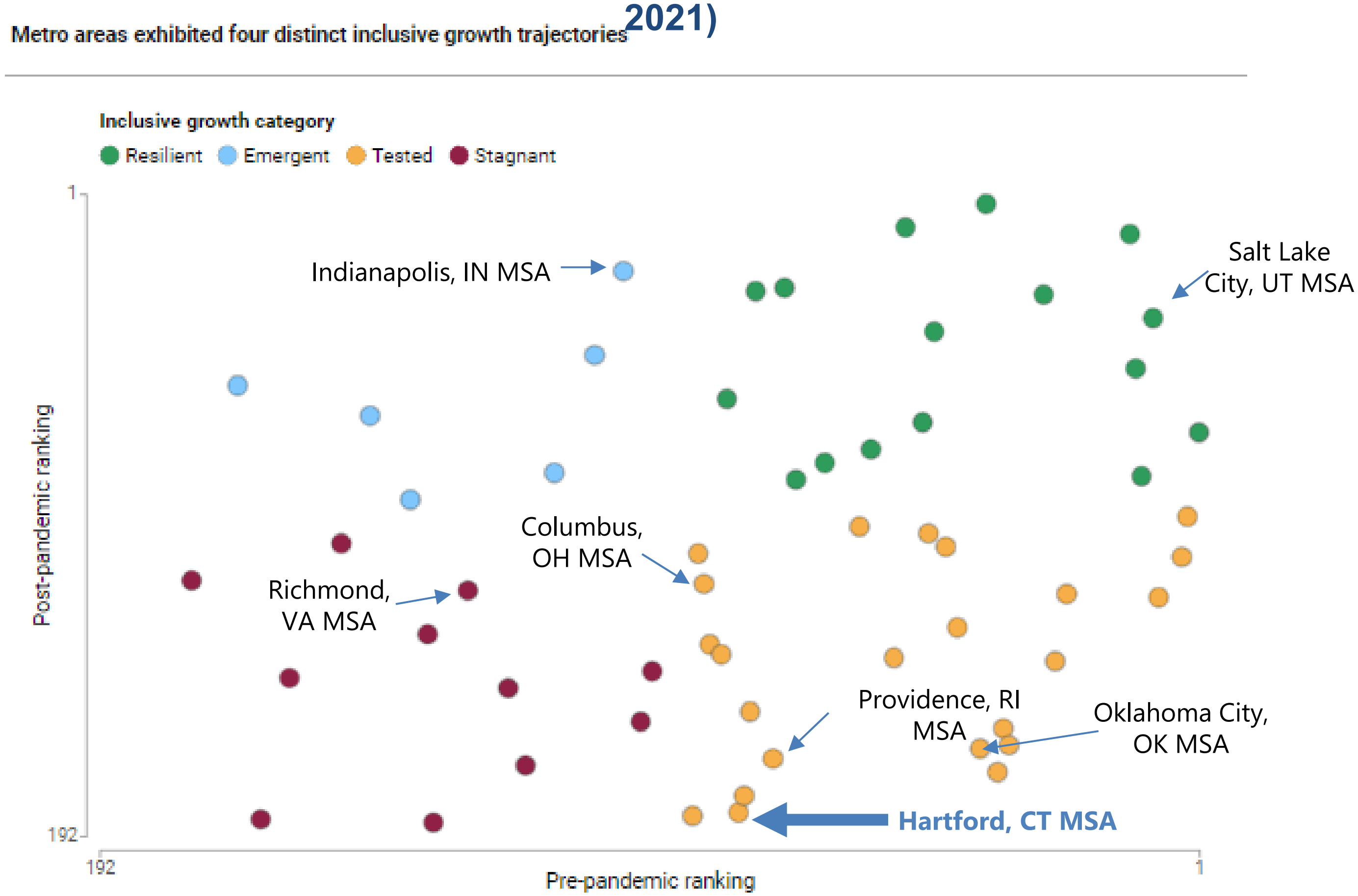
−5.7% Chart



Benchmarking: Inclusive Economic Performance During the Pandemic

The Hartford MSA was "tested" during the pandemic based on its ranking on inclusive economic performance (which includes growth, prosperity, overall inclusion, and racial inclusion). It ranked in the top half of the nation's 192 metros pre-pandemic but slipped into the bottom half during the pandemic. About 40% of all very large metros areas (defined as over 1 million in population) were categorized as tested during the pandemic, including some of the largest and strongest economies in the nation such as New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Boston. Metros in the Northeast were most likely to be categorized as stagnant. Metros with between 500,000 and 1 million residents tended to be more resilient as were metros in the South.

Inclusive Economic Performance by Very Large Metro Area, Pre-Pandemic (2011 to 2019) and During the Pandemic (2019 – 2021)



Source: Brookings Institution's Metro Monitor 2023

CEDS Benchmarking

Benchmarks were set in the 2016 CEDS update, including the goal of reducing disparity by 1/3 by 2021. The previous benchmarks were set for the MSA; however, this analysis is for the Capitol Region as defined in this report. The tables below show how well the Capitol Region performed on those goals. GDP growth was the only benchmark metric that met the goals; however, median household income disparity is trending in the right direction and Black families have nearly met the goal. Hispanic families have nearly met the goal for poverty rate reduction. The COVID-19 pandemic likely factored into the Capitol Region's performance over this time period.

Capitol Region Growth Benchmark Metrics

Indicator	2016	2021	5-year Goal*	Actual Growth	Goal Met?
Population	1,045,505	1,040,418	**3% - 4%**	-0.5%	No
GDP	$85,302,308,743	$96,959,084,802	**5% or more**	13.7%	**Yes**

Source: Lightcast

Capitol Region Disparity Benchmark Metrics

Indicator	2016	2021	5-year Goal*	Goal Met?
Median Household Income				
White, Non-Hispanic	$82,014	$91,244		
Black	$48,863	$58,425	**$59,803**	No, but very close
Hispanic	$40,788	$51,303	**$54,393**	No, but trending in the right direction
Poverty Rate				
White, Non-Hispanic	5.8%	7.5%		
Black	14.1%	15.9%	**11.4%**	No
Hispanic	26.8%	20.8%	**19.9%**	No, but very close
Employment Rate				
White, Non-Hispanic	61.6%	61.8%		
Black	61.2%	60.5%	**61.3%**	No
Hispanic	57.2%	59.8%	**58.7%**	Yes

Source: ACS

**5-Year Goals set in the 2016 CEDS update, including the goal of decreasing disparity by 1/3. Disparity refers to the difference between the White, Non-Hispanic population indicators and those of the Black and Hispanic*

DATA SOURCES

Lightcast (formerly Emsi Burning Glass) is a global leader in labor market analytics, offering a data platform that gives a comprehensive, nuanced, and up-to-date picture of labor markets at all scales from national to local. Key components of the platform include traditional labor market information, job postings analytics, talent profile data, compensation data, and skills analytics. Lightcast integrates government data with information from online job postings, talent profiles, and resumes to produce timely intelligence on the state of the labor market. Job and compensation data is available by industry, occupation, educational program, and skill type. Click to learn more.

Esri ArcGIS Business Analyst combines proprietary statistical models covering demographic, business, and spending data with map-based analytics to offer insights on market opportunities for industries, businesses, and sites. Business Analyst integrates datasets covering a wide range of topics including demographics, consumer spending, market potential, customer segmentation, business locations, traffic counts, and crime indexes, which can be overlaid spatially to produce customizable maps and uncover market intelligence. Data can be pulled for standard and custom geographies, allowing for valuable comparison between places. Click to learn more.

PolicyMap is a spatial analysis and data tool that facilitates the creation of compelling, interactive maps from 50,000+ indicators related to public policy. Geospatial analysis, including advanced querying and filtering facilitated by data-rich maps, can be used for storytelling and decision-making. PolicyMap's library of variables spans topics such as demographics, housing, lending, quality of life, economy, education, health, and government programs. Functionality is optimized for use by policymakers in government, business, healthcare, universities, academic, and others. Click to learn more.

IBISWorld is a leading provider of expert industry research and analysis for broad sectors and niche industries across the economy. Thoroughly researched industry reports from IBISWorld leverage economic, demographic, and market data into forward-looking insight, providing detailed data and narrative on current and historic trends, as well as future outlook and projections. Topics covered include products and services, major markets, upstream and downstream supply chain industries, performance drivers, factors for competitiveness, operating conditions, major players, and key statistics on industry performance. Reports are available by industry at the global, national, and state level. Click to learn more.

CoStar is a comprehensive source of commercial real estate intelligence, offering an inventory of over 6.4 million commercial properties spanning 135 billion square feet of space in 390 markets across the US. CoStar covers office, retail, industrial, hospitality, and multifamily markets. Property- and market-level data on absorption, occupancy, lease rates, tenants, listings, and transactions are researched and verified through calls to property managers, review of public records, visits to construction sites, and desktop research to uncover nearly real-time market changes. Click to learn more.

The Kauffman Indicators of Entrepreneurship offers measures, reports, and accompanying data visualizations that present entrepreneurial trends in the US. The indicators are organized into three series covering entrepreneurial jobs, new employer businesses, and early-stage entrepreneurship. Underlying data sources include the Current Population Survey (CPS), Population Estimates Program (PEP), Business Formation Statistics (BFS), and Business Dynamics Statistics (BDS) from the US Census Bureau, and Business Employment Dynamics (BED) from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Click to learn more.

The **American Community Survey (ACS)** is an ongoing statistical survey by the US Census Bureau that gathers demographic and socioeconomic information on age, sex, race, family and relationships, income and benefits, health insurance, education, veteran status, disabilities, commute patterns, and other topics. Mandatory to fill out, the survey is sent to a small sample of the population on a rotating basis. The questions on the ACS are different than those asked on the decennial census and provide ongoing demographic updates of the nation down to the block group level. Click to learn more.

Conducted every ten years in years ending in zero, the **US Decennial Census of Population and Housing** is a complete count of each resident of the nation based on where they live on April 1st of the Census year. The Constitution mandates the enumeration to determine how to apportion the House of Representatives among the states. The latest release of the 2020 Census contains data for a limited number of variables, including: total population by race/ethnicity, population under 18, occupied and vacant housing units, and group quarters population. Click to learn more.

The **Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)** program estimates total employment and unemployment for approximately 7,500 geographic areas on a monthly basis, from the national level down to the city and town level. LAUS data is offered through the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by combining data from the Current Population Survey (CPS), Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey, and state unemployment (UI) systems. Click to learn more.

The **Census of Agriculture** provides a detailed picture of US farms and ranches and the people who operate them. It provides uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every state and county in the US on topics including agricultural land, animal and crop production, employment, worker demographics, farm business operations, the environment, and employment. It is conducted by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) every five years, in years ending in 2 and 7. Click to learn more.

Business Dynamics Statistics | US Census Bureau

The Business Dynamics Statistics (BDS) program provides annual measures of business dynamics—such as job creation and destruction, establishment births and deaths, and firm startups and shutdowns—for the economy and aggregated by establishment and firm characteristics. It covers the entire US economy and is available at the national, state, and MSA (metropolitan statistical area) levels. Click to learn more.

Population Estimates Program | US Census Bureau

The Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program (PEP) produces estimates of the population for the US and its states, counties, cities, and towns. Demographic components of population change—births, deaths, and migration—are produced at the national, state, and county levels. PEP provides population estimates on an annual basis. Click to learn more.

OnTheMap | US Census Bureau

OnTheMap is a tool developed through the US Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program that helps to visualize Local Employment Dynamics (LED) data about where workers are employed and where they live. It offers visual mapping capabilities for data on age, earnings, industry distributions, race, ethnicity, educational attainment, and sex. Click to learn more.

Economic Census | US Census Bureau

The Economic Census is the US Government's official five-year measure of American business and the economy. It is conducted by the US Census Bureau for years ending in 2 and 7. The Economic Census is the most comprehensive public source of information about American businesses from the national to the local level. Published statistics cover more than 1,000 industries, 15,000 products, every state, over 3,000 counties, 15,000 cities and towns, and Puerto Rico and other US Island Areas. Click to learn more.

Slide 90

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ATTACHMENT B: Action Plan Matrix

Strategy Framework

Themes

- Workforce
- Small Business & Entrepreneurship
- Housing
- Placemaking
- Business Environment
- Organizing for Action

Game-Changers

GOALS Big Ideas, what we hope to achieve.

Initiatives Projects designed to achieve our goals.

Actions What we'll do to achieve our goals.

GOAL 1 Adapt the physical environment to meet the current and future needs of businesses and residents

Initiative 1.A) Focus on adaptive reuse of buildings in urban and suburban core areas

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
1.A.1	**Develop more collaborative workspaces**	Provide flexible, affordable office space for startups, freelancers, and small businesses.	MetroHartford	iQuilt (Downtown)	
1.A.2	**Create downtown neighborhood districts**	These areas should have an abundance of restaurants, culture, entertainment, shopping, sports, and recreation with unobtrusive parking, and other services within walkable distances along greenway streets and open-space plazas.		CT Next CRDA (Downtown) CT Main St. (Regional) Hartford 400	
1.A.3	**Provide spaces that create a strong network for spurring creative talent**	To support the growth of creative industries.	Greater Hartford Arts Council CT Next		
1.A.4	**Target young professionals and empty nesters by facilitating mixed-use developments**	The goals are to create vibrant, walkable neighborhoods that offer a wide range of amenities and services, while also supporting the existing businesses and infrastructure.		HYPE (Metro Hartford) Planners (zoning) Banks (financing) Small scale developers	
1.A.5	**Create fund for small scale developers**	Partner with insurance companies in the region to establish a fund for small scale developers to use for mixed-use and housing projects.	MetroHartford	Insurance companies	

Theme Alignment: Workforce · Small Business and Entrepreneurship · Housing · Placemaking · Business Environment · Organizing for Action

GOAL 1 Adapt the physical environment to meet the current and future needs of businesses and residents

Initiative 1.B) Reshape the regional housing market

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
1.B.1	**Develop a 360-degree regional future housing strategy**	Advance equitable, environmentally friendly, and healthy residential development throughout the region by addressing housing supply, affordability, and availability.	CRCOG	Community leaders Planners Development community	
1.B.2	**Create a program geared toward first-time homebuyers**	Reduce housing finance and transaction costs.	To be determined as part of the housing strategy.	Banks/non-profits	
1.B.3	**Support mixed-income housing development throughout the region**	Vertical and horizontal mixed-use property development to help address the needs for diverse, affordable housing and to provide easily accessible, walkable, smartly designed, and environmentally sensitive communities.		AARP Age Well Collaborative	Special Act No. 21-28

Initiative 1.C) Advance study and design for the RiverLink and the related East Coast Greenway projects

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
1.C.1	**Support Hartford400 Vision**	Continue to move forward with core elements of Hartford400's vision for a comprehensive, river-centered action plan that integrates environmental, economic, social, transportation, and cultural aspirations.			

Theme Alignment: Workforce · Small Business and Entrepreneurship · Housing · Placemaking · Business Environment · Organizing for Action

GOAL 2 Break down barriers for entrepreneurs and small businesses

Initiative 2.A) Take the pulse of the entrepreneurial ecosystem

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
2.A.1	**Conduct a regional ecosystem assessment**	Identify the disconnects between the supply and demand for small business resources.		Chambers throughout the region HEDCO SAMA Entrepreneurial Center at Hartford College SBDC CCAT	
2.A.2	**Convene an advisory group of underrepresented entrepreneurs and business owners**	To provide input on existing resources and programs, guide the development of new programs, and enhance reach into underserved communities.		Collaboration of Minority Women Professionals CCAT	

GOAL 2 Break down barriers for entrepreneurs and small businesses

Initiative 2.B) Grow youth entrepreneurship opportunities

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
2.B.1	**Build a pipeline of young talent**	Invest in and expand youth entrepreneurship offerings.		Urise Ventures Junior Achievement Technical High Schools CCAT	
2.B.2	**Weave entrepreneurship through education and workforce development**	All education stages include a curriculum that focuses on the core skills of starting and running a business.		Community Colleges Goodwin University Trinity College UHart Entrepreneurial & Women's Business Center Build Hartford (UCONN) CCAT	
2.B.3	**Highlight entrepreneurship as a viable career option**	Promote the benefits of entrepreneurship as a career option for students, just like any other career path.		The Young Legends CWP	
2.B.4	**Create experiential opportunities in entrepreneurship**	Expand opportunities for the region's youth to connect with the entrepreneurial community		Co-working spaces, incubators, accelerators K-12 system Colleges & Universities CCAT	

GOAL 2 Break down barriers for entrepreneurs and small businesses

Initiative 2.C) Create a front door to the regional entrepreneurial ecosystem

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
2.C.1	**Create a digital resource navigator**	Online hub where entrepreneurs in the region can search for resources and information.	UCONN BUILD	SBDC CT Next AdvanceCT CCAT	
2.C.2	**Hire an in-person resource navigator**	Champion of entrepreneurship for the region, connecting business owners to resources and bringing together partners.			

Initiative 2.D) Expand access to capital for entrepreneurs and small businesses

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
2.D.1	**Review loan application processes**	Simplify the process for small business applicants.		Area small business lenders	
2.D.2	**Deepen relationships with the region's local CDFIs**	Elevate their work and expand their portfolios and influence.	CT Next CCAT	Local CDFI's	
2.D.3	**Attract and grow minority-owned and operating lending institutions and fintech companies**	Address the lack of Black-owned financial institutions in the region.	CT Next To find co-lead for small business initiatives	HEDCO	

Theme Alignment: Small Business and Entrepreneurship · Business Environment · Organizing for Action

GOAL 3 Hyperfocus on existing businesses

Initiative 3.A) Significantly expand business retention and expansion (BRE) efforts

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
3.A.1	**Design a collaborative BRE program**	Understand the immediate and future needs of Capitol Region businesses, with a focus on deeply understanding the region's current and emerging workforce needs and taking collective action to respond to those needs.	MetroHartford	Region's workforce and Economic developers Chief Manufacturing Officer CCAT	

Initiative 3.B) Prioritize investment into training and retaining the future workforce

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
3.B.1	**Expand Dual Track programs**	Expand program to increase the number of students and businesses participating.	Capital Workforce Partners	United Way, K-12, CBIA, ReadyCT, Work-based learning network, CCAT	
3.B.2	**Expand K-12 career exploration**	Help middle and high school students begin to build local professional networks and mentor relationships with area professionals.	Capital Workforce Partners	Regional sector partnerships Business community leaders	
3.B.3	**Continue to advance career navigation efforts**	The Hartford Career Navigation Report and Recommendations outlines steps to ensure that opportunity youth gain equitable access to training and workforce development resources.	Capital Workforce Partners	Workforce Solutions Collaborative of MetroHartford	
3.B.4	**Collaborate around data**	A systematic tracking system to gauge the performance and health of the workforce development system.	Capital Workforce Partners	CCAT	

Theme Alignment: Workforce · Business Environment

GOAL 3 Hyperfocus on existing businesses

Initiative 3.C) Support industry-led workforce development efforts

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
3.C.1	**Continue to prioritize Regional Sector Partnerships**	Ensure leadership continues to be engaged in partnership activity to address cross-sector issues comprehensively.	CWP		
3.C.2	**Elevate discussions around emerging trends to create a future-ready workforce**	Utilize the partnerships as a forum to look ahead and engage with the private sector about what key trends are on the horizon so the workforce system can quickly meet talent needs.	CWP	CCAT	

Initiative 3.D) Establish consistent messaging that is regionally shared

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
3.D.1	**Form an image and identity partnership**	Partnership to guide the development of a regional marketing and branding campaign.	MetroHartford	CTNext CT Tourism Board Greater Hartford Arts Council AdvanceCT (CampusCT)	
3.D.2	**Develop an open-source regionally generated brand identity**	Brand identity can and should be used by multiple organizations when conducting talent and business attraction (i.e. Open Source).	MetroHartford		
3.D.3	**Implement a new collaborative regional branding and image campaign**	Campaign to attract and retain residents, visitors, students, talent, and businesses.	MetroHartford		

Theme Alignment: Workforce · Business Environment · Organizing for Action

GOAL 3 Hyperfocus on existing businesses

Initiative 3.E) Launch a 'smart' data-driven talent attraction campaign

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
3.E.1	**Identify top gap occupations to attract and create unique profiles for each**	Through BRE tactics, connect with area employers who are trying to attract talent to understand the exact skills and competencies that are most in demand.	MetroHartford	Private sector employers AdvanceCT ReadyCT Hartford Promise CCAT	
3.E.2	**Conduct a geographic competitive analysis**	Identify concentrations of top occupations where the Capitol Region can compete.	MetroHartford		
3.E.3	**Launch a marketing strategy**	Attract individuals who can fill the top gap occupations.	MetroHartford	CT Hires CTforME	

Initiative 3.F) Focus business attraction on emerging opportunities

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
3.F.1	**Pursue midsized, high-growth business opportunities**	Offer these companies what they need to continue to grow: highlight sustained growth practices, introduce fast-growth firms, and develop new networks, services, and resources that are best suited to help these firms.	MetroHartford	Local EDOs Community partners CCAT	
3.F.2	**Encourage corporations in the Capitol Region to assess their out-of-state real estate portfolios**	Determine if any high-skill, management-related functions of existing firms can be consolidated in Connecticut.	MetroHartford		

Theme Alignment: Workforce · Business Environment

GOAL 4 Create equitable economic opportunity

Initiative 4.A) Embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion regionally (DEI).

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
4.A.1	**Adopt DEI Economic Development Agenda**	Develop plans and action items to overcome challenges to creating an equitable economy.	CEDS Implementation Committee	State: Scott Gaul CRCOG	
4.A.2	**Develop a regional equity and diversity dashboard**	Provide the region's stakeholders and citizens with a visual public tool to track the region's efforts to advance equity and diversity.	CRCOG	Data Haven CT Data	
4.A.3	**Support the formation of a Chamber(s) or other business organizations representing undersupported business owners**	Form organizations that promote economic development, create opportunities for minority entrepreneurs, and address the unique challenges faced by minority-owned businesses.			

GOAL 4 Create equitable economic opportunity

Initiative 4.B) Take a collaborative, neighborhood-scale approach to development.

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
4.B.1	**Layer resources into neighborhoods disconnected from prosperity – concentrated poverty**	Truly meet people where they are. Weave the DEI agenda into existing economic development, workforce development, entrepreneurship, and community development plans.		Community organizations Neighborhood leaders LISC (Coordinating CDC's) Municipalities CRCOG, CCAT	
4.B.2	**Develop housing that is affordable and accessible downtown and in suburban communities**	Seek solutions that encourage the development of livable and affordable housing that promotes equitable access to housing for all income levels. Align with regional housing strategy. Variety of housing options. Prioritize strategies that focus on wealth building by examining issues of access to capital.		Partnerships for Strong Communities (region) CRCOG CHFA DOH Small scale developers Funding partners Hartford Land Bank (training) DECD (policy)	
4.B.3	**Increase access to childcare and health/mental care**	Identify pockets where access to quality health and childcare is lacking and invest in meeting local neighborhood needs.		Hospital systems State Childcare Initiative CRCOG Women's Business Development Center	
4.B.4	**Increase quality of K-12 education in areas of concentrated poverty**	Create a more supportive and engaging learning environment for all students through a comprehensive approach.		K-12 System	

Theme Alignment: Workforce · Housing · Placemaking · Business Environment · Organizing for Action

GOAL 4 Create equitable economic opportunity

Initiative 4.C) Fix the broken rung to advance women and underrepresented employees into more senior roles

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
4.C.1	**Conduct a 360-degree career pathways analysis and strategy for the region’s economy**	Examine the career pathways for high-demand occupations that span multiple industries based on related skills.	CWP	Regional sector partners	
4.C.2	**Create, connect, and amplify management and career advancement training programs for women and underrepresented employees**	Bring more representation to senior-level positions.	CWP	Regional sector partners Women’s groups at major corporations Collaboration of Women Professionals Leadership Greater Hartford Women of Voices of Color Higher Education CSC System Leadership Greater Hartford Trinity's Center for Entrepreneurship CCAT	

Theme Alignment: Workforce · Business Environment

GOAL 4 Create equitable economic opportunity

Initiative 4.C) Fix the broken rung to advance women and underrepresented employees into more senior roles (cont.)

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
4.C.3	**Expand events and programming for women and underrepresented managers to build and grow their professional networks**	Create more opportunities for women and professionals in underrepresented races and ethnicities to grow their networks and professional development.	CWP	University of Hartford's Entrepreneurial & Women's Business Center CSC system Trinity's Center for Entrepreneurship	
4.C.4	**Increase accommodations for working parents**	Improve the workplace for working parents. Create adaptable schedules, accommodations for nursing mothers, emergency childcare backup programs, etc.		Public and private-sector employers	

Theme Alignment: Workforce · Business Environment

GOAL 5 Restructure the CEDS implementation framework

Initiative 5.A) Restructure the CEDS

Action		Description	Lead	Partners	Status
5.A.1	**Restructure the CEDS Implementation Committee**	The CEDS Implementation Committee should be brought together in its current form with adjustments made for any changes in members' organizational leadership.	MetroHartford CRCOG		
5.A.2	**Procure multi-year funding to hire an experienced executive**	The executive will execute the CEDS Action Matrix and develop other tools and techniques for measuring progress, monitoring program and resource needs, as well as proactively managing related programs, policies, and new initiatives.	CEDS Update Committee	MetroHartford CRCOG	

Theme Alignment: Organizing for Action

ABOUT CAMOIN ASSOCIATES

As the nation's only full-service economic development and lead generation consulting firm, Camoin Associates empowers communities through human connection backed by robust analytics.

Since 1999, Camoin Associates has helped local and state governments, economic development organizations, nonprofit organizations, and private businesses across the country generate economic results marked by resiliency and prosperity.

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