



STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND  
INCORPORATED 1786

## TOWN OF ELLINGTON

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187  
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187  
[www.ellington-ct.gov](http://www.ellington-ct.gov)

TEL. (860) 870-3120

**TOWN PLANNER'S OFFICE** FAX (860) 870-3122

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2022, 7:00 PM**

**IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT**

**REMOTE ATTENDANCE: VIA ZOOM MEETING, INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED BELOW**

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER:**

#### **II. PUBLIC COMMENTS** (on non-agenda items):

#### **III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:**

1. Report: Tolland County Chamber of Commerce
2. Report: Agricultural Initiatives
  - a. Discussion: Town-wide Farm Day (September 2022, tentative)
3. Report: Connecticut Economic Development Association Best Practices
  - a. 2022 Best Practices Application
  - b. Sample/Draft Application Flow Chart
  - c. CEDAS Membership Renewal
4. Report: Tax Incentive/Abatement Programs
5. Report: Current Economic Activity

#### **IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:**

1. Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget & Expenditures update.
2. Approval of the February 9, 2022 regular meeting minutes.
3. Correspondence:
  - a. Goman + York Advisory Services, Connecticut's Shifting Demographics, The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development, dated December 9, 2021.
  - b. Plan of Conservation and Development, Chapter Six - Economic Development

#### **V. ADJOURNMENT:**

**Next regular meeting is scheduled for May 11, 2022**

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**Instructions to attend remotely via Zoom Meeting listed below. The agenda is posted on the Town's webpage ([www.ellington-ct.gov](http://www.ellington-ct.gov)) under Agenda & Minutes, Economic Development Commission.**

#### **Join Zoom Meeting via link:**

**Link:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81344372334>

**Meeting ID:** 813 4437 2334

**Passcode:** 315966

#### **Join Zoom Meeting by phone:**

**1-646-558-8656 US (New York)**

**Meeting ID:** 813 4437 2334

**Passcode:** 315966

COMMISSIONERS: TO ASSIST IN ESTABLISHING QUORUMS REQUIRED TO CONDUCT MEETINGS, PLEASE CONTACT THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND A SCHEDULED MEETING.

**From:** Kevin Fitzgerald [<mailto:cedasprograms@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 10, 2022 5:32 PM  
**To:** Lisa Houlihan <[LHoulihan@ELLINGTON-CT.GOV](mailto:LHoulihan@ELLINGTON-CT.GOV)>  
**Subject:** Re: EDIT: Re: Best Practices Application - Lisa Houlihan

Greetings,

Thank you for participating in the 2022 Best Practices Certification Program! We look forward to reviewing your application.

Best regards,

Toussaint Williams  
Co-Coordinator  
Best Practices Committee  
[twilliams@advancedct.org](mailto:twilliams@advancedct.org) | (860) 571-7147

On Thu, Feb 10, 2022 at 3:31 PM Jotform <[noreply@jotform.com](mailto:noreply@jotform.com)> wrote:

Best Practices Application

Contact Person:	Lisa Houlihan
Community/Town/ City:	Ellington
Title:	Town Planner
Email	<a href="mailto:lhoulhan@ellington-ct.gov">lhoulhan@ellington-ct.gov</a>
Telephone:	8608703120
Zip Code:	06029
Additional Team Members: Names, Title, Email Address:	Ellington Economic Development Commission
Community website:	<a href="http://ellington-ct.gov">ellington-ct.gov</a>

1. Offers pre-application meetings to those applying for building, zoning, or other related permits to discuss timeframes, board or departmental requirements, restrictions, or address concerns and follows up with the applicant if necessary.

2. Has a website or web page for Planning and Economic Development that is updated regularly at least quarterly.

3. Uses social media and or newsletter to communicate with business community & stakeholders.

4. Land Use Regulations are available online.

In Ellington pre-application meetings for building, zoning, or other related development permit applications is offered to discuss timeframes, board or departmental requirements, restrictions, or address concerns through direct assistance with applicants/applicant representatives and staff via in-person, telephone, and email communications. The offices of the Town Planner, Building Official, and Fire Marshal are located in one building situated immediately adjacent to Town Hall where other administrative offices are located (e.g. First Selectman's Office, Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Tax Assessor, etc.) providing a one-stop-shop. For more complex projects or applications requiring cross-departmental oversight, meetings between applicants/applicant representatives and the Ellington Coordination Committee (Committee) is arranged. The Committee generally includes staff from the Planning Department, Fire Marshal's Office, Department of Public Works, Water Pollution Control Authority, Engineering, Building, Health, Town Attorney, and First Selectman's Office.

Webpages for Planning and Economic Development are updated monthly and both were last updated in January of 2022:

<https://www.ellington-ct.gov/departments-and-services/planning-department>

<https://www.ellington-ct.gov/government/boards-commissions/assessment-appeals-ethics/economic-development-commission>

Ellington uses social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), monthly newsletters, email membership lists, and mainstream media (Community Voice Channel) to communicate with business community and stakeholders.

January 2022 Ellington Newsletter: <https://www.ellington-ct.gov/fs/comms-manager/view/f9da64b8-f754-4d4f-ac18-481137a6caba>

Ellington Zoning Regulations:

[https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1633098140/ellingtonctgov/gp1q7zewhtucpuealv/ZoningRegs-coversheet\\_EFFECTIVE\\_10-01-2021.pdf](https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1633098140/ellingtonctgov/gp1q7zewhtucpuealv/ZoningRegs-coversheet_EFFECTIVE_10-01-2021.pdf)

[https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1597693670/ellingtonctgov/mb4jwvnp34vivic2nnxfm/Regulationswithallappendix\\_201911191107163068.pdf](https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1597693670/ellingtonctgov/mb4jwvnp34vivic2nnxfm/Regulationswithallappendix_201911191107163068.pdf)

<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1597685689/ellingtonctgov/nlpukbidpkiribsnl4z/EllingtonSubdivisionRegulationsPDF.pdf>

5. Communicates within 72 hours to pending applicants and responds to questions within 72 hours regarding application status.

6. Offers GIS land use and parcel information online to applicants and the public.

7. Shares applications and renderings online for stakeholders to review during the approval process.

8. Offers online permitting that allows for electronic signatures and payments.

9. Community has a written brand identity and marketing strategy.

Ellington offers online permitting for zoning and building applications. Applicants receive automated confirmation emails upon submitting applications, and staff advises applicants within 1 to 2 business days of receiving applications about the status of permits. Once an applicant provides all required application submittals and requisite approvals present, permits are issued within 3 to 5 business days. Applications submitted for commission approval are reviewed for completeness by staff with applicant representatives at intake. Once an application is officially received, it's circulated to staff for interdepartmental review and comment. Application information is scanned and forwarded electronically to engineering, building, fire marshal, traffic authority, health, assessor, water pollution control authority, and public works. When staff comment is provided it is immediately forwarded to applicants/applicant representative(s). Applications submitted for commission approval are generally processed within 30 to 45 days.

Ellington maintains a robust online GIS mapping that has several themed layers (e.g. zoning, wetlands, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, preserved land, aerial imagery, etc.), and each parcel is connected to electronic property cards/assessor information. <https://ellingtonct.mapgeo.io/datasets/properties?abuttersDistance=100&latlng=41.907197%2C-72.412027&modal=disclaimer>

Commission agenda packets for Planning and Zoning, Economic Development, Inland Wetlands and Watercourses, Design Review Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Conservation, including copies of applications, narratives, staff/reports, site plans and other supportive documents are posted on Ellington's website prior to each meeting. Following is an example: [https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1644252955/ellingtonctgov/kbpauyctbcnpx7ybbfeu/2022\\_02-09EDCAgendaPacket.pdf](https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1644252955/ellingtonctgov/kbpauyctbcnpx7ybbfeu/2022_02-09EDCAgendaPacket.pdf)

Ellington offers online permitting (Accela) that accepts electronic payment and self-established user accounts serve as e-signatures. <https://aca-prod.accela.com/ellington/Default.aspx>

Ellington does not have a formal marketing strategy, but utilizes a common tagline: Ellington is a great place to grow! See Welcome to Ellington on main page of town website. <https://www.ellington-ct.gov/>



10. Community maintains a "sell sheet" to quickly respond to proposal requests that includes: demographic information, workforce data, largest existing employers, cost of doing business, tax rates, and utility providers.

[2021 Ellington.pdf](#)

11. Community has a plan for communicating effectively across language barriers.

N/A

12. Coordinates meetings between relevant municipal departments to encourage collaboration on applications and avoid conflicting schedules.

Interdepartmental meetings (Coordination Committee Meetings) are held as activity dictates to address issues related to applications for building, zoning, or other development permits. Meetings are held to review preliminary plans, proposals pending before a commission, and pre-construction. Generally, staff representing engineering, building, fire marshal, planning, zoning, wetlands, health, public works, and water pollution control is present. Prior to COVID, Coordination Committee Meetings were reserved for in-person typically on Thursdays. Post COVID shutdowns, meetings are coordinated as needed and attendance is available in-person, remotely, or a combination thereof.

13. Actively partners with regional economic development organizations and other communities.

The Ellington Planning Department and Economic Development Commission engages in regional economic development initiatives through active membership with the Tolland County Chamber of Commerce (TCCC). The EDC participates in business after hours, business before breakfast, annual legislative breakfast, ribbon cutting ceremonies, annual awards, etc. The Town Planner manages the Planning Department and is primary staff to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Economic Development Commission and serves on the Chamber's Board of Directors, Economic Development Commission, and the Executive Committee.

14. Works collaboratively with a diverse group of partners, reflecting the diversity of your community (race, ethnicity, gender, unique perspectives, etc.) that informs inclusive growth and equitable economic development.

N/A

15. Publishes a check list or flow chart demonstrating required permit submittals and it is sent to applicants with steps that must be completed in order to proceed.

N/A

16. Encourages applicants to conduct community and neighborhood meetings in advance of public hearings and provides relevant contacts or support.

Ellington is a suburban rural town with a population of 16,428 (according to the Connecticut Department of Public Health as of July 2020). The nature of routine development proposals does not generally warrant community and neighborhood meetings, however when projects have the potential to impact the community at large like when developing and adopting a Plan of Conservation or Development, or the majority of a given neighborhood may be impacted by the installation of a 19 MW solar array for 75 +/- acres, public outreach is encouraged and accomplished via public informational meetings, direct mailers, door-to-door visits, print ads, and social/multimedia posts.

17. Offers coordinated inspections if applicable; e.g. public safety and building inspector.

18. Hosts interdepartmental staff meetings to address issues related to applications for building, zoning, or other related permits.

Upload additional files supporting criteria above.

19. Has a point person dedicated to economic development who serves as coordinator/ombudsman for on-going communications and has relevant training or experience.

20. Has a mission statement for economic development that reflects the community's vision and values.

[Coordinated Inspections.pdf](#)

Interdepartmental meetings (Coordination Committee Meetings) are held as activity dictates to address issues related to applications for building, zoning, or other development permits. Meetings are held to review preliminary plans, proposals pending before a commission, and pre-construction. Generally, staff representing engineering, building, fire marshal, planning, zoning, wetlands, health, public works, and water pollution control is present. Prior to COVID, Coordination Committee Meetings were reserved for in-person typically on Thursdays. Post COVID shutdowns, meetings are coordinated as needed and attendance is available in-person, remotely, or a combination thereof.

[Microsoft Invite to CC Meeting.docx](#)

The Ellington Town Planner manages the Ellington Planning Department and is primary technical staff to the Economic Development Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission and Design Review Board. The current planner possess more than twenty-years of municipal land use experience, is a certified planner through the American Institute of Certified Planners, and successfully completed the New England Economic Development Course through the International Economic Development Council. For the past 8 years the current planner has served on the Board of Directors, Economic Development Committee, and Executive Committee of the Tolland County Chamber of Commerce.

[ELL EDC Mission Stmt.pdf](#)  
[Ellington EDC Business Information Packet.pdf](#)

21. Supports ongoing training/professional development for economic development and land use staff and commissioners (e.g. orientation and continuing education for new commission members).

Ongoing training/professional development for economic development and land use staff and commissioners is funded through the Town Planner's and Economic Development Commission's operating budgets. As part of welcoming new commissioners, members are sent training materials and relevant regulations/policies prior to attending initial meetings. The Town Planner is currently enrolled in CCM's Certified Connecticut Municipal Official program and has attended six community development related training sessions over the past year. More recently, December 9, 2021, the Town Planner attending a program sponsored by CEDAS: Connecticut's Shifting Demographics. Like the December 9th presentation, when training and professional development program content is beneficial to commission review, training material is shared and discussed with planning and economic development commissioners.

22. Has completed a standardized economic development self-assessment and has a plan for continuous improvement.

CEDAS BP #22.docx  
CERC Self-Assessment results - August 2016.pdf

23. Asks applicants to provide feedback on the application process and uses feedback to make process improvements (customer satisfaction survey).

N/A

24. Reviews zoning and land use regulations at minimum every five years for consistency, best practices in planning and economic development, alignment with the plan of conservation and development, economic inclusion, and vision for economic development.

Over the past five years the Ellington Zoning Regulations have been amended sixteen (16) times, of which ten (10) amendments directly address business community concerns and recommendations from the plan of conservation and development. The amendments include changes to regulations to permit larger ground-mounted solar arrays accessory to commercial/industrial facilities, allow temporary signs for longer durations, to allow changeable electronic fuel price signs, to encourage farm brewery/cider/distillery/winery, and allow rear lots for non-residential purposes. The latter amendment resulted in the development of 19,000 sf light industrial facility.

25. Has an economic development strategic plan current within the past three years.

Ellington updated its plan of conservation and development effective November 30, 2019, and adopted economic strategies and a Market Analysis as part of the project. Currently, the Analysis is being used to evaluate housing stock and develop changes to local regulation to meet housing need.

<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1644344474/ellingtonctgov/lcqxv9h8ui6o26jpw7h9/EllingtonCTMarketAnalysis.pdf>

26. Maintains an inventory of available properties.

The Ellington EDC webpage includes a link to [loopnet.com](http://loopnet.com), a commercial real estate search site.

<https://www.ellington-ct.gov/government/boards-commissions/assessment-appeals-ethics/economic-development-commission>

27. If the community has municipal incentive policies, they are posted on the community's website.

Economic Development Tax Abatement Program:

[https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1618340535/ellingtonctgov/vhfdtrdtlo8fngdwwmu/2021AMENDMENTS-ABATEMENTSCHEDULEDEFINITIONSCAPTURECLAUSE-BOSAPPROVED2021\\_04-12.pdf](https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1618340535/ellingtonctgov/vhfdtrdtlo8fngdwwmu/2021AMENDMENTS-ABATEMENTSCHEDULEDEFINITIONSCAPTURECLAUSE-BOSAPPROVED2021_04-12.pdf) Farm, Forest & Open Space; Homeowner Tax Credit; Property Tax Exemptions: <https://www.ellington-ct.gov/departments-and-services/assessor/exemptions-tax-credits>

28. Publishes design and signage guidelines or design review criteria.

<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1596037015/ellingtonctgov/s6p4cqe75z38ymk3znm4/DesignReviewGuide.pdf>

29. Has a formal Business Retention and Expansion plan/program.

Formal programs are systematic approaches to business visits.

These must include some strategy beyond occasional visits.

30. Zoning codes provide reliability, predictability and transparency through tools such as form based zoning.

Ellington utilizes a Tax Abatement Program to assist with business retention and expansion needs. Attached is a list of abatements granted over the past ten years to retain existing businesses and help with expansion needs.

<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1644523604/ellingtonctgov/pbdjs0h7wokw50bakgbt/ApprovedTaxAbatementList.pdf>

Ellington has not adopted any form-based codes. To provide reliability, predictability and transparency, Ellington developed a Design Review Guide covering applicability, site layout, and building, signage, lighting, and landscape recommendations. The Ellington Design Review Board serve as advisors to the Ellington Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) offering design flexibility and leaving regulatory compliance to the PZC.

<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1597693767/ellingtonctgov/zozk7uiskciylgn0cy4k/DesignReviewGuide.pdf>

31. Demonstrates movement towards administrative review.

Ellington Zoning Regulation Section 8.2.3 enables Planning Department staff to approve minor site improvements for commercial, industrial, multi-family and mixed-use sites. Administrative oversight includes review of smaller building additions, parking expansions, accessory buildings, and other minor site modifications. Ellington Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulation Section 6.4 enables staff to grant administrative approvals for commercial or industrial projects when construction activity is greater than 25' to a wetland or watercourse (regulated area).

<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1633098140/ellingtonctgov/qpilq7zewhtucpuealvb/ZoningRegsw-coversheet EFFECTIVE 10-01-2021.pdf>

<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1597693670/ellingtonctgov/mb4jwvnp34vivc2nnxfm/Regulationswithallappendix 201911191107163068.pdf>

32. Engages women and minority-owned businesses to determine specific needs and direct them to specialized resources.

N/A

33. Other innovative and creative ideas not previously accounted for in other criteria.

To assist businesses recuperate from operational restrictions associated with COVID-19, the Ellington EDC developed a Shop Ellington campaign in 2020, and held the event again in 2021. The event intends to increase patron activity during sales events starting the day after Thanksgiving and runs for ten consecutive days. The EDC advertises the event through newspaper ad, social media, flyers, direct mailers, and publication with the Tolland County Chamber of Commerce. Businesses receive event flyers, raffle cards and tickets, and a Shop Ellington yard signs. Customer raffle cards are also linked to the EDC's webpage for download and print.

Upload additional files supporting criteria above.

[Customer Raffle Card & General Instructions - finals.ite.pdf](#)

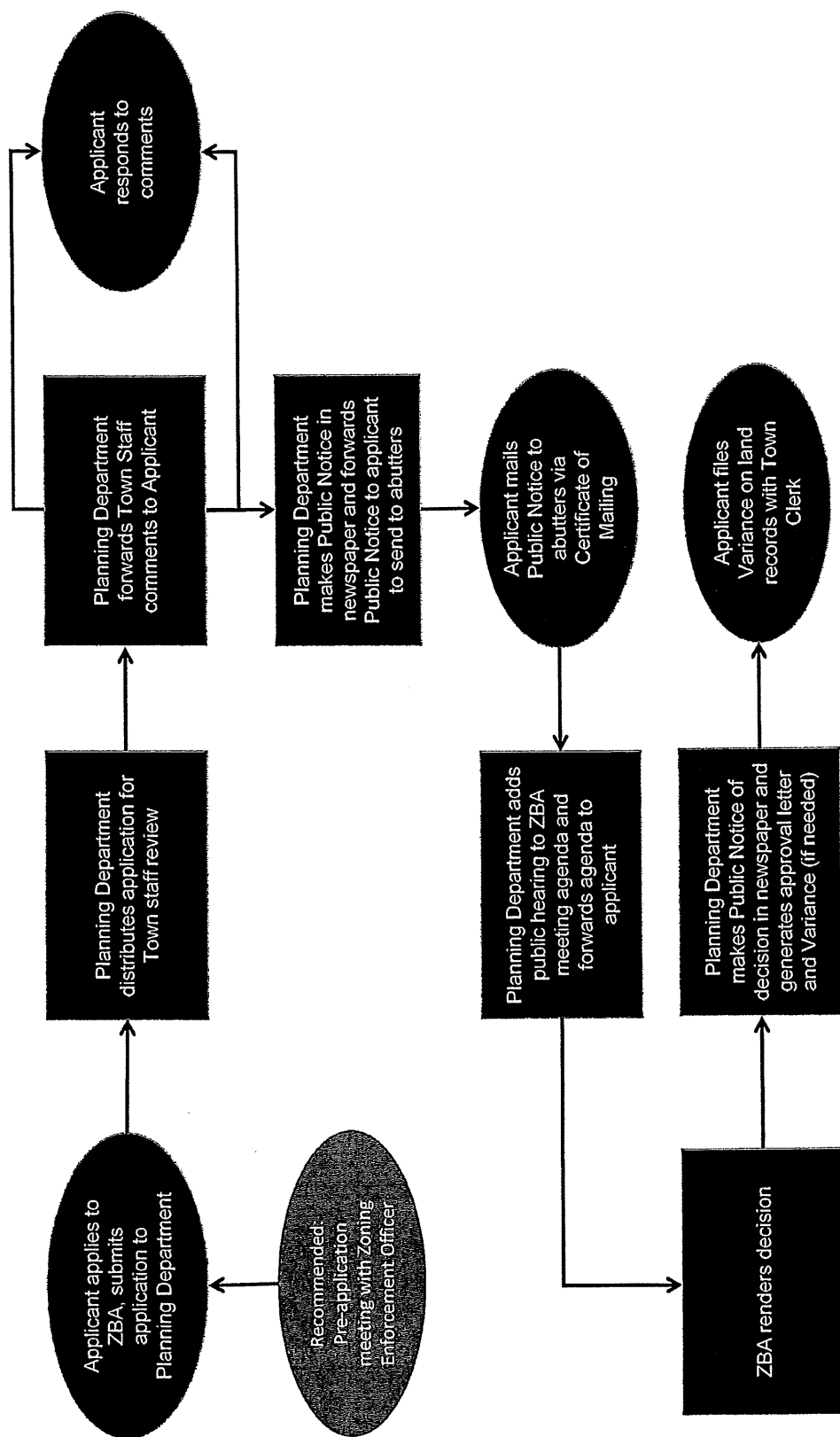
[Shop Ellington 2021 Congrats & Thank you.pdf](#)

[Shop Ellington 2021 Participating Business Flyer FINAL 11-24-2021.pdf](#)

[Shop Ellington 2021 Poster.pdf](#)

TELOR

## Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) Application Process



LEZARD





## 2022 Membership

- ☐ Renewal  
☐ New Membership Application

☐ Yes, I want to join (or renew my membership to) CEDAS, Connecticut's only individual member professional organization dedicated exclusively to the advancement of economic development and individual member proficiency.

### Contact Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City / State / Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### My Business / Organization is:

<input type="checkbox"/> State Agency	<input type="checkbox"/> Chamber of Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Utility
<input type="checkbox"/> Investment Banker	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Banker	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering Firm
<input type="checkbox"/> Contractor/Construction	<input type="checkbox"/> Consulting Firm	<input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate Firm
<input type="checkbox"/> Municipal	<input type="checkbox"/> Regional Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> University/Technical College
<input type="checkbox"/> Architectural Firm	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please indicate) _____	

### Professional Staff (Note: Memberships are non-transferable)

*Discounts are available for two or more professional staff members joining from the same organization.*

- ( ) **\$150.00 – Regular Member** (1<sup>st</sup> member)  
( ) **\$125.00 –** (2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> member)  
( ) **\$75.00 –** (5<sup>th</sup> + member)  
( ) **\$40.00 – Students and Retired Professionals**

### Special Membership Categories: *Economic Development Commissions*

*\*An Economic Development Commission (EDC) is defined as a volunteer position for the town or city and you should pay under the Special Membership Categories*

- ( ) **\$150.00 – Economic Development Commission**  
( ) **\$40.00 – Individual ECD Members**

### Organizational Membership

- ( ) **\$500.00**

**\$ Total Amount Due**

**Make your check payable to CEDAS and mail it with this form to:**

Alison Geisler  
CCM  
545 Long Wharf Drive, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New Haven, CT 06511

**Membership Questions?** Contact Alison Geisler at [ageisler@ccm-ct.org](mailto:ageisler@ccm-ct.org) or 203-498-3029.

*Pg 1 of 2*



**For multiple individuals or organizational members, please provide each member's contact information below.**

#### Contact Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City / State / Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Contact Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City / State / Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Contact Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City / State / Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

# TOWN OF ELLINGTON

## Town Planner Expenditure

Fiscal Year: 2021 - 2022

From Date: 7/1/2021

To Date: 4/7/2022

Account Number	Description		Adj. Budget	Current	YTD	Balance	Encumbrance	Budget Bal	%Bu
1000.02.00220.10.50103	Part Time—Econ Devel Commission		\$1,300.00	\$260.00	\$260.00	\$1,040.00	\$0.00	\$1,040.00	80.00%
Transaction Detail (Maximum)									
Date	Entry	Check No	Deposit No	Invoice No	PQ Number	Voucher	Shipment	Memo	Journal
1/21/2022	280		0	0	0	0	0	0 ECON DEV Comm-Part Time	Adjusting
2/18/2022	312		0	0	0	0	0	0 ECON DEV Comm-Part Time	Adjusting
Detail Total:							\$260.00	\$260.00	
1000.02.00220.20.60221	Advertising Printing—Econ Devel Commission—		\$400.00	\$170.00	\$170.00	\$230.00	\$0.00	\$230.00	57.50%
Transaction Detail (Maximum)									
Date	Entry	Check No	Deposit No	Invoice No	PQ Number	Voucher	Shipment	Memo	Journal
12/16/2021	203	601404	0	202247	0	1027		0 202247	Accounts Payable
Detail Total:							\$170.00	\$170.00	
1000.02.00220.20.60222	Dues & Subscriptions—Econ Devel Commission—		\$750.00	\$430.00	\$430.00	\$320.00	\$0.00	\$320.00	42.67%
Transaction Detail (Maximum)									
Date	Entry	Check No	Deposit No	Invoice No	PQ Number	Voucher	Shipment	Memo	Journal
10/22/2021	114	600979	0	1808	0	1020		0 1808	Accounts Payable
Detail Total:							\$430.00	\$430.00	
1000.02.00220.20.60223	Travel—Econ Devel Commission—		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
1000.02.00220.20.60232	Postage—Econ Devel Commission—		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
1000.02.00220.20.60233	Education—Econ Devel Commission		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
1000.02.00220.20.60234	Professional Development—Econ Devel Commission—		\$100.00	(\$25.00)	(\$25.00)	\$125.00	\$0.00	\$125.00	125.00%
Transaction Detail (Maximum)									
Date	Entry	Check No	Deposit No	Invoice No	PQ Number	Voucher	Shipment	Memo	Journal
3/10/2022	331		0	0	0	0	0	0 Professional Development—Econ Devel Commission—	Adjusting
Detail Total:							(\$25.00)	(\$25.00)	
1000.02.00220.20.60250	Contracted Services—Econ Devel Commission—		\$2,800.00	\$404.00	\$404.00	\$2,396.00	\$0.00	\$2,396.00	85.57%
Transaction Detail (Maximum)									
Date	Entry	Check No	Deposit No	Invoice No	PQ Number	Voucher	Shipment	Memo	Journal
11/18/2021	130	601142	0	59132	0	1024		0 59132	Accounts Payable
Detail Total:							\$404.00	\$404.00	
1000.02.00220.30.60341	Office Supplies—Econ Devel Commission—		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Detail Total:							\$0.00	\$0.00	
Department: Econ Devel Commission - 00220									
					\$1,239.00	\$4,111.00	\$0.00	\$4,111.00	76.84 %





# TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187

[www.ellington-ct.gov](http://www.ellington-ct.gov)

TEL. (860) 870-3120 TOWN PLANNER'S OFFICE FAX (860) 870-3122

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2022, 7:00 PM

**IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT**  
**REMOTE ATTENDANCE: VIA ZOOM MEETING, INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED BELOW**

**PRESENT:** In Person: Chairman Sean Kelly  
Zoom Attendance: Vice Chairman Donna Resutek, Regular Members David Hurley and Jim Fay and Alternate Sam Chang

**ABSENT:** Regular Members Chris Todd and Alternates Bryan Platt and Amos Smith

### STAFF

**PRESENT:** Lisa M. Houlihan, Town Planner and Nathaniel Trask, Recording Clerk

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Sean Kelly called the Economic Development Commission meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

**II. PUBLIC COMMENTS** (on non-agenda items): None

### III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

#### 1. Report: Tolland County Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Houlihan said the Tolland County Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) will hold a legislative breakfast at CNC Software in Tolland on March 3, 2022, from 8:30AM to 10:00AM. The breakfast is free to members, and the Chamber will look into providing a remote attendance option. They will also be holding a business showcase on April 5, 2022, at Georgina's Restaurant. There will be a membership fee and non-membership fee to attend.

#### 2. Report: Agricultural Initiatives

Nothing new to report.

#### 3. Report: Connecticut Economic Development Association Best Practices

Ms. Houlihan said the 2022 schedule for best practices certification has been changed. The application period will be open from November to February and the decision-making process will be during February and March. The CEDAS Best Practices Awards Presentation will be held in April at a location that will be announced later. Ellington will be applying to be named a Best Practices community.

Ms. Houlihan brought up the topic of Question 32 of the online application for Best Practices, which asks if the community "engages women and minority owned businesses to determine specific needs and direct them to specialized resources." She indicated that the commission is not engaged in this from an economic development and planning perspective. Chairman Kelly stated that the score for the community would be affected by this on the Best Practices application, however it is something that should be focused on in preparation for the next application period. Ms. Houlihan reported that Question 26 asks if the town "maintains an inventory of available properties." She recapped past discussion about this and use of the online commercial property marketplace called LoopNet.

Question 25 asks if the commission "has an economic development strategic plan current within the past three years." Ms. Houlihan stated that the commission does not have a standalone economic development strategic plan, noting after polling surrounding communities in the past a chapter dedicated to economic development and strategies was added to the Plan of Conservation and Development when updated in 2019.

Question 23 asks if the commission "asks applicants to provide feedback on the application process and uses feedback to make process improvements (customer satisfaction survey)." Ms. Houlihan said this is not something that the commission currently does, but a questionnaire could be discussed and added to the application process in the future.

Question 14 asks if the commission "works collaboratively with a diverse group of partners, reflecting the diversity of your community (race, ethnicity, gender, unique perspectives, etc.) that informs inclusive growth and equitable economic development." Ms. Houlihan said the commission currently does not have a process related to this that focuses on economic development and planning.

The commission fulfills many of the Connecticut Economic Development Association Best Practices. Ms. Houlihan noted the commission has a mission statement, the town offers online permitting and staff coordinates meetings to review applications recently submitted, ongoing applications and preconstruction applications.

4. Report: Tax Incentive/Abatement Programs

Nothing new to report.

5. Report: Current Economic Activity

Chairman Kelly reported the construction of Phase II development at the Big Y Express property is going well. Development of the first part, which is the car wash, is nearing completion. Chairman Kelly, Vice Chairman Resutek and Commissioner Hurley stated that restaurant business at JRego's Gathering Place, 175 West Road was going well.

#### **IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:**

1. Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget & Expenditures update, and Draft FY22/23 Budget.

Chairman Kelly introduced the changes that were made to the budget at last month's meeting. An increase was made to the advertising and part-time services budget while the contracted services budget was reduced. The total budget is \$4,450.

A business strategic plan will be added to the agenda for next month's meeting.

2. Approval of the January 12, 2022 regular meeting minutes.

**MOVED (FAY) SECONDED (RESUTEK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 12, 2022 MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.**

3. Correspondence:

- a. Goman + York Advisory Services, Connecticut's Shifting Demographics, The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development, dated December 9, 2021.

Chairman Kelly discussed the shifting demographics and economic development study performed by Gorman + York Advisory Services and noted the report will be maintained on the agenda for discussion at next month's commission meeting.

- b. Ellington, CT Market Analysis May 2018.

Commissioner Chang spoke about the data contained in the CT Market Analysis, May 2018. He noted that – according to the report – much of the demographic of Ellington can be classified as “Old and Newcomers” and that a small population of the town can be classified as “Soccer Moms.” Chairman Kelly said that the town has a higher percentage of apartments than neighboring towns.

#### **V. ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOVED (FAY) SECONDED (HURLEY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING AT 7:48 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Nathaniel Trask, Recording Clerk



# Connecticut's Shifting Demographics: The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development

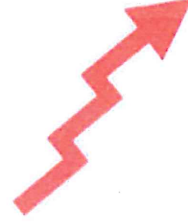
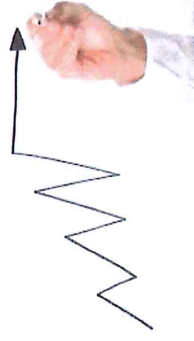
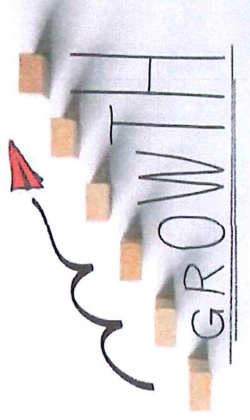
December 9, 2021



# The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development

## Introduction

- This presentation is about demographics—the 2020 Census and Connecticut's shifting demographics.
- Connecticut's demographics shifts are about economic stagnation and our lack of job growth over the past 30 years.
- Most important, Connecticut's demographic shifts have real implications for economic development.



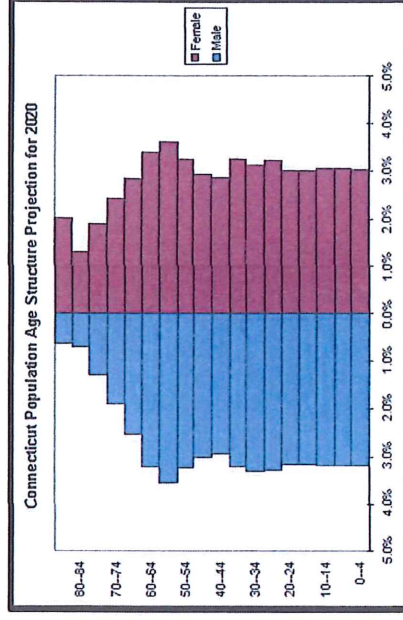
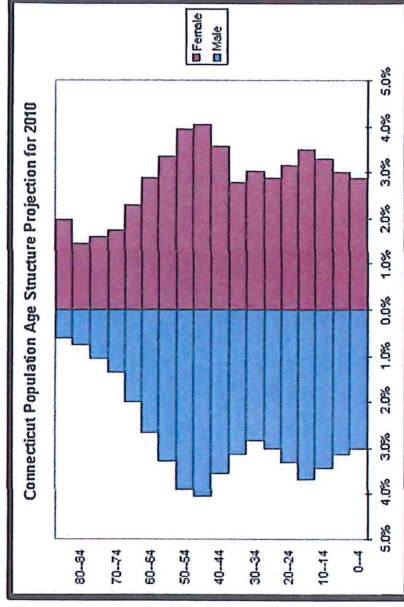
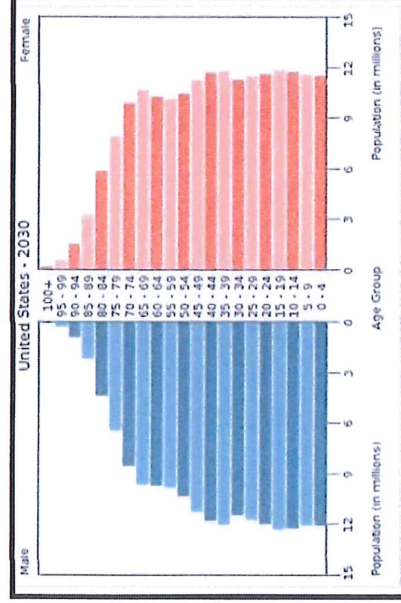
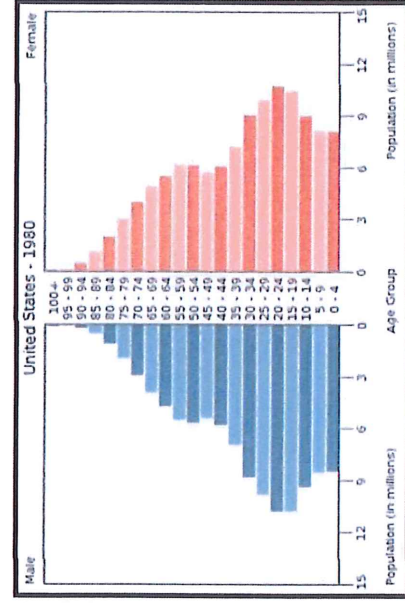
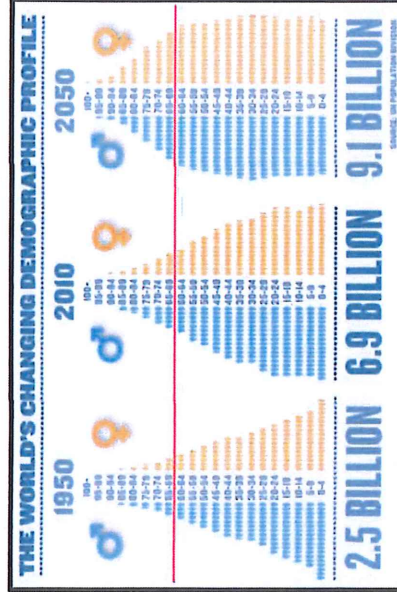
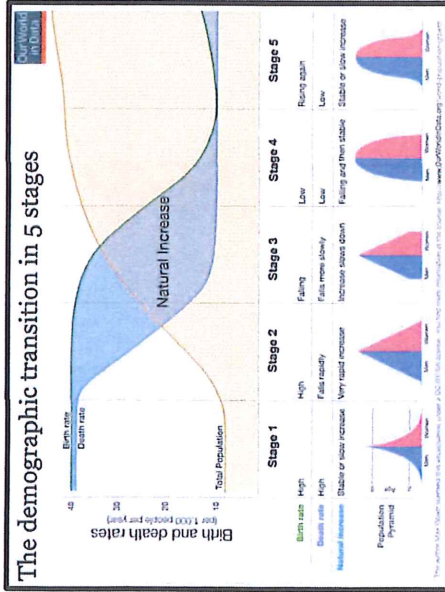
## Some things to understand

- When jobs stagnate or decline, the population ages.
- When a population ages, population growth slows.
- When population growth slows, household formations slow.
- When jobs, population, and household formations slow, demand contracts because jobs, population, and household formations are the primary drivers of real estate market demand.



# Demographic Trends A National Perspective

# The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development





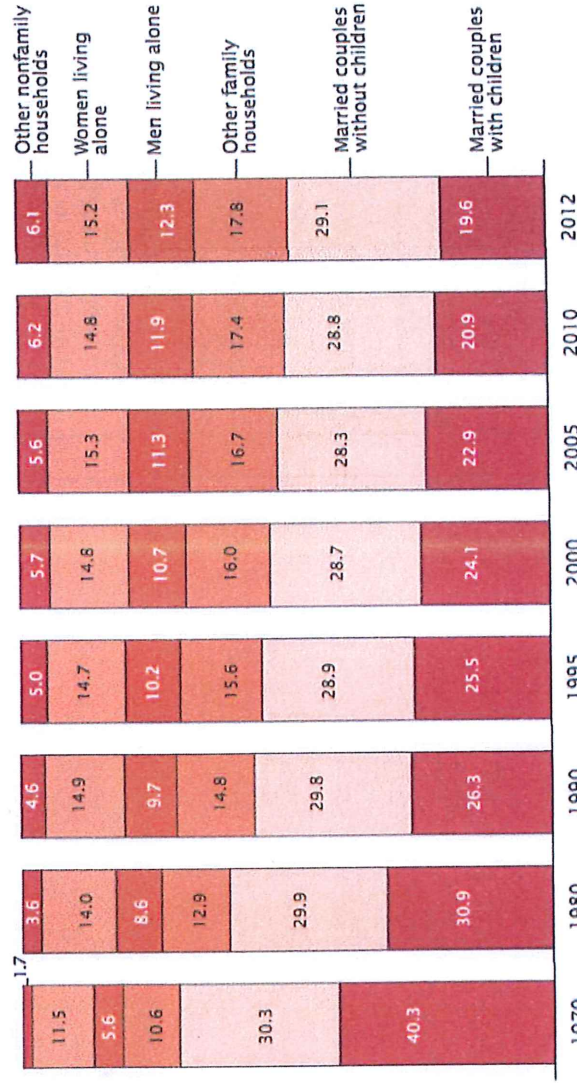
## The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development

Demographic trends and the changing demographic structure of our population and households.

What do these changes in household structures mean for the way we:

- Live
- Work
- Play/Socialize
- Consume
- and the Homes we rent/buy?

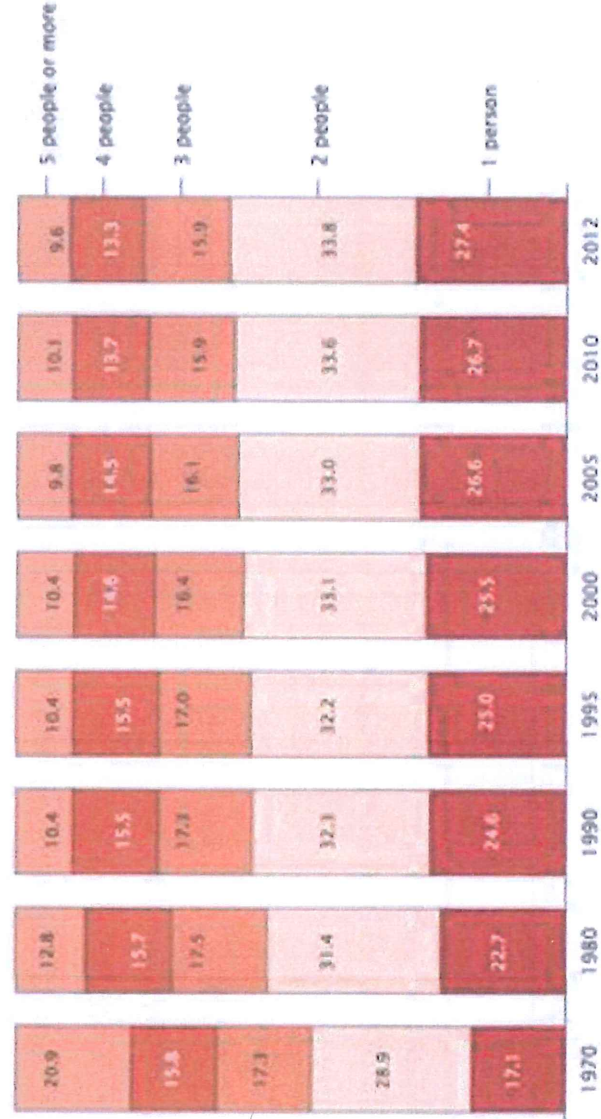
Figure 1.  
**Households by Type, 1970 to 2012: CPS**  
(In percent)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, selected years, 1970 to 2012.

# The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development

Figure 3.  
Households by Size, 1970 to 2012: CPS  
(In percent)



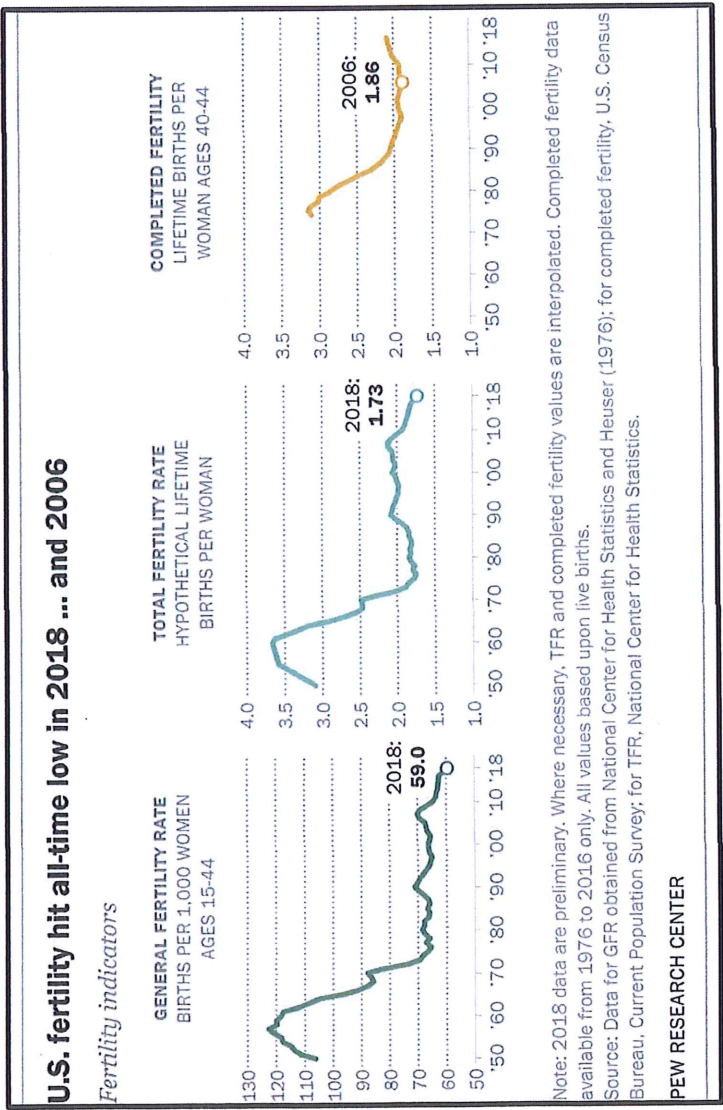
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, selected years, 1970 to 2012.

## Demographic Change

- ❖ The number of parents with children under age 18 and living at home declined by about 3 million over the past decade, dropping from about 66.1 million parents in 2010 to 63.1 million in 2020.
- ❖ There are 36.2 million one-person households, which is 28% of all households. In 1960, single-person households represented only 13% of all households.
- ❖ In 2020, 33% of adults ages 15 and over had never been married, up from 23% in 1950.
- ❖ The estimated median age to marry for the first time is 30.5 for men and 28.1 for women, up from ages 23.7 and 20.5, respectively, in 1947.
- ❖ More than half (58%) of adults ages 18 to 24 lived in their parental home, up from 55% in 2019.



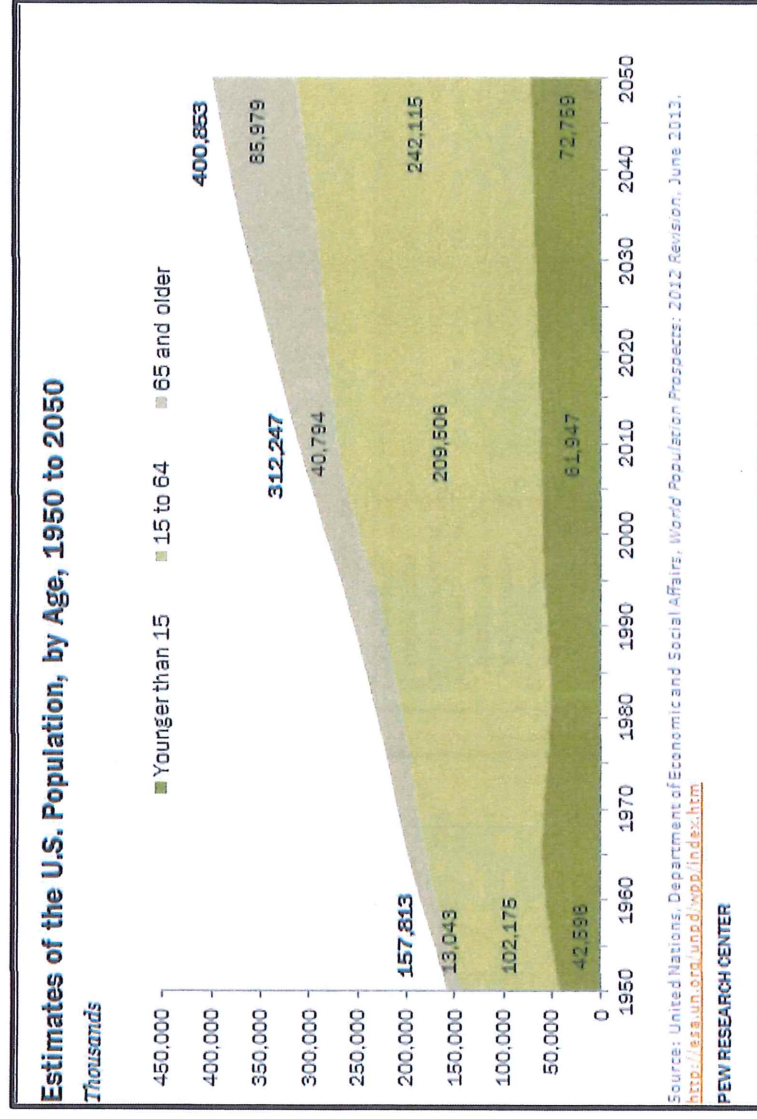
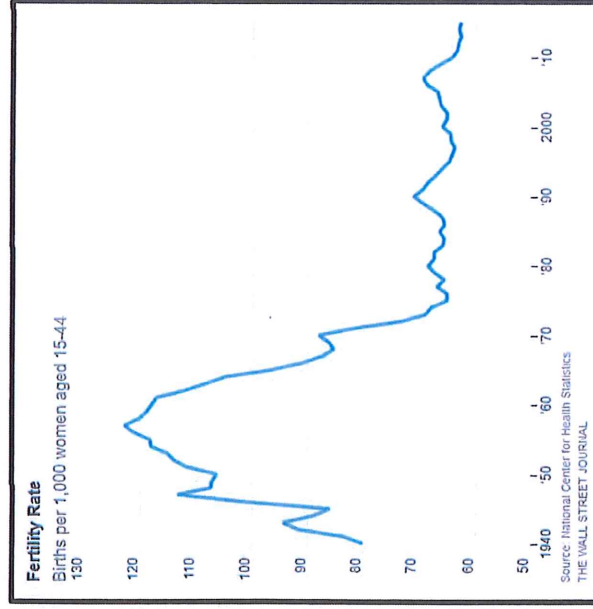
# The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development



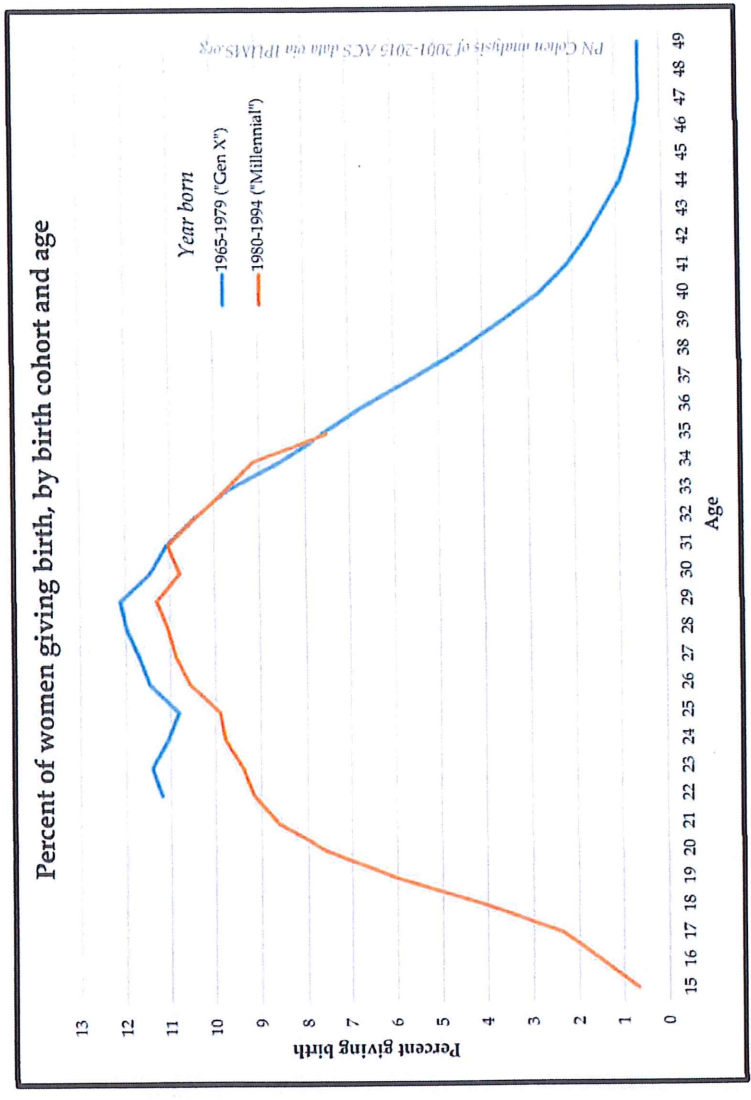
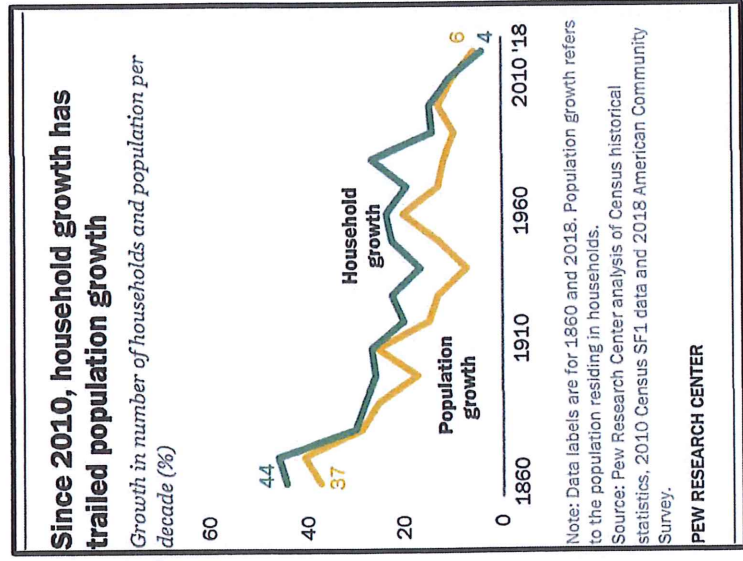
	Fertility Rate	Deaths	Births	Replacement Rate
Above Replacement	2.4	100	120	2.5 Births = Growth
Replacement	2.3	100	115	Stable
Replacement – USA	2.2	100	110	Stable
Below Replacement	2.1	100	105	Stable
United States	2.0	100	100	Decline
Connecticut	1.73	100	82	-18 Births = Decline
	1.57	100	73	-27 Births = Decline

# The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development

The United States will continue to age, and Connecticut is older and aging faster than the United States.

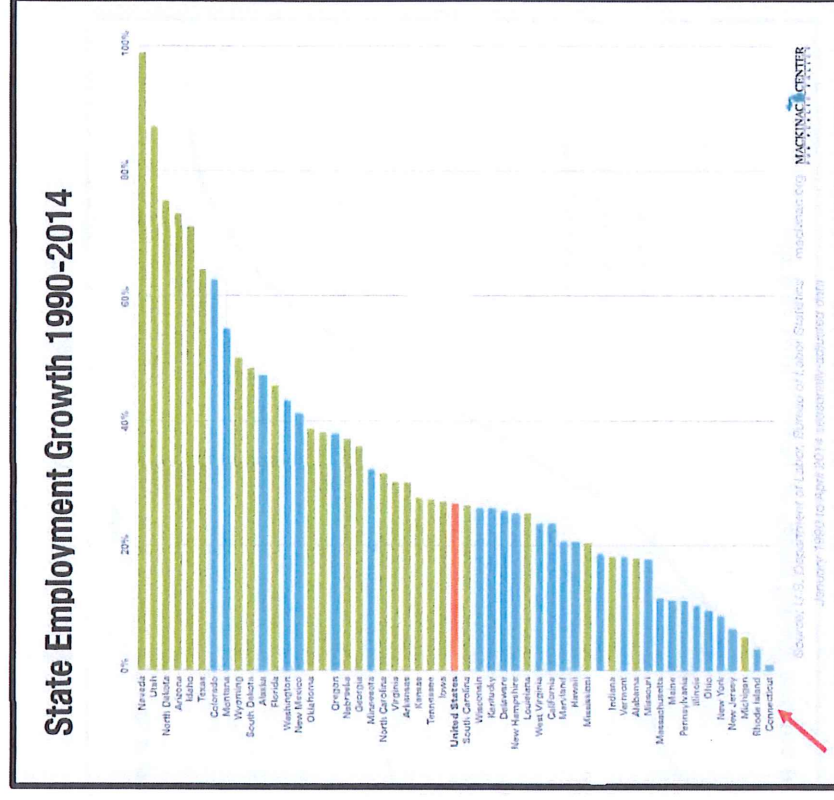
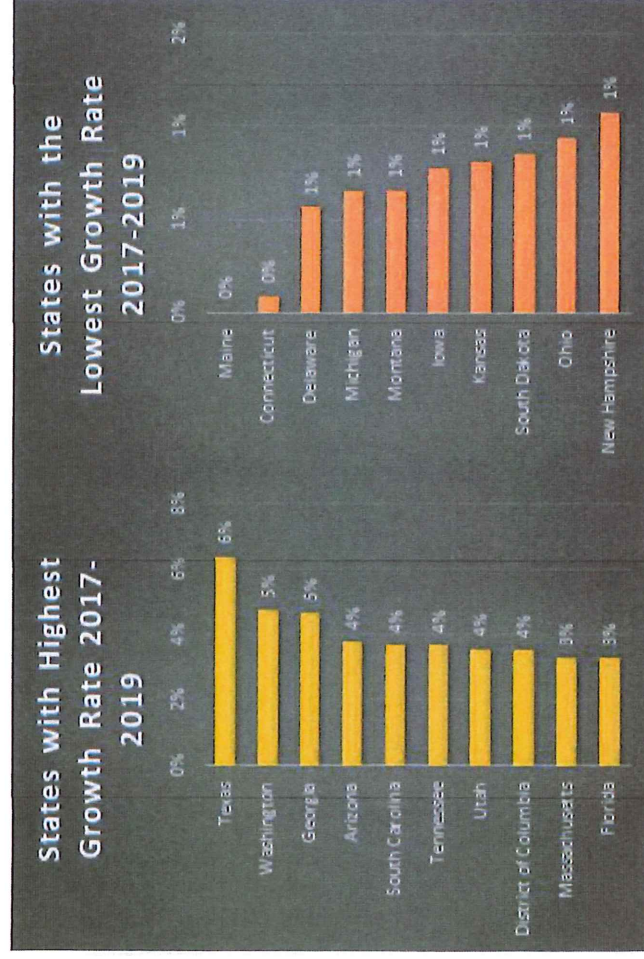


# The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development





# The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development



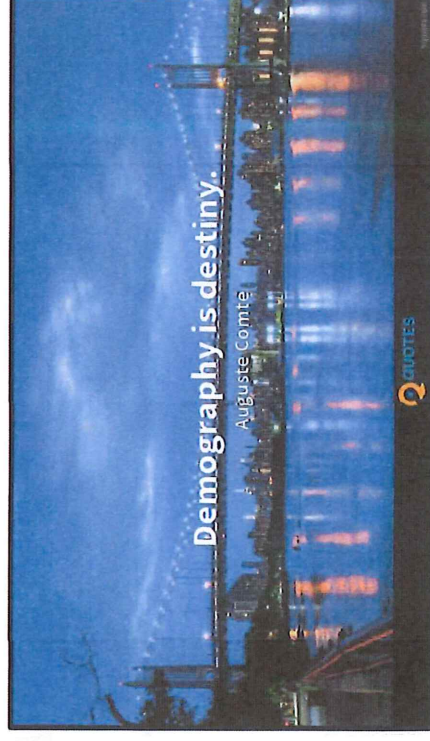


# Micro Demographic Trends A Connecticut Perspective

## The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development

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If demographics are density, Connecticut should be concerned.



Demographics do not have to be Connecticut's destiny; *we can change what we are doing* and influence our demographic trends.



## The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development

### Connecticut's demand drivers are weak.

Job growth, the primary demand driver, has been mostly stagnant since 1990.

- From 1985 to 1990 (5 years) total employment increased by 105,700 and nonfarm employment increased by 103,400.
- From 1990 to 2020 (30 years) total employment increased by 130,400 and nonfarm employment increased by only 44,800.

From 1990 to 2020, Connecticut's population grew by only 318,828 persons or approximately 126,019 households (at 2.53 person per household).

During the same period, Connecticut's net gain in housing (after demolitions) was 194,365 units (or 1.64 persons per household).

STATE OF CONNECTICUT TOTAL EMPLOYMENT (Seasonally Adjusted)										
	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020		
Jan	1,614,600	1,720,300	1,657,800	1,721,200	1,687,700	1,712,600	1,788,400	1,850,700		
Feb	1,617,700	1,725,000	1,655,700	1,724,800	1,690,500	1,715,000	1,789,800	1,846,200		
Mar	1,619,100	1,728,800	1,652,300	1,726,800	1,694,100	1,718,400	1,790,300	1,842,200		
Apr	1,619,200	1,731,300	1,648,400	1,727,200	1,698,400	1,722,600	1,789,700	1,669,700		
May	1,618,800	1,732,500	1,645,000	1,726,300	1,703,100	1,727,400	1,788,300	1,671,100		
Jun	1,619,300	1,732,200	1,643,000	1,724,800	1,707,800	1,731,400	1,786,300	1,675,500		
Jul	1,621,900	1,731,000	1,642,800	1,723,400	1,711,600	1,734,100	1,784,100	1,681,900		
Aug	1,627,000	1,729,100	1,643,900	1,722,500	1,714,600	1,735,700	1,782,500	1,687,700		
Sep	1,633,900	1,726,500	1,645,700	1,721,900	1,717,500	1,736,100	1,781,600	1,691,400		
Oct	1,641,100	1,723,600	1,647,300	1,721,200	1,720,900	1,736,000	1,781,800	1,692,700		
Nov	1,647,100	1,720,900	1,648,300	1,720,000	1,724,700	1,735,800	1,783,000	1,691,800		
Dec	1,651,100	1,719,000	1,648,900	1,718,000	1,728,800	1,735,800	1,784,800	1,691,000		
Connecticut Department of Labor - Office of Research										

STATE OF CONNECTICUT NONFARM EMPLOYMENT (Seasonally Adjusted)										
	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020		
Jan	1,549,800	1,653,200	1,567,300	1,689,800	1,666,600	1,601,000	1,683,900	1,698,000		
Feb	1,552,000	1,649,200	1,568,300	1,691,600	1,667,400	1,601,800	1,681,300	1,696,300		
Mar	1,554,200	1,648,800	1,570,900	1,697,400	1,665,500	1,603,700	1,681,600	1,683,300		
Apr	1,554,600	1,639,600	1,566,300	1,697,500	1,674,500	1,612,900	1,683,800	1,403,900		
May	1,556,000	1,639,400	1,566,000	1,702,300	1,671,500	1,621,800	1,688,300	1,437,500		
Jun	1,558,100	1,637,900	1,565,200	1,703,500	1,672,800	1,616,300	1,690,700	1,490,900		
Jul	1,554,500	1,628,900	1,568,000	1,709,900	1,672,700	1,621,700	1,685,900	1,525,000		
Aug	1,559,500	1,622,100	1,570,800	1,705,100	1,672,200	1,623,400	1,685,900	1,549,500		
Sep	1,562,000	1,618,900	1,571,700	1,705,200	1,672,900	1,622,100	1,687,900	1,569,200		
Oct	1,565,500	1,606,000	1,571,100	1,702,900	1,671,100	1,627,000	1,690,800	1,577,700		
Nov	1,566,900	1,599,500	1,574,500	1,702,100	1,673,000	1,625,400	1,691,800	1,575,400		
Dec	1,564,800	1,594,300	1,575,700	1,703,900	1,675,700	1,626,600	1,689,500	1,570,800		
Connecticut Department of Labor - Office of Research										



# The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development

TOTAL POPULATION	Population 2010	Population 2020	Population Change 2010 - 2020	% Change 2010-2020
Connecticut	3,574,097	3,605,944	31,847	1%
Fairfield County	916,829	957,419	40,590	4%
Hartford County	894,014	899,498	5,484	1%
Litchfield County	189,927	185,186	-4,741	-2%
Middlesex County	165,676	164,245	-1,431	-1%
New Haven County	862,477	864,835	2,358	0%
New London County	274,055	268,555	-5,500	-2%
Tolland County	152,691	149,788	-2,903	-2%
Windham County	118,428	116,418	-2,010	-2%

ADULT POPULATION	Population 2010	Population 2020	Population Change 2010 - 2020	% Change 2010-2020
Connecticut	2,757,082	2,869,227	112,145	4%
Fairfield County	689,810	743,170	53,360	8%
Hartford County	689,971	713,425	23,454	3%
Litchfield County	148,975	151,879	2,904	2%
Middlesex County	130,578	135,983	5,405	4%
New Haven County	669,503	690,994	21,491	3%
New London County	214,456	216,922	2,466	1%
Tolland County	121,807	123,584	1,777	1%
Windham County	91,982	93,270	1,288	1%

<18 POPULATION	Population 2010	Population 2020	Population Change 2010 - 2020	% Change 2010-2020
Connecticut	817,015	736,717	-80,296	-10%
Fairfield County	227,019	214,249	-12,770	-6%
Hartford County	204,043	186,073	-17,970	-9%
Litchfield County	40,952	33,307	-7,645	-19%
Middlesex County	35,098	28,262	-6,836	-19%
New Haven County	192,974	173,841	-19,133	-10%
New London County	59,599	51,633	-7,966	-13%
Tolland County	30,884	26,204	-4,680	-15%
Windham County	26,446	23,148	-3,298	-12%

NON-HISPANIC WHITE POPULATION	Population 2010	Population 2020	Population Change 2010 - 2020	% Change 2010-2020
Connecticut	2,757,082	2,869,227	-167,030	-10%
Fairfield County	606,716	552,125	-54,591	-9%
Hartford County	594,283	523,105	-68,178	-12%
Litchfield County	173,403	155,601	-17,802	-10%
Middlesex County	145,144	131,954	-11,190	-8%
New Haven County	582,384	509,688	-72,696	-12%
New London County	214,605	194,894	-19,711	-9%
Tolland County	135,589	120,021	-13,568	-10%
Windham County	101,138	91,844	-9,294	-9%

NON-HISPANIC ADULT POPULATION	Population 2010	Population 2020	Population Change 2010 - 2020	% Change 2010-2020
Connecticut	2,046,548	1,913,793	-132,755	-6%
Fairfield County	470,553	450,466	-20,087	-4%
Hartford County	481,437	441,908	-39,529	-8%
Litchfield County	138,339	131,221	-7,118	-5%
Middlesex County	115,151	112,302	-2,849	-2%
New Haven County	478,657	435,921	-42,736	-9%
New London County	173,964	164,712	-9,252	-5%
Tolland County	107,576	100,961	-6,615	-6%
Windham County	80,871	76,302	-4,569	-5%

NON-HISPANIC <18 POPULATION	Population 2010	Population 2020	Population Change 2010 - 2020	% Change 2010-2020
Connecticut	499,714	365,439	-132,275	-27%
Fairfield County	136,163	101,659	-34,504	-25%
Hartford County	109,846	81,197	-28,649	-26%
Litchfield County	35,064	24,308	-10,684	-30%
Middlesex County	27,993	19,652	-8,341	-30%
New Haven County	103,727	73,767	-29,960	-29%
New London County	40,641	30,182	-10,459	-26%
Tolland County	26,013	19,060	-6,953	-27%
Windham County	20,267	15,542	-4,725	-23%



# The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development

SCHOOL DISTRICT ENROLLMENTS				
	2008	2021	Change	2021 % of 2008
Connecticut	574,848	513,079	-61,769	-10.8%
Chester	341	201	-140	-41%
Clinton	2,113	1,570	-543	-25.7%
Cromwell	2,000	1,989	-11	-0%
Deep River	389	218	-171	-46%
Durham (R-13)	2,156	1,440	-716	-33.2%
East Haddam	1,433	935	-498	-34.8%
East Hampton	2,087	1,824	-263	-12.6%
Essex	551	313	-238	-43.2%
Haddam (R-17)	2,562	1,849	-713	-27.8%
Killingworth (R-17)	2,562	1,849	-713	-27.8%
Lyme (R-18)	1,538	1,283	-255	-14.6%
Middlefield (R-13)	2,156	1,440	-716	-33.2%
Middletown	5,088	4,409	-679	-13.4%
Old Lyme (R-18)	1,538	1,283	-255	-14.6%
Old Saybrook	1,621	1,074	-547	-33.7%
Portland	1,433	1,279	-154	-10.7%
Westbrook	985	650	-335	-34%
LCTRVCOG	30,557	23,606	-6,947	-22.8%

MEDIAN POPULATION AGE	
United States	38.0
Connecticut	41.2
Chester	50.0
Clinton	46.6
Cromwell	43.7
Deep River	47.1
Durham	47.1
East Haddam	46.2
East Hampton	45.2
Essex	54.6
Haddam	46.3
Killingworth	46.0
Lyme	51.7
Middlefield	48.4
Middletown	37.0
Old Lyme	52.7
Old Saybrook	51.8
Portland	46.4
Westbrook	54.2
LCTRV	45.6*

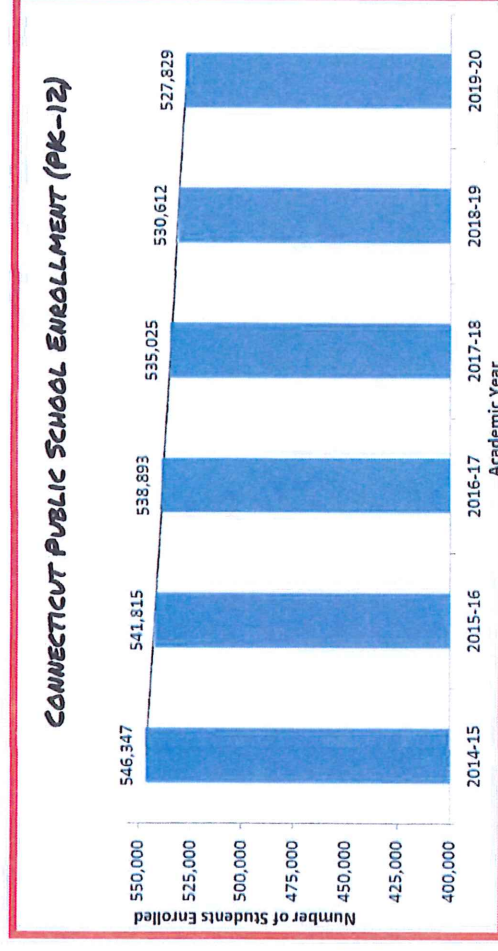
## Education Costs

- Increasing education costs are not driven by enrollments.
- Increased cost are primarily driven by healthcare, transportation, salaries, mandates, and utilities.
- Per pupil cost increases are a factor of both the above-mentioned cost increases and declining enrollments—fixed costs spread across fewer pupils.
- New housing is not the driver of enrollments or education costs.

## The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development

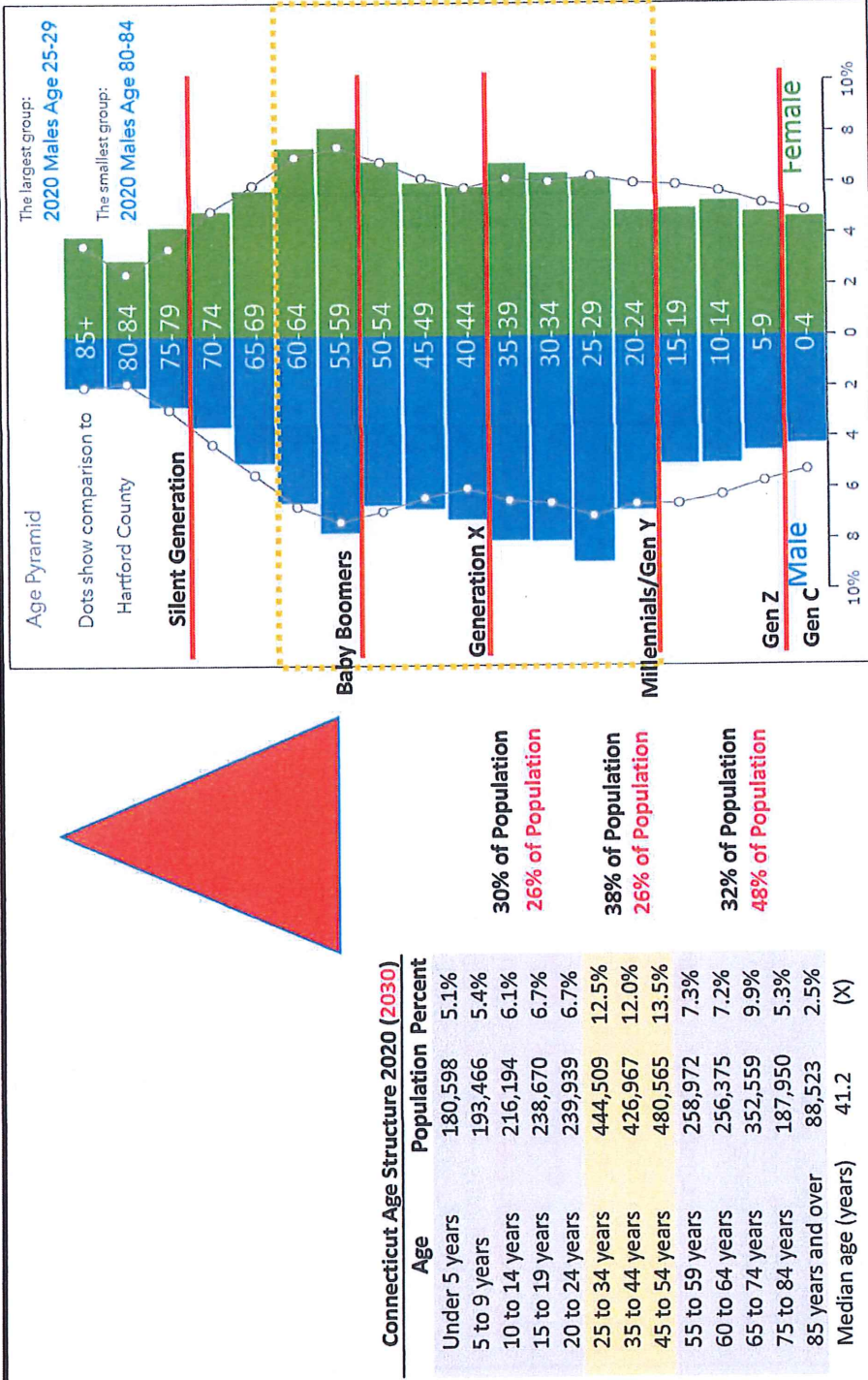
### **Hartford Region – Historic Case Study**

- In 1970 the Capitol Region (Hartford & 28 surrounding towns) had 249,229 persons between age 0-19 (school age population) or 37.2% of the region's population.
- In 2000, the 0-19 age cohort declined to 195,943 persons or 27.1% of the region's population.
  - That is a 21.5% decline in the 0-19 age cohort—equals a loss of 53,286 school-age children.
- From 1970 to 2000 the Capitol Region added 81,802 new housing units to the housing stock (while school age children declined by 53,286 persons).
- If new housing was the driver of school age children, the Region should have gained school age children, not lost 0.65 school age children for every new housing unit added.





# The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development



- Census 2010 to 2020**
- Total Population = -6%
  - Total Adult Pop. = -4%
  - Total <18 Pop. = -14%
- Non-Hispanic White**
- Total Population = -14%
  - Total Adult Pop. = -10%
  - Total <18 Pop. = -29%

# The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development

## Real Property Market Demand Drivers

**Jobs (Employment):** Growth in jobs drives demand for residential, commercial, and industrial space.

Connecticut = **Stagnant**

**Population:** Growth in population drives demand for residential and commercial space.

Connecticut = **Anemic**

**Household Formations:** Growth in the number of households—new household formations—drives demand for residential and commercial space.

Connecticut = **Modest Growth**

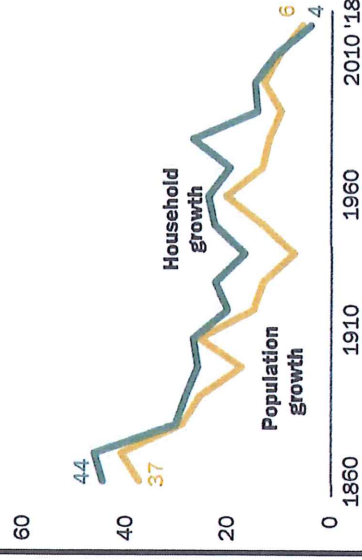
**Income, Household and Per Capita:** Income growth drives the price point of where demand is realized.

Connecticut = **Anemic**



## Since 2010, household growth has trailed population growth

Growth in number of households and population per decade (%)

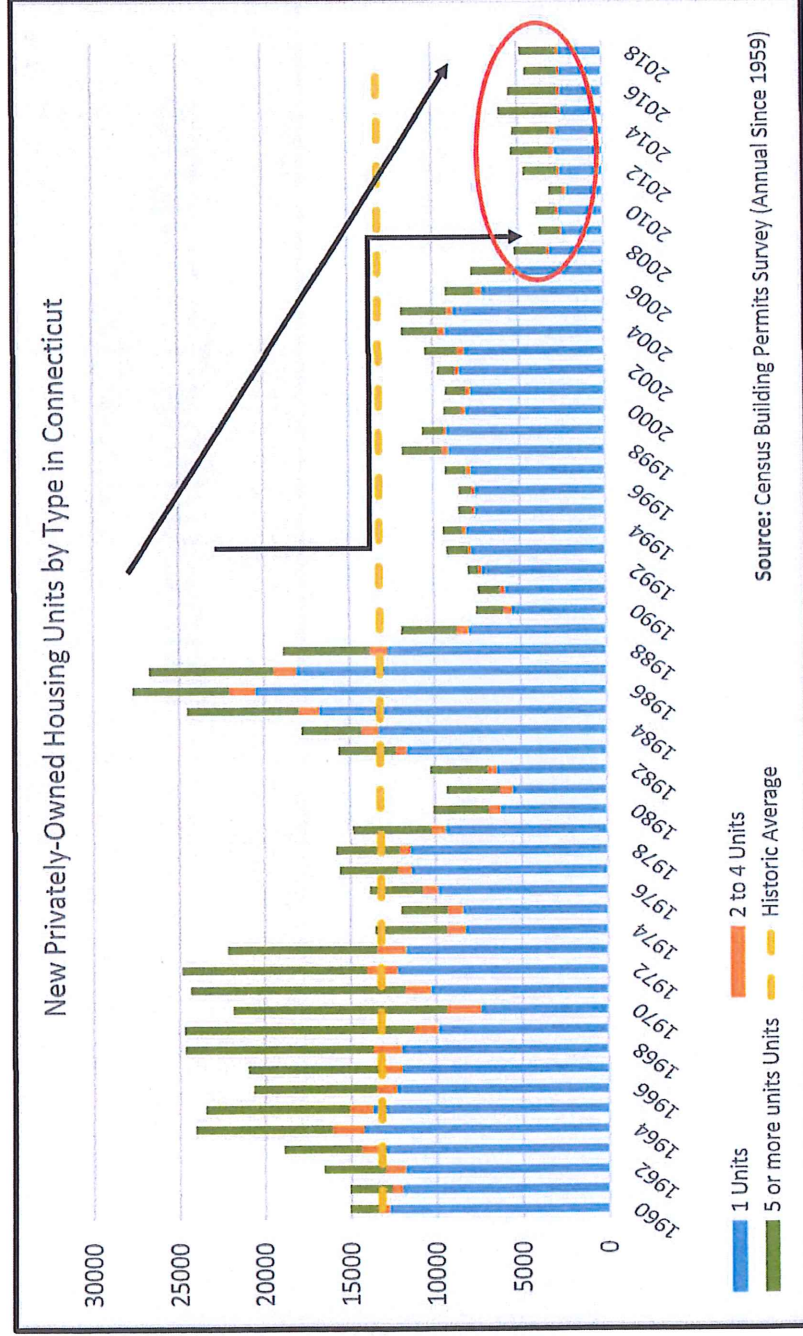


Note: Data labels are for 1860 and 2018. Population growth refers to the population residing in households.  
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of Census historical statistics, 2010 Census SF1 data and 2018 American Community Survey.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



# The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development



## Demand Drivers – Jobs

- 1985 to 1990 (5 years) nonfarm employment increased by 103,400.
- 1990 to 2020 (30 years) nonfarm employment increased by only 44,800.
- 1990 to 2020 (30 years) population grew by only 318,828 persons.

1950	2,007,280	17.4%
1960	2,535,234	26.3%
1970	3,031,709	19.6%
1980	3,107,576	2.5%
1990	3,287,576	5.8%
2000	3,405,565	3.6%
2010	3,574,097	4.9%
2020	3,605,944	0.9%

# Concluding Thoughts Connecticut



## The Dynamics of Demographics and Economic Development

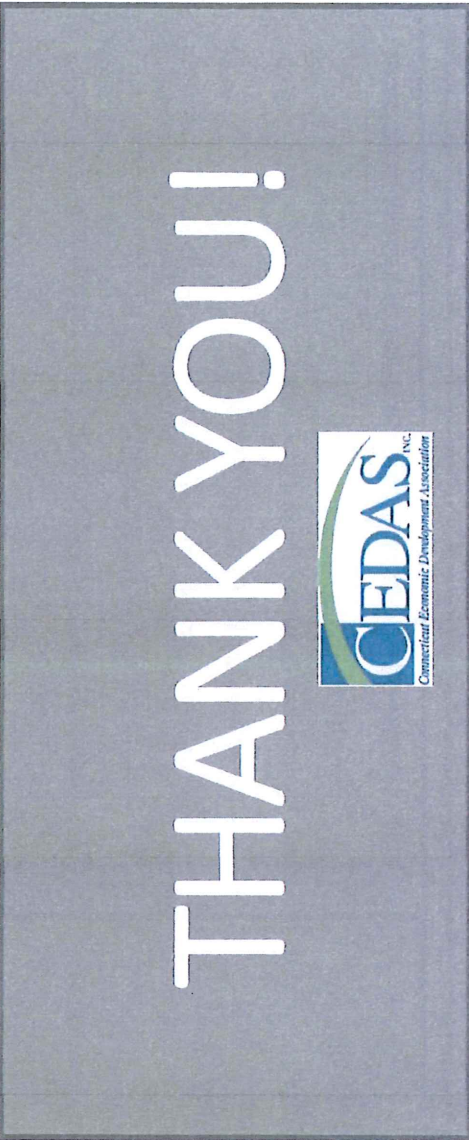
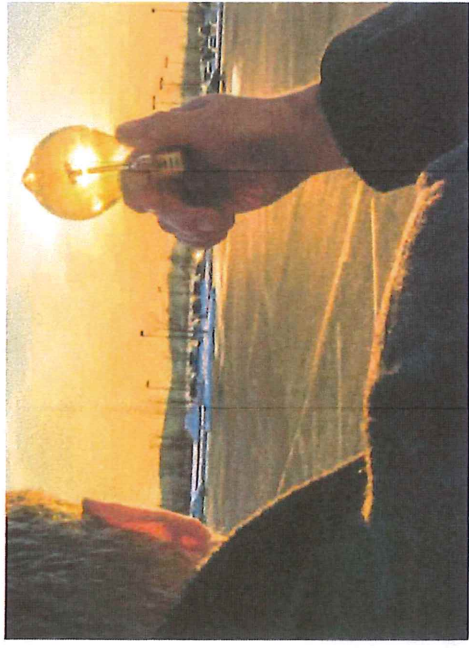
### Connecticut

- A slow-to-no-growth state for 30 years—slow moving variables of change are hard to notice in real time.
- Household formations have masked our economic and population stagnation—CT now on the threshold of decline.
- CT cannot sustain continued stagnant job and anemic population growth—2030 demographic forecast is not good.
- Real Estate Market Demand
  - Housing: driven by household formations and changing household structure—now slowing
  - Commercial office: driven by healthcare for an aging population—not job growth
  - Retail: driven by contracting per sq. ft. returns and changes in consumer behaviors
  - Industrial: driven by ecommerce and distribution

### To change our demographic destiny, we must embrace:

- Change—whatever it may be
- Growth—in all its forms
- Development—in all its forms
- Housing—rental, multi-family, and affordable
- Young persons and young households
- Family households with children—regardless of school enrollments
- Immigrants, ethnic, and racial diversity
- Minority businesses





THANK YOU!

GOMAN+YORK  
PLANNING AND DESIGN

# Professional Experience: Dr. Donald Poland, AICP

Dr. Poland is a geographer, planner, and community strategist whose work focuses on assisting communities to compete for wealth and investment through strategic market, land use, and planning interventions that build community confidence, foster pride in place, create governance capacity, and grow market demand. With twenty-four years experience the public, private, non-profit, and academic sectors, Dr. Poland offers a unique perspective and approach to addressing the social, economic, and governance challenges of creating and maintaining resilient, vibrant, and prosperous communities.

## Education

- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Geography. *Cities and Urbanization*. University College London (UCL). 2016
  - Master of Science (MS), Geography with concentration in city planning. CCSU, Geography Department. 1999
  - Bachelor of Arts (BA), Geography & Psychology. CCSU. 1995
- ## University Teaching
- Trinity College, Urban Studies. Visiting Associate Professor (2015-16 and 2020 - present).
  - CCSU Geography Department, Lecturer (2009 - present)
  - UCONN Urban Studies, Lecturer (2010 - present)

## Personal

- A licensed private pilot, he lives in Stafford Springs, and likes to spend time at his second home in the Maine North Woods with his life-partner Alison and their furry kids (Bowie, Skye & Brixton).

## Selected Achievements

- Consultancy work spans 18 states and over 100 communities.
- Extensive work on post-Katrina planning, land use, and redevelopment strategies in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana.
- Accepted as an expert witness in land use planning, neighborhood redevelopment, and community development in the US District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana.
- Prepared an economic investment strategy for the City of Oswego, NY that was instrumental the City receiving a \$10 million Downtown Revitalization Grant.

## Affiliations

- American Planning Association (Past-President, CT Chapter)
- American Institute of Certified Planners
- American Association of Geographers



## Chapter Six: Economic Development – Commercial and Industrial Development

### **Economic Development Overview**

Commercial and industrial development is important to the community and community planning for many reasons. First, it is a source of economic development, both in terms of providing jobs for Ellington residents and tax revenues for local government. Second, commercial and industrial development provide services and amenities for residents and businesses. Last, commercial and industrial development contribute to the overall character of the community.

Ellington has several commercial and industrial areas. These include the Route 83 corridor (from the Vernon town line to the north and the airport to the north); the Town Center Triangle (between Main and Maple Streets and west to Tomoka Avenue); the Five Corners area; the Industrial Park/Windermere area; Crystal Lake area; and Route 140 West (South of Reeves Road). While each of these areas play a role in commercial and industrial development, some of the areas are small, neighborhood scale, and distanced from major arterials. From a macro perspective, Ellington is distanced from the interstate highway system, creating a competitive disadvantage for large-scale commercial and industrial development. However, this does not mean that commercial and industrial development are not important or not possible, but that the locations for such development—in a meaningful scale—is limited mostly to the Route 83 corridor and the Town Center Triangle. Therefore, this Plan recommends focusing on these two areas as the primary opportunities for commercial and industrial development.

The Route 83 corridor, being the primary arterial in Ellington—providing access to south to I-84—with high traffic counts and being mostly included in the sewer service area, is the area most suitable and likely for commercial development. While wetland and floodplain constraints exist to the west, the frontage acreage along Route 83 are suitable for development. In addition, the existing lower density development with large setbacks on the eastside of Route 83 provide opportunity for additional commercial development in the form of pad sites/in-fill development.

The Town Center Triangle, with approximately 230 acres of land and approximately 80 acres of under or un-developed land, and for commercial uses, provides a real opportunity for future development. In addition, the area is within the sewer service area, providing the opportunity for higher density, mixed-use, and walkable development. Most important, the public outreach program as part of the POCD planning process revealed that Ellington residents want a more distinct, compact, and walkable (bikeable) town center.

Ellington airport is a unique asset to Ellington and could provide economic development benefits to the community, if it were strategically planned for and positioned to create economic opportunity. Recognizing the outcome of the *Feasibility Study for Analysis of Municipal*



*Purchase of the Ellington Airport by the Town of Ellington*, this Chapter/Plan does not recommend the Town to own the airport. This Chapter/Plan recommends the Town consider being a strategic partner in encouraging and facilitating the repositioning of the airport to become a more robust facility and economic asset to the community.

In addition to the conventional commercial and industrial sectors that are the focus of economic development, it is important to understand and recognize that Ellington has a meaningful agricultural sector with many working farms and over 5,000 acres of active agricultural land—approximately 25% of the total land area of Ellington. Therefore, agriculture needs to be included in the Plan of Conservation and Development, not simply in terms of open space and farmland conservation, but as meaningful and viable means of economic development. Changes in consumer behavior and preferences and the shift toward experiential activities has given rise to local and organic products, farm-fresh products, farmers markets, and agricultural tourism. This provides Ellington with a real opportunity to capitalize on these emerging markets and position itself and its local farms to reap the benefits of attracting visitors and consumers to local farms (see Chapter 5 discussion to amend the Zoning Regulations to allow additional commercial activities on farms).

The last area of focus regarding commercial and industrial development is site design. Site design is not simply about parking, stormwater management, landscaping, and lighting. Site design, collectively, is also about the aesthetic qualities and visual appeal of development. In the context of economic development, site design contributes to community character and the image of a community. Therefore, through site design, Ellington should seek to convey an image of pride, confidence, and investment—a place where individuals and businesses are willing to invest their time, energy, and money.

This chapter will focus on these key areas and the overall need and strategies to create an environment conducive to economic development. For a more detail discussion of economic development, see the two reports prepared for the Plan of Conservation and Development Steering Committee (included in the Appendix) titled *‘The Work of Economic Development and The Practice of Economic Development*.

### **The Route 83 Corridor**

The Route 83 corridor is the most significant economic development area in Ellington. The corridor stretches approximately three miles from the Vernon town line north to Ellington Airport. Most of the corridor, especially the western side is already zoned for commercial and industrial development. With strong traffic counts, the availability of public water and sewer in much of the corridor, and a meaningful concentration of existing businesses and multi-family development, the Route 83 corridor is the logical and likely location of future commercial and industrial development. While the Route 83 Corridor does have some development



challenges and constraints—most notably are the wetlands and floodplain to the west—there is ample acreage along the western frontage of Route 83 and additional developable land along the eastern frontage that provide development opportunities. Most important, the 2015 Route 83 Corridor Study provides a framework for the implementation of a development strategy for this corridor—no further study is needed or required. The Route 83 Corridor Study should continue to guide the Town in this area.

Since the Route 83 area is mostly served by public water and sewer, it should be designated as a receiving area for the transfer of open space and/or development rights. In doing so, a transfer program and associated zoning provisions can be developed to allow density bonuses for development in the Route 83 Corridor. This would overcome some of the development constraints, by maximizing the density of development on the developable acreage within the Corridor. In doing so, it may also create an economic incentive and economic opportunity for commercial development.

Recognizing that Ellington's location—primarily distance from and access to the interstate highway system—creates limits on type and quantity of commercial and industrial development, it would be advantageous to allow mixed-use residential and commercial development within the Corridor. The residential development could subsidize the commercial development cost and would provide greater market demand for the subsequent commercial development. In addition, through the transfer of open space and/or development rights, allowing mixed-use residential development within the Corridor would most likely drive the preservation of prime agricultural and open space land outside of the receiving area, furthering the conservation goals of this Plan. To accomplish this, the Plan recommends the following strategies for the Route 83 Corridor.

#### **Considerations/Strategies**

- Adopted the 2015 Route 83 Corridor study and its recommendations as an appendix to this Plan. By inclusion of the Route 83 Corridor study as part of this Plan, the recommendations of the Corridor Study are included as part of these recommendations.
- Review and update of the Planned Commercial Zone to create a flexible Master Plan development approach and process that creates flexibility and focus more on quality of design (site design and architecture) than on the bulk, area, and density of development.
- The Commission may want to consider allowing the Planned Commercial Zone (as modified in the above recommendation) to also be applicable or applied to other areas of the Route 83 Corridor, since this zone appears to best accommodate the commercial development Ellington wants.
- Create a transfer of open space and/or development rights programs (as discussed in Chapter Three and Chapter Four) to incentivize higher density development within the Corridor. In doing so, designate the areas in the Corridor that are within the sewer service area as receiving areas for the transfer of open space and/or development rights from more rural areas of town. The greater density and residential uses may overcome some of the



challenges of financing commercial development, creating an incentive and greater economic opportunity for commercial development.

- In the process of creating a transfer of openspace and/or development rights program, the Commission should explore the utilization of such transfers for commercial density, not just residential. This may include incentives regarding lot coverage, setback, building height, and other bulk and area requirements.
- Improve upon and create more robust site design standards within the Zoning Regulations. Such standards should include robust provisions for low impact development, landscaping, parking, architecture, consolidated parcels, and access management provisions. By improving the site design standards with the aim of improving the quality of development/design within the Route 83 Corridor, such provision will also apply to and improve the quality of development and design in other commercial and industrial areas.

### **The Town Center Triangle Area**

Throughout the public outreach process for this Plan, the residents of Ellington made it clear that they want a more robust, vibrant, distinctive, and accessible Town Center. In addition, it was evident that the community does not want to change or disrupt the historic character and development pattern along Main Street and near the Town Green. The Town Center Triangle Area (the area bounded by Main Street, Maple Street, and Route 83) provide a unique and meaningful opportunity for future development—specifically, the creation of town or village center. The area is approximately 230 acres, with approximately 80 acres of un-developed or under-developed land. In addition, the areas most suitable or potentially available for future development within this area are already zoned for commercial development. In addition, the natural features and area that would typically be viewed as development constraints (specifically wetland) in the area can be master planned into any development concept as opportunities for public spaces and place-making amenities.

As conceptualized in the sketches in Exhibits 6-1 and 6-2, this area is suitable for higher density, village style, mix-use development that is walkable. In addition, the area provides opportunities for public spaces: parklands, walking and bike trails, and functional spaces for public gatherings. In short, the Town Center Triangle could become a focal point, a functional village center, for the Town. To accomplish this, the Plan recommends the following considerations and strategies.

### **Considerations/Strategies**

#### ***The creation of an Ellington Center Village Plan.***

Such a plan should include an extensive community outreach program, market analysis, and conceptual designs. The aim and outcome should be to create an economically viable conceptual plan to shop/market to the development community to secure a capable developer.

The Village Plan should also explore and consider:

- The creation of a Village District Zone that would provide a flexible master plan approach to development. Such an approach would focus more on site-design, public spaces, and architecture rather than bulk, area, and density.
- That any development in the Village District Zone be a mixed-use commercial (office, retail, service) and residential development. The Plan should include recommendations for the distribution uses: ground floor retail, service, and office; upper floor(s) office and residential; and stand-alone residential buildings and/or town houses.
- Requiring the inclusion of well-designed public spaces: parklands, trails, and community gathering spaces.
- Designating the area as a receiving area for the transfer of open space and/or development rights, providing density bonuses for residential development.
- The inclusion of affordable housing, in accordance with 8-30g and the housing needs assessment in Chapter 6.





**Exhibit 6-1**  
Conceptual Rendering



## Ellington Airport

Ellington airport is a unique asset to Ellington and could provide economic development benefits to the community, if the airport were strategically planned for and positioned to create economic opportunity. To begin, it must be recognized that once an airport closes, a new airport will never open. The number of general aviation airports throughout the country is in decline. Not all communities have general aviation airports. This makes such airports unique and provides host communities with an asset and amenity that distinguishes them from other communities in the competitive world of economic development. Ellington airport is an asset and amenity to Ellington. However, its small size (1800-foot runway) limit its capabilities and restrict its potential. While the decision has been made that it does not make economic sense for Ellington to own and/or operate the airport, the Town is still a stakeholder and has a role to play in the future of airport and its role in the community. A review of the previous airport studies and preliminary look at the airport and surrounding properties revealed that possible opportunities may exist to expand the airport, its runways, and its facilities. In addition, such improvements may free-up additional land for industrial development (see the conceptual sketches below). Therefore, this Plan recommends further exploration of the airport's potential. To accomplish this, the Town should consider the following strategies.

### **Considerations/Strategies**

#### ***Create an Airport Advisory Committee.***

The committee should be made up of key stakeholders: The Town, airport owners, airport tenants, the Economic Development Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Education, and community residents.

- The Airport Advisory Committee should be charged with studying the airport, its potential, and its role in the community and economic development.
- It should provide studies, reports, and other information to Town departments, boards, and commissions.
- It should be an advocate for the airport.

#### ***Conduct an Airport Expansion Feasibility Study.***

This study should explore:

- The potential for expanding and reorientation of the runway.
- The need and potential for land acquisition for expanding the runway.
- The potential for an instrument approach to an expanded runway.
- The market potential for increased general aviation use and activities.
- The reconfiguration of land and buildings and the potential for new industrial development.
- The creation of an aviation program at the high school and possible partnership with the airport in the creation of such a program.





**Exhibit 6-2**  
Conceptual Rendering of Ellington Airport



## **Agriculture as an Economic Sector**

Agriculture is a meaningful and viable economic sector in Ellington. With many working farms and over 5,000 acres of active agricultural land—approximately 25% of the total land area of Ellington—the agricultural sector must be considered and nurtured as viable means of economic development. In addition, the best way to preserve farmland is to preserve farming and the farmer. Most important, Ellington has some very enthusiastic, creative, and hard-working young farmers—a unique and advantageous circumstance that is not often the case for most communities. Therefore, it is imperative that Ellington work with its agricultural sector to ensure that it remains viable, has the support it needs, and can possibly even grow.

In the context of growing Ellington’s agricultural sector, changes in consumers behaviors, preferences for locally sourced products, and shifts in consumption toward experiential activities has given rise to new opportunities in agriculture, most notably the growth in agritourism. While Ellington have a more robust agricultural sector than most farming communities, it has little in the way of agritourism. The rise of agritourism and Ellington’s lack of agritourism presents an opportunity that should be explored, and if possible, exploit the opportunity. To accomplish this, Ellington should consider the following strategies.

### **Considerations/Strategies**

- The creation of an Agriculture Advisory Commission. The committee should be made up of key stakeholders, including local farmers.
- Review all Town regulations and ordinances with the aim of removing barriers to farming to ensure that the Town is not closing-down opportunities.
- Amend the Zoning Regulations to allow agritourism and specific agritourism uses. This may include banquet spaces or functions, farm-to-table dinners, tasting rooms and restaurants, vineyard, breweries, tours, outdoor activities, bakeries, etc.
- Amend the Zoning Regulations to allow small country inns, and/or other forms of hospitality that may be reasonably associated with farms.
- Create and/or organize harvest events, fairs, and festivals that highlight local farms, their work and products, and draw positive attention to Ellington’s agricultural community.

## **Site Design Standards**

The last area of focus regarding commercial and industrial development is site design. Site design is not simply about parking, stormwater management, landscaping, and lighting. Site design, collectively, is also about the aesthetic qualities and visual appeal of development. In the context of economic development, site design contributes to community character and the image



of a community. Quality site design conveys a message of community pride, confidence, and investment. It tells local residents, visitors, and investors that this community is a place where individuals and businesses are willing to invest their time, energy, and money.

Therefore, Ellington should complete a comprehensive update of the Zoning Regulation's site design provisions. Such an update should focus on providing modern site design standards that follow best practices. In addition, the Commission should seek to provide flexibility in standards that allow for better design, rather than simple compliance with standards and requirements. Such updated provisions should focus on sustainable practices such as a low impact design, shared parking, energy efficient lighting, consolidated parcels, access management, and high-quality landscaping. The Commission should seek to raise the standards and expectations for the quality of design—both site design and architectural design—and insist that land use applications incorporate higher quality designs and materials.

## Economic Development

The work of economic development, simply stated, is *the process and practice of creating wealth and attracting investment* to a community. In fact, *creating wealth and attracting investment* is not only the work of economic development, it is the work of community development, community planning, and place-making.

Wealth can be created, and investment can be attracted in many ways and forms that are not simply about providing jobs, marketable goods, and services. For example, wealth can be created through property improvement, infrastructure investment, and increasing homeownership—especially when investments are strategically aimed at increasing property value. In this regard *attracting investment* in housing—ensuring that a community's housing stock (also a marketable good) remains competitive. Therefore, the work of economic development is about creating a culture of investment by managing the processes of governance and nurturing the economic-ecosystem of the community. What is most important in the work of economic development is that community embrace economic development. A community must want and be committed to economic development and work toward constant improvement.

The practice of economic development recognizes the work of economic development as a system, a complex adaptive ecosystem. Therefore, the practice of economic development focuses on the activities and tools that a community can create and utilize to engage in the work of *creating wealth and attracting investment*. While Ellington is already engaged in and utilizing some economic development practices, programs, tools, and strategies, it should seek to be more proactive in efforts.

The key to economic development—cultivating an environment and economic-ecosystem aimed at creating wealth and investment—for a smaller community such as Ellington, is to raise the level of public awareness around economic development—to embrace economic development



and continuously work towards improving economic development. To accomplish this, there are many small, inexpensive, and incremental things Ellington can do to build upon existing practices and grow its economic development capacity.

The following recommendations are organized into short and long terms strategies that Ellington can implement to improve its economic development efforts. The short-term recommendations are low-cost and easy to implement practices that elevate the work and importance of economic development. The long-term recommendations are more formal and more costly practices that will build upon the short-term recommendations and build greater capacity (resiliency) to create wealth and investment.

### **Considerations/Strategies**

In the **short-term**, implement the following:

- ***Economic Development Training:***

Economic development is everyone's job. Economic development starts with customer service. Therefore, Ellington should implement a training program for all Town Hall staff, boards, and commissions.

- ***Encouraging What Ellington Most Wants:***

Investment flows to the location of least resistance. Therefore, if Ellington wants certain kinds of economic development and investment, it should encourage such uses and investments. This can be accomplished by conducting a comprehensive review of the permitted and special permitted uses contained in the Zoning Regulations with the aim of allowing the economic development activities/uses the Town most wants by staff approvals and Commission site plan, not the more subjective, time consuming, and costly special permit process.

- ***Business Outreach and Engagement:***

Too often local government spends very little effort cultivating relationships with the business community. Ellington should proactively work to engage the business community. Some simple and time effective ways to do this are to host quarterly meet & greet sessions at town hall with specific businesses sectors, conduct monthly business visitations (even just one business a month), and work with the Chamber of Commerce to host business after-hours networking events.

- ***Celebrate Ellington Businesses:***

The Economic Development Commission, in association with Board of Selectmen, should seek to celebrate Ellington businesses and their investment in Ellington. Some simple ways of doing this include the implementation a 'ribbon cutting' program for new businesses and existing business expansions. Another activity would be to implement a yearly 'Business Investment' award program. Three award categories could be: Business Expansion, New Business, and Property Maintenance.

- ***Community Information Packet:***

Many small and some large businesses don't have access to good demographic and socio-economic data—data that can be important to their business planning activities and investment decisions. Providing such information is a simple way to assist and inform businesses—to help educate them about your community. Therefore, the Ellington Economic Development Commission should create and maintain a Community Information Packet that can be made available on the Town's website as a downloadable PDF. The CERC Town profile is a good starting point for demographic, socio-economic, and other community-based information. The Town Profile can be supplemented with detailed and robust community data and real estate market information.

In the **long-term**, implement the following:

- ***Economic Development Planning:***

Create a comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. This should include a focus on Ellington's image, community brand, and marketing.

- ***Strategic Community Investment:***

When developing budgets, especially the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), Ellington should conceptualize government budgets and projects as an opportunity and means of making strategic investments in economic development—investing in Ellington's future. CIP investments aimed at place-making and quality of life, such as walking trails, sidewalks, bike lanes and trails, public/community space can go a long way to creating the economic development ecosystem that businesses and residents seek—providing quality of amenities.

- ***Intentional Development:***

Most communities are reactive to development—allowing the market to propose developments that are then reviewed, debated, and approved or denied. Being intentional about the development Ellington wants, is about investing (time, energy, and money) in planning for development. In the Town Center Triangle and along the Route 83 corridor, Ellington should consider creating conceptual designs for future development and market those designs to the development community. This could also be done in association with an expedited permitting process—if a developer strives to develop the communities conceptualized plan, then a simplified approval process (site plan) is provided to the developer.

The above short- and long-term recommendations are not all an all-inclusive list of activities and strategies, more could be done to further engage in the work and practice of economic development. However, they are a starting point for creating an economic-ecosystem, continuous improvement, and building economic development capacity.