

# Town of East Hartford

## Plan of Conservation & Development



Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting  
November 8, 2023



BFJ Planning

# Agenda

- 1 Project Status**
- 2 Update on Stakeholder Meetings**
- 3 Discussion of 2014 POCD Goals**
- 4 Prep for Upcoming Community Engagement**
  - **Online Engagement**
  - **November 28 Public Workshop**
- 5 Initial Findings on Demographics and Land Use/Zoning**

# Project Status: Work Since Last Meeting

- Stakeholder meetings largely complete (Historic District Commission meeting November 14)
- Conducting initial mapping on Founders Plaza and Town overall
- First meeting with Port Eastside developer on Founders Plaza (next meeting November 14)
- Data analysis on Townwide demographics largely complete, Founders Plaza market analysis in-process
- Prep for November 28 public workshop and launch of online engagement

# Project Status: Next Steps

- Visioning stage of project: Social Pinpoint online engagement and November 28 workshop
- Begin work on draft POCD chapters
- Complete existing conditions and market analysis of Founders Plaza; launch engagement for this component
- December 13 P&Z meeting: confirm overall POCD vision statement and topic-specific goals



# Update on Stakeholder Meetings

## Town Staff Meetings

**Public Works, Engineering & Public Safety – September 18, 2023**

**MDC – October 13, 2023**

## Boards and Commissions Meetings

**Commission on Services for Persons with Disabilities – September 14, 2023**

**Housing Authority – September 14, 2023**

**Redevelopment Agency – September 20, 2023**

**Historic District Commission – November 14, 2023**

# Stakeholder Meetings: Key Takeaways

- There is a need for upgrades to various municipal facilities to reflect current space needs and modern standards. DPW and fire facilities have substantial repair and renovation requirements, and there is a general need for more meeting space (especially with built-in technology) to ease demand on the libraries and Community Cultural Center.
- Many of the social services-oriented departments rely on grants and lack a consistent source of funding. They need staff to support non-English speakers, maintain programs, and improve communication and awareness.
- Affordable housing needs are acute, especially for families, seniors, and those with disabilities. The Town needs a balanced housing stock in various forms: not just apartments. Town also lacks a homeless shelter; users must go to Hartford.
- Many stakeholders noted the need for improvements to the bus system, including more stops and routes, on-time services, and ADA access.

# Stakeholder Meetings: Key Takeaways

- Main Street in the Town Center needs pedestrian and streetscape improvements to make this a more attractive place to shop and dine; stakeholders consistently indicated they do not patronize the area due to lack of options.
- East Hartford needs an organized entity to support business development and retention and facilitate a strong aesthetic environment, especially along Main Street. A Business Improvement District (BID) could take on these responsibilities.
- Office and traditional retail are viewed as weak (in the region overall). In East Hartford, light industrial/warehousing is a strength, as are restaurants (but many people aren't aware of the restaurant options available).
- There is a general lack of communication and data sharing across Town departments and boards/committees.

# Stakeholder Meetings: Key Takeaways

- Park maintenance is challenging, and parks need to serve multiple purposes. There are opportunities for indoor sports/bubble facilities that could also be rented out. Other targeted park needs will be addressed in POCD.
- Lack of visibility and organizational support for arts (performance and visual).
- Several long-term planning needs were identified: 1) emergency management plan; 2) Town-wide climate change adaptation strategy, and 3) comprehensive municipal facilities study.

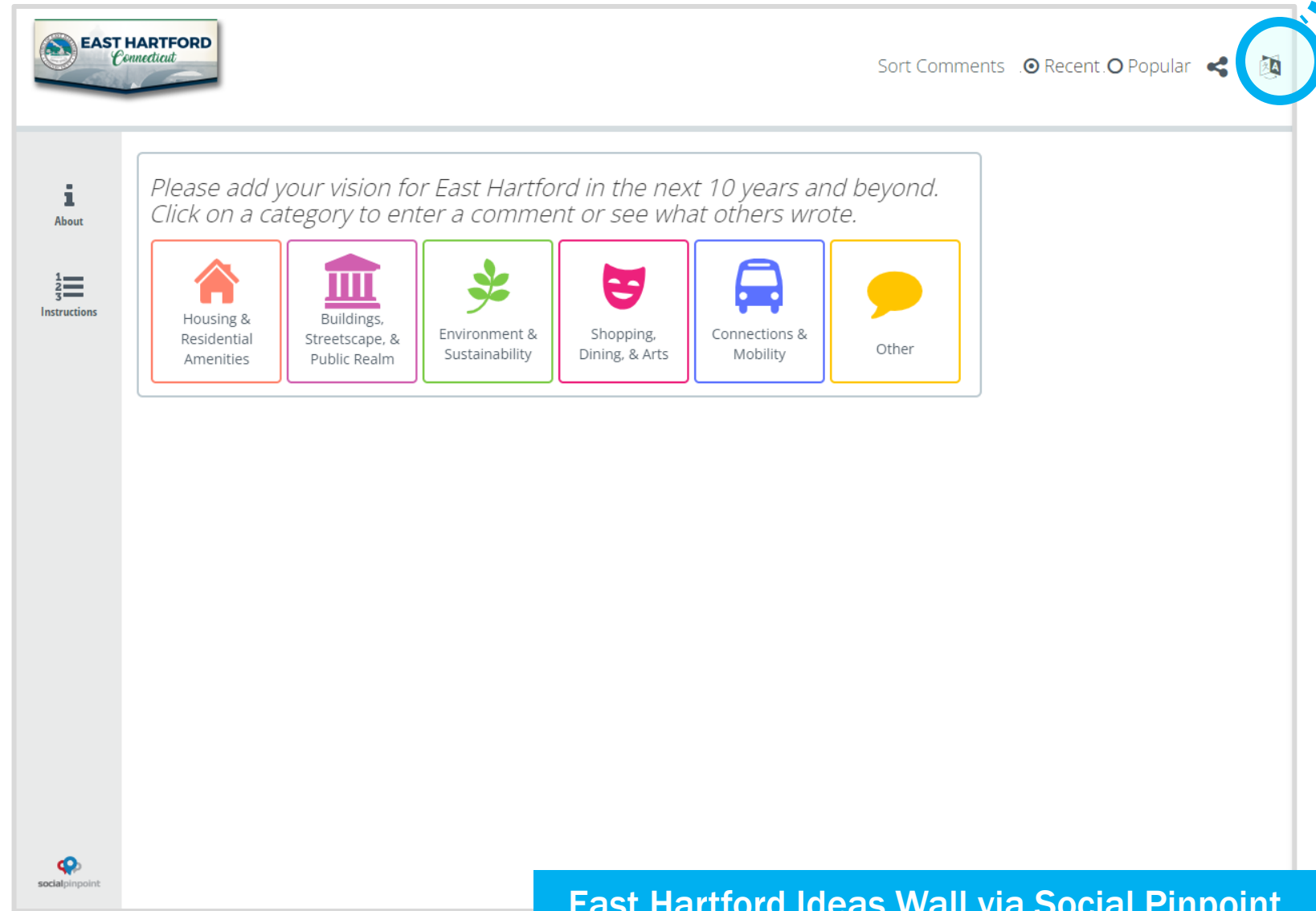


# Discussion of 2014 POCD Goals: What's Changed? What's Missing?

- Preserve the Town's sound housing stock and stable neighborhoods.
- Regulate infill development in keeping with the character and scale of surrounding neighborhoods and development,
- Preserve and enhance the Town's open space and recreation areas.
- Create linkages among open space, community facilities and residential neighborhoods.
- Revitalize and rejuvenate the Town Center.
- Implement improvements to the Town's commercial corridors.
- Connect redevelopment areas such as Rentschler Field, Founders' Plaza and the Goodwin College areas with the Town Center and with each other.
- Promote economic development to attract and retain business.
- Promote future development efforts which provide new housing, recreation, business and employment opportunities.
- Support quality-of-life improvements.

# Prep for Upcoming Community Engagement: Online Engagement

- Social Pinpoint is a software platform used for community engagement and public participation
- Allows users to interact with an Ideas Wall or maps to identify specific locations and provide comments, suggestions, or concerns related to proposed developments, and infrastructure improvements



East Hartford Ideas Wall via Social Pinpoint

# Example of an Ideas Wall

The Irmisch Ave corridor between Hoffman and the park could use a continuous sidewalk path.

Connections & Mobility | 3 months ago Like Dislike

Some type of auto cleaning or easy cleaning public bathrooms would be great, in service and available 24/7 would be great, perhaps with an "in use" light that officers passing by could see at night as well as an emergency 911 phone

Buildings, Streetscape, & Public Realm | 3 months ago Like Dislike -2

Enough of the apartment building and two family dwellings.

Housing & Residential Amenities | 3 months ago Like +1 Dislike -2

Utilize the signage above the LIRR to advertise local events and small business instead of a giant law firm.

Buildings, Streetscape, & Public Realm | 3 months ago Like +4 Dislike

Expand the gazebo area to cover the blocked-off parts of Hoffman. It should be converted to green space and connected with the areas under the railroad to include a rail trail, as others have suggested. The gazebo park should include restrooms, bike racks, and possibly a playground. It should also utilize ecological landscaping to use native plants in its gardening and plant more trees to shade us, cool us, and clean our air. This would also be a great area to host a farmers

The north side of the LIRR tracks directly opposite the platform is a great opportunity to grab the attention of LIRR passengers, but the small old buildings are in dire need of investment and cleanup. The oil depot tanks could be used for community art to grab the attention of LIRR riders, improving the image of our Village. Attached is a photo of painted tank examples from the Winwood art district in Miami.



Buildings, Streetscape, & Public Realm | 3 months ago Like +1 Dislike

Speaking of clear conflicts of interest, why is it legal for the town's dishonorable Judge John Bopp to have a local tax evading law firm within the NYF zone? If the town targets you for whatever reason, ordinance or buildings dept. parking violations, the judge you see may also own the

Something needs to be done to alleviate the traffic on Wellwood Ave. With that constant traffic those of us that live on the Gary St, Easton St, and Hartford St are constantly having to deal with people driving very quick down our blocks to utilize Irmisch St and work their way out of the traffic. It's dangerous and don't need to constantly worry about my pet or child being out front and being hit by the speeding. Perhaps speed bumps on the blocks?

Buildings, Streetscape, & Public Realm | 3 months ago Like Dislike

There was a "study" done years ago that said the angled parking on Wellwood in the village was at a bad angle and the angle of the spaces needed to be fixed for better visibility when pulling out. Whatever happened to that? Why hasn't it been fixed? We all know this is a problem, but nothing has been done!

View the discussion (2)

Buildings, Streetscape, & Public Realm | 3 months ago Like +4 Dislike

As a coastal town, Lindenhurst is prone to flooding. We should build rain gardens and implement restoration projects to naturally sequester rainwater and in the process filter excess nutrient pollution. We must also stop unsustainable development such as in the example of "the Wel" apartments being built on top of a creek.

Environment & Sustainability | 3 months ago Like +5 Dislike

Continue to attract and bring in more fine dining restaurants. Something other than pizzerias. It would be nice to have a building perhaps built on the former Waldbaums lot facing the railroad tracks that would sit a nice music hall / dance hall. Similar to how Mulcahy's is in Wantagh. Attract a lot of attention to Lindenhurst! The rest of this former Waldbaums lot can still house a supermarket like Shop Rite and provide parking for the stores and the businesses of the village.

Shopping, Dining, & Arts | 3 months ago Like +2 Dislike

Adding a dog park in the village would be great. Maybe a playground and then separate fenced off area with a dog park so people do not need to go to neighboring towns to enjoy a day with their dogs/families.

View the discussion (1)

Buildings, Streetscape, & Public Realm | 3 months ago Like +4 Dislike -2

The intersection of Hoffman Ave & Wellwood Avenue on the southside needs a face lift, the signage is an eyesore and looks tacky. The North side is looking great with the beautiful Belfast and Village Square kept well maintained. That effort should be restored into those corner stores to continue elevate the village. The Metro PCS is a prime location would have better appeal if it was small business vs. a chain cell phone store.

View the discussion (1)

Shopping, Dining, & Arts | 3 months ago Like +3 Dislike

Please add more blacktop path that runs around the entire perimeter of the fireman's / feller's pond park. That way we could have a nice path to walk around during the nice weather and get our cardio in. Currently it just runs around the pond. Would be nice if it ran along the sides of the ball fields and bathroom area that's on the Byrd St side. Also would love to have a dog park placed in this park somewhere. A lot of dogs in this neighborhood.

Buildings, Streetscape, & Public Realm | 3 months ago Like Dislike

Add side walks on both sides of the road to upcoming main roads like Delaware and Broadway, between Hoffman and Montauk. These roads are becoming increasingly busy with downtown becoming busier. It is a safety concern walking on Delaware to the village without side walks and we have a lot of kids on bikes and pedestrians walking around.

View the discussion (2)

Connections & Mobility | 3 months ago Like +6 Dislike

All municipal and town-owned properties should take climate-smart action and utilize solar panels for self-sufficient energy as the Lindenhurst Library and Village Hall have. Opportunities for expanding this to other locations include the middle school, and local businesses should be incentivized to install solar panels on their roofs.

View the discussion (2)

Environment & Sustainability | 3 months ago Like +4 Dislike -1

# Prep for Upcoming Community Engagement: Public Workshop

Town of East Hartford

Plan of Conservation and Development Update (POCD)



Public Workshop

East Hartford is updating its POCD, the Town's "blueprint" for the next 10 years and beyond. The Plan will provide policies and land use goals to guide the Town's economic, social, physical, environmental, and fiscal development.

Please join us for the first POCD public meeting. You will have the opportunity to share your ideas on improvements to community facilities, parks, transportation, and more.

What's your vision for the future of East Hartford?



Date

Tuesday, November 28, 2023

Time

7 - 9 pm

Location

East Hartford Senior Center, 15 Milbrook Drive



For more information, scan the QR code or visit the Town website at:  
<https://www.easthartfordct.gov/planning-and-zoning-commission/pages/2024-plan-of-conservation-and-development-update>

Town of East Hartford

Plan de Conservación y Actualización de Desarrollo (POCD)



Taller Público

East Hartford está actualizando su POCD, el "Plan" del Municipio para los próximos 10 años y más. El Plan proporcionará pólizas y metas de uso de la tierra para guiar el desarrollo económico, social, físico, ambiental y fiscal del Municipio.

Acompáñanos para la primera reunión pública del POCD. Tendrá la oportunidad de compartir sus ideas sobre mejoras a los edificios comunitarios, parques, transporte y más.

¿Cuál es su visión para el futuro de East Hartford?



Fecha

Martes, el 28 de Noviembre del 2023

Hora

7 - 9 pm

Localización

East Hartford Senior Center, 15 Milbrook Drive



Para obtener más información, escanee el código QR o visite el sitio web del Municipio en:  
<https://www.easthartfordct.gov/planning-and-zoning-commission/pages/2024-plan-of-conservation-and-development-update>

Tuesday, November 28

7 - 9 pm

Senior Center – 15 Milbrook Drive





# Prep for Upcoming Community Engagement: Public Workshop

## 1. Public Workshop 1: Introduction & Vision Setting

This workshop aims to introduce the project, share initial findings from existing conditions work and visioning surveys, and engage the community in discussions to create guiding principles and goals for the planning process, focusing on topics like land use trends, transportation, municipal facilities, the local economy, and environmental issues.

## 2. Public Workshop 2: Founders Plaza Master Plan

The second workshop will concentrate on the Founders Plaza area, with the BFJ Team presenting their assessment and analysis while seeking input from the community on the vision for this specific area. It will involve small group discussions covering aspects like waterfront connections, transportation, design, and aesthetics, supported by visual aids.

## 3. Public Workshop 3: Draft Recommendations & Feedback

In this session, draft recommendations will be presented to the public for feedback through an interactive open house format with various thematic stations staffed by planning team members and others. Participants can provide feedback directly on recommendations, facilitating information sharing and immediate reactions.



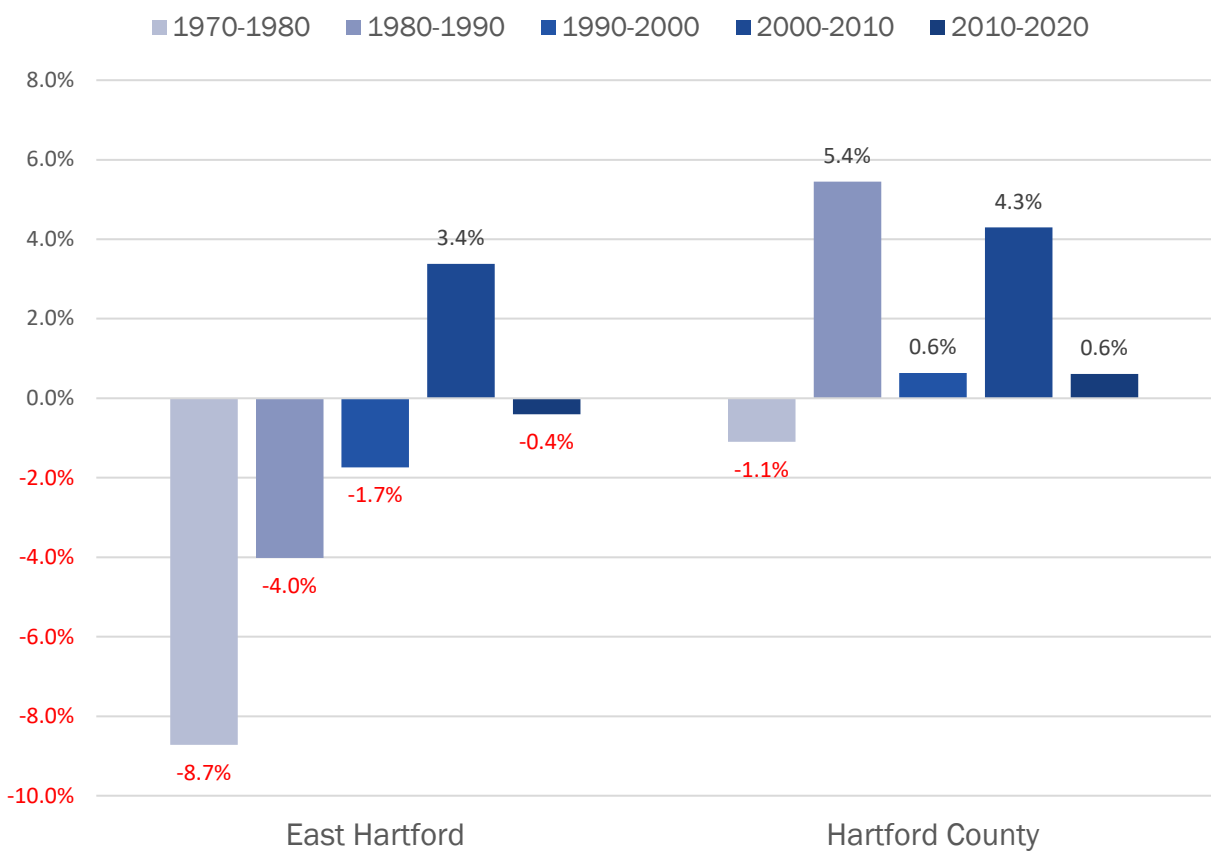


# Demographics: Total Population

## Key Trends

- Town’s population has fallen in four of the past five decades including from 2010 to 2020 (-0.4%) while Hartford County has generally seen modest but continuous growth.
- However, East Hartford’s population loss has slowed with each consecutive decade through 2010 and is stabilizing, suggesting that it’s becoming increasingly attractive for prospective residents.
- As its population has become increasingly diverse in race/ethnicity, the loss of White non-Hispanic residents has continued to outpace the gain in black, indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC).
- Improvements to community resources, housing stock, and local job opportunities may be needed to ensure the Town remains desirable for potential residents across many socioeconomic groups.

## Total Population, Decennial % Change



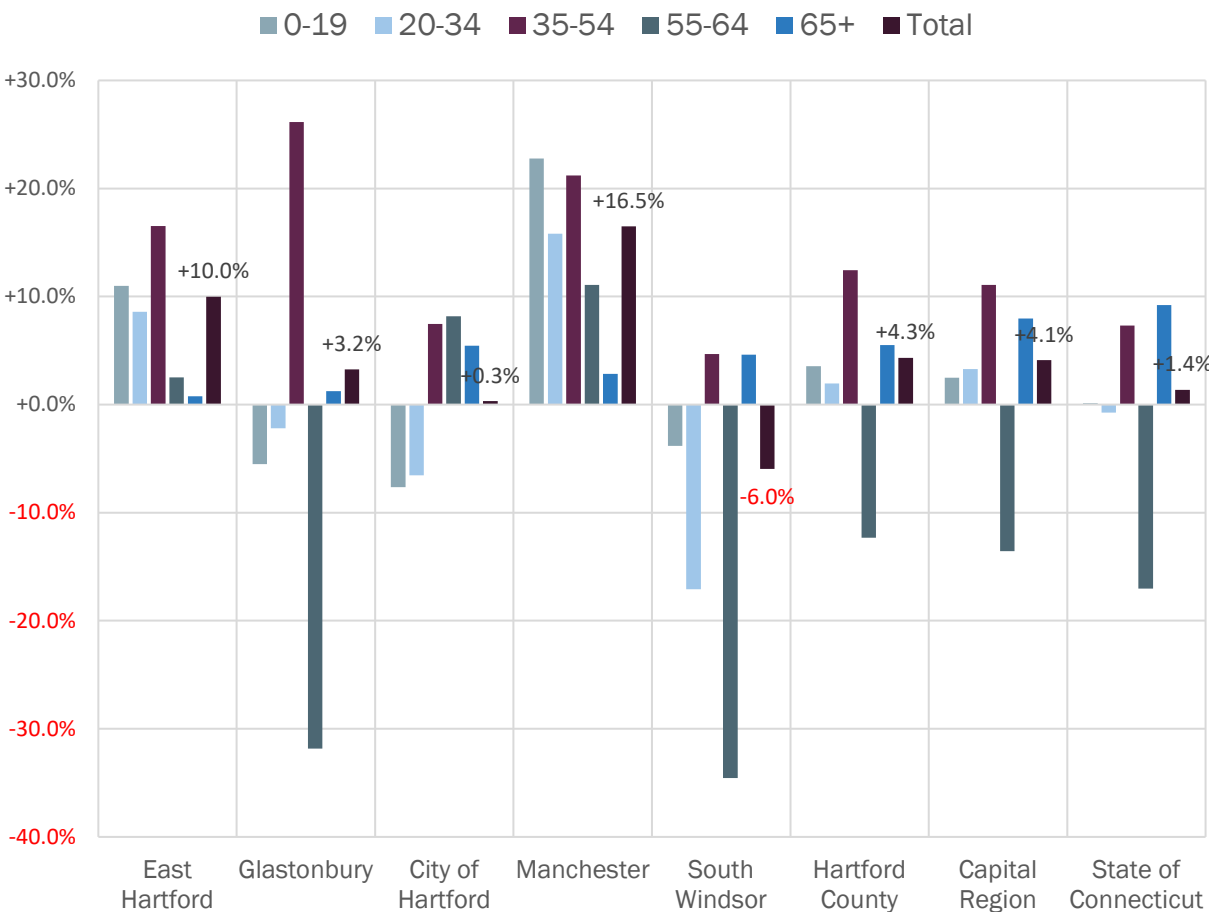
Source: US Decennial Census, 1970-2020

# Demographics: Population Projections, 2020-2040

## Key Trends

- According to CT Data Center’s latest projections released in 2015, East Hartford’s population is expected to increase by 10%, a larger increase than all its neighbors except for Manchester (+16.5%)
- Youth population growth in East Hartford is projected to be second-strongest (+11%) among its neighbors, after Manchester (+22.8%)
- Strong growth also projected in East Hartford among younger and prime labor force age adults (+8.6% & +16.5%)
- Unlike neighboring communities, minimal growth is projected in East Hartford among older workers aged 55-64 (+2.5%) and seniors 65+ (+0.8%)

## Population Growth %, 2020-2040



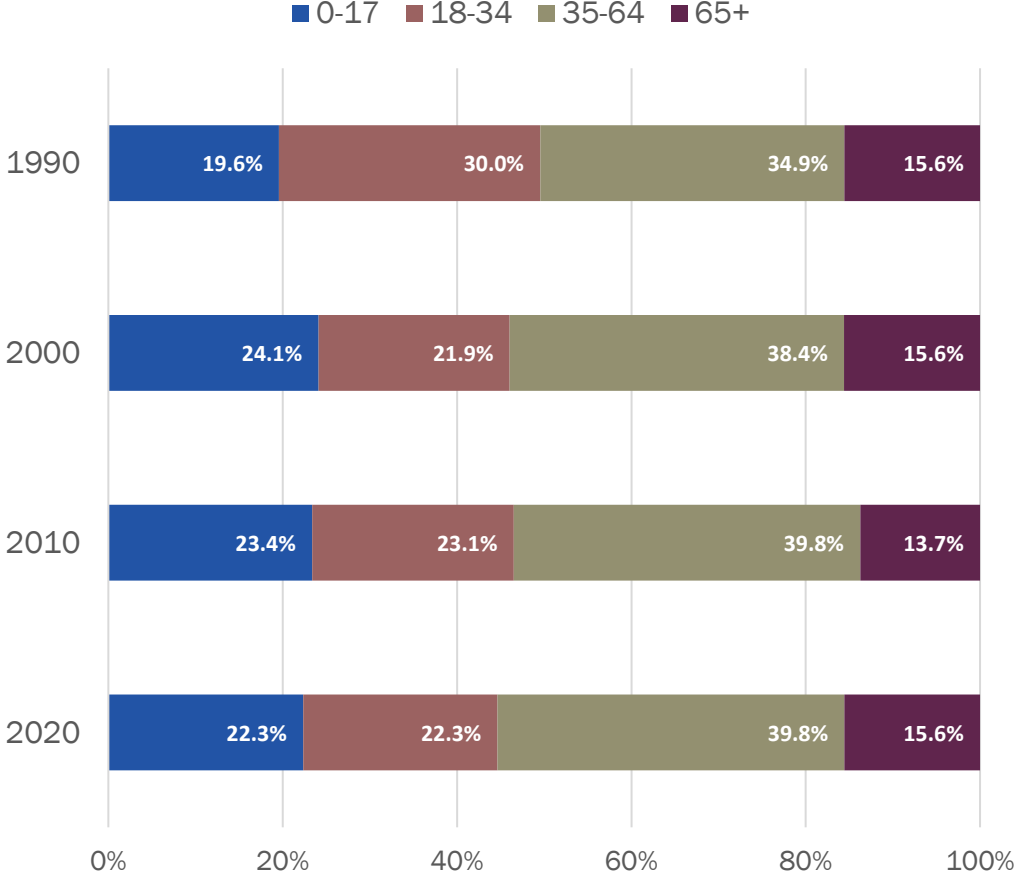
Source: UCONN Data Center, 2015

# Demographics: Age

## Key Trends

- Since 1990, East Hartford’s share of seniors hasn’t changed, while shares of the older labor force and youth under 18 have grown and the younger labor force has decreased.
  - This trend is somewhat in contrast to regional trends where shares of seniors increased and youth under 18 decreased.
- East Hartford’s age distribution has remained largely stable since 2000 with little variation across major age groups.
- East Hartford’s median age (39) is lower than its high-income neighbors, Glastonbury (44) and South Windsor (42), but higher than Hartford (33) and Manchester (37), indicating a stable working-age population.

## Population Share by Age, 1990-2020



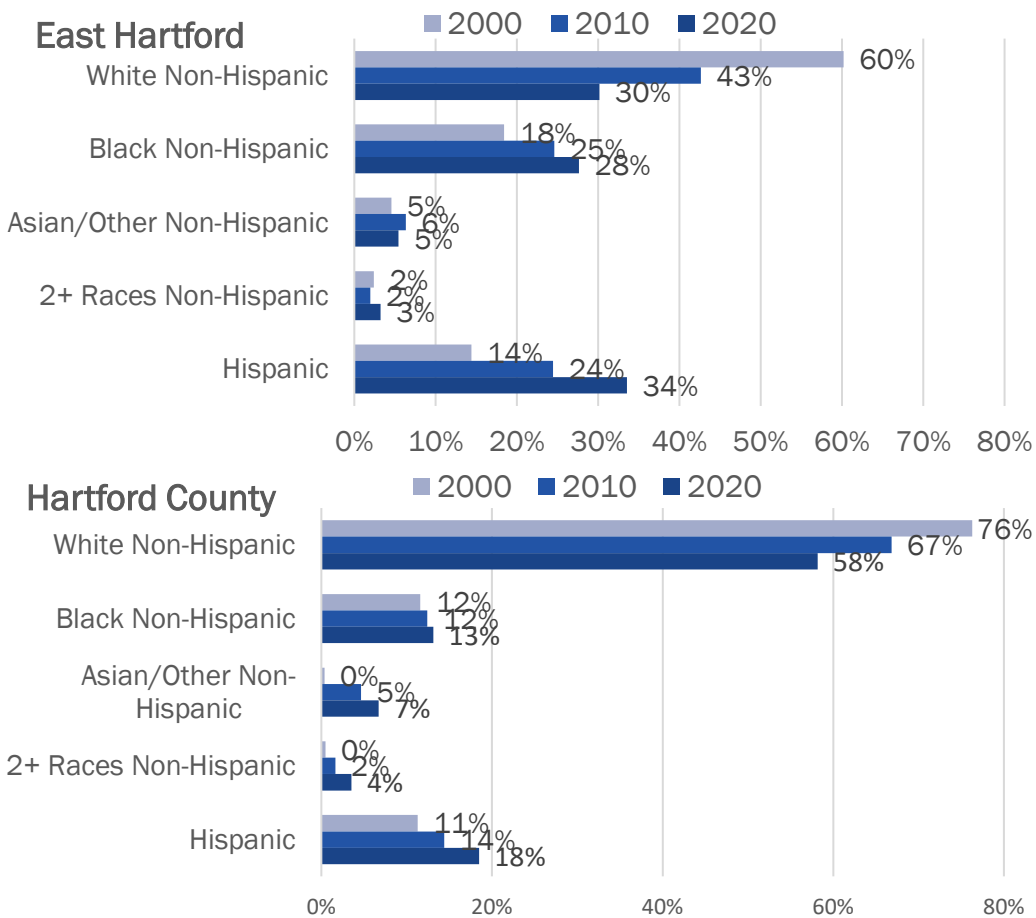
Source: US Decennial Census, 1990-2020

# Demographics: Race & Ethnicity

## Key Trends

- Over the past 20 years, Hartford County’s population has grown increasingly diverse in terms of race and ethnicity with gains in Hispanic, Black, Asian, and other population groups.
- East Hartford has historically been more diverse than the County and continues to attract residents from across the United States and the globe.
  - From 2000 to 2020, East Hartford’s Hispanic population more than doubled (+10,050).
  - Black non-Hispanics increased by 5,050 residents.

## Race & Ethnicity, 2000-2020



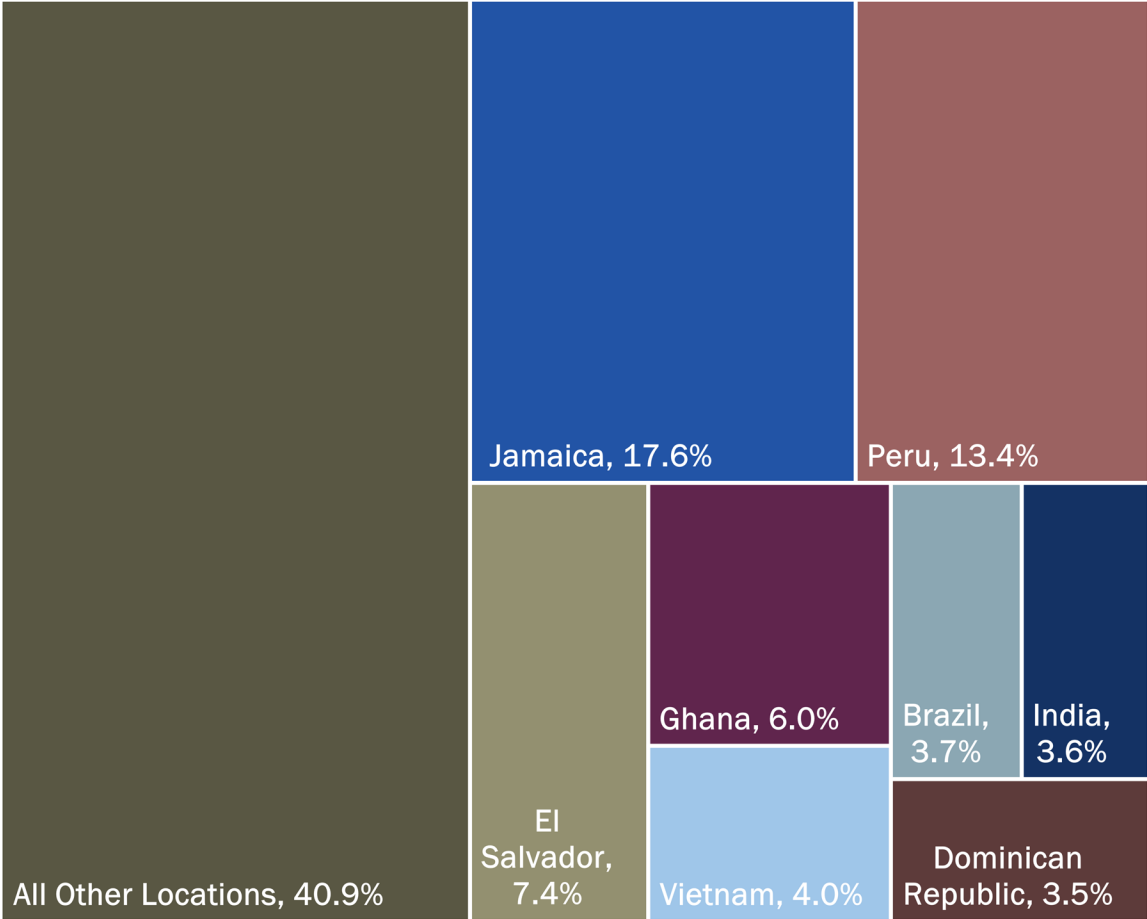
Source: US Decennial Census, 2000-2020

# Demographics: Nativity & Language

## Key Trends

- Today, 38.4% of East Hartford residents speak a language other English at home; 27.3% speak Spanish
- 20.6% of East Hartford residents are foreign-born
- Sizeable shares of East Hartford’s foreign-born population are from Jamaica (17.6%), Peru (13.4%), El Salvador (7.4%), Ghana (6%), and Vietnam (4%)

## Foreign-Born Population by Place of Birth, 2021



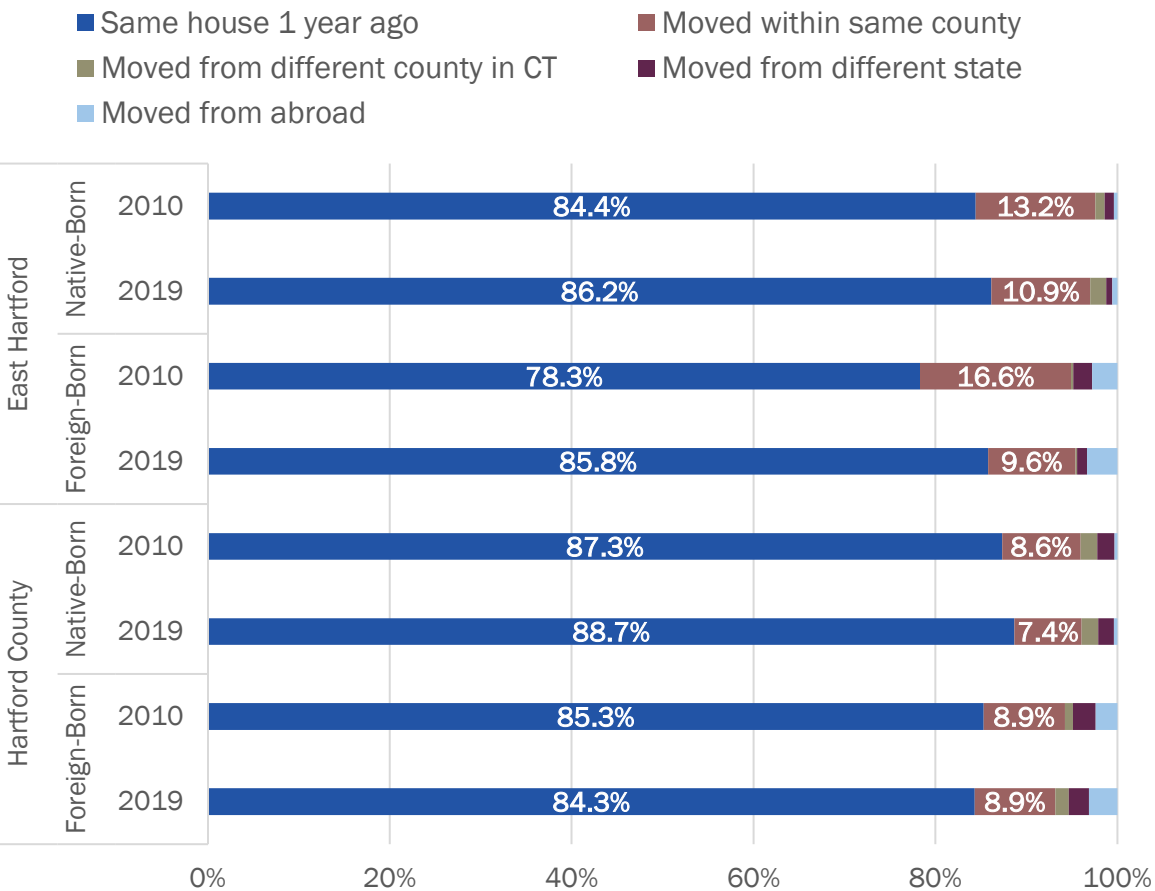


# Demographics: Migration

## Key Trends

- Since 2010, a higher share of East Hartford residents have resided at the same house from one year to the next, showing improved housing stability.
- The share of foreign-born East Hartford residents who moved to a different house from 2010 to 2019 dropped from 21.7% to 14.2%, a significant improvement.
- This trend continued through 2021, likely driven by pandemic health concerns and lower vacancy levels given a regional housing shortage.
- East Hartford’s share of foreign-born residents who moved to Town from another country over the past year increased from 2.8% in 2010 to 3.3% in 2019 and 4.2% in 2021, well above Hartford County levels.

## Geographic Mobility Over Past Year, 2010 & 2019



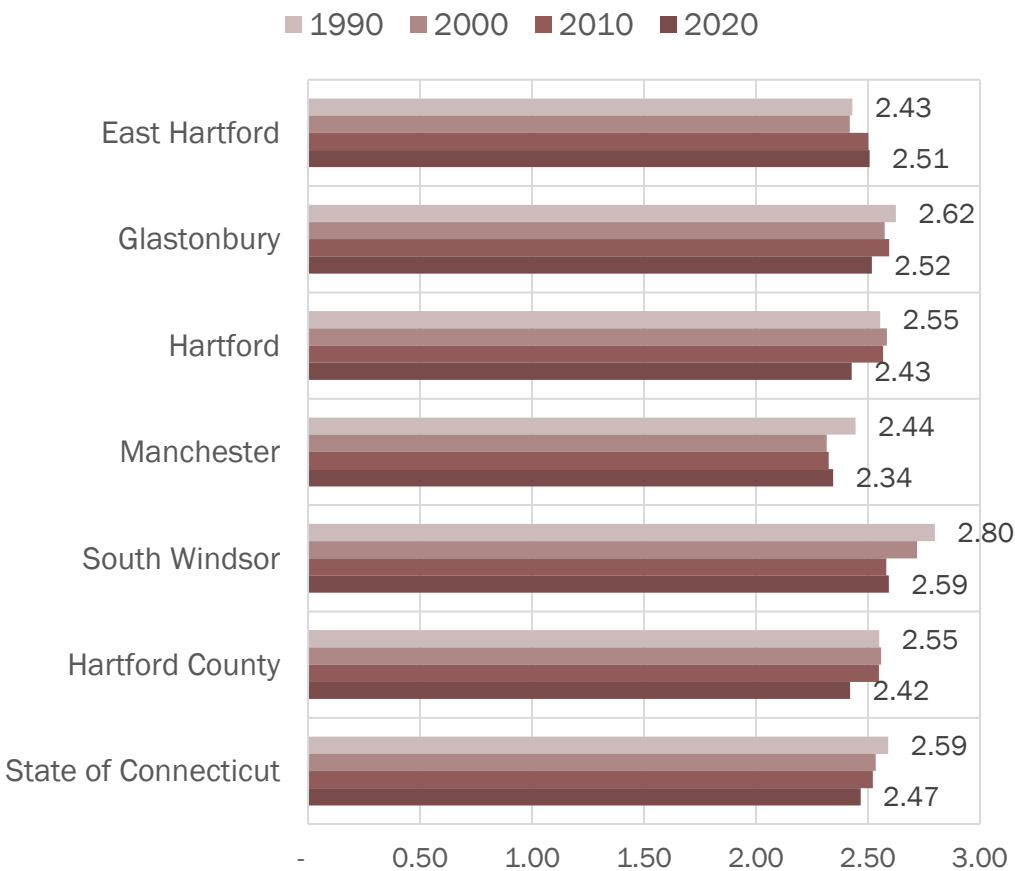
Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010 & 2019 5-Year Estimates.

# Demographics: Household Size

## Key Trends

- While neighboring communities' household sizes have generally decreased over the last few decades, East Hartford is unique for its relatively stable average household size (2.43 to 2.51 from 1990 to 2020).
- Over the past decade, East Hartford, Manchester, and South Windsor saw slight increases in average household size, reflecting population growth.
  - In East Hartford, the recent increase was driven by an expansion of 3- and 4-person households as individuals living alone, 2-person and 5+ person households declined in number.

## Average Household Size, 1990-2020



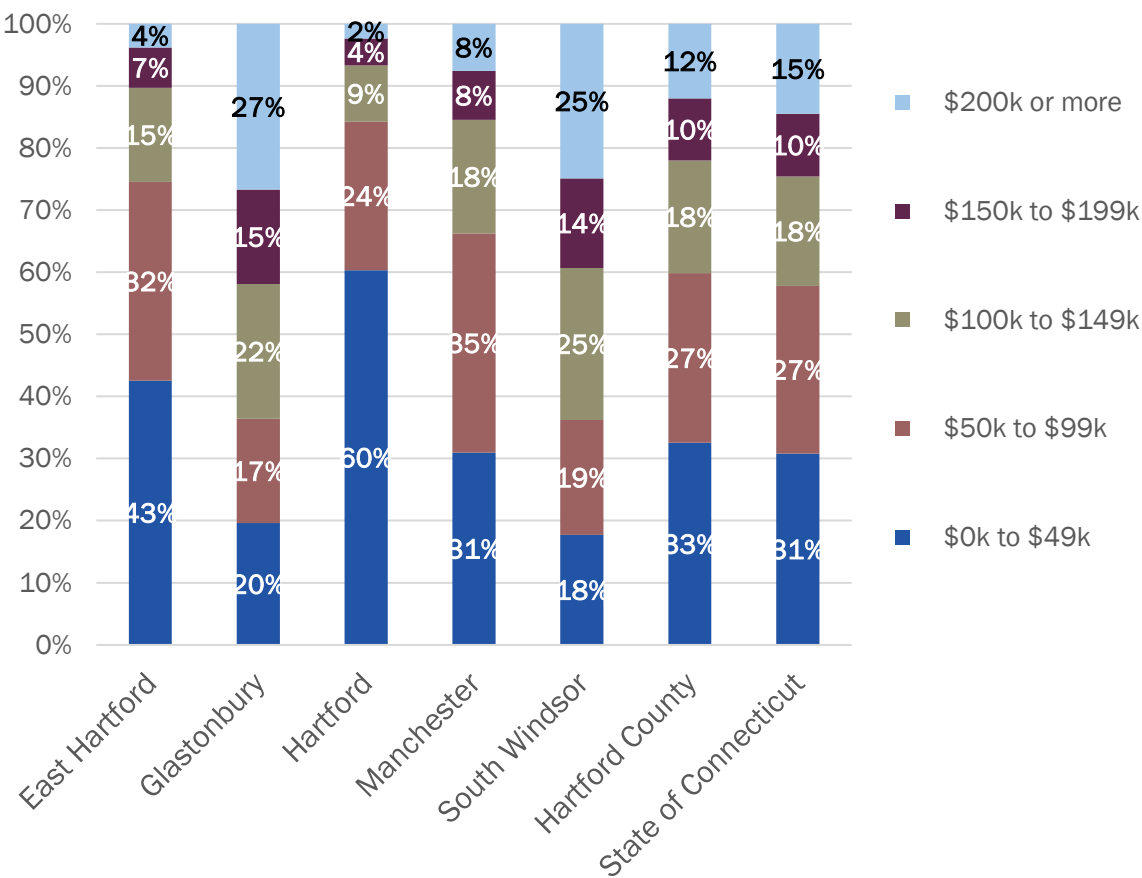
Source: US Decennial Census, 1990-2020

# Demographics: Household Income

## Key Trends

- East Hartford has a lower median household income (\$58,920) than most of its neighbors, except for Hartford (\$37,480).
- 43% of East Hartford households earn less than \$50,000 annually versus 33% of County households.
- Just 26% of East Hartford households earn \$100,000 or more, far less than in Glastonbury & South Windsor (both 64%), Manchester (34%), and Hartford County (40%) but more than the City of Hartford (16%).

## Distribution of Household Income, 2021



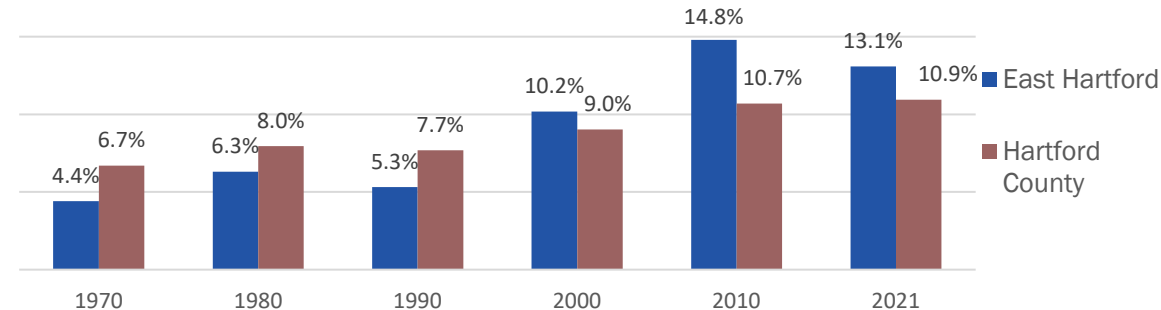
Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021 5-Year Estimate.

# Demographics: Poverty

## Key Trends

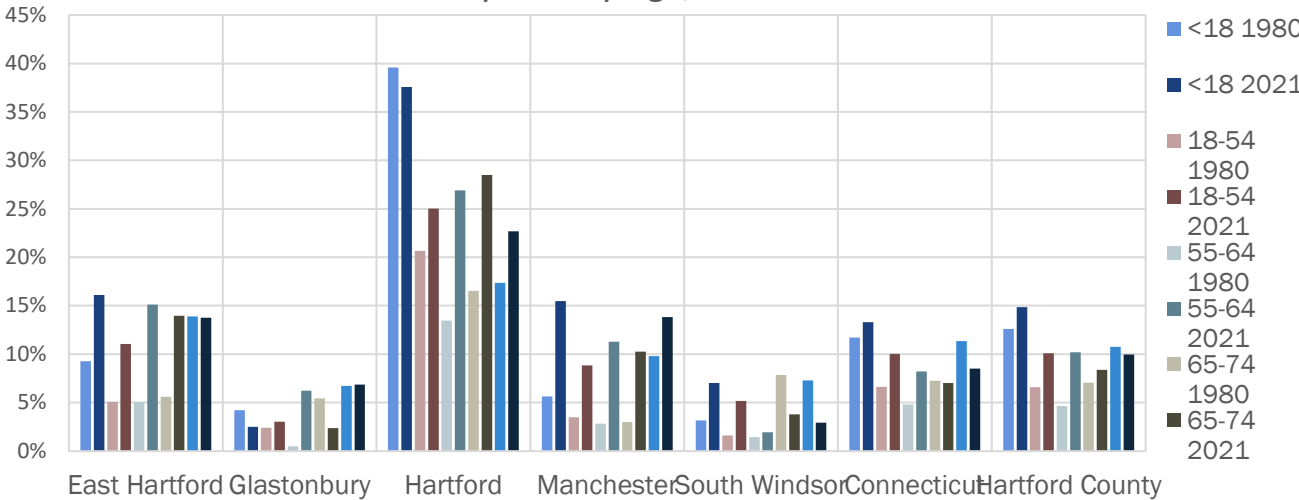
- The Town’s poverty rate has increased since 1970, nearly tripling in share from 4.4% in 1970 to 13.1% in 2021.
- The poverty rate sharply increased for all East Hartford residents, except for older seniors 75+, whose already high level of poverty continued to stay elevated.
- In 2021, East Hartford residents experienced poverty rates over 15% among youth aged 6-17, and older adults aged 55-64. Poverty rates among older adults (45+) and teenagers were well-above County levels.
- These trends may indicate a need for additional supportive services for youth, families, and seniors and older working age residents.

## Poverty Rate, 1970-2021



Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census 1970-2000, American Community Survey, 2010 & 2021 5-Year Estimates

## Poverty Rate by Age, 1980 & 2021



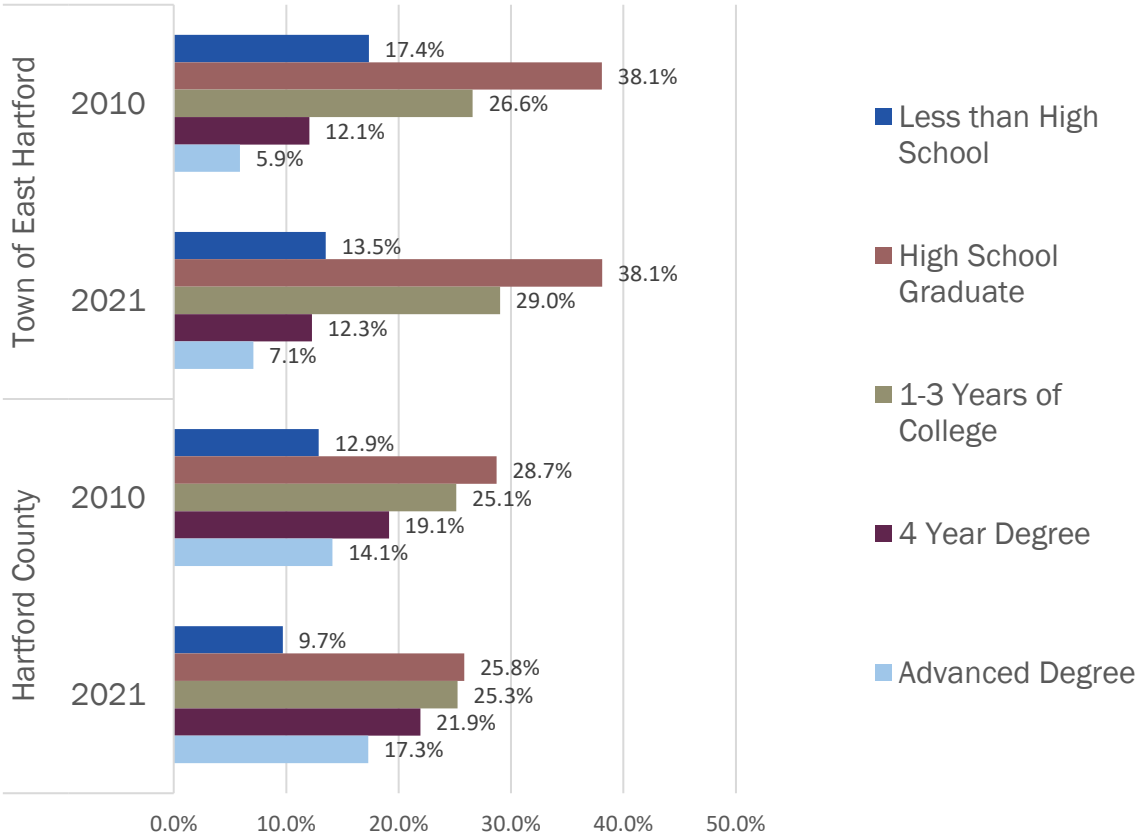
Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census 1980, American Community Survey, 2017-2021 5-Year Estimate.

# Demographics: Educational Attainment

## Key Trends

- The Town has lower levels of educational attainment than the County, with just 48.4% of residents aged 25+ with some college education or more compared with 64.5% of County residents.
- For residents with a 4-year college degree or higher, East Hartford share of such residents (19.4%) is half that of the County (39.2%).
- The share of population with less than a high school education has decreased by almost 4 percentage points, but the educational gap has widened considerably versus the broader region, suggesting that the Town remains one of the few viable places for working class people to live.

## Educational Attainment, 2010 & 2021



Source: CTDOL, QCEW, 2010-2022

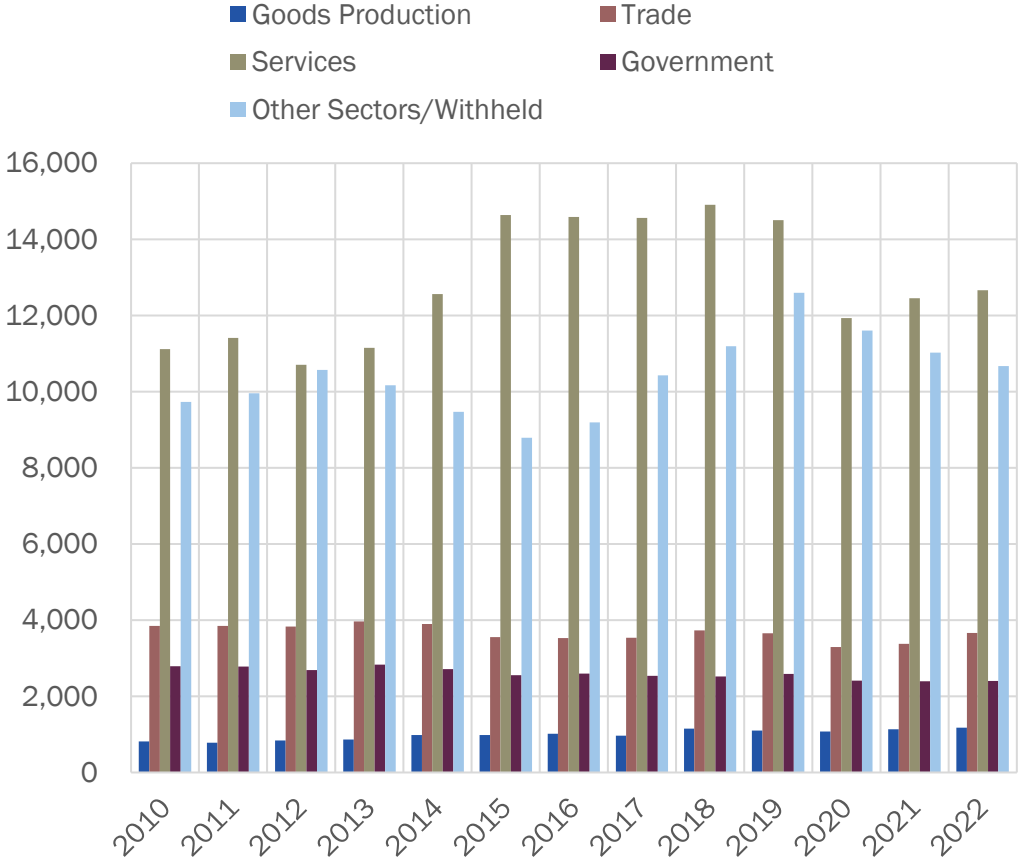


# Economics: Employment

## Key Trends

- East Hartford’s total employment is estimated at 30,580 jobs in 2022, down 11.2% from 34,440 in 2019, but up 8.1% from 28,300 in 2010.
- Although Goods Production and Trade industries have both added jobs since 2019 (+6.8% & +0.2% respectively), the services and government sectors are continuing to recover jobs lost (-12.7% & -7.2% respectively).
- The services sector added the largest number of jobs since 2010 (+1,550) led by gains in Admin., Support, & Waste Mgmt (+1,520); Health Care & Social Assistance (+190), and Mgmt of Businesses & Enterprises (+140). In other sectors, Construction added 340 jobs, and Wholesale Traded added 150 jobs.

## Jobs by Supersector, 2010-2022



Source: CTDOL, QCEW, 2010-2022

# Economics: Commutation

## Key Trends

- While there was contraction in local jobs from 2019 to 2020 (-11.6%) likely due to pandemic-related shutdowns, the spatial distribution of places of employment remained largely unchanged in East Hartford over the past 10 years
- 3 major job clusters in the Town:
  - Pratt & Whitney Campus
  - Founders Plaza
  - Prestige Park
- The primary destinations of employment for East Hartford residents are Hartford (18.1%), East Hartford (11.7%), Manchester (7.5%), South Windsor (4.9%), & Glastonbury (4%)
- The share of residents employed in East Hartford has dropped 2.7% since 2010 as workers have moved to decentralized employment and work-from-home options

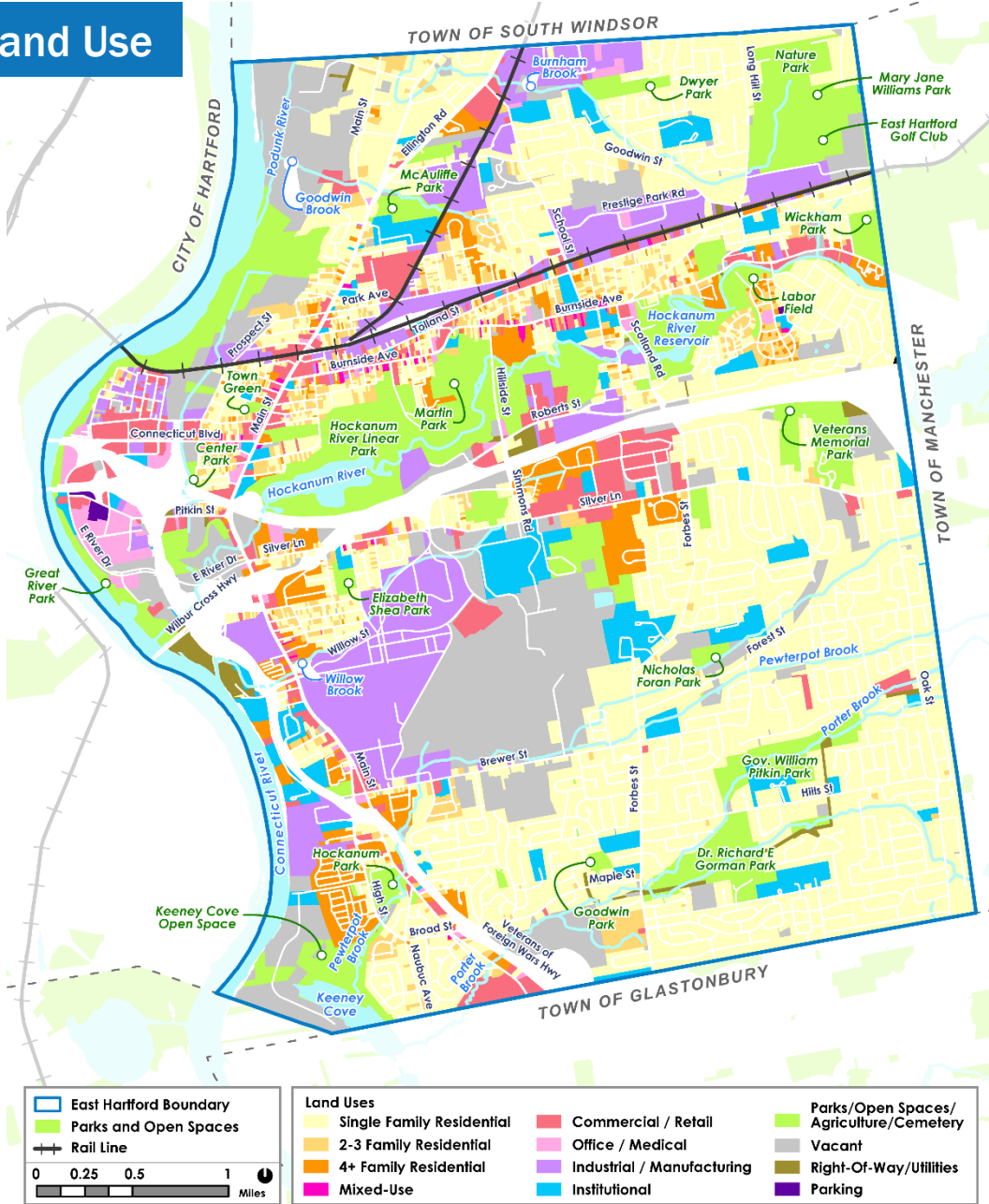
## East Hartford Jobs per Sq Mile, 2019



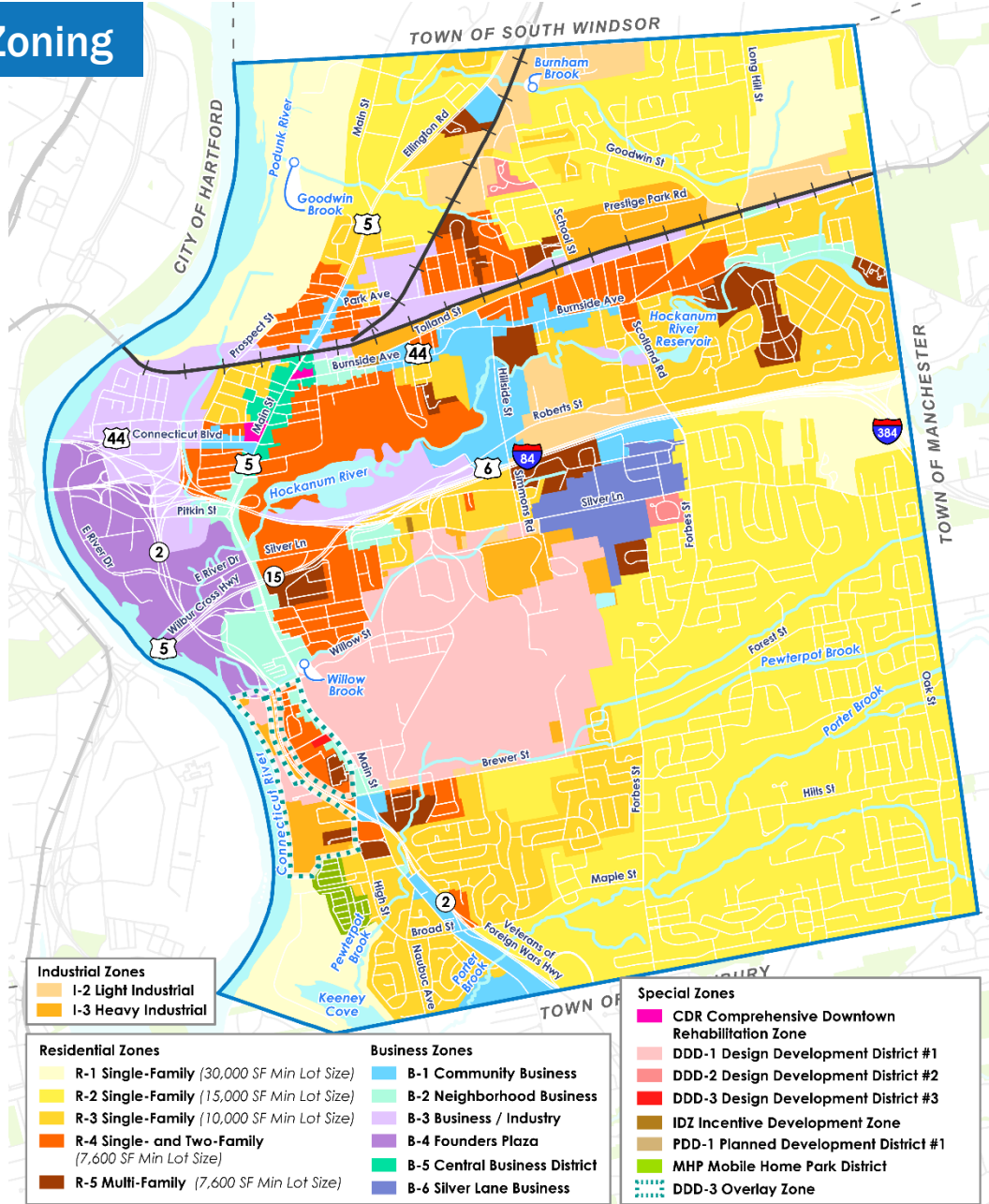
Source: US Census Bureau, OnTheMap, 2019

# Land Use and Zoning

## Land Use



## Zoning



# Land Use and Zoning: Major Zoning Changes Since Last POCD

- **Streamlined regulations for:** parking requirements for manufacturing uses, site plan and sign permit application requirements and procedure, and special use permit requirements (2016)
- **Developed Design Development District 3 (DDD-3)** regulations to allow for a mixed-use college district around Goodwin College (2019)
- **Added breweries and brewpubs** as special permit uses in all business zones and one industrial district (2019)
- **Incorporated zoning recommendations** from Silver Lane Revitalization Plan into the POCD to support required zoning regulations (2020)
- **Revised Incentive Development Zone regulations** to allow residential cluster development as a special permit use to facilitate redevelopment of 550 Burnside Ave. (2021)



# Land Use and Zoning: Major Zoning Changes Since Last POCD (cont.)

- Removed the 1,000-foot distance requirement between restaurants serving alcohol (2021)
- Create definition for “small box discount store” and set a 2,000-foot distance requirement to limit locations of dollar stores (2021)
- Created Planned Development District to facilitate Silver Lane corridor zoning changes (2021)
- Established zoning regulations for cultivation and sale of cannabis (2021-2022)
- Comprehensive update of zoning regulations (2022)



# Land Use and Zoning: Initial Land Use Issues

- **Future zoning for Founders Plaza to facilitate redevelopment**
- **Current zoning for commercial corridors** – Does the Town need all the business zones? If not, what should the land use vision be?
- **Opportunity to review and revise mixed-use designations** – Does zoning support these mixed-use designations? Which areas should be classified as mixed-use? (i.e. Burnside Avenue)
- **Explore options for future uses of office buildings as they become more vacant such as professional schools (school/college is only permitted in residential zones) or light manufacturing type uses.**
- **Multi-family and General Housing Allowances** – (1) Clarify and simplify requirements for multi-family housing development; (2) Expand allowances for housing development including re-organizing use-based standards for housing, re-evaluating permitted districts for multi-family housing or mixed-use development.
- **Silver Lane Plan Recommendations for Re-Zoning** – Are the recommendations still relevant?



# Thank You!

