

Housing Needs of Low Income Individuals and Families

Introduction

In February 2013, the Housing Commission of the Bipartisan Policy Center issued a comprehensive analysis of the state of the nation's housing, entitled "Housing America's Future: New Directions for National Policy¹." The report reminds us that Americans "intuitively understand that ensuring access to decent, suitable, and affordable housing is a goal worth striving for, and one that our country must never abandon." Understanding local housing needs, demand and market trends is critical to effectively embracing and realizing this goal locally in Connecticut.

Like much of the nation, Connecticut faces considerable challenges in meeting the housing needs of our state residents. A significant proportion of Connecticut's renters and homeowners pay more than a third of their income on housing costs and the amount needed in order to afford an apartment in our state continues to be high.

While very little state investment was made during the 1990's and 2000's to create affordable housing, major housing initiatives currently being implemented under the leadership of Governor Malloy will positively impact the availability of affordable housing over the coming years and decades. Under the Governor's leadership, significant budgetary and capital investments are being made, including a \$300 million commitment over the next decade to preserve and revitalize existing state-assisted housing. In the last biennium, in addition to authorizing the first \$30 million in year one of this ten-year commitment, Governor Malloy's housing initiatives included \$120 million for affordable housing, over \$30 million for three hundred units of supportive housing, \$12.5 million for congregate housing with ongoing operating subsidies, and \$2 million for Housing Incentive Zones.

The recently passed FY 14-15 biennial budget continues to build on these efforts by investing \$136 million in capital funding to develop or rehabilitate affordable housing across the state and \$20 million in capital funding to develop 100 new units of supportive housing, with an annualized \$2 million for rental assistance subsidies and services. In addition, to support the authorization of \$60 million as years two and three of the ten year commitment, the biennial budget included an annualized \$3 million for 300 new RAPs to ensure an adequate ongoing revenue stream to prevent future deterioration of preserved housing units. Finally, in order to help municipalities plan for and create mixed-income housing that is critical to attracting and

¹ http://bipartisanpolicy.org/sites/default/files/BPC_Housing%20Report_web_0.pdf

retaining young professionals, working families, retirees, and people in public service jobs, Governor Malloy also included as part of his housing initiative an authorization of another \$1 million for Housing Incentive Zones.

In order to coordinate and streamline these housing initiatives, Governor Malloy proposed the consolidation of the state's housing functions into a new, standalone department in 2012. As a result of his efforts, this new centralized Department of Housing was fully implemented as of July 1, 2013. This department is the lead agency in housing-related matters for the state, and will develop and implement a comprehensive approach to eliminating homelessness and meeting the housing needs of low- and moderate-income individuals, families, and communities.

In addition to this funding and centralized programming, in January 2012, Connecticut's housing advocacy community launched a strategic statewide framework, Opening Doors-Connecticut², to foster collaboration between a broad range of partners to ensure all residents have access to stable and affordable housing. Modeled after the federal initiative, Opening Doors-Connecticut will use integrated solutions, with a targeted focus on the most vulnerable populations, to meet two goals: (1) ending chronic homelessness, as well as homelessness among veterans, by 2017; and (2) preventing and ending homelessness among families, youth, and children by 2022.

The following assessment, prepared by the Interagency Council on Affordable Housing, explores the housing needs of low income individuals and families, including the following areas:

- An examination of the shortage of affordable housing for both renters and homeowners, as well as how other existing factors, including a historical lack of investment in funding for housing initiatives over the last two decades, may have contributed to this insufficiency;
- A discussion of the importance of affordable housing in relation to economic development;
- An examination of the links between affordable housing and other demographic factors, since as income level, household makeup, race and ethnicity, and disability;
- Homelessness statistics; and
- Overall observations on how the state is meeting the housing needs of its low income individuals and families.

² <http://pschousing.org/openingdoors-ct>

Assessing the housing needs of low income individuals and families is one of the four core statutory responsibilities of the Interagency Council on Affordable Housing. This assessment will be used to continue to fulfill the Council's duties of reviewing and analyzing the effectiveness of existing state programs in meeting those needs, identifying barriers to effective housing delivery systems, and developing strategies and recommendations to enhance the availability of safe and affordable housing in communities across the state through the Department of Housing.

Shortage of Affordable Housing in Connecticut

While statutory and popular definitions of affordable housing differ, the term "affordable housing" is generally understood to mean housing that costs a household not more than 30% of its gross income. This benchmark has been accepted in the industry for the past 30-plus years, and applies to both rental and homeownership. When housing costs do not exceed 30% of income, households at all income levels are left with sufficient income for food, clothing, transportation, education costs, savings, and other essentials of a healthy, stable life.

Affordability will obviously vary significantly depending on the income of the household, and most of the affordable housing built with public funding sources is targeted toward households earning 80% or less of the local Area Median Income (AMI). Some state housing programs in Connecticut allow for higher income targeting: the Housing Trust Fund and Flex Housing program target households at or below 120% of AMI and at or below 100% of AMI, respectively. To put this in perspective, data from the 2010 American Community Survey shows that nearly 40% of Connecticut households (approximately 540,000) have incomes below 80% of AMI; of this total, approximately 350,000 (10% of all Connecticut residents) live below the poverty limit, which, in 2010, was \$22,050 annually for a family of four.³

Both homeowners and renters in the state of Connecticut have faced growing housing affordability challenges over the last decade. The number of those currently burdened by their housing costs is still significantly higher than it was ten years ago – 52% of households paid more than 30% of their incomes on rental housing in 2011 compared to 36.5% in 2000⁴. For homeowners, this number has also been significant, with 36.1% burdened by housing costs in 2011 and 23.9% in 2000⁵. However, there have been some slight improvements in affordability

³ American Community Survey 2010. The 2013 poverty limit is \$23,550 for a family of four.

⁴ Partnership for Strong Communities. "Housing in CT 2012: the Latest Measures of Affordability."

⁵ Partnership for Strong Communities. "Housing in CT 2012: the Latest Measures of Affordability."

indicators within recent years – Connecticut’s housing wage⁶, currently the eighth highest out of all fifty states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico, decreased from 2012 to 2013. In addition, the most recent available data on the housing market revealed that the 2012 housing market shows signs of recovery with moderate permit growth, increased home sales, and growing builder confidence.

Homeowners:

As stated above, new data⁷ indicates that there was modest housing growth in 2012, despite the fact that permits did not reach pre-recession levels. The following statistics illuminate this gradual recovery, which is anticipated to continue into 2013:

- In 2012, Connecticut cities and towns produced 4,669 new housing units, which represents a 47.1% increase from a six-decade low in 2011 of 3,173 units.
- Connecticut ranked 10th in the nation for permit growth in 2012, and was higher than the national average.
- In 2012, Connecticut experienced the first year-over-year percentage increase of single-family home sales since 2005, of 14.8% from 2011 to 2012. In addition, that year’s sales were the highest since 2009.

Similarly, affordability has shown small signs of improvement. Data released in October 2012 from Home Connecticut compared median home sales prices in Connecticut’s 169 municipalities to median household incomes of residents to ascertain affordability.⁸ This analysis showed that the 2011 state median household income of \$70,705 was not sufficient to purchase a single-family home at the median sales price with a 10% down payment in just over half of the state’s cities and towns – 88 municipalities out of 169. However, this statistic compares favorably with the prior year’s affordability data, which determined that 112 municipalities were unaffordable by the same measure. Similarly, when comparing town median household income to the income needed to qualify for a mortgage to purchase the median sales price home in that same town, 54 towns and cities were found to be unaffordable in 2011, compared to 96 in 2010.

⁶ “Housing wage” is the amount a person must earn to afford housing without spending more than 30% of total household income on housing costs.

⁷ Department of Economic and Community Development and Department of Labor. July 2013. “The Connecticut Economic Digest: State’s 2012 Housing Market in Review.”

⁸ Partnership for Strong Communities, “Affordability in Connecticut, 2011. Released in October 2012, this study analyzed 2010 and 2011 home sales data and median income data provided by the Warren Group and Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) Data Finder.

However, it is pertinent to recognize that low-income families and individuals, despite the modest improvements described above, are still struggling to afford decent housing. For many of Connecticut's poorer communities, housing prices may be low, but town median income also tends to be depressed⁹. In these instances, geography plays a major role in affordable homeownership opportunities. The table below, taken from the May 2013 Multiple Listing Service, illustrates that for every twenty low and moderate income renters, there is only one house for sale prices at \$160,000 or below.¹⁰ It is apparent that the availability of these homes varies widely from one county to the next.¹¹

County	Total Number of Homes for Sale	Number of Home Prices @ \$160,000 or Below	% of Homes for Sale @ \$160,000 or Below
Fairfield County	6,882	296	4.3%
Hartford County	4,278	883	20.6%
Litchfield County	2,614	318	12.2%
Middlesex County	1,459	117	8.0%
New Haven County	5,043	1,040	20.6%
New London County	2,090	429	20.5%
Tolland County	1,012	180	17.8%
Windham County	758	234	30.9%
TOTAL CONNECTICUT	24,278	3,497	14.4%

Another indicator that demonstrates the lack of access to affordable housing is the 2012 Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals list. This list, most recently revised in December 2012 and compiled annually, lists the number of affordable housing units¹² in each municipality, and what percentage of the total housing stock is affordable. According to this list, there are only 32 municipalities in Connecticut where at least 10% of the homes are affordable. Most of the remaining 137 towns have less than 5% affordable housing stock.¹³

Renters:

⁹ Partnership for Strong Communities, "Affordability in Connecticut, 2011"

¹⁰ \$160,000 is the median buying price in Connecticut Housing Finance Authority's Single Family program.

¹¹ Connecticut Multiple Listing Service, May 2013

¹² A complete listing of the types of dwelling counted by DECD as affordable can be found in CGS Section 8-30g(k).

¹³ DECD, annual Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals list, revised December 2012.

Those individuals and families who cannot afford to own or buy a home have to turn to the rental market, which has its own set of challenges. In 2013, a person earning the state’s minimum wage of \$8.25 per hour must work nearly three full-time jobs (or a total of 113 hours per week) to pay the statewide fair market rent (FMR) of \$1,208 per month for a two-bedroom apartment.¹⁴ At \$23.22 an hour, Connecticut continues to outpace other states with one of the nation’s highest “housing wage,” which is the amount a person must earn to afford a typical two-bedroom apartment without spending more than 30% of total household income on housing costs.¹⁵ To put this in perspective, in order to afford that two-bedroom apartment, an individual or household must earn \$4,025 a month or \$48,304 annually. More than half of the Connecticut’s jobs do not, on average, pay this amount.¹⁶ One slight indicator of improvement is the decreasing of Connecticut’s housing wage from \$23.58 in 2012 to the current \$23.22. However, as the following statistics demonstrate, the lack of decent affordable housing is still a particularly acute problem for the state’s low-income individuals and families.

Of the state’s 419,240 renter households, 126,415 (30%) earn less than 30% of Area Median Income (AMI).¹⁷ Nearly half of all renters (195,860 households, or 47%) pay more than 30% of their income for their housing; 102,565 households, or 24% of all renters, pay in excess of 50% of their income toward housing costs.¹⁸ This data, and the graphs below, clearly illustrate that the greatest numbers and percentages of need for affordable housing among renters is in the populations earning less than 30% and 50% of AMI. Some 61% of extremely low income households (earning less than 30% of AMI), or 77,425 families across the state, pay more than half of their income toward their housing costs. This is considered to be “severely cost-burdened.” By contrast, only 4%, or 3,210, households statewide earning between 51% and 80% pay more than half of their income toward housing.

COUNTY	Extremely low income renter households (<30% AMI)			Very low income renter households (31-50% AMI)			Low income renter households (51%-80% AMI)		
	Total hhlds	# severe cost burden	% severe cost burden	Total hhlds	# severe cost burden	% severe cost burden	Total hhlds	# severe cost burden	% severe cost burden
Fairfield County	31,250	18,575	59%	17,570	5,160	29%	14,850	900	6%
Hartford County	37,145	22,765	61%	22,175	4,695	21%	21,125	630	3%

¹⁴ National Low Income Housing Coalition, “Out of Reach 2013: American’s Forgotten Housing Crisis”

¹⁵ National Low Income Housing Coalition, “Out of Reach 2013: American’s Forgotten Housing Crisis”

¹⁶ Connecticut Department of Labor. “Connecticut Occupational Employment and Wages, Statewide 2011.”

¹⁷ National Low Income Housing Coalition 2006-2010 CHAS Cost Burden/Gap Analysis - Connecticut.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Litchfield County	4,615	2,435	53%	2,755	605	22%	3,140	40	1%
Middlesex County	4,005	2,365	59%	2,940	845	29%	2,585	180	7%
New Haven County	35,230	22,720	64%	22,445	7,505	33%	20,975	1,030	5%
New London County	7,065	4,115	58%	5,300	1,240	23%	8,175	345	4%
Tolland County	3,245	2,315	71%	2,085	525	25%	2,600	65	3%
Windham County	3,860	2,135	55%	2,585	360	14%	2,615	20	1%
TOTAL CONNECTICUT	126,415	77,425	61%	77,855	20,935	27%	76,065	3,210	4%

Source: NLIHC analysis of Table 8, CHAS 2006-2010

The following “gap analysis” demonstrates an almost equivalent need for affordable units – there is currently a deficit of 77,850 units statewide for households earning below 30% of Area Median Income. This is in contrast to the need among low-income households earning as much as 80% of Area Median Income. The gap for that population is only 5,105 units statewide, with the greatest need in Fairfield County.

COUNTY	Extremely low income renter households (<30% AMI)				Low Income renter households (<80% AMI)			
	Total hhlds	Total affrd/avail units	Surplus/deficit	Affordable Units per 100 hhlds	Total hhlds	Total affrd/avail units	Surplus/deficit	Affordable Units per 100 hhlds
Fairfield County	31,250	12,815	(18,435)	41	63,670	58,505	(5,165)	92
Hartford County	37,145	14,645	(22,500)	39	80,445	82,760	2,315	103
Litchfield County	4,615	1,965	(2,650)	43	10,510	10,700	190	102
Middlesex County	4,005	1,615	(2,390)	40	9,530	9,350	(180)	98
New Haven County	35,230	12,085	(23,145)	34	78,650	76,895	(1,755)	98
New London County	7,065	2,915	(4,150)	41	20,540	20,635	95	100
Tolland County	3,245	765	(2,480)	24	7,930	7,315	(615)	92
Windham County	3,860	1,770	(2,090)	46	9,060	9,070	10	100
TOTAL CONNECTICUT	126,415	48,575	(77,840)	38	280,335	275,230	(5,105)	98

Source: NLIHC analysis of Table 8, CHAS 2006-2010

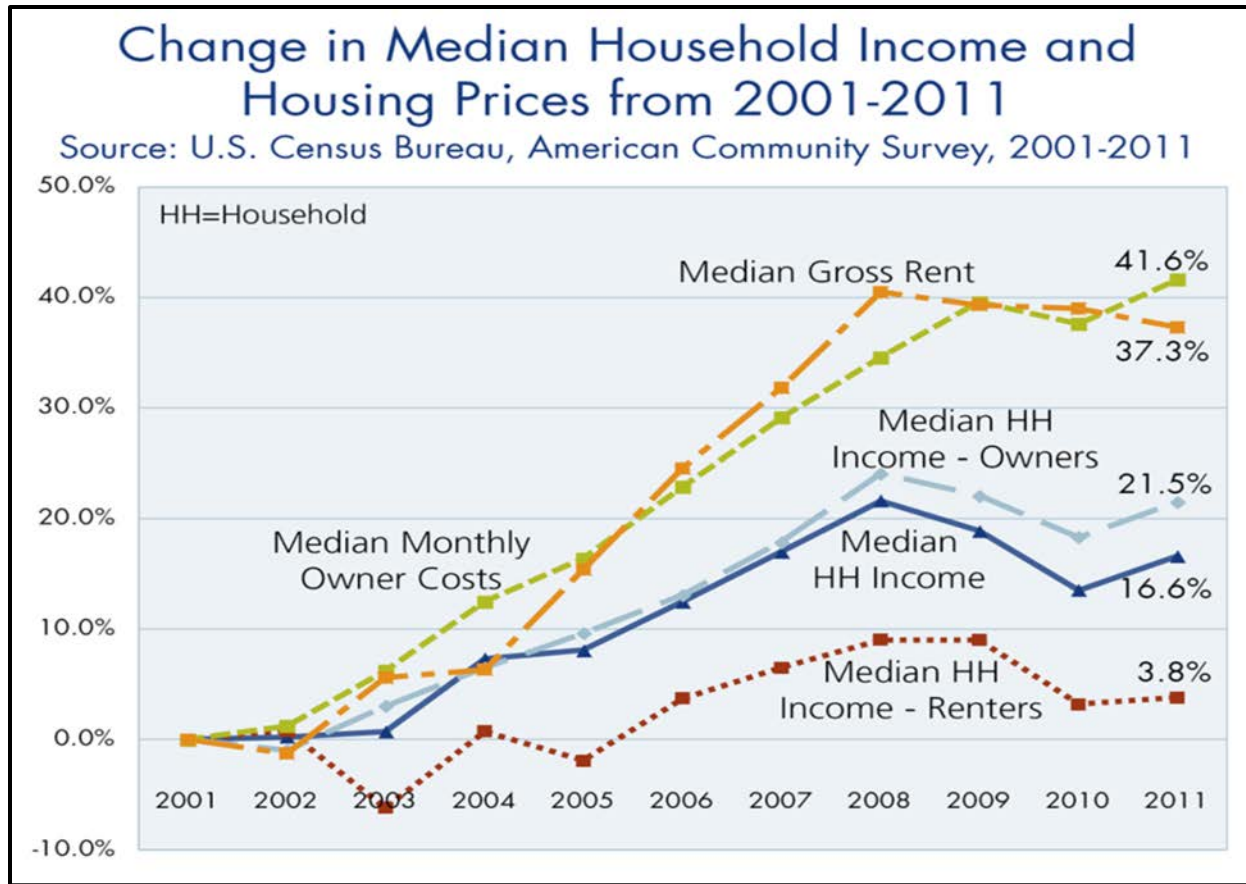
As with the homeownership statistics, the rental market data shows there are clear geographic patterns within the state. The data above illustrates that there are disproportionately fewer rental housing units available and affordable to extremely low income households in Hartford, New Haven, and Tolland Counties. Interestingly, for those households earning closer to the

median income, Fairfield County has the greater shortage, while Hartford County has sufficient rental units to meet the demand of that cohort¹⁹.

Why is there insufficient affordable housing in Connecticut?

Part of the problem is a mismatch between the change in the cost of housing and the growth in personal household income. While personal income has increased over time, it has not kept pace with the rise in the cost of housing in Connecticut. As shown below, between 2001 and 2011 the median monthly owner costs increased by 41.6% and the median gross rent increased by 37.3%; during the same period, the median household income of owners and renters increased by only 21.5% and 3.8%, respectively. This gap has narrowed slightly during the recent recession, primarily on the owner side; however, there remains an imbalance between supply and demand.

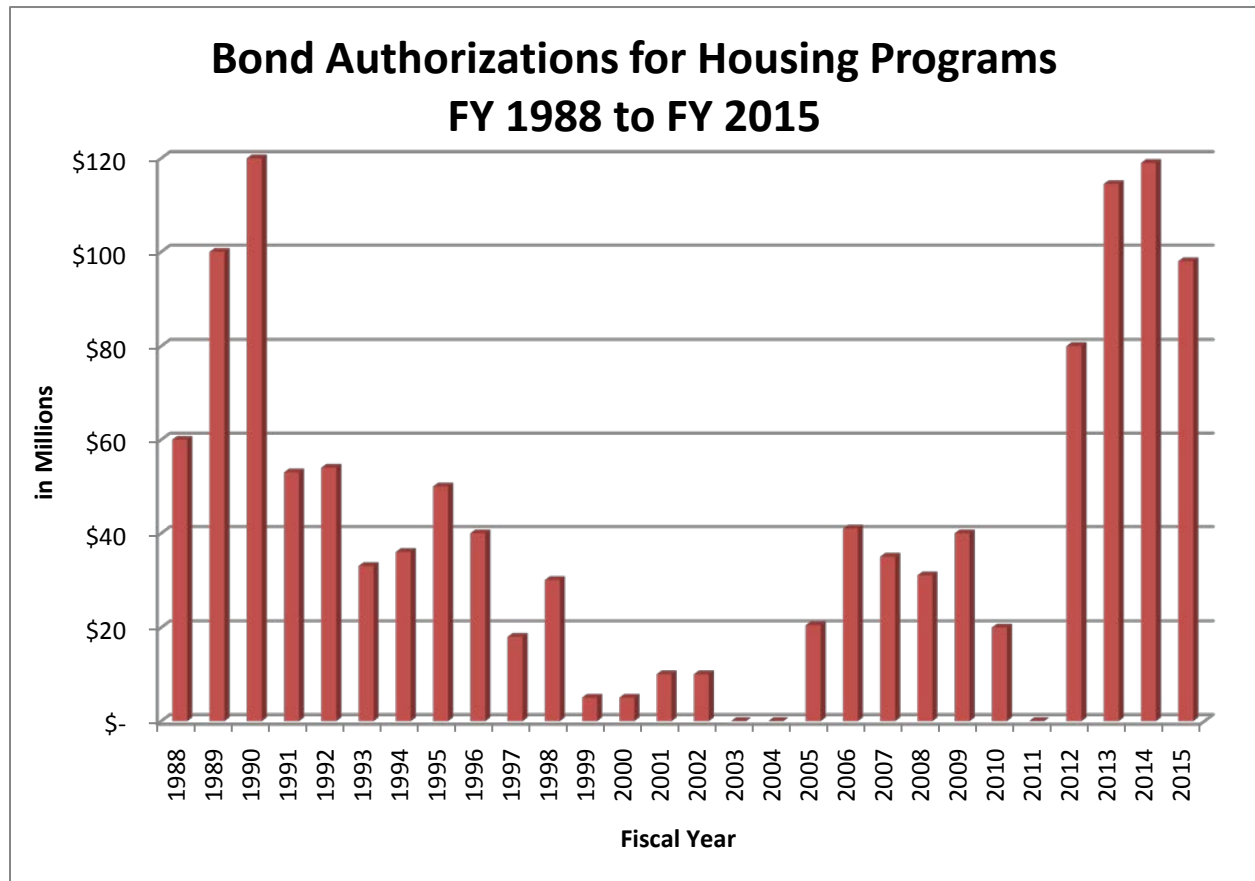
¹⁹ This methodology calculates the need for affordable housing by subtracting the number of affordable units by the number of low-income households, to determine the surplus or deficit of affordable housing units. One limitation of this methodology is that it may not capture those areas in which the rents are truly too cost-prohibitive for households with income under 80% AMI to even live in those counties. It is important to note that within a county, low cost rents predominate in places where poverty is concentrated and high rents predominate in communities where high income households are concentrated. This suggests that the need for affordable housing is greatest in communities where low income individuals and families cannot and do not currently reside.



The shortage of affordable housing has many deleterious effects. For Connecticut’s lowest income households, it means a greater risk of becoming homeless. For those low-income households that are paying 50% or more of their incomes toward housing costs, the financial burden of staying housed often means forgoing other critical household expenses, including health care, child care, nutritious food and clothing expenses. Higher housing costs reduces the funds that are available when emergencies arise, like sudden health problems or the loss of employment. In addition, higher housing costs means less disposable income available to sustain commercial enterprises – most often small businesses - in the surrounding community.

External market factors also contribute to high housing costs in Connecticut. Many suburban and rural communities lack the public facilities and infrastructure necessary to support multi-family housing, such as access to water and sewer facilities. At the same time, the state is subject to high construction costs due to its proximity of the New York City and Boston markets. Operating costs tend to also be higher due to higher property taxes, heating and cooling costs, the incremental cost of providing support services for very low-income residents, the added costs associated with constructing housing accessible to low-income elderly and disabled residents. In addition, as the following chart depicts, there has been a lack of state investment

in affordable housing for twenty years before the current administration, which has contributed to the high costs and low production of affordable housing.



Source: Office of Policy and Management, 2013

The lack of sufficient affordable housing is also attributable, in part, to NIMBY-ism²⁰ and local zoning practices that permit the state’s municipalities to implement rules that limit or prohibit development of affordable housing. Many communities have zoning and land use policies that make it difficult or impossible to develop multifamily housing or small starter homes. These include large minimum lot requirements, density limitations, and onerous architectural and landscape review requirements.

Affordable Housing and Economic Development

Affordable housing and economic development are inextricably linked. There is a “triple bottom line” associated with creating affordable housing: new jobs through construction, additional local revenues generated through new taxes, and more disposable income available

²⁰ NIMBY is an acronym for the phrase “Not In My Back Yard” and is a characterization of opposition by residents to affordable housing development in their neighborhoods.

to the people who live in the housing. Economic growth partly depends on the availability of affordable housing and on the ability of communities to support a range of incomes and employment types. Where communities do not support such a range of incomes and employment types, the result is often undesirably long commutes that are bad for the environment and create a disincentive for both employees and businesses to remain in or relocate to Connecticut.

The lack of sufficient affordable housing throughout the state also limits the ability of low-income individuals and families to move to communities where they can take advantage of job and educational opportunities. In some cases, household members may have to accept lengthy commutes and sacrifice critical time caring for children and elderly household members, volunteering and otherwise playing an active role in the civic life of the community. In other cases, those job and educational opportunities may be lost altogether. The combined effect of these impacts can be to render communities more vulnerable to crime, dysfunction and instability, which can lead to disinvestment and the loss of businesses and jobs.

Affordable Housing and Demographic Trends

It is also important to recognize that the lack of affordable housing in Connecticut has a racial dimension. In Connecticut, income is highly correlated with race. Based on the 2010 Five-Year American Community Survey, the poverty rate in Connecticut was 9%.²¹ However, the poverty rate among Hispanic persons was 21% and among Black persons (including individuals who indicated that they were Black and Hispanic²²) it was 19%.²³ The poverty rate among Non-Hispanic White persons was 5% and the rate for Asians was 8%.²⁴ The median family income for Hispanic households was less than half the statewide median and about 44% of the median family income for non-Hispanic White households.²⁵ The median family income for Black households was about 55% of the median family income for non-Hispanic White households.²⁶

²¹ Rodriguez, Orlando, "Housing Demographics: Single-Parent Families, Minorities, and Disabilities Among an Aging Population" prepared for the 2012 Connecticut Housing Conference, December 18, 2012. Orlando Rodriguez is with Connecticut Voices for Children.

²² On the census, people are asked to identify both their race and ethnicity. The data collected does not permit a separation of those people who indicated they were Black but also Hispanic from those who indicated they were Black but not Hispanic. Therefore, while the poverty rate among Black persons does not include all Hispanic persons, it does include Hispanic persons who also indicated that their race was Black.

²³ Rodriguez, *Ibid.*

²⁴ Rodriguez *Ibid.*

²⁵ Rodriguez *Ibid.*

²⁶ Rodriguez *Ibid.*

While it is clear that certain groups are lower income and this, by necessity, means that they have a greater need for affordable housing, adjusting the “Out of Reach” analysis to assess the impact of this disparity on certain groups is telling.

As stated previously, based on statewide average rents, the minimum income necessary to afford a 2-bedroom apartment in Connecticut is \$48,304.^{27,28} At this minimum income level, rent would account for no more than 30% of a household’s income. A minimum income of \$48,304 makes housing out of reach for 35% of non-Hispanic White households and 29% of Asian households.²⁹ In contrast, 60% of Black households and 62% of Hispanic households spend more than 30% of their income on housing.³⁰

Out of Reach by Race (Households)	
Race/Ethnicity	Percentage of Group for whom Fair Market Rent is “Out of Reach” (over 30% of income)
White (non-Hispanic)	35%
Black (includes Hispanics)	60%
Asian (includes Hispanics)	29%
Hispanic	62%

There is also a significant disparity based on family status, with only 15% of two-parent households paying more than 30% as compared to 67% of single-parent households.³¹

Out of Reach by Family Status (Households)	
Family Status	Percentage of Group for whom Fair Market Rent is “Out of Reach” (over 30% of income)
Two-Parent Households	15%
Single-Parent Households	67%

²⁷ Out of Reach, *supra* note 9.

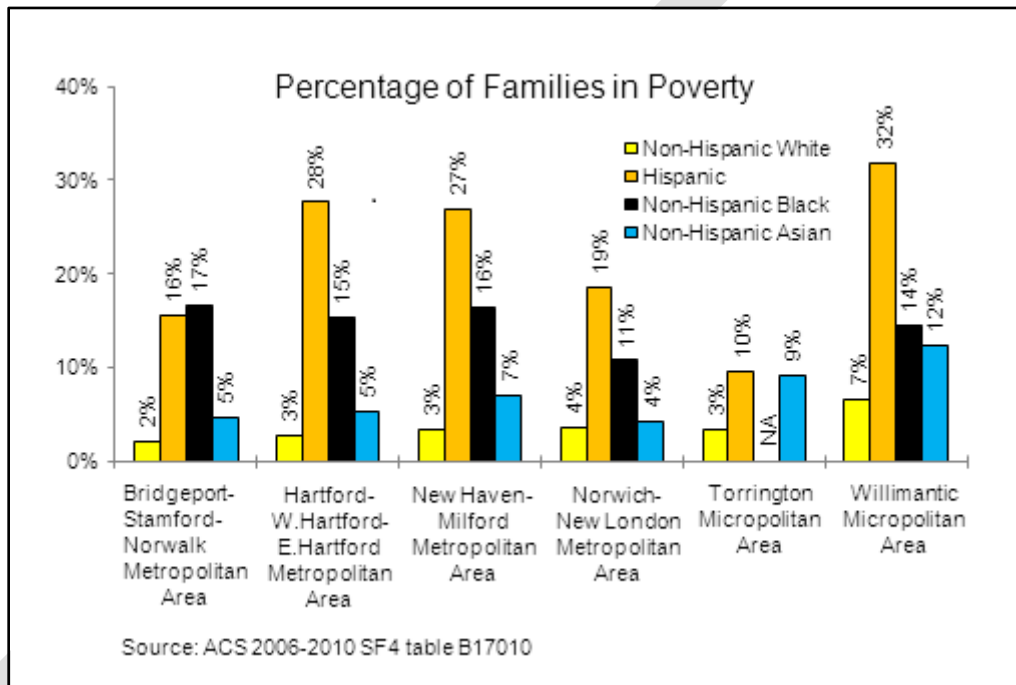
²⁸ Based on 2013 Fair Market Rent data from HUD, which utilizes American Community Survey 5-yr 2006-2010 and 1-yr 2010 data. See *Final FY 2013 Fair Market Rent Documentation System*, <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/fmr/fmrs/docsys.html&data=fmr13>.

²⁹ American Community Survey 2010 1-yr tables B19001H and B19001D.

³⁰ American Community Survey 2010 1-yr tables B19001B and B19001I.

³¹ Based on a minimum household income of \$48,304 (*2013 Out of Reach*) and aggregate income data from ACS 2010.”

Most of the state’s affordable housing is concentrated in a small number of communities, and those communities largely have the highest concentrations of people of color. Residential segregation of households of color in Connecticut also results in isolation in high-poverty neighborhoods. The table below indicates the percentage of families in poverty by race and ethnicity in different areas of the state. African Americans and Hispanics are two to nine times more likely to be living in poverty as compared to Whites. In the New Haven-Milford metropolitan area the poverty rate for Hispanic families is 9 times that of Whites and poverty for Black families is 4 times the White rate.



Another emerging demographic trend is the aging of the state’s population. From 2005 to 2010, the population of people under 45 decreased by nearly 9% and the number of residents under 25 decreased by more than 15%.³² Meanwhile, the number of residents over 65 increased by 8% and the number of residents between ages 45 and 64 increased by 11%.³³ According to the estimates of the Connecticut State Data Center, by 2020 people age 65 and older will constitute approximately 18% of the population and that figure will rise to 22% by 2030.³⁴ At the same time, from 1990 to 2010, Connecticut lost over a quarter (28%) of its 25-to 34-year-old population, the third highest percentage decrease in the nation.³⁵ The U.S. Census Bureau projects this lower percentage of working-age residents to continue through 2030.

³⁴ Connecticut State Data Center. CtSDC: 2010 to 2030 Population Projections – State-Wide Stand-Alone.

³⁴ Connecticut State Data Center. CtSDC: 2010 to 2030 Population Projections – State-Wide Stand-Alone.

³⁴ Connecticut State Data Center. CtSDC: 2010 to 2030 Population Projections – State-Wide Stand-Alone.

³⁵ 2010 Census data.

This combination of demographic and economic trends is likely to put considerable pressure on Connecticut's rental housing market. Economically, the Employee Benefit Research Institute reports that more than half of all current retirees have less than \$25,000 in savings. Meanwhile, both the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University report that Millennials are saddled with average debt of \$24,300 and median debt of \$13,100, respectively. Demand for affordable housing is likely to increase from both of these sources, and, combined with high gasoline and heating oil costs, many observers believe those two groups will seek smaller, denser, more affordable, energy-efficient homes in locations walkable to shopping and services and, if possible, close to mass transit. The Joint Center also noted the likelihood of heightened demand for such housing in its just-released State of the Nation's Housing 2013: "This affordability gap is exacerbated by higher income households competing with low-income renters for affordable units as well as by widespread structural inadequacy in affordable housing stock."³⁶

Affordable Housing and Disability

The landmark 1999 Supreme Court decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.* affirmed that the unjustified segregation of individuals with disabilities is an illegal form of discrimination. Since then states have worked to desegregate living areas and increase the integrated housing opportunities for individuals with disabilities who are transitioning from, or at serious risk of entering, institutions and other restrictive, segregated settings.

People with disabilities may have multiple physical, mental, and/or developmental conditions that constrain their possibility of obtaining suitable housing. For example, a person with mobility impairments may require a single level home, special equipment to aid them in carrying out daily functions, or even a regular home nurse or family member to care for them. These needs, in turn, require different housing solutions, such as greater accessibility or multiple bedrooms for live-in assistance.

In Connecticut, income and employment status also correlates with disability status. Unemployment and poverty are significantly more prevalent among people with disabilities. Specifically, 41% of the population with disabilities has an income below 200% of the poverty threshold, which in 2010 ranged from \$11,344 for a single individual under age 65 to \$22,113

³⁶ <http://nlihc.org/article/state-nation-s-housing-report-shows-growth-rental-market-and-increase-severely-cost-burdened>

for a married couple with two children under age 18.³⁷ The median earnings for people with disabilities are about 60% of the median earnings for people without disabilities.³⁸

Affordable Housing and Homelessness

As measured in Connecticut's 2013 Point in Time (PIT) Count, 4,506 individuals in 3,847 households were counted as homeless, either unsheltered or living in Connecticut's homeless shelters and transitional housing programs on a single night in 2013. Of this total, 814 were minor children.³⁹ Approximately three times this number will enter and exit homelessness each year. Episodes of homelessness put tremendous pressure on social and familial networks, disrupt families, and interfere with access to health care services, education and employment. The causes of homelessness are complex and varied. With immediate intervention, some households may be prevented from entering homelessness, or may be able to quickly exit homelessness into permanent housing. For others, access to affordable housing may increase their economic and household stability. Still others will also require short or long-term assistance to access health services, employment training, and help with activities of daily living. The state's Reaching Home Campaign has established projected housing and support needs for Connecticut's homeless populations, detailed on the following table.⁴⁰

Estimated needs for housing assistance, by type, among targeted households who will experience homelessness (unless prevented)	Families with Children	Chronically Homeless Adults without Children	Other Homeless Adults^ (Vets + prevention of chronic homelessness)	Total Targeted Households
Prevention Strategies	520	-	240	760
Rapid Re-Housing	920	-	160	1,080
Deeply Affordable Housing	360	-	310	670
Permanent Supportive Housing	590	1,770	3,410	5,770
<i>Estimated need that could be met through turnover of existing supportive housing units</i>	<i>(400)</i>	<i>(800)</i>	<i>(1,230)</i>	<i>(2,420)</i>

³⁷ Rodriguez *Ibid.*

³⁸ Rodriguez *Ibid.*

³⁹ Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, "Point in Time Count" 2013

⁴⁰ Partnership for Strong Communities, "Opening Doors Connecticut: Framework for Preventing and Ending Homelessness." 2011. This table was developed using 2011 data, and is currently in the process of being updated.

Need for New Supportive Housing	190	970	2,180	3,340
Estimated Total Target Households Needing Housing Assistance 2012-2016	2,390	1,770	4,120	8,280
Estimated Persons in these households	6,840	1,770	4,120	12,730

Observations

In the absence of sufficient affordable housing and rental assistance opportunities throughout the state, low-income families often pay unaffordable rents for substandard housing in segregated neighborhoods with concentrated poverty and insufficient access to employment opportunities, highly performing schools and other public amenities. Such marginalization has been linked to poor school performance and greater health problems, especially asthma and obesity. Equally troubling, it has resulted in multi-generational poverty and permanent concentrations of poverty and disinvestment.

According to the US Census Bureau, in 2012 Connecticut towns and cities authorized 4,669 new housing units, which reverses the downward trend seen in 2011 – which had a six-decade low of 3,173 units. This improvement reflects Connecticut’s long-standing, and recently renewed, dedication to housing priorities. Notably, Connecticut is only one of four states (MA, NY, and HI) that has state-financed housing. The state-sponsored housing portfolio, which comprises properties wholly or partially funded with state funds, provides housing for some of the state’s lowest income residents. However, as the first state-sponsored units were occupied in 1948 and are now nearing the end of their useful life and more recently constructed units have been undermined as a result of neglect and underinvestment during prior administrations, a significant portion of the state-sponsored housing portfolio requires significant rehabilitation or, in some cases, total redevelopment. While there are approximately 13,950 units in the state-sponsored housing portfolio, only approximately 82% are occupied due to deteriorating conditions and there are over 9,000 households on waiting lists for these units.⁴¹ There are another 12,000 households on waiting lists for other affordable housing developments.⁴²

While low-income individuals and families need affordable housing, more units alone will not be sufficient to transform their lives. The affordable housing units that are needed include

⁴¹ Partnership for Strong Communities, Connecticut Fair Housing Center and DECD “Affordable Housing in Connecticut” prepared for the Interagency Council on Affordable Housing, August 14, 2012.

⁴² Partnership for Strong Communities, Connecticut Fair Housing Center and DECD “Affordable Housing in Connecticut” prepared for the Interagency Council on Affordable Housing, August 14, 2012.

more affordable housing units that are located strategically to reduce racial segregation, increase the degree of integration among households with different incomes levels and disability, be accessible and accommodating to disability and independent living needs where appropriate, provide transit-oriented residential opportunities suitable for workers, and should offer access to jobs, education, shopping, services and affordable transit. Low-income individuals and families in Connecticut, like all residents, also need affordable housing that strengthens communities and enables the state's economy to grow more robust and more competitive.

This needs assessment demonstrates that although Connecticut has dramatically increased its investment in affordable housing projects in recent years, there is still a great need for affordable housing, especially for affordable housing serving the state's low-income individuals and families. The data shows that the needs are even greater for certain populations, specifically Hispanic, Black, and single-parent families. However, with Governor Malloy's recent prioritization of housing policy, a new influx of state funding, and a centralized department to implement coordinated programming, the State has a new opportunity to catalyze and invest in sustainable solutions to meet the housing needs of all state residents.