

Housing and Municipal Budgets: Figures, Facts and Phenomena



Connecticut towns are aging. They have fewer volunteers, shoppers, young homebuyers, young teachers, and young municipal and

commercial workers. The reason? Very often, those people can't afford to live in those towns. **What does the future look like?**

In the short term, towns will seek to expand property tax revenues and feel pressures to develop property for residential and commercial uses. They will compete for scarce workers, need shoppers to support the commercial sector of their grand lists, confront foreclosure and homelessness, and have trouble passing budgets as the electorate ages.

In the long term, towns with fewer homebuyers and larger elderly populations will see property values fall, grand lists shrink, social service costs rise, merchants seeking shoppers, difficulty in passing budgets and labor shortages increase.

Can housing creation be a net plus for a town? Can the lack of a full range of housing options really hurt a town? What is the real equation on costs vs. revenues? Will towns struggle in the future if they fail to plan effective housing resources?

These are all questions that have good, if not definite, answers. To that end, here are some numbers that can help.

More information available at www.HOMEConnecticut.org

41% - The percentage of Connecticut teachers 50+-years-old who will need to be replaced in the next decade.

17% - The projected decline in Connecticut public school enrollment from the 2004-'05 height through 2020-'21.

128 of 193 - The number of public school districts (66%) that between the 2006/7 and 2007/8 school years had no growth or falling enrollment in grades 1 to 12.

100+ - The number of Connecticut municipalities with volunteer fire departments.

\$3 to \$4 million - The approximate amount a typical town must spend to create a career fire department if it can't find volunteers.

31 of 169 - The number of Connecticut municipalities where 10% or more of the housing stock is considered affordable by the state.

13% - The increase in family homelessness in Connecticut in 2008.

30% - The approximate percentage of Connecticut households that rent.

24% - The percentage of renting households that earn less than 50% of median income and spend more than half of it on housing.

9.2% - The average decline in median sales prices of Connecticut homes in 2008.

60% - How much higher Connecticut housing costs are compared to the national average (7th highest median monthly rent payment [\$886] and the 5th highest median monthly mortgage payment [\$1,870]).

30.1% - Connecticut's highest-in-the-nation percentage loss of 25-34-year-olds between 1990 and 2006.

\$1,960 to \$11,554 - Local property taxes paid by a household in a new home, based on earnings and the home that household can afford.