



Rural Land Rural Towns Conference

2019



CONTEXT



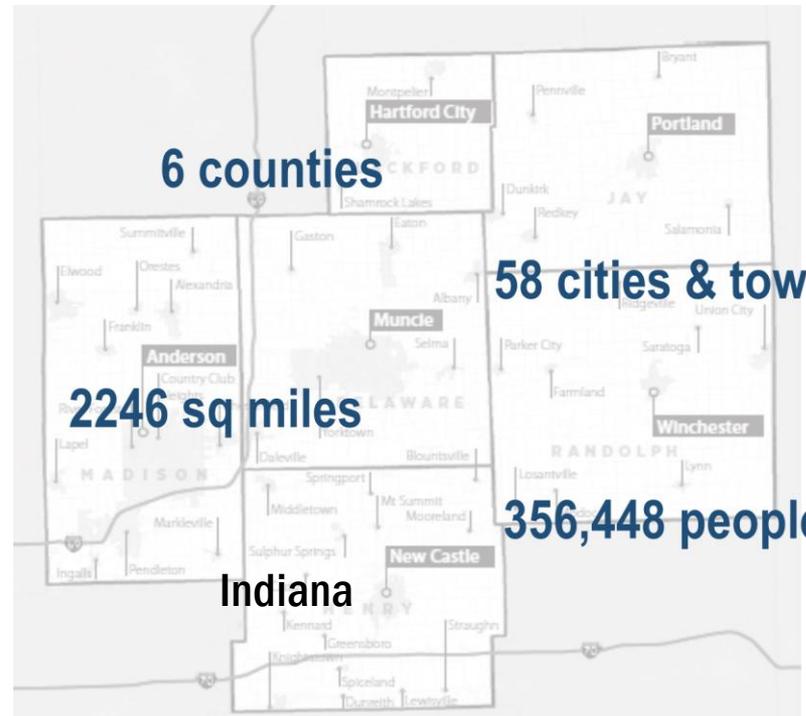
Connecticut



THE STURBRIDGE TOWNSHIPS



Community
Heart & Soul™



6 counties

58 cities & towns

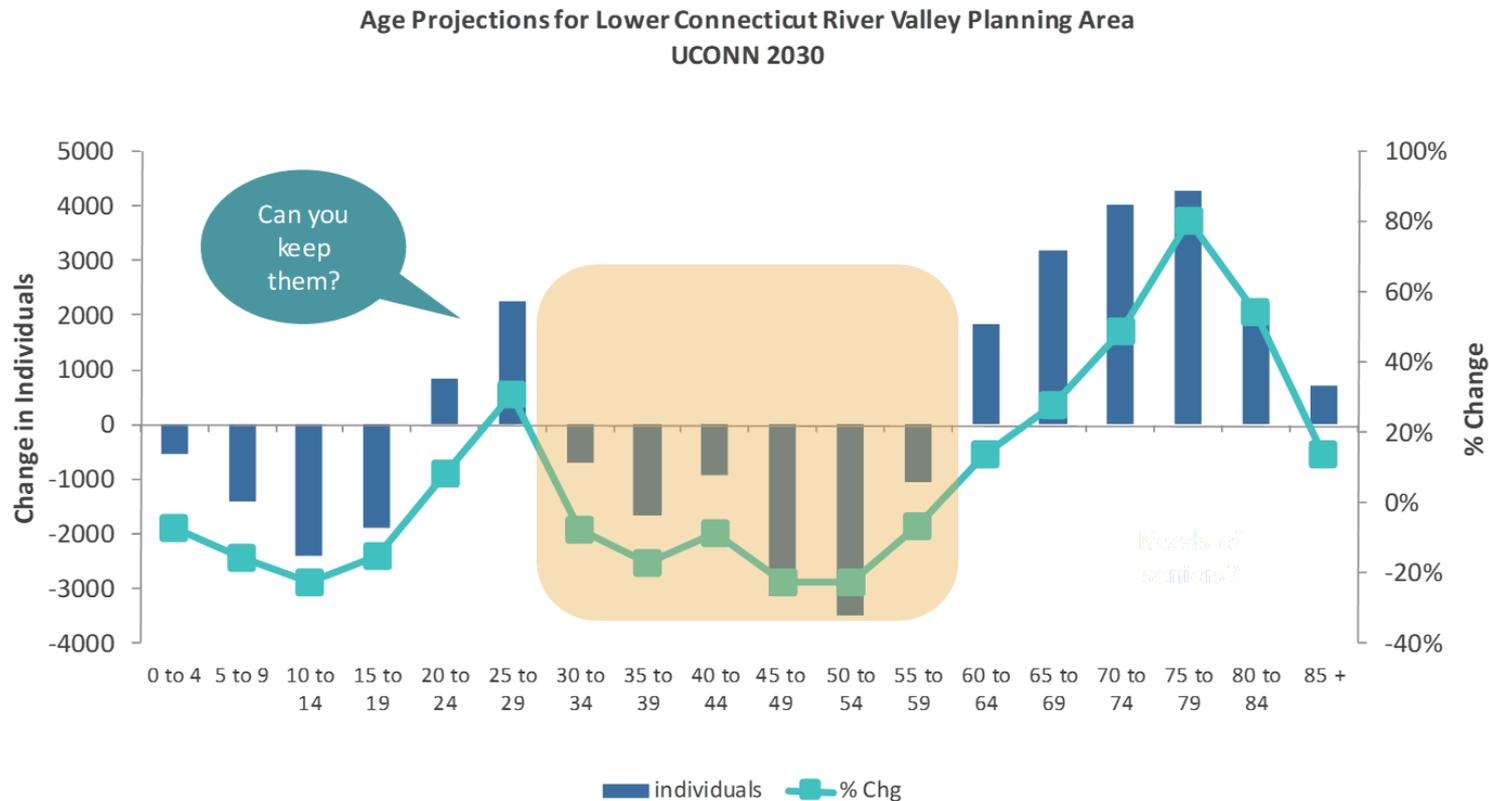
2246 sq miles

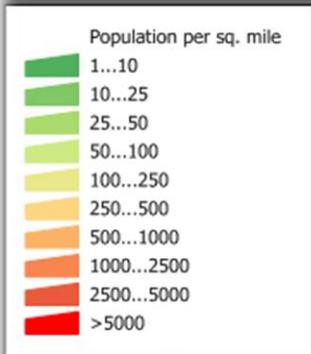
356,448 people

Indiana

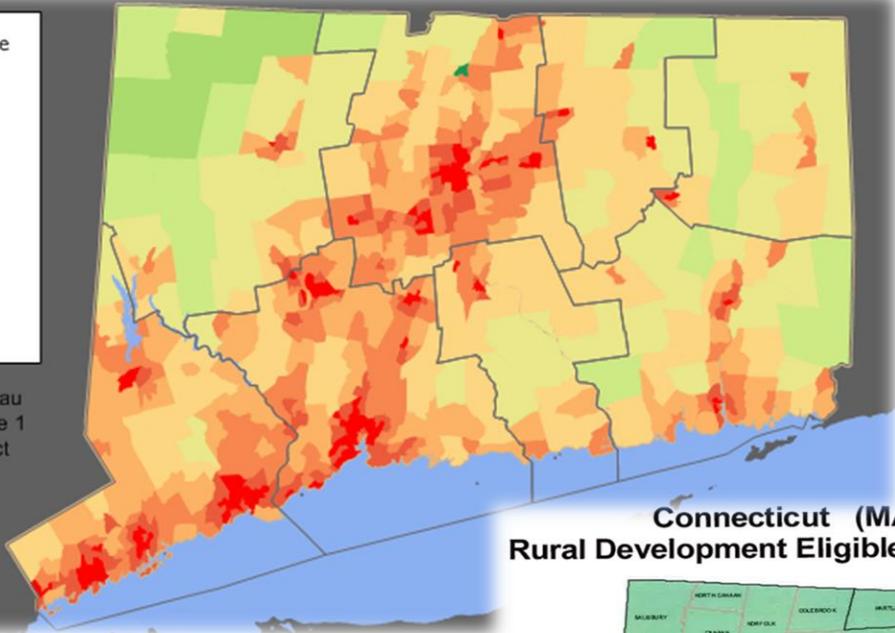
The issues – not going to dwell on them

- Demography
- Business model of local government in New England (property taxes)
- General Connecticut economic conditions
- Others?

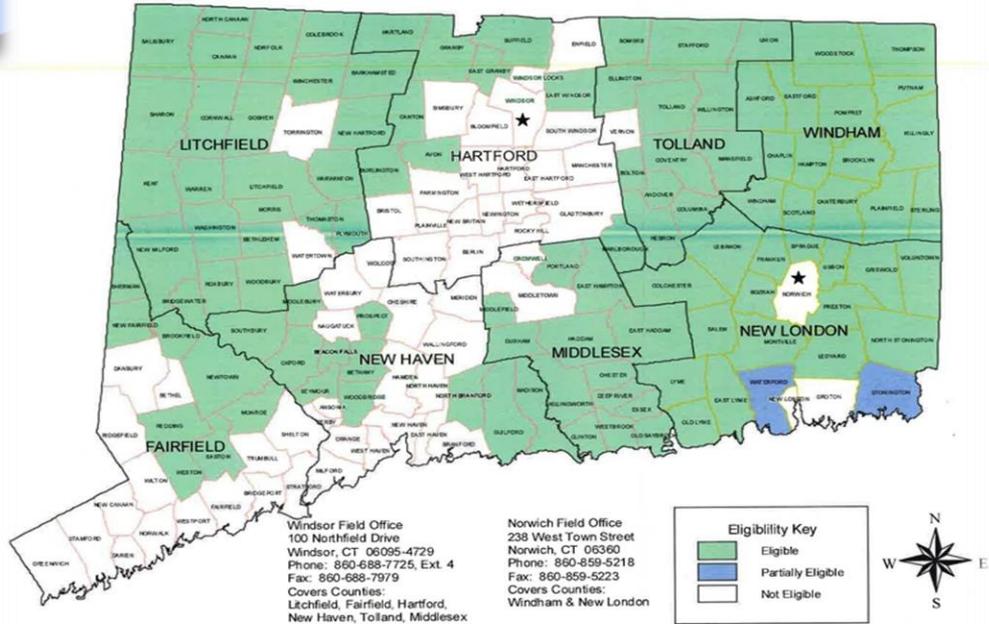




Source: U.S. Census Bureau
Census 2010 Summary File 1
population by census tract



**Connecticut (MACT/RI Jurisdiction)
Rural Development Eligible Areas For Housing Programs**



USDA/RD SRC 9/03

Rural Connecticut

One size won't fit all

66

40% OF
MILLENNIALS
WOULD LIKE
TO LIVE IN AN
URBAN AREA IN
THE FUTURE.

99



Viewed another way:

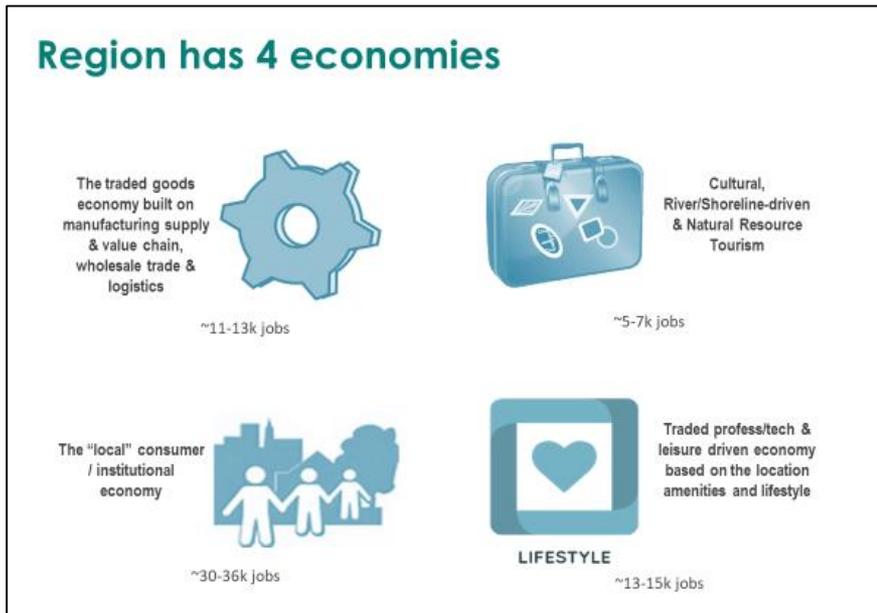
60% prefer not to

Fact: Only 13% live in downtowns
(city reported analysis is often
metro level data not urban center)

Fact: 22% are 1st or 2nd
generation immigrants largely
concentrated in urban centers

Be the best version of who you are

- Understand who you really are economically
- Listen to those (millennials) who chose to live here or stay here about why



Survey showing that 37 percent of millennials want to live in cities and 36 percent prefer the suburbs, while 23 percent say they do want to live in small towns or rural areas.

- University of Illinois Extension, 2017

In reality, just one quarter of Millennial homeowners live in an urban area. Nearly half of all Millennials live in suburban communities, with eight in 10 adults under 25 living outside an urban core.

- Zillow Housing Buyer Study, 2016

Change the narrative to an authentic positive storyline

Tourism? Think Wallet Share

Having amenities that members of the community want requires people

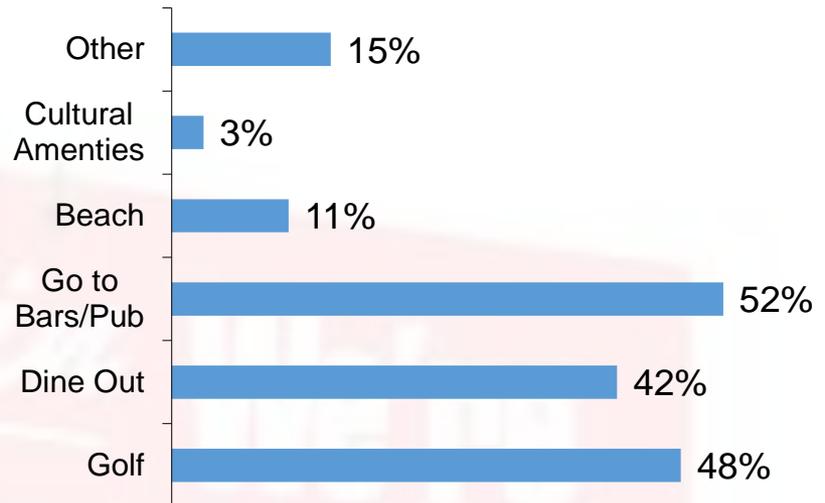
Two ways to do that:

- More housing
- Tourism

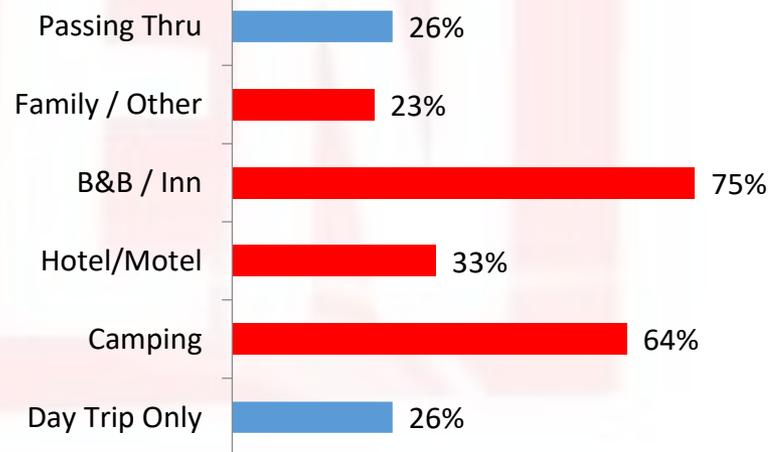
Wallet Share is the concept of trying to grab all potential expenditures associated with a trip: food, lodging, gifts, activities etc.

Think of it as an “experience”

**South County Saltwater Fishing
Other Activities During Overnight Stays**

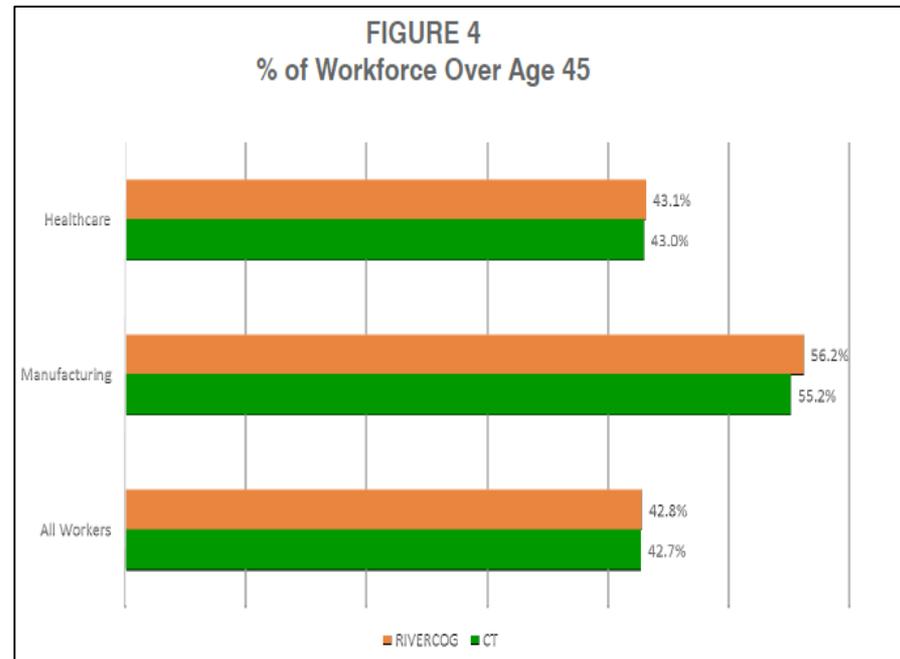
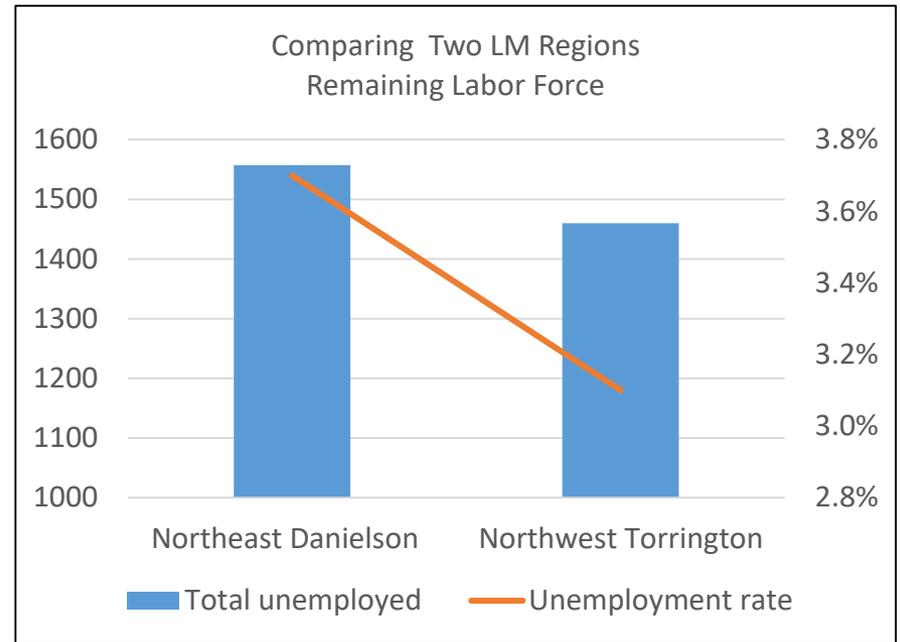


**Sturbridge Region
Percent of Visitors Doing More Than
1 Activity by Type of Visit or Accommodation**



Grow your own talent

- Tight labor market but aging pool of workers
- It's easier to keep than recruit
 - Create stickiness as early as possible
- Help people create their own jobs
 - Rules around home-based businesses, access to broadband etc



Encourage creative solutions

- Start small
- It may be necessary to combine business ideas into one store for them to be viable
- Creative reuse with minimal improvements that are reflective of local economics
- Don't let zoning & parking get in the way



Think regionally

(or maybe micropolitan-ly)

- Development expertise
 - Zoning
 - Workforce
 - Small business
- Linking regional town center or hub to broader area
- Others?

