
LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY COG 2023 EQUITY PROFILE



DataHaven

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Compiled by DataHaven in August 2023.

This report is designed to inform local-level efforts to improve community well-being and racial equity. This is version 2.0 of the DataHaven region equity profile, which DataHaven has published for all 169 towns and several regions of Connecticut. Please contact DataHaven with suggestions for version 3.0 of this report.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout most of the measures in this report, there are important differences by race/ethnicity and neighborhood that reflect differences in access to resources and other social needs. Wherever possible, data are presented with racial/ethnic breakdowns, as defined by existing federal data collection standards. However, for smaller groups or more detailed breakdowns, some values may not be available or have less reliable data. In these cases, values are marked as “N/A,” not available.

Federal and statewide approaches to data collection, including small sample sizes, tend to hide disparities within certain population groups. This does not mean that a given population is not impacted by inequitable social conditions. DataHaven and other organizations often collect information on demographic characteristics besides race/ethnicity, and encourage further analysis and advocacy that can lead to more inclusive data reporting. Please contact DataHaven at info@ctdatahaven.org with questions about additional reporting that may be possible.

- Lower Connecticut River Valley COG is a region of **174,225 residents**, **19 percent** of whom are people of color. The region’s population has decreased by **less than 1 percent** since 2010.
- Of the region’s **72,251 households**, **75 percent** are homeowner households.
- **Thirty-one percent** of Lower Connecticut River Valley COG’s households are cost-burdened, meaning they spend at least 30 percent of their total income on housing costs.
- Among the region’s adults ages 25 and up, **44 percent** have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher.
- Lower Connecticut River Valley COG is home to **68,812 jobs**, with the largest share in the Health Care and Social Assistance sector.
- The median household income in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG is **\$86,876**.
- As of 2015, Lower Connecticut River Valley COG’s average life expectancy was **81.1 years**.
- **Sixty-two percent** of adults in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG say they are in excellent or very good health.
- In 2021, **61 people** in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG died of drug overdoses.
- **Eighty-eight percent** of adults in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG are satisfied with their area, and **59 percent** say their local government is responsive to residents’ needs.
- In the most recent state election, **68 percent** of registered voters in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG voted.
- **Forty-six percent** of adults in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG report having stores, banks, and other locations in walking distance of their home, and **48 percent** say there are safe sidewalks and crosswalks in their neighborhood.

OVERVIEW

For the purposes of this report, Lower Connecticut River Valley COG will be compared to Connecticut as a whole, as well as to Middletown whenever possible. Some indicators are only reliably available by county; in these cases, values will instead be shown for Middlesex County. Where necessary, data may be presented for a proxy region made up of public use microdata areas (PUMAs) designated by the US Census Bureau, including all of Middlesex County and parts of New London County. **Charts and tables based on these proxy areas are noted as such in their titles.**

Lower Connecticut River Valley COG is made up of the following towns (with 2020 populations):

- Chester (3,749)
- Clinton (13,185)
- Cromwell (14,225)
- Deep River (4,415)
- Durham (7,152)
- East Haddam (8,875)
- East Hampton (12,717)
- Essex (6,733)
- Haddam (8,452)
- Killingworth (6,174)
- Lyme (2,352)
- Middlefield (4,217)
- Middletown (47,717)
- Old Lyme (7,628)
- Old Saybrook (10,481)
- Portland (9,384)
- Westbrook (6,769)

The proxy study area is made up of the following locations (with 2020 populations):

- PUMA 0900700 (Middlesex County) (164,245)
- PUMA 0901101 (132,357)

FIGURE 1: STUDY AREA

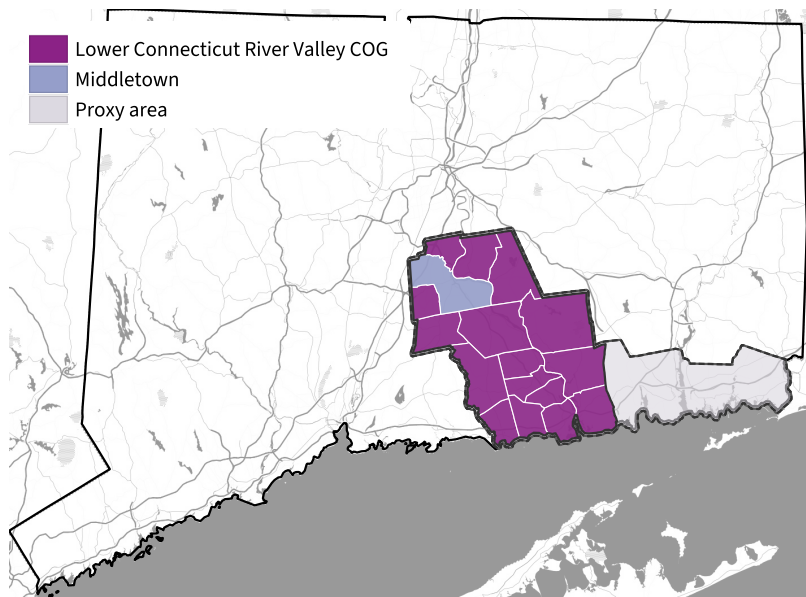


TABLE 1: ABOUT THE AREA

Indicator	Connecticut	Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	Middletown
Total population	3,605,944	174,225	47,717
Total households	1,397,324	72,251	20,089
Homeownership rate	66%	75%	54%
Housing cost burden rate	35%	31%	39%
Adults with less than a high school diploma	9%	5%	6%
Median household income	\$83,572	\$86,876	\$67,485
Poverty rate	10%	6%	11%
Adults 18–64 w/o health insurance	8%	5%	7%
Life expectancy (years, 2015)	80.3	81.1	78.7

DEMOGRAPHICS

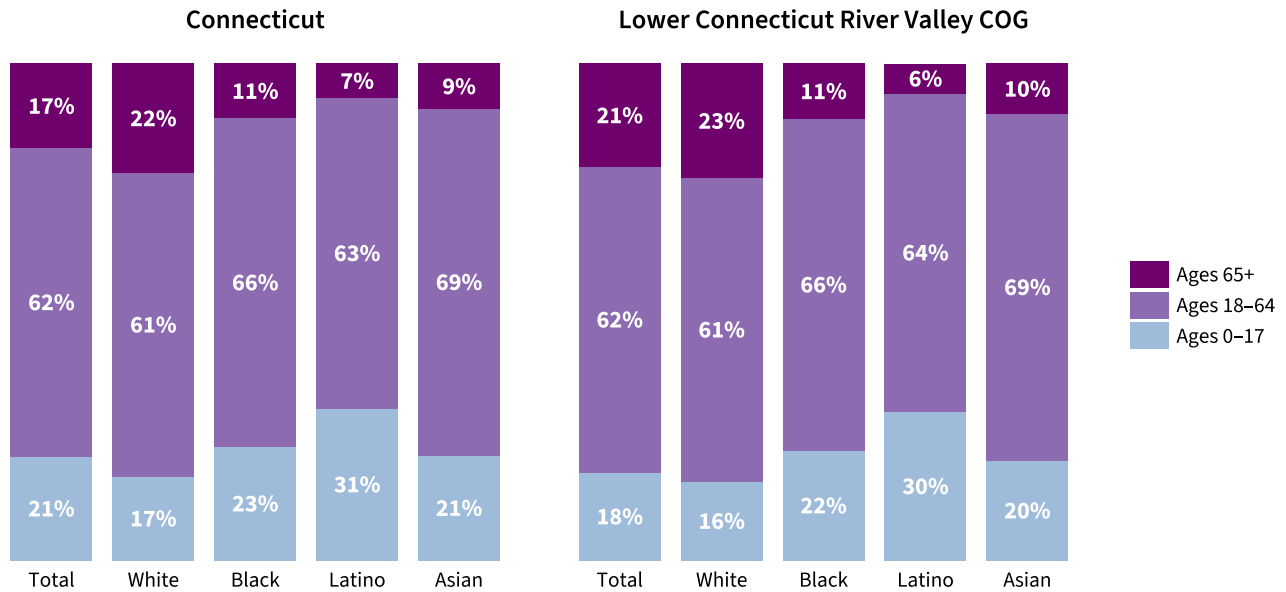
As of 2020, the population of Lower Connecticut River Valley COG is 174,225, including 29,946 children and 144,279 adults. Nineteen percent of Lower Connecticut River Valley COG’s residents are people of color, compared to 37 percent of residents statewide.

TABLE 2: POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2020

Area	White		Black		Latino		Asian		Other race/ethnicity	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Connecticut	2,279,232	63%	360,937	10%	623,293	17%	170,459	5%	172,023	5%
Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	141,003	81%	8,057	5%	12,298	7%	5,115	3%	7,752	4%
Middletown	30,342	64%	6,306	13%	5,637	12%	2,611	5%	2,821	6%

As Connecticut’s predominantly white Baby Boomers age, younger generations are driving the state’s increased racial and ethnic diversity. Black and Latino populations in particular skew much younger than white populations.

FIGURE 2: POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND AGE GROUP, 2021

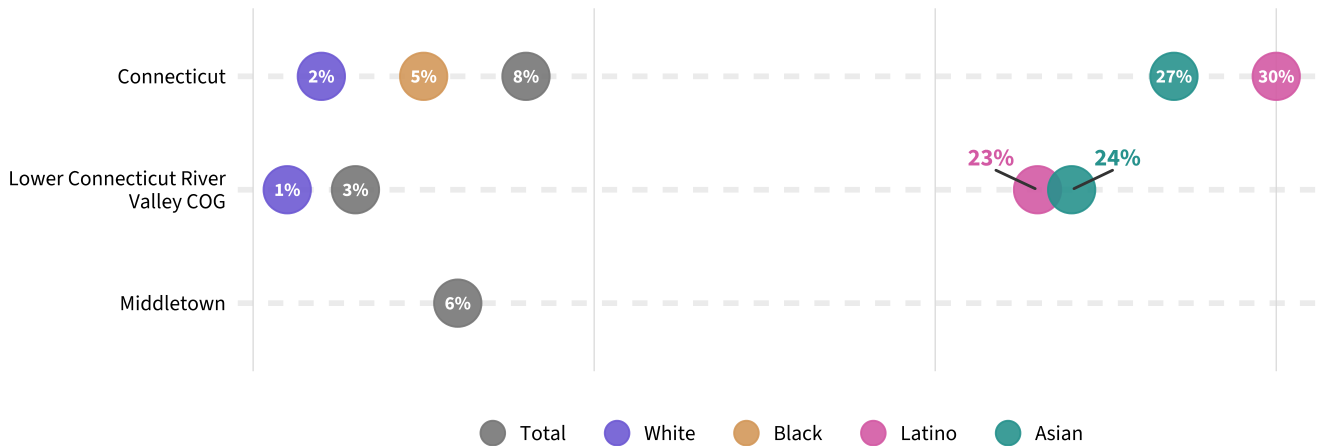


Note: Only groups with at least 50 residents in each age group shown.

About 13,651 residents of Lower Connecticut River Valley COG, or 8 percent of the population, are foreign-born. The largest number of immigrants living in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG were born in Poland, followed by China and Italy.

Linguistic isolation is characterized as speaking English less than “very well.” People who struggle with English proficiency may have difficulty in school, seeking health care, accessing social services, or finding work in a largely English-speaking community. As of 2021, 5,722 Lower Connecticut River Valley COG residents, or 3 percent of the population ages 5 and older, had limited English proficiency. Latinos and Asian Americans are more likely to have limited English proficiency than other racial/ethnic groups.

FIGURE 3: LINGUISTIC ISOLATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2021



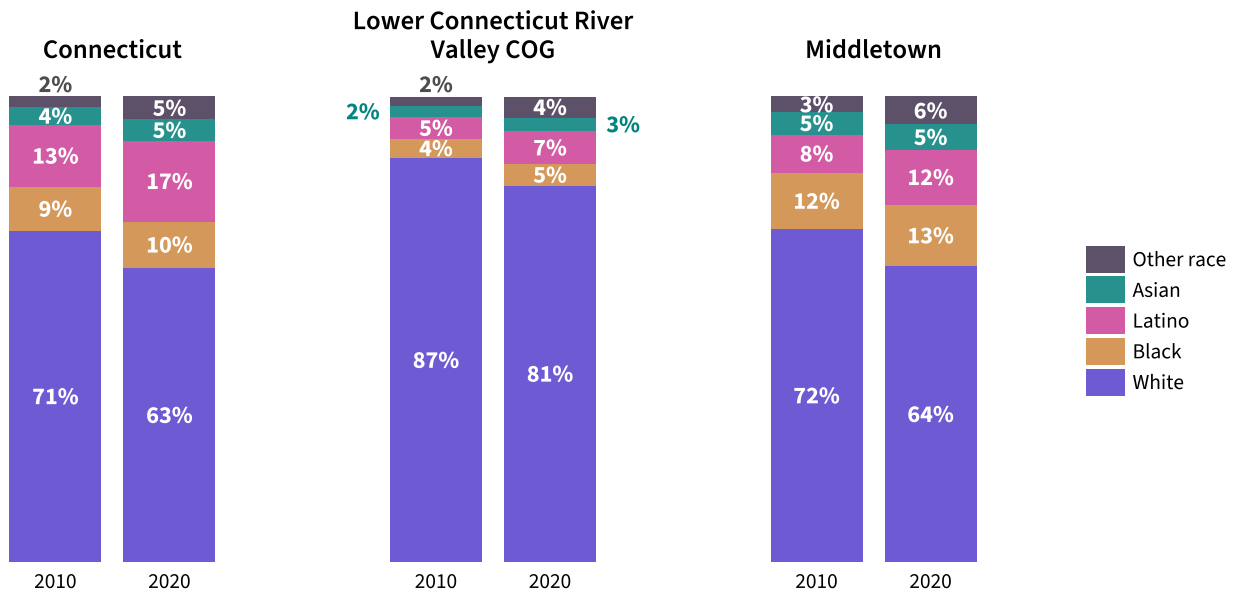
POPULATION CHANGE: 2020 CENSUS

The first set of data from the 2020 Census was released in August 2021, containing basic population counts by age and race/ethnicity. Between 2010 and 2020, Connecticut’s population was nearly stagnant. During the same period, Lower Connecticut River Valley COG shrank by 1,460 people, a less than 1 percent decrease. The number of white residents in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG shrank by 7.6 percent, while the non-white population grew by 44 percent.

TABLE 3: POPULATION AND POPULATION CHANGE BY AGE GROUP, 2010–2020

Area	Age	Population, 2010	Population, 2020	Change	Percent change
Connecticut	All ages	3,574,097	3,605,944	+31,847	+0.9%
	Children (0–17)	817,015	736,717	–80,298	–9.8%
	Adults (18+)	2,757,082	2,869,227	+112,145	+4.1%
Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	All ages	175,685	174,225	–1,460	–0.8%
	Children (0–17)	37,145	29,946	–7,199	–19.4%
	Adults (18+)	138,540	144,279	+5,739	+4.1%
Middletown	All ages	47,648	47,717	+69	+0.1%
	Children (0–17)	9,082	7,645	–1,437	–15.8%
	Adults (18+)	38,566	40,072	+1,506	+3.9%

FIGURE 4: SHARE OF POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2010–2020



HOUSING

Lower Connecticut River Valley COG has 72,251 households, of which 75 percent are homeowner households. Of the region’s 82,148 housing units, both occupied and vacant, 76 percent are in single-family buildings and 23 percent are in multifamily buildings.

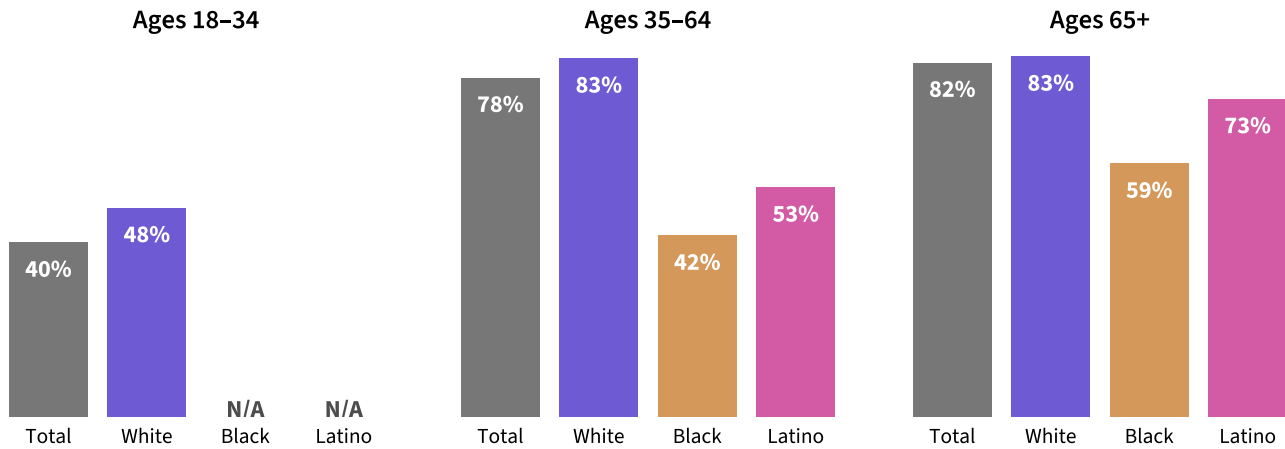
Homeownership rates vary by race/ethnicity. Purchasing a home is more attainable for advantaged groups because the process of purchasing a home has a long history of racially discriminatory practices that continue to restrict access to homeownership today. This challenge, coupled with municipal zoning dominated by single-family housing, results in de facto racial and economic segregation seen throughout Connecticut.

TABLE 4: HOMEOWNERSHIP RATE BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, 2021

Area	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian
Connecticut	66%	76%	41%	37%	60%
Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	75%	79%	40%	48%	53%
Middletown	54%	62%	35%	35%	33%

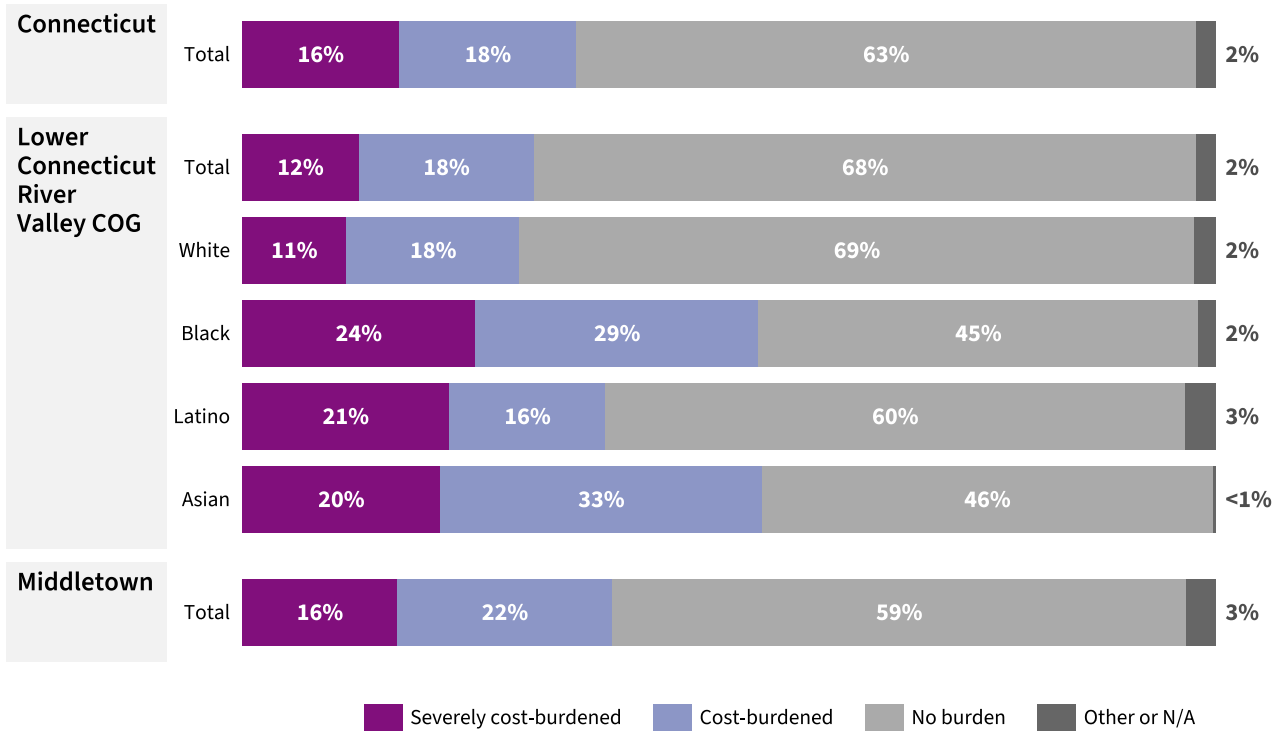
Younger adults are less likely than older adults to own their homes across several race/ethnicity groups. However, in most towns, younger white adults own their homes at rates comparable to or higher than older Black and Latino adults.

FIGURE 5: HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES BY AGE AND RACE/ETHNICITY OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY COG, 2021 (WITH PROXY AREA)



A household is cost-burdened when they spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing costs, and severely cost-burdened when they spend half or more of their income on housing costs. Housing costs continue to rise, due in part to municipal zoning measures that limit new construction to very few towns statewide. Cost-burden generally affects renters more than homeowners, and has greater impact on Black and Latino householders. Among renter households in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG, 48 percent are cost-burdened, compared to 24 percent of owner households.

FIGURE 6: HOUSING COST-BURDEN RATES BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2021 (WITH PROXY AREA)



Household overcrowding is defined as having more than one occupant per room. Overcrowding may increase the spread of illnesses among the household and can be associated with higher levels of stress. Increasing the availability of appropriately-sized affordable units helps to alleviate overcrowding.

TABLE 5: OVERCROWDED HOUSEHOLDS BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, 2021

Area	Total		White		Black		Latino		Asian	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Connecticut	27,078	2%	7,418	1%	4,868	3%	10,971	6%	3,445	6%
Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	566	1%	499	1%	<50	N/A	<50	N/A	<50	N/A
Middletown	209	1%	175	1%	<50	N/A	<50	N/A	<50	N/A

EDUCATION

Public school students in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG are served by 15 school districts for pre-kindergarten through grade 12, including 4 regional districts. During the 2022-23 school year, there were a total of 19,478 students enrolled in these districts, with 4,414 enrolled in the Middletown School District. Tracking student success measures is important since disparate academic and disciplinary outcomes are observed as early as preschool and can ultimately affect a person's long-term educational attainment and economic potential.

FIGURE 7: PUBLIC K-12 STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY RACE/ETHNICITY PER 100 STUDENTS, 2022-23

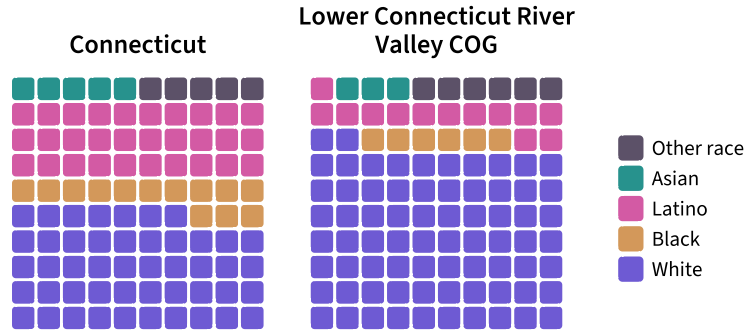
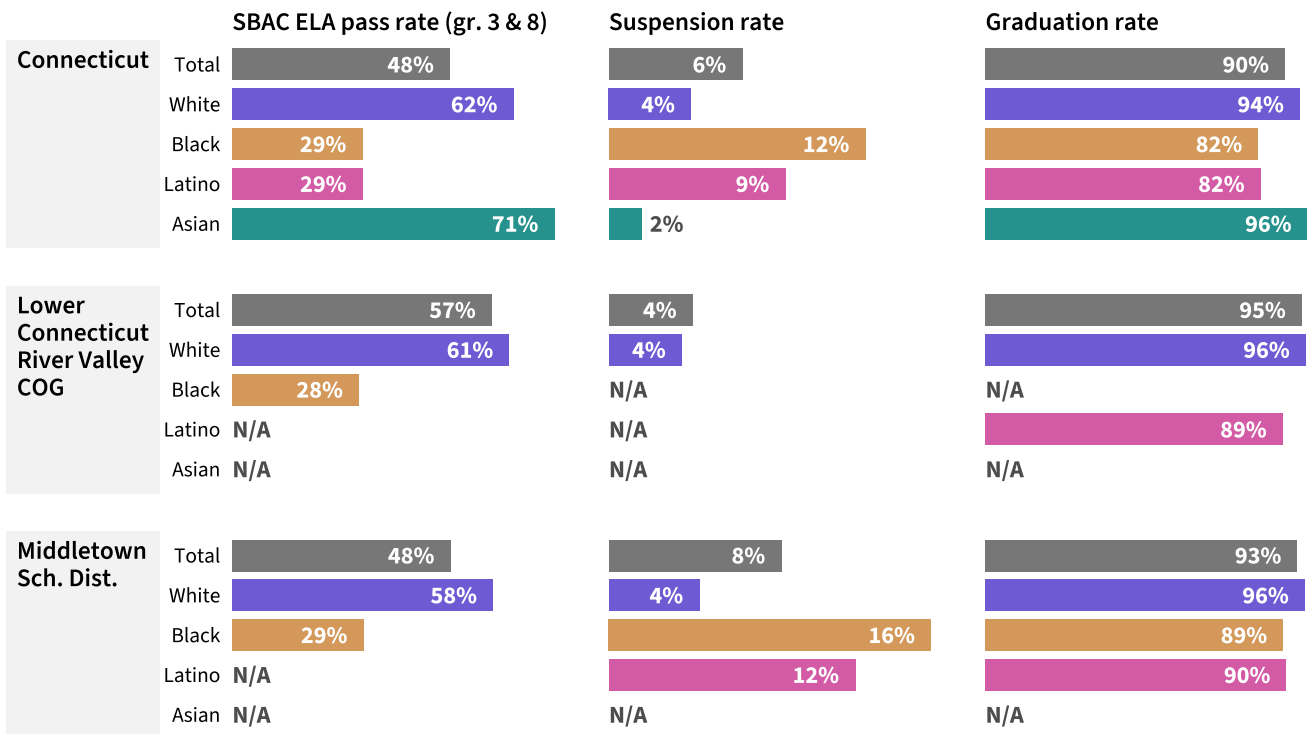
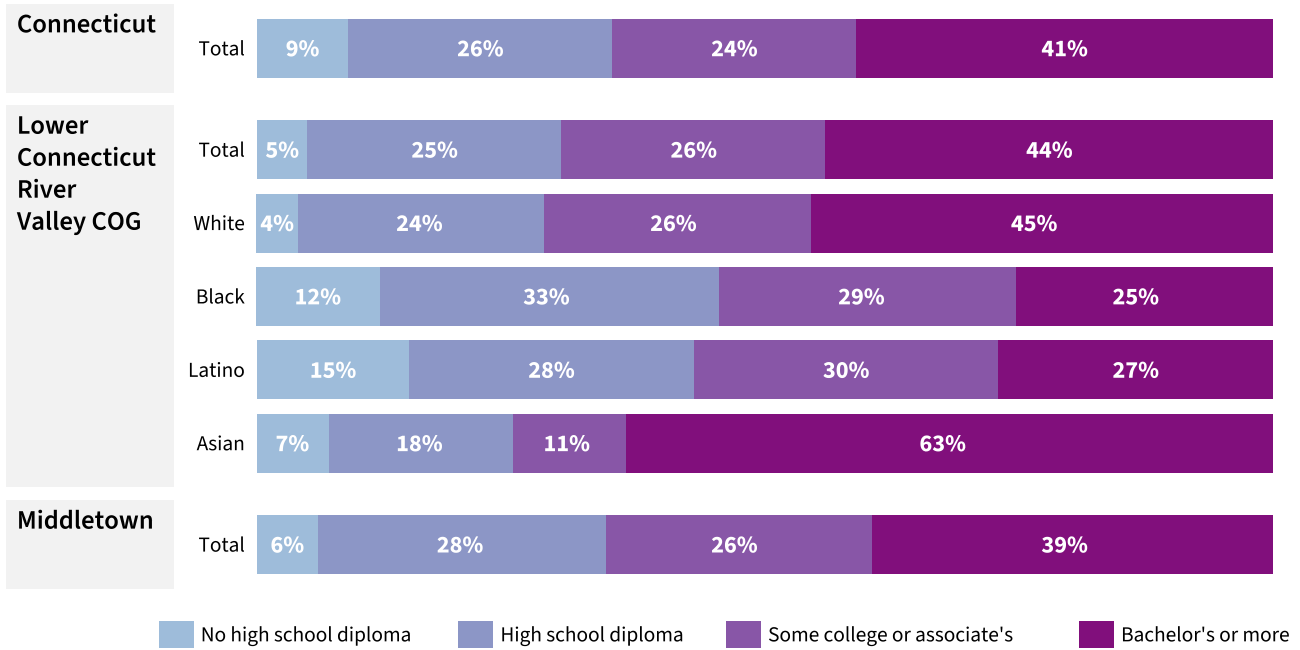


FIGURE 8: SELECTED ACADEMIC AND DISCIPLINARY OUTCOMES BY STUDENT RACE/ETHNICITY, 2020-21 AND 2021-22 SCHOOL YEARS



Adults with high school diplomas or college degrees have more employment options and considerably higher potential earnings, on average, than those who do not finish high school. In Lower Connecticut River Valley COG, 5 percent of adults ages 25 and over, or 6,356 people, lack a high school diploma; this share is 9 percent statewide and 6 percent in Middletown.

FIGURE 9: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SHARE OF ADULTS AGES 25 AND UP, 2021



ECONOMY

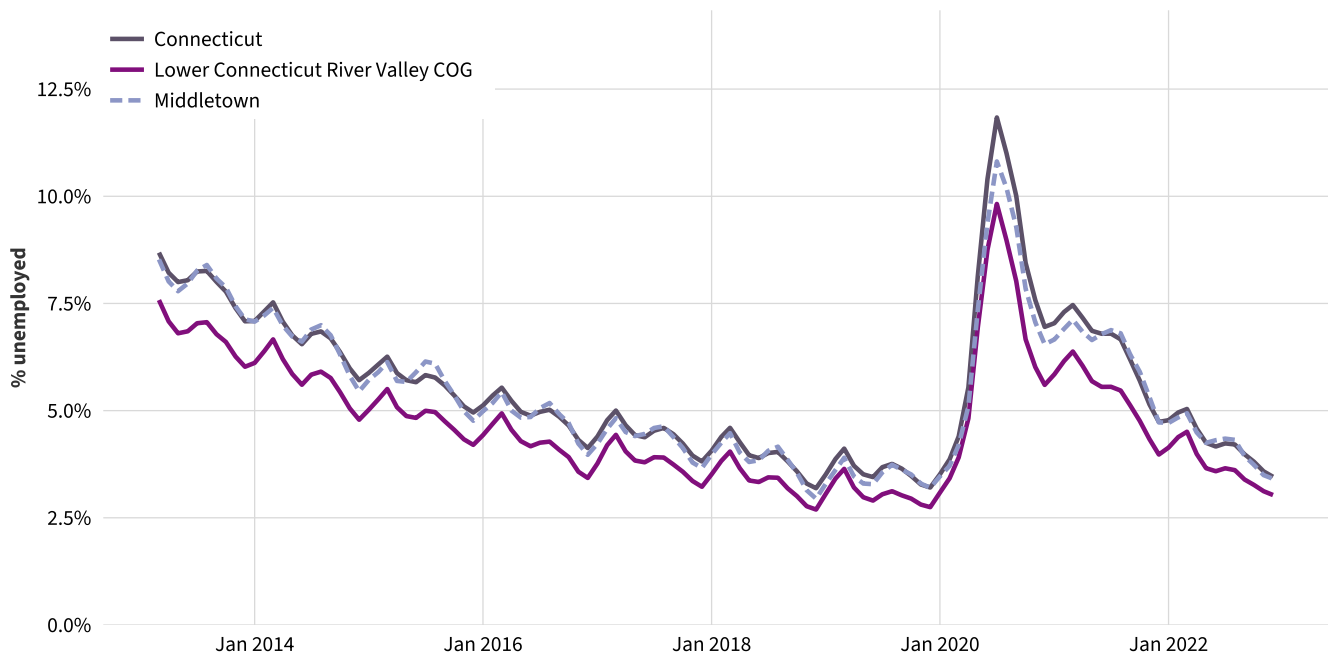
At the end of 2021, there were 68,812 total jobs based in towns in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG, with 27,554 of these based in Middletown. The Health Care and Social Assistance sector comprises the largest share of jobs in the region. While many industries saw major job losses early on in the COVID-19 pandemic, by early 2023 the number of jobs statewide had nearly caught back up to pre-pandemic counts.

TABLE 6: JOBS AND WAGES IN LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY COG’S 5 LARGEST SECTORS, 2021

Sector	Connecticut		Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	
	Total jobs	Avg annual pay	Total jobs	Avg annual pay
All Sectors	1,591,760	\$77,816	68,812	\$62,498
Health Care and Social Assistance	267,984	\$60,835	11,739	\$58,200
Manufacturing	152,860	\$89,604	8,528	\$84,699
Retail Trade	167,286	\$41,652	7,566	\$38,135
Accommodation and Food Services	111,160	\$26,767	5,614	\$26,166
Construction	59,323	\$77,099	3,528	\$75,566

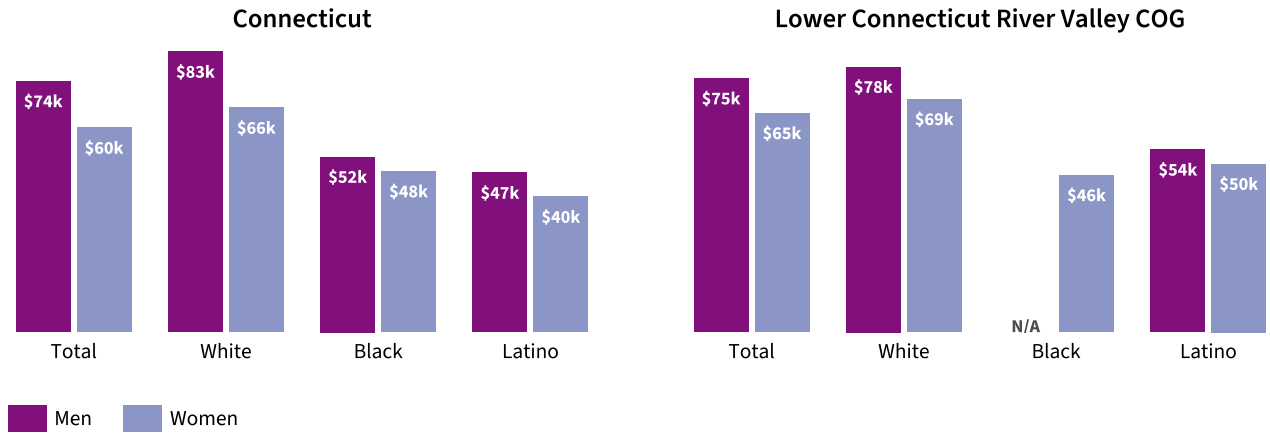
Nationwide, the onset of the pandemic led to a huge spike in unemployment rates, mirrored across Connecticut. At its peak in July 2020, Connecticut’s unemployment rate was 12.0 percent. As of December 2022, unemployment rates statewide and in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG were 3.2 percent and 2.9 percent, respectively

FIGURE 10: MONTHLY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 2013–2022, 3-MONTH ROLLING AVERAGE



Individual earnings vary by race/ethnicity, sex, and other characteristics. These can be measured comparing the differences in average earnings between groups. White workers and men often out-earn workers of color and women. These trends hold even when controlling for educational attainment and within many occupational groups.

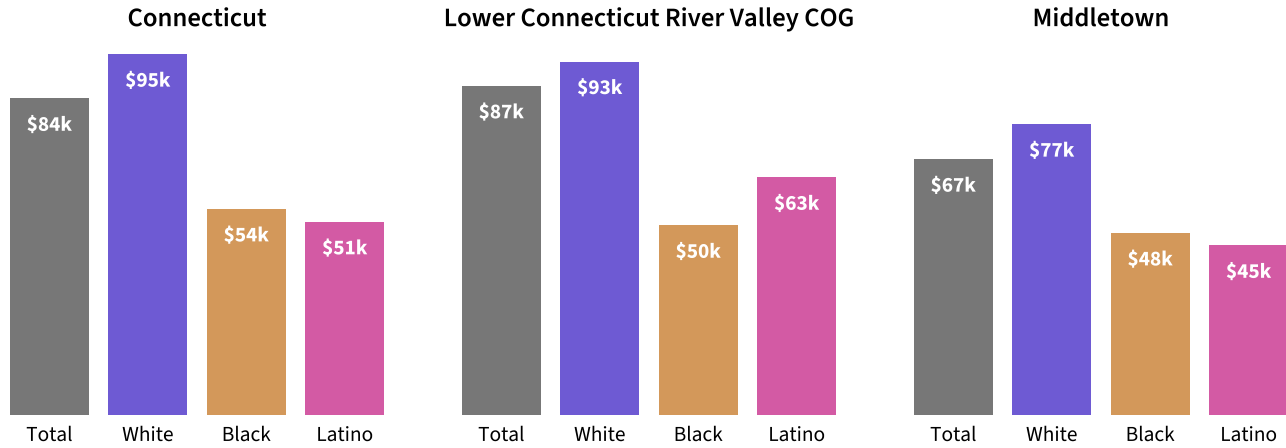
FIGURE 11: MEDIAN INCOME BY RACE/ETHNICITY AND SEX FOR FULL-TIME WORKERS AGES 25 AND OVER WITH POSITIVE INCOME, 2021 (WITH PROXY AREA)



INCOME & WEALTH

The median household income in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG is \$86,876, compared to \$83,572 statewide. Town-level median household incomes range from \$64,695 in Westbrook to \$133,652 in Durham. Racial disparities in outcomes related to education, housing, employment, and wages result in disparate household-level incomes and overall wealth. Households led by Black or Latino adults generally average lower incomes than white households.

FIGURE 12: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, 2021 (WITH PROXY AREA)



Between the Great Recession and the COVID-19 pandemic, average incomes have not kept pace with inflation over the past two decades. Connecticut’s median household income was \$83,572 in 2021; adjusted for inflation, this was \$1,365 lower than in 2000.

TABLE 7: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN LARGE TOWNS, 2000–2021, IN 2021 DOLLARS

Area	Income, 2000	Income, 2021	Change, 2000-2021	Percent change
Portland	\$99,661	\$107,034	+\$7,373	+7.4%
Clinton	\$95,230	\$98,836	+\$3,606	+3.8%
East Hampton	\$104,450	\$107,869	+\$3,419	+3.3%
Cromwell	\$95,531	\$94,468	-\$1,063	-1.1%
Connecticut	\$84,937	\$83,572	-\$1,365	-1.6%
Old Saybrook	\$98,806	\$95,795	-\$3,011	-3.0%
Middletown	\$74,271	\$67,485	-\$6,786	-9.1%

The Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP, or food stamps) is a program available to very low-income households earning less than 130 percent of the federal poverty guideline (\$26,500 for a family of four in 2021). Throughout the state, poverty and SNAP utilization rates are higher among Black and Latino households than white households.

With many of the safety measures early in the COVID-19 pandemic, having reliable, high-speed internet at home became a necessity for remote participation in school, expanded job opportunities, and telehealth. Statewide, Black and Latino residents are slightly more likely than average to live in a household without broadband access.

Access to a personal vehicle may also be considered a measure of financial security since reliable transportation plays a significant role in job access and quality of life. Vehicle access reduces the time a family may spend running errands or traveling to appointments, school, or work.

TABLE 8: SELECTED ECONOMIC RESOURCES BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2021

	Total		White		Black		Latino		Asian	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Population living below poverty level										
Connecticut	351,476	10%	139,246	6%	64,472	17%	127,775	21%	14,134	9%
Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	10,649	6%	7,097	5%	1,288	15%	1,459	13%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	4,843	11%	2,036	7%	1,197	17%	1,211	25%	N/A	N/A
Population without broadband internet at home										
Connecticut	269,234	8%	159,553	7%	38,465	10%	61,883	10%	5,334	3%
Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	13,894	8%	10,060	7%	1,725	21%	1,887	17%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	5,791	13%	3,403	12%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

TABLE 9: SELECTED HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC INDICATORS BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, 2021 (WITH PROXY AREA)

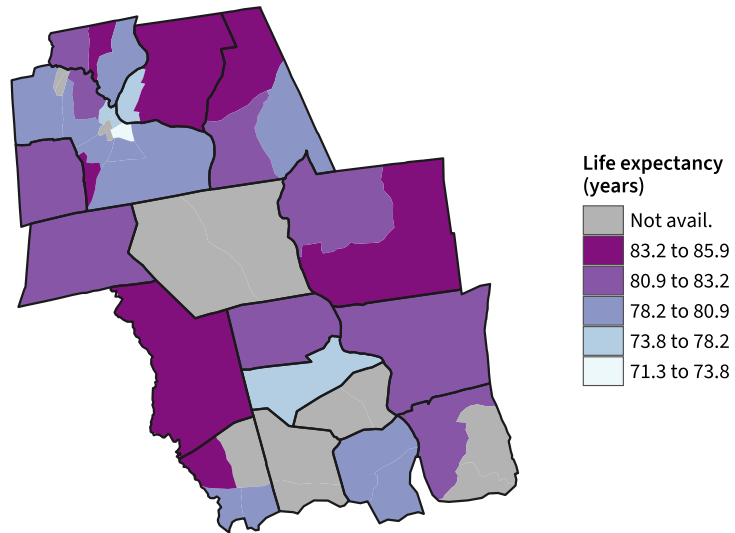
	Total		White		Black		Latino		Asian	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Households receiving food stamps/SNAP										
Connecticut	160,416	11%	62,974	6%	34,132	24%	57,456	30%	3,501	6%
Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	5,408	7%	3,564	6%	931	26%	765	20%	N/A	N/A
Middletown	2,913	15%	1,339	9%	931	32%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Households without a vehicle										
Connecticut	118,174	8%	53,628	5%	25,802	19%	31,312	16%	4,728	9%
Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	3,463	5%	2,312	4%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Middletown	1,926	10%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

HEALTH

The socioeconomic disparities described above tend to correlate with health outcomes. Factors such as stable housing, employment, literacy and linguistic fluency, environmental hazards, and transportation all impact access to care, physical and mental health outcomes, and overall quality of life. Income and employment status often drive differences in access to healthcare, the likelihood of getting preventive screenings as recommended, the affordability of life-saving medicines, and the ability to purchase other goods and services, including high-quality housing and nutritious food.

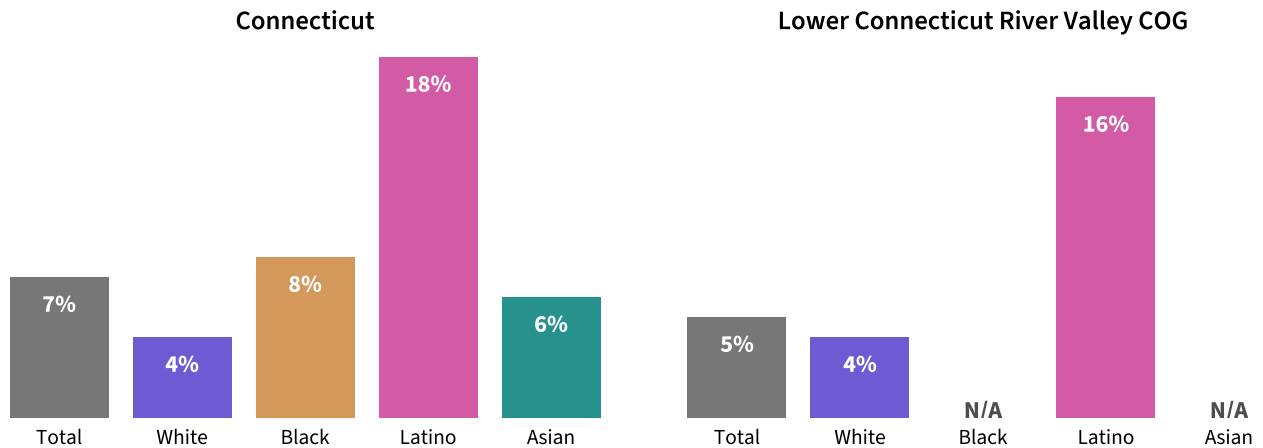
Life expectancy is a good proxy for overall health and well-being since it is the culmination of so many other social and health factors. The average life expectancy is 81.1 years in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG, and 80.3 years statewide. Across the region, this ranges from 77.9 years in Deep River to 84.5 in Killingworth.

FIGURE 13: LIFE EXPECTANCY, LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY COG BY CENSUS TRACT, 2015



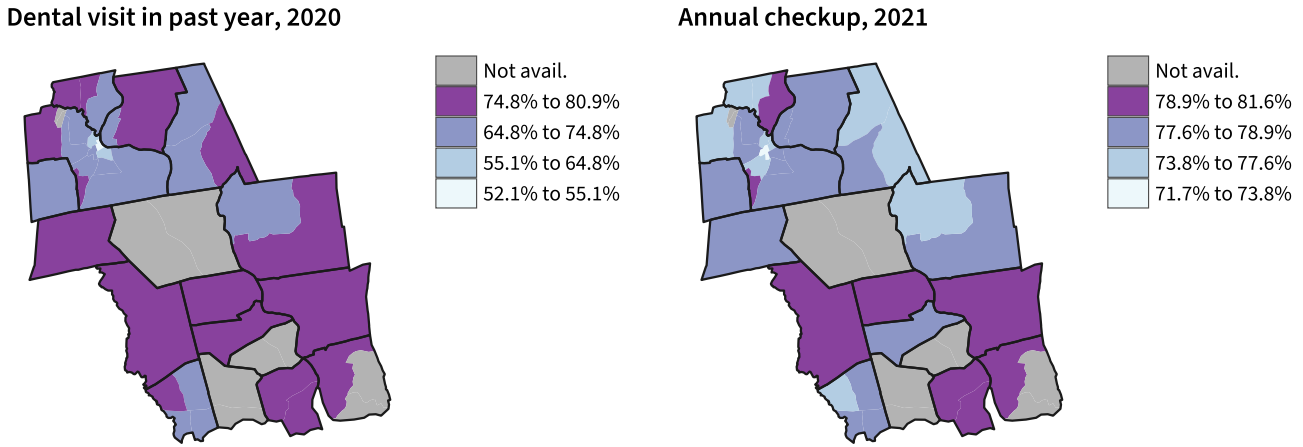
Health-related challenges begin with access to care. Due to differences in workplace benefits, income, and eligibility factors, Black and especially Latino people are less likely to have health insurance than white people.

FIGURE 14: UNINSURED RATE AMONG ADULTS AGES 19–64 BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2021



Preventive care can help counteract economic disadvantages, as a person’s health can be improved by addressing risk factors like hypertension and chronic stress early. Lack of affordable, accessible, and consistent medical care can lead to residents relying on expensive emergency room visits later on. Overall, 78 percent of the adults in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG had an annual checkup as of 2021, and 74 percent had had a dental visit in the past year.

FIGURE 15: PREVENTIVE CARE MEASURES, SHARE OF ADULTS BY CENSUS TRACT, LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY COG



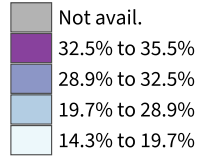
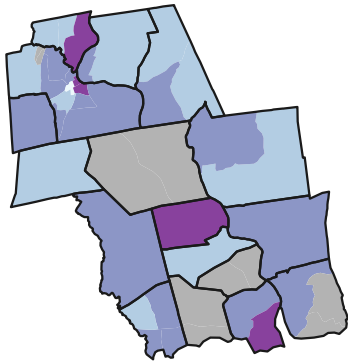
Throughout the state, people of color face greater rates and earlier onset of many chronic diseases and risk factors, particularly those that are linked to socioeconomic status and access to resources. For example, diabetes is much more common among older adults than younger ones, yet middle-aged Black adults in Connecticut have higher diabetes rates than white seniors.

FIGURE 16: SELECTED HEALTH RISK FACTORS, SHARE OF ADULTS, 2015–2021

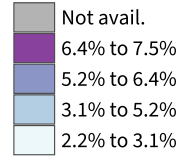
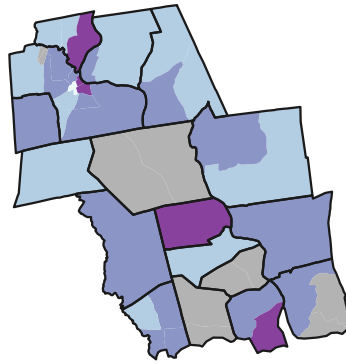
		Excellent/very good self-rated health	Food insecurity	Smoking	Obesity	Exercise 3+ days a week
Connecticut	Total	59%	14%	14%	29%	61%
	Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	62%	10%	14%	25%	65%
	White	62%	7%	14%	23%	67%
	Black	56%	22%	9%	30%	61%
	Latino	67%	23%	24%	36%	56%
Middletown	Total	56%	13%	18%	25%	59%

FIGURE 17: CHRONIC DISEASE PREVALENCE, SHARE OF ADULTS BY CENSUS TRACT, LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY COG

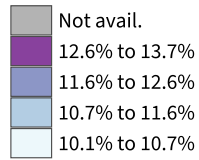
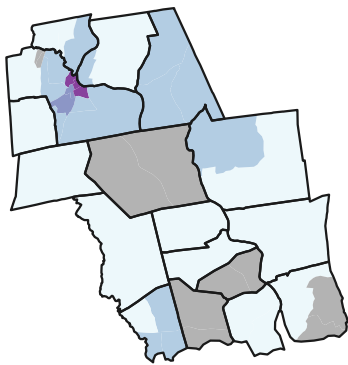
High blood pressure, 2021



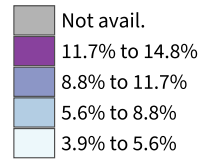
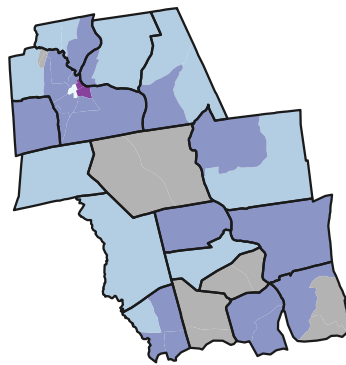
Coronary heart disease, 2021



Current asthma, 2021



Diabetes, 2021



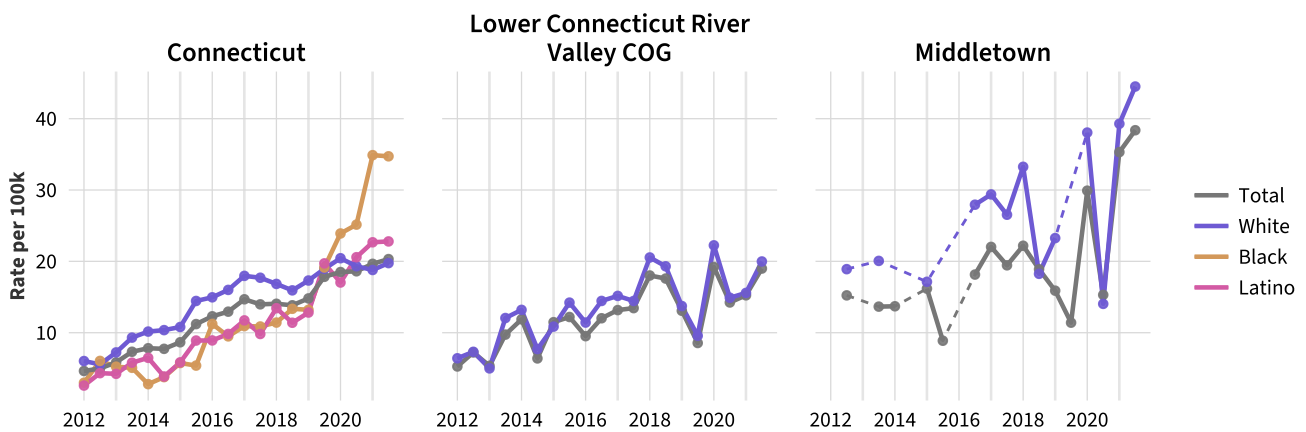
Mental health issues like depression and anxiety can be linked to social determinants like income, employment, and environment, and can pose risks of physical health problems as well, including by complicating a person’s ability to keep up other aspects of their health care. People of color are slightly more likely to report feeling mostly or completely anxious and being bothered by feeling depressed or hopeless. Overall, 12 percent of Lower Connecticut River Valley COG adults report experiencing anxiety regularly and 10 percent report being bothered by depression.

TABLE 10: SELECTED MENTAL HEALTH INDICATORS, SHARE OF ADULTS, 2015-2021

	Total	White	Black	Latino	Asian
Experiencing anxiety					
Connecticut	13%	11%	15%	19%	15%
Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	12%	11%	14%	16%	N/A
Middletown	12%	12%	5%	20%	N/A
Bothered by depression					
Connecticut	9%	8%	10%	14%	9%
Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	10%	8%	11%	23%	N/A
Middletown	9%	6%	9%	14%	N/A

Like other states, Connecticut has seen a rise in drug overdose deaths in the last several years. In 2021, Connecticut saw an average of 122 overdose deaths per month, up from 59 in 2015. White residents long comprised the bulk of these deaths, but as overall overdose death rates have risen, an increasing share of those deaths have been people of color.

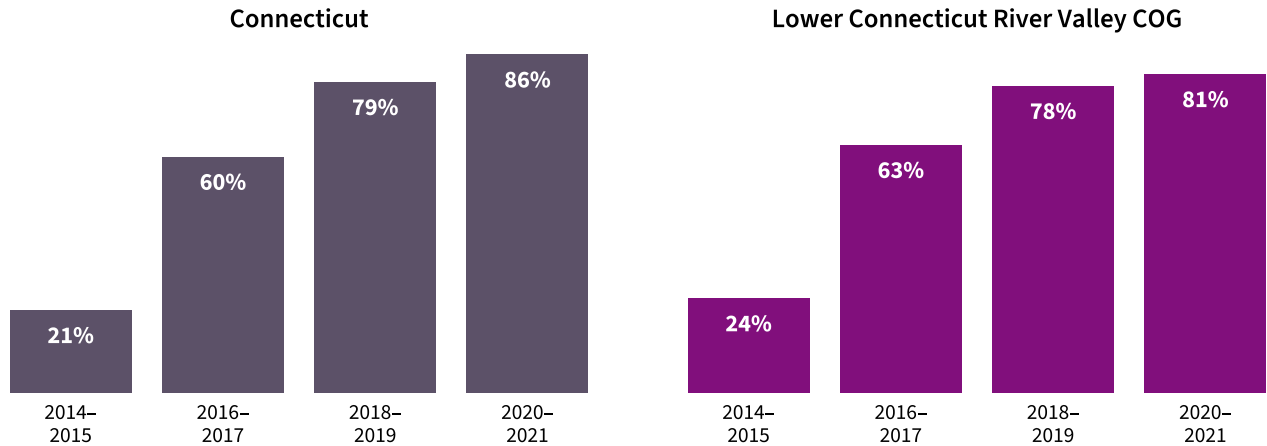
FIGURE 18: AGE-ADJUSTED SEMI-ANNUAL RATES OF DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS PER 100,000 RESIDENTS BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2012-2021



Note: Values are suppressed for small populations or few overdose incidents. Dashed lines indicate periods where values are suppressed or otherwise unavailable.

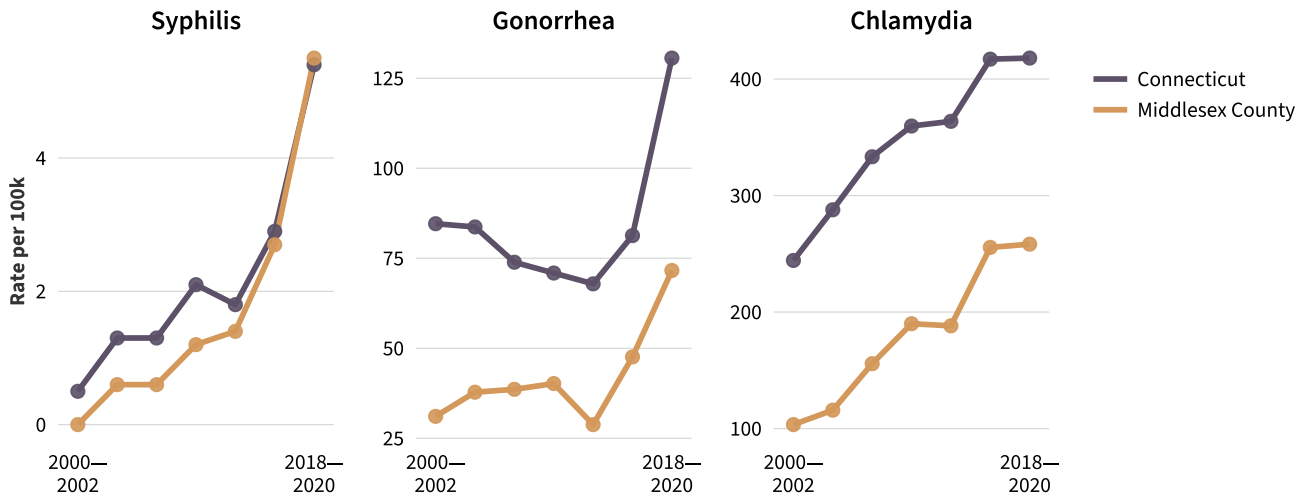
The introduction and spread of fentanyl in drugs—both with and without users’ knowledge—is thought to have contributed to this steep rise in overdoses. In 2016 and 2017, 63 percent of the drug overdose deaths in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG involved fentanyl; in 2020 and 2021, this share was 81 percent.

FIGURE 19: SHARE OF DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS INVOLVING FENTANYL, 2012–2021



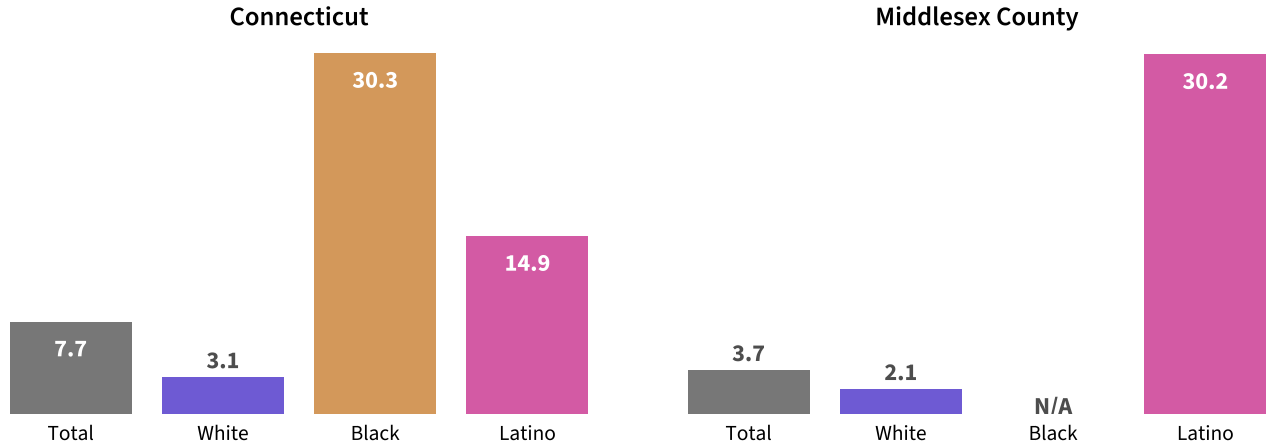
Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can have long-term implications for health, including reproductive health problems and certain cancers, and can increase the risk of acquiring and transmitting diseases such as HIV and hepatitis C. Following nationwide trends, Connecticut has seen increases in the rates of STIs like chlamydia and gonorrhea over the past two decades. Between 2018 and 2020, Middlesex County had annual average case rates of 258 new cases of chlamydia per 100,000 residents, 72 cases of gonorrhea per 100,000, and 5.5 cases of syphilis per 100,000.

FIGURE 20: ANNUALIZED AVERAGE RATES OF NEW CASES OF SELECTED SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS PER 100,000 RESIDENTS, 2000–2020



As with many other diseases, Connecticut’s Black and Latino residents face a higher burden of HIV rates. Statewide between 2016 and 2020, Black residents ages 13 and up were nearly 10 times more likely to be diagnosed with HIV than white residents.

FIGURE 21: ANNUALIZED AVERAGE RATE OF NEW HIV DIAGNOSES PER 100,000 RESIDENTS AGES 13 AND OVER, 2016–2020

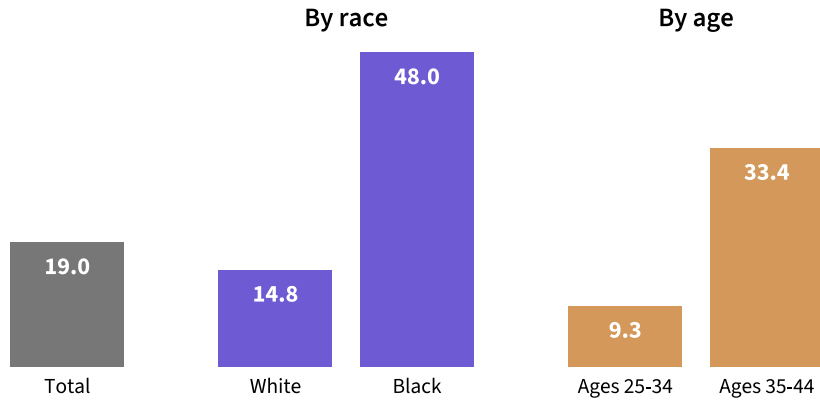


Birth outcomes often reflect health inequities for parents giving birth, and those outcomes can affect a child throughout their life. Often, parents of color have more complications related to birth and pregnancy than white parents. Complications during pregnancy or childbirth also contribute to elevated mortality among parents giving birth.

TABLE 11: SELECTED BIRTH OUTCOMES BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF PARENT GIVING BIRTH, 2017–2021

Area	Total	White	Black	Latina			Asian
				Latina (overall)	Puerto Rican	Other Latina	
Late or no prenatal care							
Connecticut	3.4%	2.5%	5.2%	4.4%	3.0%	5.6%	3.4%
Middlesex County	2.2%	1.9%	2.8%	2.3%	N/A	N/A	3.9%
Middletown	2.9%	3.0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Low birthweight							
Connecticut	7.9%	6.4%	12.4%	8.4%	10.0%	7.0%	9.0%
Middlesex County	7.3%	6.8%	9.5%	7.6%	10.6%	4.9%	9.4%
Middletown	8.8%	7.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Infant mortality (per 1k live births)							
Connecticut	4.5	3.0	9.1	5.4	N/A	N/A	N/A
Middlesex County	3.4	3.2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Middletown	6.4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

FIGURE 22: MATERNAL MORTALITY RATE PER 100K BIRTHS, CONNECTICUT, 2013–2017



Children under 7 years old are monitored annually for potential lead poisoning, based on having blood-lead levels in excess of the state’s accepted threshold. Between 2018 and 2020, 0.6 percent of children tested in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG were found to have elevated lead levels. Children living in homes built before 1960 are at a higher risk of potential lead poisoning due to the more widespread use of lead-based paints in older homes. Black and Latino households are more likely to live in these older buildings.

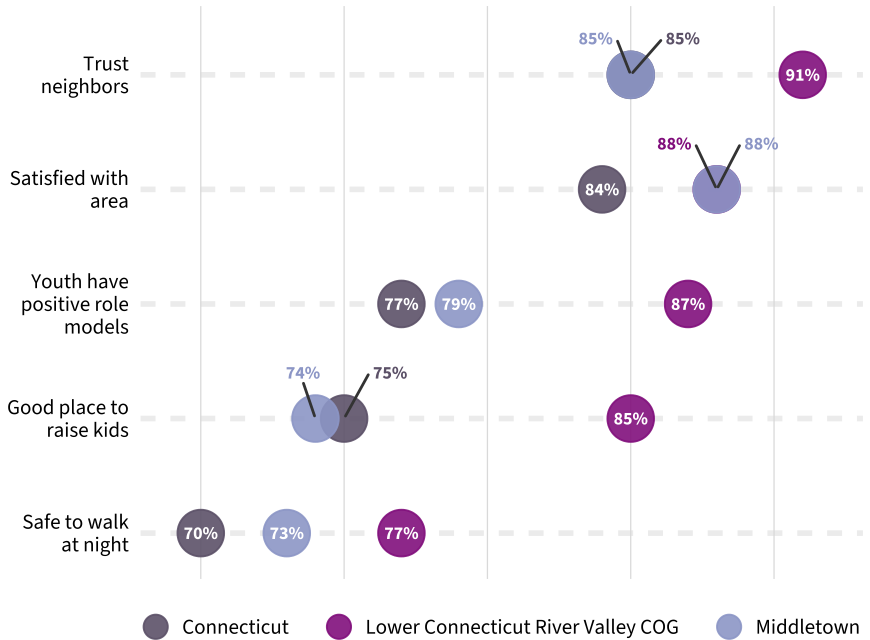
TABLE 12: HOUSEHOLDS LIVING IN STRUCTURES BUILT BEFORE 1960 BY RACE/ETHNICITY OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, 2021 (WITH PROXY AREA)

Area	Total		White		Black		Latino		Asian		Other race	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Connecticut	579,568	41%	390,197	40%	64,854	49%	95,979	50%	14,732	27%	14,953	42%
Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	24,031	33%	20,805	34%	1,039	31%	1,695	40%	N/A	N/A	891	48%
Middletown	6,957	35%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

CIVIC LIFE & COMMUNITY COHESION

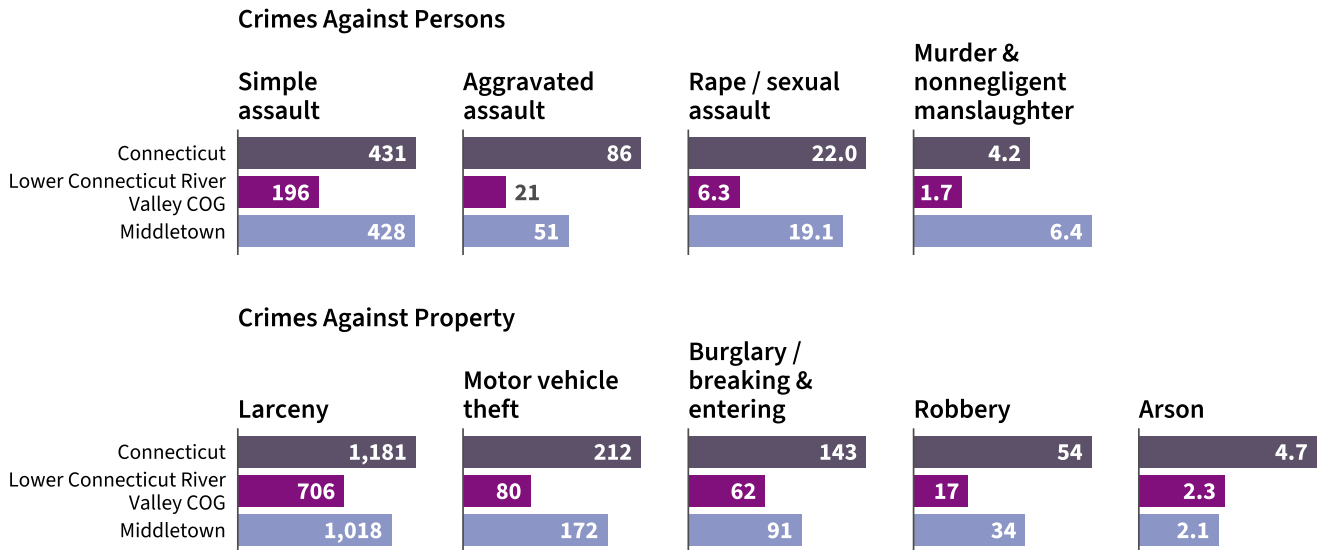
Beyond individual health, several measures from the DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey show how local adults feel about the health of their neighborhoods. High quality of life and community cohesion can positively impact resident well-being through the availability of resources, sense of safety, and participation in civic life. For example, adults who see the availability of role models in their community may enroll their children in extracurricular activities that benefit them educationally and socially; residents who know and trust their neighbors may find greater social support. Overall, 88 percent of Lower Connecticut River Valley COG adults report being satisfied with the area where they live.

FIGURE 23: RESIDENTS' RATINGS OF COMMUNITY COHESION MEASURES, SHARE OF ADULTS, 2015-2021



Crime rates are based on reports to law enforcement of violent force against persons, as well as offenses involving property. Not all crimes involve residents of the areas where the crimes occur, which is important to consider when evaluating crime rates in areas or towns with more commercial activity. Crime patterns can also vary dramatically by neighborhood. Crime can impact the social and economic well-being of communities, including through negative health effects.

FIGURE 24: GROUP A CRIME RATES PER 100,000 RESIDENTS BY TOWN / JURISDICTION, 2021



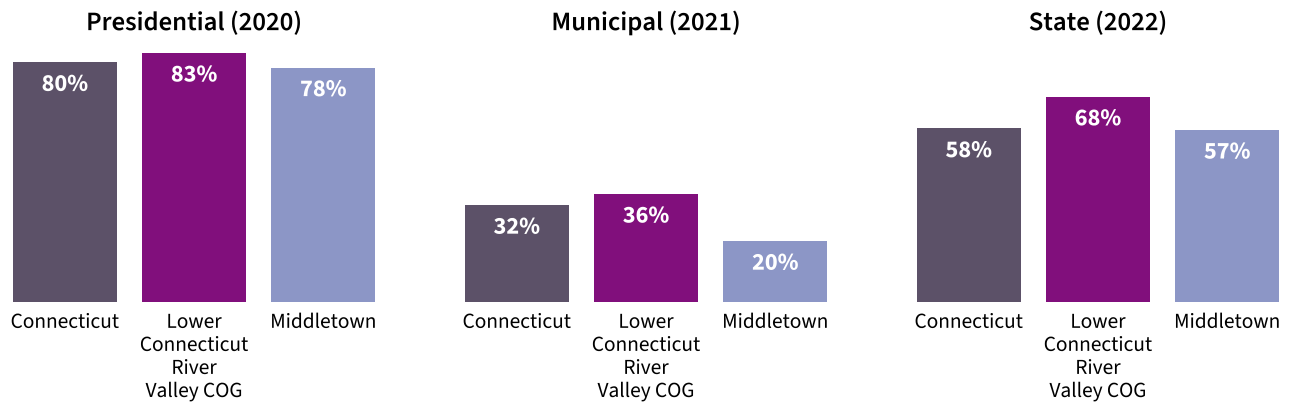
A lack of trust in and engagement with local government and experiences of unfair treatment by authorities can impair community well-being and cohesion. Fifty-nine percent of adults in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG feel their local government is responsive to residents’ needs, compared to 53 percent of adults statewide.

TABLE 13: RESIDENTS’ RATINGS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SHARE OF ADULTS, 2015–2021

Area	Local govt is responsive	Have some influence over local govt
Connecticut	53%	67%
Lower Connecticut River Valley COG	59%	68%
Middletown	58%	68%

Eighty-three percent of Lower Connecticut River Valley COG’s eligible voters, or 107,494 people, voted in the 2020 presidential election, and 68 percent (87,899 people) voted in the 2022 state election.

FIGURE 25: REGISTERED VOTER TURNOUT, 2020–2022

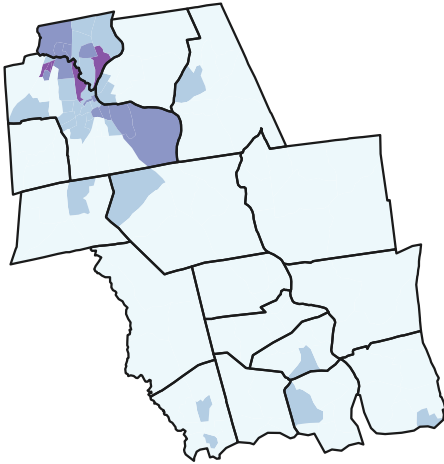


ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

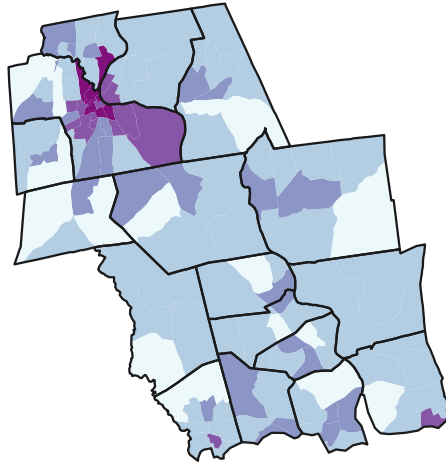
Many environmental factors—from access to outdoor resources to tree canopy to exposure to pollutants—can have direct impacts on residents’ health and quality of life. Environmental justice is the idea that these factors of built and natural environments follow familiar patterns of socioeconomic disparities and segregation. The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ranks small areas throughout the US on their risks of exposure to a variety of pollutants and hazards, scaled to account for the historically disparate impact of these hazards on people of color and lower-income people.

FIGURE 26: EPA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE INDEX BY BLOCK GROUP, LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY COG

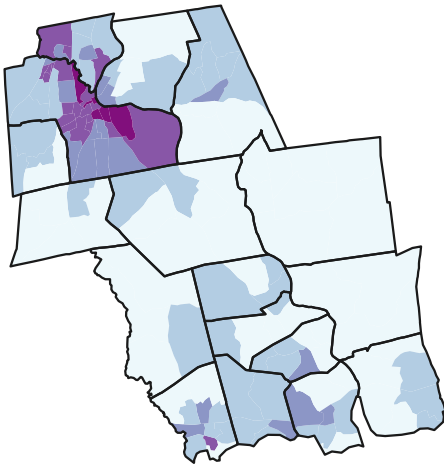
Air toxics cancer risk



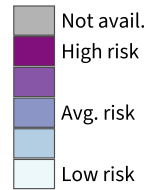
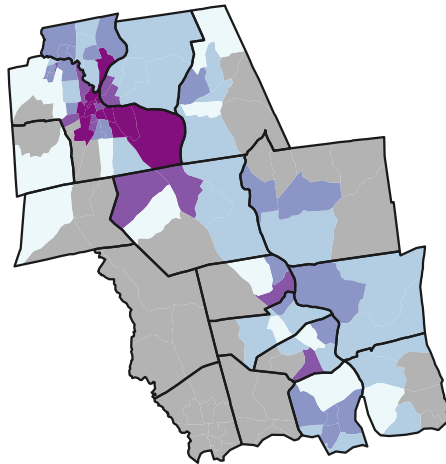
Lead paint exposure



Hazardous waste proximity

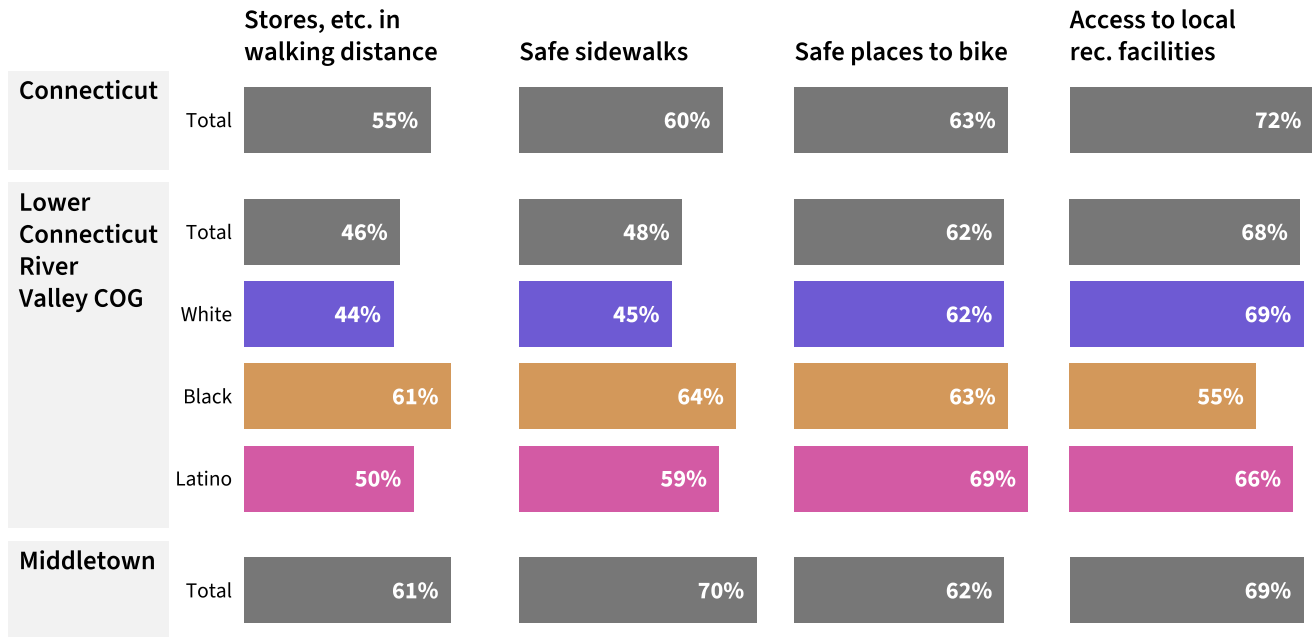


Wastewater discharge



High-quality built environment resources, such as recreational facilities and safe sidewalks, help keep residents active and bring communities together. Walkable neighborhoods may also encourage decreased reliance on cars. Throughout Connecticut, Black and Latino residents are largely concentrated in denser urban areas which tend to offer greater walkability. Of adults in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG, 46 percent report having stores, banks, and other locations they need in walking distance, lower than the share of adults statewide.

FIGURE 27: RESIDENTS' RATINGS OF LOCAL WALKABILITY MEASURES BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SHARE OF ADULTS, 2015–2021



NOTES

Figure 1. Study area. Map tiles by Stamen Design, under CC BY 3.0. Data by OpenStreetMap, under ODbL.

Table 1. About the area. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates. Available at <https://data.census.gov>; US Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Census P.L. 94-171 Redistricting Data. Available at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/about/rdo.html>; PLACES Project. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/places>; and National Center for Health Statistics. U.S. Small-Area Life Expectancy Estimates Project (USALEEP): Life Expectancy Estimates Files, 2010–2015. National Center for Health Statistics. 2018. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/usaleep/usaleep.html>. Note that for the sake of privacy, the Census Bureau suppresses any income values above \$250,000 in their tables; any such values not calculated by DataHaven will be shown as \$250,000+.

Table 2. Population by race/ethnicity, 2020. US Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Census P.L. 94-171 Redistricting Data.

Figure 2. Population by race/ethnicity and age group, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Figure 3. Linguistic isolation by race/ethnicity, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Table 3. Population and population change by age group, 2010–2020. US Census Bureau 2010 & 2020 Decennial Census P.L. 94-171 Redistricting Data.

Figure 4. Share of population by race/ethnicity, 2010–2020. US Census Bureau 2010 & 2020 Decennial Census P.L. 94-171 Redistricting Data.

Table 4. Homeownership rate by race/ethnicity of head of household, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Figure 5. Homeownership rates by age and race/ethnicity of head of household, Lower Connecticut River Valley COG, 2021 (with proxy area). DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year public use microdata sample (PUMS) data, accessed via IPUMS. Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Matthew Sobek, Danika Brockman, Grace Cooper, Stephanie Richards, and Megan Schouweiler. IPUMS USA: Version 13.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V13.0>

Figure 6. Housing cost-burden rates by race/ethnicity, 2021 (with proxy area). DataHaven analysis (2023) of Ruggles, et al. (2023).

Table 5. Overcrowded households by race/ethnicity of head of household, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Figure 7. Public K–12 student enrollment by race/ethnicity per 100 students, 2022-23. DataHaven analysis (2023) of enrollment data from the Connecticut State Department of Education, accessed via EdSight at <http://edsight.ct.gov> At the school district level, not all groups may be shown due to CTSDE data suppression rules for small enrollment counts, even though they may represent more than 1% of the school district population.

Figure 8. Selected academic and disciplinary outcomes by student race/ethnicity, 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years. DataHaven analysis (2023) of Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) testing (3rd and 8th grade English/language arts), discipline, and four-year graduation data from the Connecticut State Department of Education, accessed via EdSight. Not all groups' values may be included, or in some cases may be based on estimates, due to CTSDE data suppression rules for small counts. Because students can be suspended more than once in a school year, the suspension rate represents the percentage of students with one or more suspension or expulsion during the school year.

Figure 9. Educational attainment by race/ethnicity, share of adults ages 25 and up, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Table 6. Jobs and wages in Lower Connecticut River Valley COG's 5 largest sectors, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of annual employment data from the Connecticut Department of Labor. Note that in some cases, especially for smaller towns or where data were deemed unreliable for whatever reason, data have been suppressed by the department. In a few cases, that may mean large sectors in an area are missing from the analysis here. Available at https://www1.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi/202/202_annualaverage.asp

Figure 10. Monthly unemployment rate, 2013–2022, 3-month rolling average. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Statistics. <https://www.bls.gov/lau>

Figure 11. Median income by race/ethnicity and sex for full-time workers ages 25 and over with positive income, 2021 (with proxy area). DataHaven analysis (2023) of Ruggles, et al. (2023).

Figure 12. Median household income by race/ethnicity of head of household, 2021 (with proxy area). DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates and Ruggles, et al (2023).

Table 7. Selected economic resource indicators by race/ethnicity, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Table 8. Selected household economic indicators by race/ethnicity of head of household, 2021 (with proxy area). DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates and Ruggles, et al (2023).

Table 9. Median household income in large towns, 2000–2021, in 2021 dollars. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census; and American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Figure 13. Life expectancy, Lower Connecticut River Valley COG by Census tract, 2015. Data from National Center for Health Statistics. U.S. Small-Area Life Expectancy Estimates Project (USALEEP): Life Expectancy Estimates Files, 2010–2015. National Center for Health Statistics. 2018. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/usaleep/usaleep.html>

Figure 14. Uninsured rate among adults ages 19–64 by race/ethnicity, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates.

Figure 15. Preventive care measures, share of adults by Census tract, Lower Connecticut River Valley COG. Data from PLACES Project. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Figure 16. Selected health risk factors, share of adults, 2015–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of 2015, 2018, and 2021 DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey. Available at <https://ctdatahaven.org/reports/datahaven-community-wellbeing-survey>

Figure 17. Chronic disease prevalence, share of adults by Census tract, Lower Connecticut River Valley COG. Data from PLACES Project. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Table 10. Selected mental health indicators, share of adults, 2015–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of 2015, 2018, and 2021 DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey.

Figure 18. Age-adjusted semi-annual rates of drug overdose deaths per 100,000 residents by race/ethnicity, 2012–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of Accidental Drug Related Deaths. Connecticut Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. Available at <https://data.ct.gov/resource/rybz-nyjw>. Rates are weighted with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 2000 U.S. Standard Population 18 age group weights available at <https://seer.cancer.gov/stdpopulations>

Figure 19. Share of drug overdose deaths involving fentanyl, 2012–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of Accidental Drug Related Deaths. Connecticut Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

Figure 20. Annualized average rates of new cases of selected sexually transmitted infections per 100,000 residents, 2000–2020. DataHaven analysis (2023) of data from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. NCHHSTP AtlasPlus. Updated 2019.

<https://www.cdc.gov/nchhstp/atlas/index.htm>

Figure 21. Annualized average rate of new HIV diagnoses per 100,000 residents ages 13 and over, 2016–2020. DataHaven analysis (2023) of data from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. NCHHSTP AtlasPlus.

Table 11. Selected birth outcomes by race/ethnicity of parent giving birth, 2017–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of data from the Connecticut Department of Public Health Vital Statistics. Retrieved from <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Health-Information-Systems--Reporting/Hisrhome/Vital-Statistics-Registration-Reports>

Figure 22. Maternal mortality rate per 100k births, Connecticut, 2013–2017. America’s Health Rankings analysis of CDC WONDER Online Database, Mortality files, United Health Foundation. Retrieved from <https://www.americashealthrankings.org>

Table 12. Households living in structures built before 1960 by race/ethnicity of head of household, 2021 (with proxy area). DataHaven analysis (2023) of US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates and Ruggles, et al (2023).

Figure 23. Residents’ ratings of community cohesion measures, share of adults, 2015–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of 2015, 2018, and 2021 DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey.

Figure 24. Group A crime rates per 100,000 residents by town / jurisdiction, 2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of 2021 Crime in Connecticut Overview By Town. Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection. Available at <https://portal.ct.gov/DESPP/Division-of-State-Police/Crimes-Analysis-Unit/Crimes-Analysis-Unit>. Group A crimes under the FBI’s National Incident Based Reporting System are categorized into crimes against persons, crimes against property, and crimes against society. The first two of these, shown here, are similar to the Part I Offenses of the previous reporting system and shown in older reports.

Table 13. Residents’ ratings of local government, share of adults, 2015–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of 2015, 2018, and 2021 DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey.

Figure 25. Registered voter turnout, 2020–2022. DataHaven analysis (2023) of data from the Connecticut Office of the Secretary of the State Elections Management System. Available at <https://ctemspublic.pctg.net>

Figure 26. EPA Environmental Justice Index by block group, Lower Connecticut River Valley COG. United States Environmental Protection Agency. 2022 version. EJSCREEN. Retrieved from <https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>

Figure 27. Residents’ ratings of local walkability measures by race/ethnicity, share of adults, 2015–2021. DataHaven analysis (2023) of 2015, 2018, and 2021 DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey.

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Visit DataHaven (ctdatahaven.org) for more information. This report was authored by Camille Seaberry, Kelly Davila, and Mark Abraham of DataHaven.

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ABOUT DATAHAVEN

DataHaven is a non-profit organization with a 30-year history of public service to Connecticut. Our mission is to empower people to create thriving communities by collecting and ensuring access to data on well-being, equity, and quality of life. DataHaven is a formal partner of the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership of the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C.

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