Our Values

Accessibility:

Every aspect of community design and life ought to be accessible and promote the engagement of its residents.

Choice:

Communities should promote personal dignity and functional independence across the lifespan by creating a broad array of choices to meet evolving needs.

Intergenerational:

Intergenerational communities can leverage strengths across the lifespan by linking the needs and skills of different age groups, rather than pursuing age-segregated solutions.

Cooperative:

Creating livable communities requires partnership across a wide array of sectors, within-town collaboration across departments, and regional collaboration.

Equity:

Everyone deserves the ability to live in one's home and community safely, independently and comfortably, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, income or ability level.

Go to: www.livablect.org, for information about:

Funding

is available from a range of partners, though shaping livability can begin with implementing low-cost strategies.

Partners

provide subject matter expertise, unique perspective and supports.

Ideas and Innovations

are being implemented across Connecticut and throughout the nation.

Connecticut's Legislative **Commission on Aging**

Shaping **Livable Communities**
and Promoting Aging in Place

A Guide for Municipal Leaders

July 2015 Edition

2010

2015

2020

2025
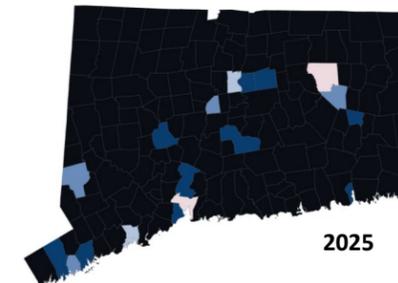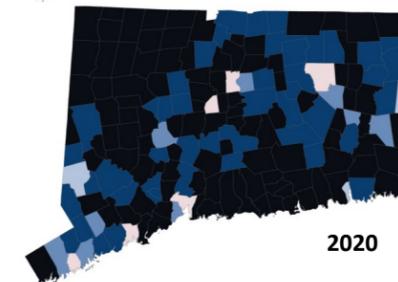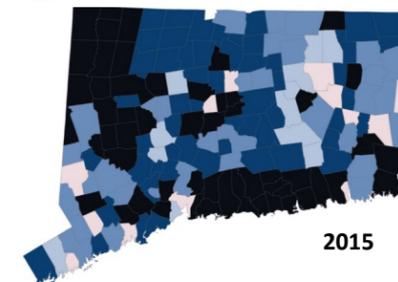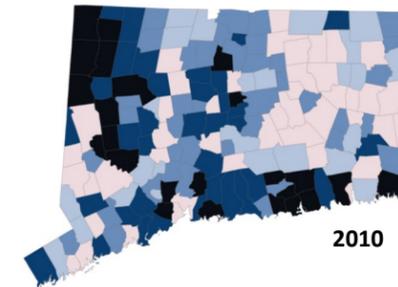
Percentage of People Age 65 and Older as Proportion of Total Population

These maps were produced in partnership with the Connecticut State Data Center.

	Less than 13%
	13% - 14%
	15% - 16%
	17% - 19%
	20% or more

Connecticut is Aging:
Is Your Town Ready?

Connecticut is undergoing a permanent and historic transformation in its demographics: it is aging. Connecticut is the 7th oldest state in the nation with the 3rd longest-lived constituency. And its residents overwhelmingly want to stay in their homes and communities as they grow older, retaining choice and independence.

What that means for municipal leaders and their partners is that there's a **growing urgency to plan for changing communities**—ones that will need affordable, accessible and diverse housing and transportation options and public spaces and buildings; supportive community features ad services; and vibrancy and opportunities for community engagement.

Recognizing that urgency, Connecticut passed a state law that empowered **Connecticut's Legislative Commission on Aging** to spearhead a statewide livability initiative. Through its initiative, the Commission is convening, engaging, inspiring and supporting local and regional efforts to shape more livable communities for residents across the lifespan. We're working with diverse partners, connecting related initiatives, and promoting ideas.

Deeply embedded in this work is a notion of shared fate, across age and other demographic characteristics.

The goal of this guide is to provide **strategies to municipal leaders** and their partners to enhance community livability for Connecticut residents. Livable communities not only foster independence and allow individuals to age in place, they also promote health and well-being, create economic value and drive environmental sustainability.

To learn more go to the Commission's website: **www.livablect.org**

Connecticut's Legislative Commission on Aging : A Nonpartisan Public Policy and Research Office of the Connecticut General Assembly   Located at the State Capitol

Strategies to Shape Livable Communities

Connecticut's Legislative Commission on Aging

These strategies present a menu of opportunities for communities to consider. But there is no singular formula for shaping livability. Communities should build on their strengths and consider their unique needs.

Physical Environment

Planning and Zoning:

◊ Ensure that **municipal plans of conservation and development** include planning for older adults and individuals with disabilities to remain in their homes and communities, pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 8-23(e)(1)(I).

◊ Revise zoning codes to **maximize opportunities for Smart Growth.**

◊ Allow **flexible housing** options, like accessory dwelling units and shared housing.

◊ Reduce minimum lot sizes strategically to **allow for higher-density development**.

◊ **Conduct health, environmental, and economic impact assessments**.

Public Spaces and Buildings:

◊ Ensure that public buildings and spaces are **ADA accessible for all users** and designed and located to enhance community safety and intergenerational interactions.

◊ Establish **community gardens** and incorporate strategic **landscaping** in public spaces.

◊ **Rehabilitate** blighted, vacant and otherwise underutilized properties.

◊ Promote social interaction through programs and physical design features, like conversation-starting public art and outdoor reading rooms.

◊ Encourage **diverse use** of public spaces and buildings (like parks and school playgrounds) to maximize investment and community building. Consider joint use agreements.

Housing:

◊ **Educate residents** on home remodeling or modifications to age in place.

◊ Compile a list of vetted **home repair and home modification contractors and programs** to help older adults and persons with disabilities adapt their homes.

◊ Incentivize incorporation of **universal design features** in new construction.

◊ Ensure that adequate smaller, energy-efficient, **affordable housing** in neighborhoods of opportunity exists in every community.

◊ **Collaborate with** affordable and low-income housing **developers** to generate additional housing options.

Transportation:

◊ Develop or enhance **mobility management programs.**

◊ Engage in **transit-oriented development**.

◊ Identify funding streams to coordinate and grow both **fixed route and demand-responsive transportation options**.

◊ Conduct a **walkability audit**.

◊ Establish **lower speed limits** on local streets.

◊ **Adopt and implement a complete streets** policy and plan.

◊ **Coordinate** transportation options across **town lines** and share resources.

◊ Use **on-demand transit services** and **leverage errand-outsourcing apps** and **mobile services** in transit-challenged homes and neighborhoods.

Social Environment

Community Engagement

◊ Cultivate an atmosphere that promotes **diversity and inclusiveness**.

◊ **Mobilize older adults** to address community issues through meaningful **paid and unpaid work opportunities**.

◊ Promote opportunities for **intergenerational contribution, connectivity and learning**.

◊ Promote **flexible work options**.

◊ Facilitate opportunities for **religious, spiritual and social connectivity**.

◊ Facilitate opportunities for **local economic development and job creation**.

◊ **Consistently outreach** to the community, especially those at risk of social isolation.

◊ Provide opportunities for **social and cultural engagement**.

Health Services:

◊ Support a **robust public health system** to promote in-home programs, community wellness programs and preventive health services.

◊ Support local health departments, first responders, senior centers and other partners in their efforts to **prevent falls** through various strategies.

◊ Formalize partnerships between health care, public health and social services leaders and professionals to ensure an **integrated system** that comprehensively meets the needs of older adults, which can include addressing social isolation, loss and mental health issues.

◊ Formalize partnerships with **town planners** to maximize opportunities for Smart Growth and other strategies to promote active lifestyles.

◊ Ensure capacity and capability to plan for **public health emergencies**, including for those with access and functional needs.

◊ Prioritize access to **healthy and affordable foods** and opportunities for **physical activity**.

◊ Conduct **health impact assessments** to determine the potential health implications of projects, policies and community design.

◊ Promote more widespread **adoption of telehealth** and other assistive technologies.

◊ Use and incentivize use of **community health workers** for service delivery.

Social Services:

◊ Support a robust local social services system to address community needs through **collaborations** among other municipal departments, divisions and community leaders.

◊ Promote information, training and support for **family caregivers** across the lifespan.

◊ Support effective, community-level primary mental health care for older adults.

◊ Create an open and affirming environment for diverse populations.

◊ Promote and support collaboration among **police, fire, aging services and adult protective services** for safety education and prevention of physical and financial elder abuse.

Why Make Communities Livable? For improved community economic growth and individual economic security, employment opportunity, community safety, emergency preparedness, and more...