What is Metro Hartford?

The Metro Hartford region consists of 1 million people living in Hartford, New Britain and the 36 surrounding towns and communities. While there is no perfect definition for “Metro Hartford,” the Capitol Region Council of Governments brings together municipal leaders from these 38 towns to coordinate on shared issues, planning and economic development for the region.

Meaningful change in 2016?

Last year’s report focused on access to schools, jobs, neighborhoods and the ongoing challenge of creating access to opportunity. In this year’s report, we focus on five related themes consistent with those priorities. With ongoing declines in state and local resources, how can we support meaningful change consistent with these priorities?

- The Next Generation
  attracting and retaining millennials

- Mobility
  connecting people to opportunity in the region

- Job Growth
  aligning workforce and economic development

* Inner suburbs have higher population density and poverty than outer suburbs
Leadership + Civic Engagement for deliberate long-term progress

Education ensuring a quality education for all despite scarce resources

Full source references available at MetroHartfordProgressPoints.org
What has worked? What can we do differently?

Regional thinking is not new to Metro Hartford, even if the effectiveness of our actions has been inconsistent. In the absence of regional government, we must rely on informal, voluntary collaboration among regional leaders to address regional challenges. Here are a few examples:

- 1960: County government abolished in Connecticut
- 1958 - 1964: Deconstruction of the Front Street neighborhood makes way for Constitution Plaza
- 1964: Hartford City charter changed to ‘weak mayor’ format; reverts to ‘strong mayor’ in 2004
- 1965: Harvard research calls for “metropolitan solution” to Hartford’s education challenges
- 1968: Greater Hartford Chamber of Commerce holds “Town Meeting for Tomorrow” which led to the formation of the Capitol Region Council of Elected Officials
- 1972: Greater Hartford Process releases regional plan and development proposal for 20,000 person ‘new town’ to be located in Coventry
- 1973: CRCOG designated as Transportation Planning Prioritizing Agency for the region
- 1975: City of Hartford vs. Hills lawsuit against HUD and 7 suburban towns challenges failure to plan for inclusion of integrated housing
- 1978: Capital Workforce Partners established from Private Industry Council
- 1978: Hispanic Health Council founded

**What has worked?**

**What can we do differently?**

Regional thinking is not new to Metro Hartford, even if the effectiveness of our actions has been inconsistent. In the absence of regional government, we must rely on informal, voluntary collaboration among regional leaders to address regional challenges. Here are a few examples:

- 1912: Hartford city plan envisions expansion to present-day Windsor and Rocky Hill
- 1924: United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut founded
- 1925: Hartford leaders propose annexation of West Hartford
- 1925: Newington seeks annexation by Hartford and New Britain
- 2025: Hartford Foundation for Public Giving founded
- 1929: Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) founded to ‘provide quality potable water and sewer systems’ for the Hartford region

**“The Bishops Era”**

The ‘Bishops’ were business leaders who informally shaped many development projects and policies in Hartford and the region.
How do we learn from our region’s past to shape a more successful future? We can start by building awareness and a shared understanding of the evidence.
What can we do to ensure our region retains and attracts a sufficient supply of skilled workers?

By 2025, millennials are projected to be the largest workforce segment in the Metro Hartford region.

Many of the region’s millennials are not high-mobility college-educated individuals.

Population numbers by opportunity level show that 45% of the 18- to 34-year-olds in our region live in low or very low opportunity neighborhoods, and most of the inflows from out of state are to the same neighborhoods.

43% of millennials in the region live in households that don’t earn family-sustaining wages*

45% of young children in the region (birth - 3) are in households that don’t earn family-sustaining wages*

The Metro Hartford region retains the fewest four-year graduates of any metro region in the country with 60% of recent graduates citing ‘jobs’ as their primary reason for leaving.

College graduates, individuals with advanced degrees and older residents are moving out of our state, while younger and less educated people are moving in.

This out-migration increases budget challenges as taxpayers leave the region and businesses lose customers.

FROM 2012 – 2014 THE NET MIGRATION OF TAXPAYER INCOME OUT OF THE REGION WAS $912,360,000

Source: IRS SOI Tax Stats migration data
How can new transit options and amenities improve access and spur growth for our communities?

Many of our region’s residents of all ages would like to live where they can walk to shops, restaurants and other amenities, compared to where they live today.

Many in the region face long commutes, especially low-income Hartford residents who spend time and money traveling to jobs in suburbs not well served by public transportation.

Source: ‘Housing Report,’ 2015. Legislative Commission on Aging, CCAPA and CRCOG

Source: 2015 DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey
New and proposed rail, bus and highway projects aim to increase access by linking towns and communities within and outside the region.

A regional bus loop, expanded bus service, improvements to highway infrastructure and new train stations all work toward improving access to amenities, housing and jobs in order to spur growth and generate vibrant communities.

“We are poised to become a thriving hub between Hartford and Springfield... offering a charming community with an accessible town center, jobs, housing... capturing boomers and young professionals who otherwise may flee out of state.”

– Jennifer Rodriguez, Town Planner / Windsor Locks

Full source references available at MetroHartfordProgressPoints.org
How can we better align workforce and economic development strategies for the region?

The Metro Hartford region has not produced meaningful job growth in the past 25 years, despite having advanced industries that offer a family-sustaining wage and having residents eager to work.

Advanced industries, such as aerospace manufacturing and computer systems designs, are a vital part of the region’s economy, but growth has been slow and our competitive advantage may be eroding.

The net zero regional job growth masks an employment decline by large and non-resident firms, but employment growth by smaller and locally-owned businesses and nonprofits.
Most future job openings will be high-wage jobs that require advanced degrees or low-skill jobs with high turnover and wages that cannot sustain a family of four.

**27%** of future job openings in our region will be high-skill jobs

**72%** of future job openings in our region will be jobs that don’t pay a family-sustaining wage

### PROJECTED NUMBER OF JOB OPENINGS 2016 – 2022

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<td>Example High Skill, High Wage Jobs: Managers, Personal Financial Advisors</td>
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38,000 men and women in our region who are unemployed, not in school, and ready to work fall into one or more categories with traditionally high unemployment levels.

### NUMBER OF UNEMPLOYED / LOOKING FOR WORK

- **Opportunity Youth (16-24)**
  - Not at work, not in school
- **Low Skill Adults (25-64)**
- **Middle Skill Adults (25-64)**
- **High Skill Adults (25-64)**
- **Disabled**
- **Veterans**
- **Limited English Proficiency**


Full source references available at MetroHartfordProgressPoints.org
Almost half of Hartford residents in public schools are now in integrated settings. The majority of the remaining students attend traditional schools.

Although magnet schools are accessible to all students in the region, 62% of applicants to these schools were not offered seats in 2015.

While there has been progress in Hartford school integration, we know little about the academic impact of that effort.

Less than 4% of Hartford resident students who attend traditional public schools score above 10th grade goals for math and science.

What do these results mean for the future of advanced industries in our region?

Source: Sheff Movement, State Department of Education, Office of Program Review and Investigations
Our neighborhood schools continue to experience declining enrollment, but our region continues to spend millions annually on new school construction.

7% ↓ SCHOOL ENROLLMENT SINCE 2001 25% ↑ EDUCATION EXPENDITURES BY TOWNS SINCE 2001 29K ↑ EMPTY SEATS IN OUR REGION'S SCHOOLS OVER PAST 10 YEARS

INCREASE IN NUMBER OF EMPTY SEATS 2003 – 2013

"The planning and zoning commission and town council should really be talking with boards of ed and sharing that our schools are half empty ... We have a resource and an asset that is not being fully utilized."

- Michael Zuba, Director of Planning, Milone and MacBroom 2015 Metro Hartford Progress Points Forum Panelist

Prior to 2010, towns in the Hartford region received in excess of $100 million/year for new school construction, renovations and remodeling. That figure has since dropped to around $80 million/year since 2010 and was further reduced in 2016.

$1.4 Billion

IN CONSTRUCTION GRANTS, WERE AWARDED TO MAGNET SCHOOLS AND OTHER CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS RELATED TO THE SHEFF VS. O'NEILL CASE (2003 – 2012)

$1.2 Billion

IN LOCAL SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION GRANTS WERE AWARDED TO SINGLE SCHOOL DISTRICTS (2004 – 2012)

Source: State Department of Education school capacity data, Office of Fiscal Analysis data via CTdata.org
Full source references available at MetroHartfordProgressPoints.org
Where will we see meaningful change in our region?

In the absence of regional government, we must look to collaborative leadership and civic engagement as the drivers that will move us toward deliberate long-term progress.

A number of public and private initiatives that have the potential for positive change for schools, jobs and neighborhoods are underway. These are a great start. But more is needed.

**The Next Generation**

attracting and retaining millennials

- Towns are creating walkable areas near transportation through transit-oriented development along the CT Fastrak corridor and the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield rail line.
- Colleges and universities, including Trinity College, UConn and University of Saint Joseph, are expanding their presence in downtown Hartford.
- Groups like the Metro Hartford Alliance’s Hartford Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs (HYPE), United Way’s Emerging Leaders and the Urban League’s Young Professionals continue to engage and connect millennials with each other and the region.

**Mobility**

connecting people to opportunity in the region

- Regional, state and federal efforts are expanding transportation options and redesigning existing infrastructure to better meet the needs of today’s population and employers.

**Job Growth**

aligning workforce and economic development

- Innovation hubs like reSET, Make Hartford and Axis 901, and entrepreneur support centers like Innovation Destination Hartford, offer business advisory services and other supports to help small businesses thrive.
- Several regional collaboratives are creating career pathways and bridging middle schools, high schools, higher education, adult education, employers and workforce development.
- The federally-designated North Hartford Promise Zone and the Working Cities Challenge are opportunities to bring in new local and federal sources of funding.

**Education**

ensuring a quality education for all

- Local funders and nonprofits are creating new connections between superintendents and administrators in underperforming districts.
- Our state and region will be called upon to address educational disparities through Sheff vs. O’Neill and — potentially — financial disparities through Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding vs. Rell.
Why will the future be different than the past?

The need for systemic change implied by this report requires leadership and more regional coordination and integration.

There are various models of transformational change - one possible path forward is to use John Kotter’s eight-step Model for Transformational Change as a roadmap to addressing our shared regional challenges. We hope this report creates the sense of urgency necessary to address these issues.

MODEL FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE*

1. CREATE URGENCY
2. BUILD A TEAM
3. CREATE A VISION FOR CHANGE
4. REMOVE OBSTACLES / COMMUNICATE
5. EMPOWER ACTION
6. CREATE SHORT-TERM WINS
7. DON’T LET UP
8. MAKE CHANGE STICK
