



Photo Credit: Mary Johnson

Branford 2017 Community Report

The Branford Community Foundation (BCF) connects people who care with causes that matter, for the purpose of preserving and promoting the quality of life in Branford. Established in 1980, BCF maintains over two million dollars in endowed funds and invests nearly \$100,000 in our community each year through grants, scholarships and leadership initiatives. Every day, it helps address the most pressing issues facing the community, in areas such as: basic needs, health, education, the arts, the environment, youth and civic engagement. In so doing, the BCF impacts lives, solves problems, and improves futures.

Learn more at branfordcommunityfoundation.org.



The **COMMUNITY** Foundation *for* Greater New Haven

Demographic Trends

Branford has a total population of 28,074.

Branford's population is less racially diverse than the region: Greater New Haven is 35% non-white, versus Branford's 11%. However, the town's youth population is more diverse than the adult population: 19% of children under age 18 are racial/ethnic minorities.

All age groups are projected to decrease in population between 2015 and 2025 **except adults ages 65 and over, which is projected to increase by 41%.**

Branford is made up of 12,395 households. **28% more of its adults live alone than did in 1990.**

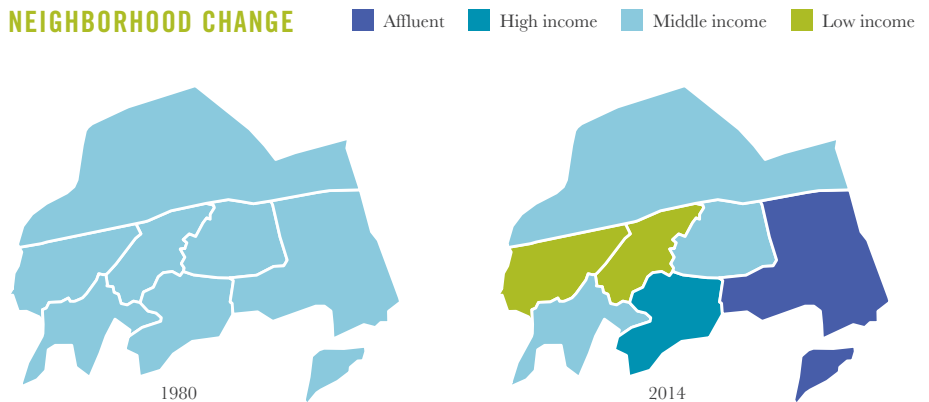
Like the region and state as a whole, new housing construction has recently shifted toward multi-family structures. From 2005 to 2010, 85% of the 241 new homes built in Branford were single-family units. However, from 2011 to 2014, **55% of the 248 new homes built were units within multi-family buildings.**

Neighborhood Change

In 1980, all Branford residents lived in middle-income neighborhoods. By 2014, this had shrunk to 44% as **coastal areas became relatively more affluent and family incomes elsewhere did not keep up with statewide growth.**

WHAT IS IT? The **poverty rate** is defined as the share of people living in households with income below the federal poverty line (\$24,257 for a family of four). Residents are considered **low income** if their household makes below two times this amount.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE



THE POPULATION OF ADULTS AGE 65+ IS PROJECTED TO GROW

↑ 41%
FROM 2015 - 2025

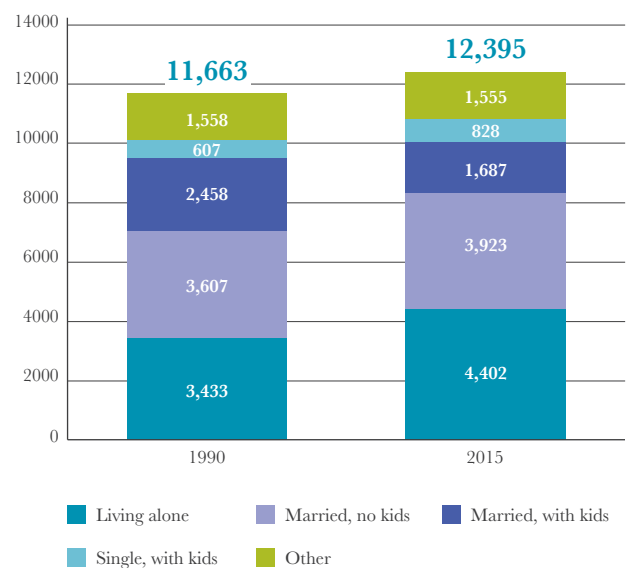
17%
OF ALL RESIDENTS ARE LOW INCOME

22%
OF CHILDREN ARE LOW INCOME

23%
OF SENIORS ARE LOW INCOME

WHAT IS IT? Middle-income neighborhoods are defined as neighborhoods (Census tracts) where the average family income level is similar to that of Connecticut.

HOUSEHOLD TYPES



Income and Family Hardship

Branford residents have a similar median household income to the state and region, with the average household earning \$71,938 per year, compared to \$66,169 in Greater New Haven and \$70,331 statewide.

Branford has lower poverty and low-income rates than the state or the region. However, both **children and seniors are more likely to live in low-income households than other age groups.**

Though the unemployment rate in Branford hasn't fully recovered from the Great Recession (2007–2009), **the town has consistently lower unemployment rates than the state and region.**

Overall, Branford residents are less likely to be severely cost-burdened (i.e., spending more than 50% of their income on housing costs) than residents of the region. However, **15% of the town's households are severely cost-burdened.**

Education

There are 3,108 students in the Branford Public Schools as of the 2013–2014 school year. This includes 412 students (13%) in special education, 751 students (24%) receiving free or reduced price meals, and 117 (4%) English language learners.

Branford has high graduation rates: **91% of high school students graduate in four years**, higher than the region (84%) or state (87%).

Of the students who graduate high school on time, 75% enroll directly in college. **56% of high school graduates go on to complete a degree within 6 years.**

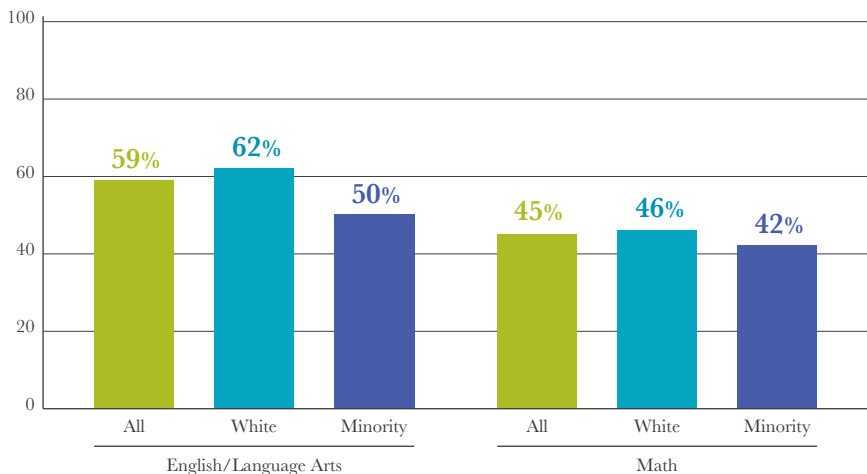
59% of Branford students passed the English/language arts SBAC test in 2015, and 45% passed the math test. Passing rates were lower for minority students.

8.8% of the town's public school students were chronically absent in the 2013–2014 school year.

WHAT IS IT? Students are considered **chronically absent** if they miss more than 10% of the school days in a year, regardless of reason.

Branford is home to an estimated 403 preschool-age children. **66% of Branford's three- and four-year-olds are enrolled in school**, about the same as the enrollment rate of the state (64%) and higher than that of the region (60%).

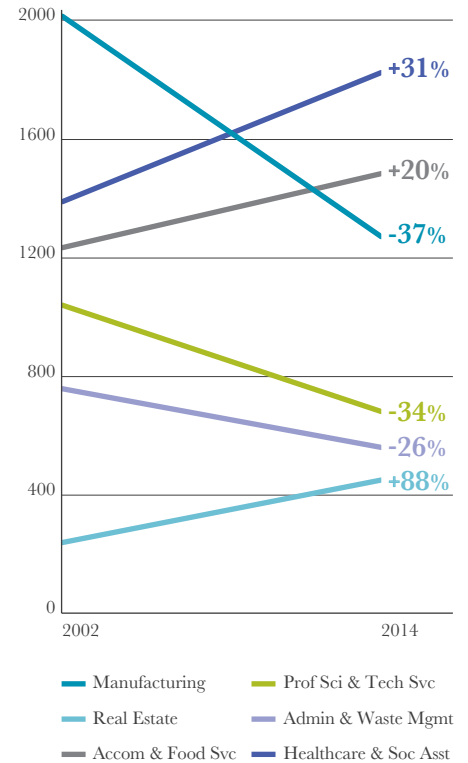
SBAC (SMARTER BALANCED TEST) PASS RATES



FOUR YEAR GRADUATION RATES



JOB LOSSES & GAINS



Economic Development

There were 12,791 jobs located within Branford in 2014, a decrease of 586 jobs (4%) since 2002. These jobs paid an average wage of \$46,396 per year, which was lower than the statewide average of \$63,909.

On any given day, **there is a net flow of 1,066 low-income workers into the town**, and a net flow of 2,619 high-income workers leaving Branford for work in other towns.

WHAT IS IT? Low-income workers are defined here as those with salaries below \$40,000 per year.

From 2002 to 2014, **the manufacturing industry has lost the most jobs in Branford, while the health care and social assistance industry has gained the most**, consistent with statewide and regional trends.

Community Well-Being

New Haven's Outer Ring suburbs, which include Branford (see definition below), fare very well on a variety of measures of well-being and health risk factors.

72% of Branford and Outer Ring residents rate their overall health as good or excellent. Branford and Outer Ring residents have lower rates of chronic diseases such as diabetes and asthma than the state and region, lower rates of smoking, and are much more likely to have visited a dentist in the past year.

Branford has a lower age-adjusted mortality rate than Connecticut.

The town has lower rates of death due to heart disease, but higher rates due to accidents. Overall mortality rates have decreased in recent years.

HEALTH RISK FACTORS

Condition	Connecticut	Outer Ring
Self-Rated Health (good or excellent)	63%	72%
Anxiety (mostly or completely)	11%	10%
Depression (fairly or very often)	9%	6%
Diabetes	9%	5%
Obesity	26%	24%
Food insecurity	12%	7%
Smoking	15%	10%
Asthma	13%	11%
No health insurance	5%	3%
Dentist visit in past year	77%	81%

LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH, BRANFORD

Cause of Death	Change over Time	Compared to CT
All deaths	⬇ Decreasing	⬇ Lower
Accident	➡ Steady	⬆ Higher
Cancer	➡ Steady	➡ Same
Diabetes	➡ Steady	➡ Same
Heart Disease	⬇ Decreasing	⬇ Lower

91% GOOD PLACE TO RAISE CHILDREN

60% RESPONSIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

92% GOOD JOB DONE BY POLICE

46% VOLUNTEERED IN THE LAST YEAR

Civic Life

Branford and Outer Ring residents give high ratings to their towns on many aspects of community cohesion, including local governance and policing.

91% of Branford and Outer Ring adults feel their town is a good or excellent place to raise children, much higher than the statewide rate (74%).

46% of Branford and Outer Ring adults engaged in volunteer activities in the past year, similar to the statewide rate.

Branford adults vote at slightly higher rates than the state or region.

In 2014, **263,919 books and other materials were checked out of the James Blackstone Memorial and Willoughby Wallace Memorial libraries**, averaging 9 items checked out per resident. Annual visits increased from 3 per capita in 2004 to 8 per capita in 2014.

ABOUT THIS REPORT This report was produced by the Branford Community Foundation in partnership with The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, and is based on local, state, and federal public data analyzed by DataHaven, a non-profit organization with a 25-year history of public service to Greater New Haven and Connecticut. Reporting is drawn from the *Greater*

New Haven Community Index 2016, produced by DataHaven in collaboration with community, government, and scientific partners including The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven and Yale-New Haven Health. Data on well-being and community cohesion are drawn from the 2015 DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey's in-depth interviews with

16,219 randomly-selected adults throughout Connecticut including 500 in the Outer Ring suburbs of New Haven (defined as Branford plus Madison, Guilford, North Branford, North Haven, Bethany, Woodbridge, Orange, and Milford). Download the entire report, including detailed notes on the sources and analyses used in this document, at www.ctdatahaven.org.