



**SOUTH CENTRAL CONNECTICUT
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
2018-2023**

**APPENDIX A:
DETAILED SWOT
ANALYSIS**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Business Development & Recruitment	Pages 3-5
Workforce & Housing	Pages 6-7
Infrastructure	Page 8
Real Estate, Land Use & Sustainability	Page 9
Marketing, Communications & Stakeholder Education	Page 10



Strengths - General

- Access to 1/3 of the nation's population, gross domestic product, total jobs and businesses
- Highly educated workforce
- Outstanding quality of life
- More affordable than New York or Boston
- Located near major gateways and transportation hubs

Strengths - Advanced Manufacturing

- Established reputation in advanced manufacturing
- Creates high-value positions
- Employers are willing to supplement skills with on-the-job training in key sectors
- Investments in facilities and equipment make it less likely for companies to relocate

Strengths - Biomedical and Life Sciences

- Extremely high value based on our proximity to Yale University and the Yale-New Haven Health System
- Highly educated bioscience workforce
- State and local support for this sector

Strengths - Healthcare

- Yale-New Haven Health System
 - Destination hospital and medical center where a growing number of patients with increasingly complex conditions are being treated
 - Signature standard of care throughout the health system
- Smilow Cancer Hospital at Yale New Haven Hospital is one of 41 National Cancer Institute designated locations and a leader in specialized, innovative cancer treatment

Weaknesses - General

- Region/state needs impactful marketing
- Limited employment opportunities for accompanying spouses
- Other regions in the country offer a lower cost of doing business
- Aging workforce
- Connecticut's reputation for excessive regulation and taxation
- Aging/inadequate transportation infrastructure to support key sectors

Weaknesses - Advanced Manufacturing

- Lack of skilled workers in the pipeline
- Number of businesses and employees in this sector is declining

Weaknesses - Healthcare

- Difficulty retaining support staff due to inadequate transportation and housing options

Weaknesses - Tourism

- Lack of consistent and timely State tourism marketing funding
- Threat of increased hotel occupancy tax
- Low wages
- Demand fluctuates on the vitality of the domestic and international economies



Strengths - Healthcare (cont.)

- Intense collaboration with the Yale School of Medicine
- Extensive workforce development programs
Increasing demand for services, including home healthcare, adult day care and hospice care
- Colleges and vo-tech schools are offering clinical training programs

Strengths - Tourism

- Increasing demand for hotels, especially long-term stay properties
- Wide-ranging activities: historic sites, museums, art galleries, diverse shoreline for water-based activities, four-season recreation options and growing niche markets, such as beer and wine trails

Opportunities - General

- Intensify workforce training programs at all levels of the education continuum
- Increase utilization of the Port of New Haven
- Optimize regional collaboration
- Continued community investment by anchor institutions

Opportunities - Advanced Manufacturing

- Growing demand for training programs as the industry is promoted as modern manufacturing
- Potential for increased exports

Opportunities - Biomedical and Life Sciences

- Investment in existing and new bio centers
- More collaboration between academic institutions and pharmaceutical companies
- Create talent pool network
- Encourage cross-discipline ventures

Threats - General

- Active recruitment of our businesses by other states
- Businesses being acquired by out-of-state companies
risk of consolidation outside Connecticut
- Small/family businesses do not have a succession plan

Threats - Advanced Manufacturing

- Active recruitment of our businesses by other states with lower costs
- A significant number of employees are reaching retirement age

Threats - Biomedical and Life Sciences

- Out-of-state competition
- Continued declining federal and state funding

Threats - Healthcare

- Yale-New Haven Health System
 - Reduction in funding from the National Cancer Institute and National Institute of Health
 - Cost of uncompensated care
 - Need for improved regulations and policies to support expansion
- Need improved infrastructure for seniors to live in their homes safely
- Stricter Medicare requirements



- Publicize successes more prominently
- Create centers of excellence for bio sub-sectors (such as big data, research, manufacturing, etc.) to reduce internal competition and establish a marketable identity

Opportunities - Healthcare

- Growth of precision (personalized) medicine with an opportunity to participate in a national genomic research program
- Technology supported remote medicine
- Increased pharmaceutical trials focused on effectiveness, not toxicity
- Increased demand for in-home services

Opportunities - Tourism

- Partner with surrounding states to increase visitation to New England and the Tri-State area
- Increase advertising in states within driving distance of Connecticut
- Develop a service industry workforce
- Develop a 10 year statewide strategic marketing plan



Strengths

- Well established, seasoned public workforce system, used by over 16,000 individuals each year
- Number of public and higher education options, including three community colleges within 30 minutes of center of the region
- Valuable labor pool within a 100-mile radius of New Haven County
- Current labor force in the region has remained relatively stable, with six towns experiencing an increase

Opportunities

- Potential for the vocational and higher education systems to develop more tailored curriculum (hospitality, manufacturing)
- Estimated 4,000 new or churned jobs in all sectors will become available in next 24 months
- Better, real-time labor market information available to engage parents, teachers and other influencers of young persons of opportunities that may not require a degree
- Available current and potential talent of refugees, many of whom possess a significant work history
- Trend in workforce housing being developed near relative places of work (e.g., Mary Wade Home)
- Decline in out-migration of residents in New Haven County

Weaknesses

- Insufficient workforce pipeline for some industry clusters; most notably manufacturing
- School systems are focused on college-bound students, rather than trades and skilled jobs
- While over 17% of adults in the region have had some college experience, close to 10% do not have a high school diploma. This is particularly notable in New Haven (17%), Meriden (13.6%), and West Haven (13.5%)

Threats

- Uncertain sense of public funding and support on both federal and state levels
- Lack of credible transportation a barrier to filling jobs in outlying areas of the region
- Skills mismatch of existing labor pool and in some cases, reluctance to update
- Credentials needed to be competitive are constantly changing
- Lack of a sufficient pipeline may force companies to move away
- Out-migration of young persons, particularly college students and graduates, may adversely affect the labor pool



Strengths

- Diverse mix of housing in the region, accommodating professionals, singles, families, retirees and elderly

Opportunities

- Housing located in center city districts in Meriden and New Haven enables residents to walk or take the train to work
- Trend in workforce housing being developed near relative places of work (e.g., Mary Wade Home)
- Decline in out-migration of residents in New Haven County indicate a need to develop a continuum of housing options as residents retire and age
- Potential for development of mixed use, mixed income projects in the region, such as the plans for the former "Church Street South" in New Haven

Weaknesses

- Single family suburban homes do not appeal to Millennials due to ongoing maintenance issues and lack of proximity to recreational activities and public transportation options
- Suburban housing costs are prohibitive in several communities within the region
- Lack of marketing strategies for housing modalities that are targeted to their most attractive populations (exception possibly being elderly housing)
- There currently does not exist any centralized database for housing in the region

Threats

- Availability of housing options for low wage workers and their families is scarce. A single parent with two children must earn over \$24.72
Source: Out of Reach 2017: National Low Income Housing Coalition
- Uncertain sense of public funding and support on both federal and state levels, including Section 8 and the Choice Neighborhood initiatives
- Lack of credible transportation a barrier to filling jobs in outlying areas of the region
- Out-migration of young persons, particularly college students and graduates, may adversely affect the housing market in the region
- Credentials needed to be competitive are constantly changing
- Lack of a sufficient pipeline may force companies to move away
- Out-migration of young persons, particularly college students and graduates, may adversely affect the labor pool



Strengths

- A developed rail network with passenger service to major cities in the Northeast and a regional airport (Tweed New Haven)
- Multimodal transportation, including an established Complete Streets program (New Haven), and ride share programs, such as New Haven bike-sharing program
- Municipal energy conservation efforts and availability of alternative energy sources
- Reliable telecommunications network and Nutmeg Network

Opportunities

- New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Rail service and development around existing and/or planned rail stations
- Improvements and increase services for the Tweed New Haven Airport and expanding capacity at the Port of New Haven
- Expansion of the Complete Streets program and bike share program to other communities in the region. Improving accessibility and connectivity of the transit network
- Increasing resilience of vulnerable infrastructure, including incorporating green infrastructure projects

Weaknesses

- The region currently has an aging infrastructure in need of repair with limited funding availability
- The congestion issues on the Interstate Highways have a significant impact on commute times
- There are long commute times when utilizing the bus service available in the region and limited connectivity of the transit services in the region
- A significant amount of infrastructure vulnerable to natural hazards and sea level rise

Threats

- Potential for further funding reductions may limit infrastructure investment
- Natural hazards and sea level rise puts the region's infrastructure at risk. Severe weather events may have a negative impact on the region's drinking water supply
- High-energy costs and potential increase in rates may limit private investment
- Limited access to public transportation for low-income households may cause burdens to finding employment opportunities



Strengths

- A mature transit corridor that will be expanding northward to Hartford
- Coordinated efforts to harden shoreline infrastructure following past hurricane impacts
- An established brownfield revolving loan fund with projects in the pipeline
- An existing and growing network of recreational trails and recreational opportunities including agri-tourism
- Dense and vibrant population centers with a good mix of rural communities, and the region is centrally located between New York City and Boston

Opportunities

- Increased cooperation among municipalities (expanding on existing programs, such as hazard mitigation)
- Transit oriented development along planned and existing rail corridors
- Downtown redevelopment and town centers
- Further enhancements of trails and open space
- Infill development of brownfield sites
- Evolved and innovative zoning to spur high quality and diverse job growth

Weaknesses

- Lack of developable land with many brownfield sites
- Vacant retail spaces that will not rebound because of online shopping
- Significant infrastructure improvement needs that do not have an identified funding source
- Changing demographics with younger workers leaving the state and older workers retiring
- Lack of affordable housing
- Inefficient connections to existing transit
- Challenging impacts of a state tax policy that is reliant on property taxes
- State financial instability for the foreseeable future that creates uncertainty for private investment

Threats

- Additional budget cuts to all programs due to the state's fiscal situation & potential federal budget cuts
- Hurdles to remediation of contaminated sites through high costs and difficult property owners
- Continued migration of the workforce
- Natural hazards and rising sea levels
- Continued upward trend of high cost of living
- Additional sprawl that depletes agricultural land, farming, and food security
- More changes in demand for office and retail space as a result of advancements in technology



Strengths

- Exceptional quality of life and tourism assets to promote
 - New Haven is a walkable city and many of the suburban towns offer traditional New England greens
 - Transportation hub, especially rail
 - Robust arts, culture, history, architecture, shopping, recreational and dining options in urban, rural and shoreline settings
 - Highly educated workforce & intellectual capital with global influence
 - High-quality healthcare
 - Multi-cultural, inclusive culture
 - Strategic eastern seaboard location with access to prime consumer markets
- Established web and social media presence
- Established e-newsletters for economic development and tourism
- Annual Greater New Haven Visitors and Relocation Guide
- Global business attraction collateral

Opportunities

- Expand communication network with additional stakeholders
- Update REX Development website
- Update Visit New Haven website
- Provide stakeholders with new collateral
- Increase two-way communications with stakeholders
- Build on our relationship with the State Office of Tourism
- Host more travel writers and tour operators
- Attend more trade shows to promote the region to both business and visitors
- Create more public relations opportunities

Weaknesses

- Insufficient funding for marketing
- Difficult to reach all of our stakeholders
- Need for additional marketing of existing programs available through economic development organizations
- Lack “critical mass” in certain sectors, like bioscience, to attract talent

Threats

- Unreliable and declining funding for State Tourism Marketing
- Increased competition from other states with active marketing within the region including billboards and personal solicitations
- State’s fiscal situation and potential tax increases to cover budget gaps