

**Forum Participant Comments**

<b>Housing &amp; Development</b>
I would like to ask, "in addition to cost, what are the top factors younger folks are using in making housing choices?"
How can towns provide incentives to developers to help create an environment that attracts young, creative people?
If affordable housing was available downtown, it would attract younger people.
Residential apartments to attract younger people downtown.
Are there certain styles of apartments that are more popular with young professionals?
I would like to see more mixed use development in downtown, as well as live music and open air venue space. The more opportunities for young people to have a TRUE voice in the community the better.
What type of housing do young people prefer in downtown settings? Do singles share units?
What is the current available housing inventory in the downtown area?
I'd love to see more options to buy downtown (condos/townhomes). The options in Hartford are very limited for the more established young professional.
I am a firm believer in multi-family housing that is efficient (read small units) with common spaces and amenities (think roof top gardens, tv rooms and game rooms) that encourage community building AND storage so that young people can keep your housing costs low without sacrificing stuff (like bikes, snowboards, etc.) that keep you active and happy.
It may not be that all CT towns have the critical mass to support a town center that meets the needs of young people. In those cases, towns should support the growth of neighboring centers.
Affordable rent, parking and grocery stores will help incentivize living downtown for all ages. However, a greater "around the clock" University presence will hopefully attract more young people to live in the downtown area.
Community center/hang out space with activities
Affordability. Most young people aren't wealthy. We want and need housing options and unique amenities which are basically the opposite of what can be found in Connecticut suburban towns. Amenities: coffee, beer, ethnic food, music and lots of each!
Are there any mixed use apartments or condos available downtown?
First and foremost in attracting young workers to a downtown is quality housing, which our region has largely ignored for the last twenty years, followed by mass transit. Regionally, we need one or more pro sports franchises to put us on the radar screen. We already have sufficient live music venues (with more on the way).
Mixed use development that includes grocery shopping and provides safe, attractive and affordable housing within walking distance of downtown.
What urban qualities would appeal to you more (if you were choosing an urban district to live in: a) a polished, genteel district that had a Starbucks, a nationally known Sports bar and an Old Navy store or, b) a gritty, hipster, artsy district that had an independent internet cafe, local nightclubs with live music and tattoo parlors?
Nightlife and apartment designs geared for young professionals.
More town and city involvement to make innovative development easier and possible.

**Housing & Development Continued**

The town of Seymour has a Metro North line that stops in our downtown. We would like to have a Main Street that people would want to get off at our stop and explore and enjoy our area.

We are interested in developing downtown Baltic (Sprague)

I'm interested in seeing more affordable apartment building options in downtown Hartford

More "third spaces" to hang out and connect with others, plug into wifi and expand your brain. Kind of an updated student center.

I would like to see more permissive zoning and development codes that allow cities to develop more organically. In particular, I would like to see cities get out of the parking business. This would allow cities to evolve in response to the needs and wants of young people.

How can downtown Winsted be developed to be more main stream?

Attractive housing for young people in a downtown district.

Interested in incentive housing districts.

Wallingford is entertaining an incentive housing zone with retail and we are interested in hearing comments of who to approach as possible tenants, etc.

What will attract young professionals to urban and blighted cities?

What is housing's role in attracting young people?

**Transit**

A downtown development where we don't need a car to get to work, shopping and fun dining would be wonderful.

Walkability

Transportation and entertainment options are an important element to attract and retain young people.

Besides the importance of reviving our mixed-use building stock, CT needs to invest in a well integrated and reliable public transit system. . .

Improvements to transportation networks which emphasize bicycle, pedestrian and transit options over motorized options.

Transit oriented growth; ways for them to get involved in local civic groups like neighborhood associations of CMT's

I suggest that activists, developers and municipalities focus more of their "placemaking" efforts around signs signaling pedestrian crossings. In addition, there should be an emphasis on educating property owners about the benefits of balancing vehicular access with pedestrian connectivity.

How can we encourage AMTRAK to give us a trainstop for local commuters?

**Jobs & Businesses**

How do you bring business into a downtown, when downtown is off the main corridor?

JOBS

I'd like to see more jobs that attract Gen Y'ers

In conjunction with multi-mode transportation, walkability, and housing affordability, I would like to see employment opportunities that provide professional level salaries beyond minimum wage, sufficient for maintaining a comfortable standard of living and increase local/regional innovation.

**Retail & Marketing**

This is my first discussion of this sort, but I would like to see CT cities MARKET themselves as places for young people to start careers and live amongst their contemporaries.

Besides bars and restaurants, what other commercial uses attract young professionals?

I would like to see more outreach and cross-promotion between area colleges and universities; both structured and guerrilla.

I'd like to see more buy-in to social media as a serious tool for connecting young people to current programming.

What I'd like to see: An emphasis on original small businesses over national chain merchants.

Downtown development - sustaining retailers through their first year.

I would like to see more downtown young professional/interesting events planned to create the want and need to go downtown and to change the

What types of independent retailers (soft goods) are effectively reaching this audience?

I would like to see a vibrant, eclectic variety of shops with goods and services that cater to a younger demographic. Clothing stores, technology centers, coffee shops, music venues, etc.

More art galleries, more public entertainment on/near the green, more skateboarding, more educational and historical landmarks.

Retail and restaurant promotions to target young people.

Attracting young people to towns via restaurants and retail shops.

**General Advice/Involvement**

Be Patient

To be involved with the growth/design of a community, you must first get involved with that community.

Advice: Listen!

It's important to reach out to the community you're trying to develop to see what the residents want/need; this will help retain people living in the area and also give a different perspective.

Be bold!

Pay attention to the work of the local Planning Commission and Zoning Commission.

Do some real grass-roots research and organizing early. This will both build trust, show respect for all community members and make the administrative process (if necessary) go more smoothly.

The one piece of advice is to become as involved in the processes as possible. Serve on communities, boards, commissions and seek out opportunities for yourself, including volunteering and non-profit resources to serve. Young people need a stronger voice in all levels of the development process. What the younger generation has to say matters as well, however, a lot of the time unfortunately gets disregarded.

Advice: Research what people are doing before you "they should" all over town. Just because it isn't on your radar, doesn't mean that other people are not already working on it. Do a Google search, look for groups on Facebook, talk to people.

Get appointed to a city commission, and attend workshops on community plans - the input really is heard but young people need to show up!

**Other**

How do young professionals define downtown/urban living?

In a small town, what would compel a young person to live in its downtown?

Must deal with crushing poverty surrounding downtowns in cities. Can't ignore it.

How can powerhouse hubs of government funding switch to models of public-private leadership partnerships without incurring large administrative

When will cities stop pursuing the idealized population of already affluent young people from the suburbs and start acknowledging the young people who already live there?

New Britain is a college town with the largest of the state universities - CCSU. However, it has never been actively embraced as such. Our goal is to make New Britain a "college town" where students will want to come. Where do we start? What attractions can we give the students? Where can we look as models of towns that have successfully done this?

All too often the vocal minority controls the course of action. How do you attract and encourage participation of Young Professionals?

**Options/Solutions**