

Support H.B. 5429: Zone for Housing Diversity in Transit-Oriented Communities

Connecticut hasn't kept up with demand for new housing. We can build thriving and inclusive communities by zoning for housing diversity near public transit.



Connecticut's economy remains needlessly weighed down by our extraordinarily high housing costs. Rents have skyrocketed, increasing by 15% in the last two years. Fifty-two percent of renters and a third of homeowners now pay more than 30% of their income on housing. Incredibly, 250,000 households pay more than 50% of their income towards housing costs, leaving families with little to spend on necessities like food, healthcare, and transportation.

Train stations and CTfastrak stations are valuable state infrastructure that have enormous potential to advance economic growth in Connecticut – both for the communities in which they are located and the people that live there.

H.B. 5429 Details

- *Municipalities with a rail station or bus rapid transit station shall permit housing as of right at an average density of 15 dwelling units per acre within a ½ mile radius of the station. Stations for MetroNorth, Amtrak, Shore Line East, the Hartford Line, and CTfastrak are included.*
- *Housing developments within the transit area with six or more dwelling units shall include a set-aside of ten percent of homes restricted as affordable. Including some affordable homes in multifamily housing near transit expands access to our regional economy.*
- *Municipalities should be encouraged to provide density bonuses to developers that set-aside units for affordable housing within transit areas. Density bonuses are a proven method to increase affordable housing near transit with less need for government subsidy.*

H.B. 5429 will increase housing options near transit, helping to meet Connecticut's unsatisfied demand for new housing, expanding opportunities across the state, building on infrastructure that is already here, and ensuring our communities are thriving, vibrant places for everyone to live and work, no matter their race or background.

Creating more housing opportunities near transit – at no public cost – is just one piece of a necessary overhaul of Connecticut's approach to zoning which, today, stymies housing development and growth to the detriment of equity and economic vitality.

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Focusing housing growth around transit stations capitalizes on enormous existing public investments in transit and creates:

- More walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods
- A larger supply of affordable housing and different housing types
- Increased job access
- Increased ridership and revenue gains for transit systems
- Increased revenues for local businesses
- Congestion relief and reduced airborne pollution
- Expanded tax base with increased tax revenue for municipalities

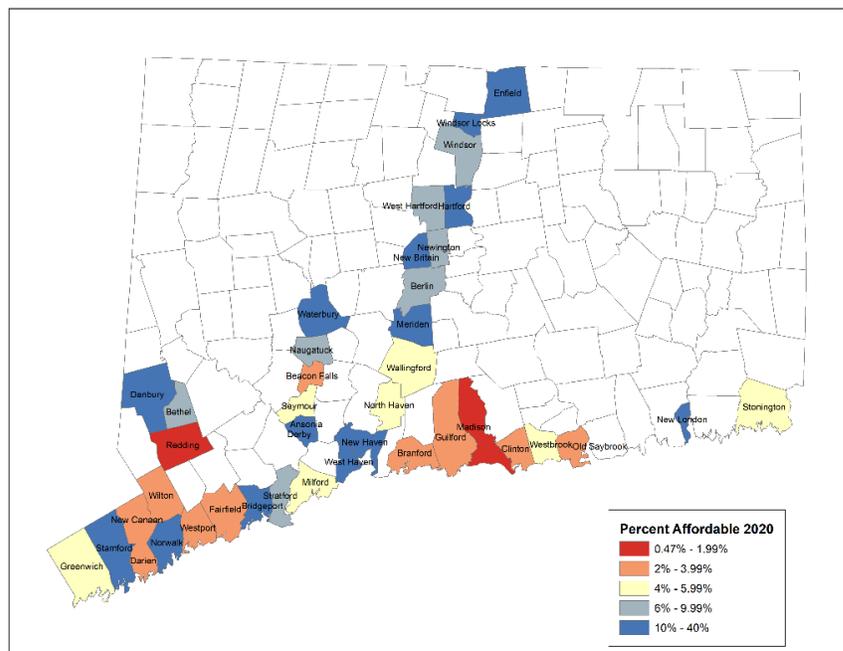
Transit-oriented development (TOD) increases housing stability for Connecticut's households. After housing, [transportation is the second highest cost in a household budget](#). For low-income households, transit, access to jobs, and a walkable neighborhood all affect whether households can choose lower cost alternatives to a car to get around.

Expanded transit access will increase housing stability for more Connecticut residents.

After housing, [transportation is the highest cost in a household budget](#).

For low-income people, access to reliable transit and a walkable neighborhood can reduce reliance on cars, shorten commutes, and encourage walking.

Too few Connecticut transit stations are accessible to low- and moderate-income households. **In 14 municipalities with transit stations less than 5% of the town's housing supply is affordable.** Zoning for housing diversity and affordability in transit station areas will expand low- and moderate-income households' access to job markets. **Low- and moderate-income households have a right to access our transit system just as higher-income households do.**



Massachusetts' passed a similar transit-oriented development law in 2021.

The law requires municipalities in the MBTA service area to create at least one zoning district that legalizes modest multi-family housing construction of at least 15 units per acre. Towns that fail to comply will not be eligible for funds from certain state capital projects and infrastructure grant programs.