

CHAPTER 1: DEMOGRAPHICS

This chapter provides background on Prospect's population - its characteristics, trends and regional context. This information will help facilitate planning decisions insofar as it explains current population conditions and recent and expected trends that will influence future development.

CURRENT POPULATION

The 2010 population of the Town of Prospect reported by the U.S. Census is 9,405, an increase of 8% from 2000. Census numbers indicate that Prospect and the surrounding towns of Bethany and Cheshire have grown at a tremendous rate in the past 40 years, far outpacing the County and the State. The Town's total population has grown 43.7% since 1970, from 6,543 to 9,405, as demonstrated in Table 1.

Towns of a similar size in New Haven County, specifically Middlebury, Bethany, and Oxford have seen a similar degree of growth, except for Oxford, whose population has nearly tripled in forty years. Prospect's population is densest in the north of the town, along Route 69, especially in census tract 3471, west of Scott Road, which has more than 1,350 people per square mile. Population density for 2010 by Census Block Group is shown in Map 1.

The Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley (COGCNV) compiles an annual demographic profile for the region¹. In 2010, the Central Naugatuck Valley Region (CNVR) population was 287,768, which was an increase of 5.6% from 2000. The average population density for the region was 931 people per square mile in 2010, which is on average comparable to Prospect, although the areas in the southern portion of the town are considerably less dense than the regional average.

TABLE 1

Selected Population Changes in New Haven County 1970-2010							
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	1970-2010* Change	2000-2010 Change
Prospect	6,543	6,807	7,775	8,707	9,405	43.7%	8.0%
Bethany	3,857	4,330	4,608	5,040	5,563	44.2%	10.4%
Cheshire	19,051	21,788	25,684	28,543	29,261	53.6%	2.5%
Middlebury	5,542	5,995	6,145	6,451	7,575	36.7%	17.4%
Naugatuck	23,034	26,456	30,625	30,989	31,862	38.3%	2.8%
Oxford	4,480	6,634	8,685	9,821	12,683	183.1%	29.1%
New Haven County	744,948	761,337	804,219	824,008	862,477	15.8%	4.7%
CNVR	-	237,385	261,081	272,594	287,768	21.2%*	5.6%
Connecticut	3,031,709	3,107,576	3,287,116	3,405,565	3,574,097	17.9%	4.9%

* Change for the CNVR is from 1980-2010.

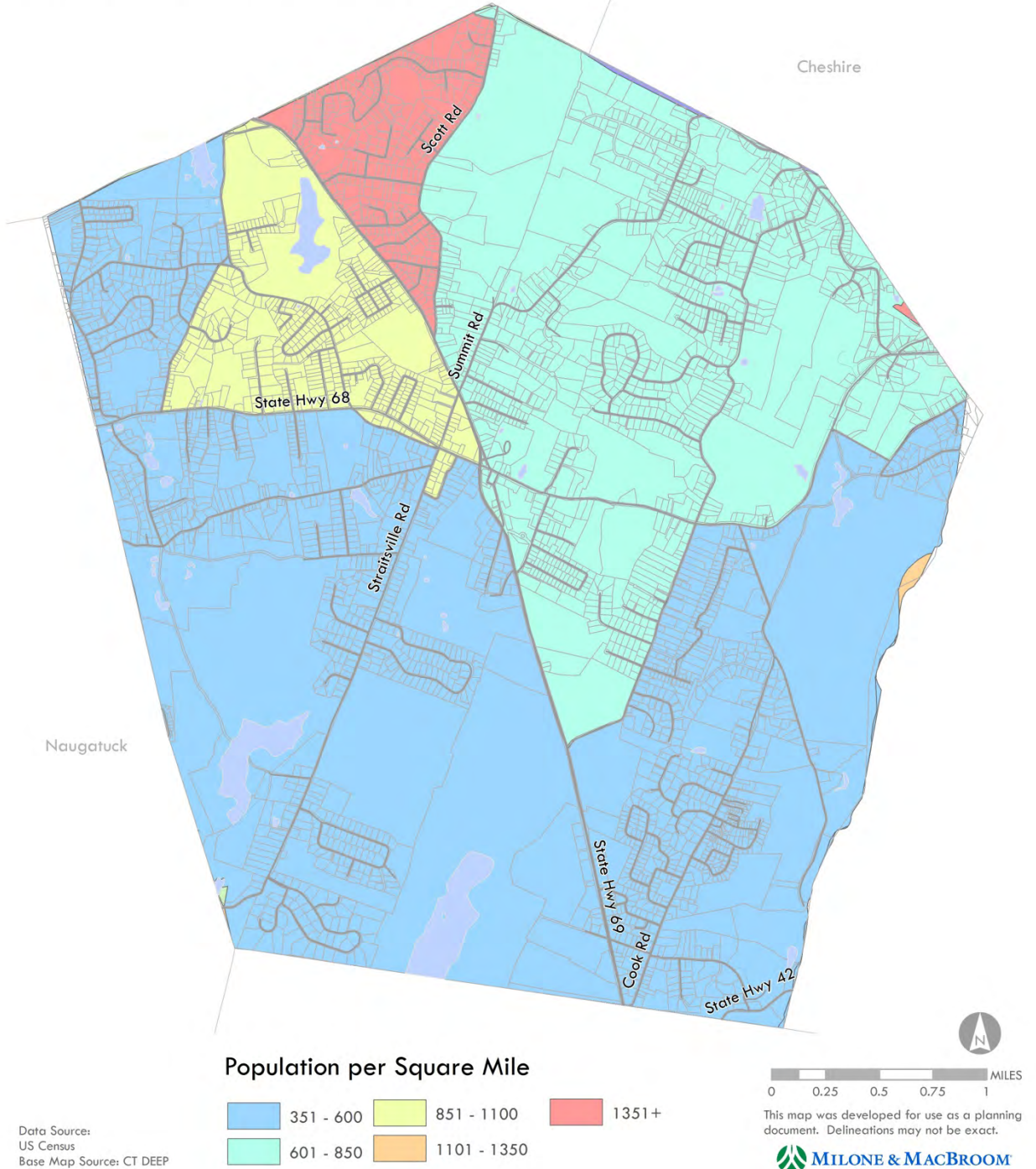
Source: US Census, Council of Governments: Central Naugatuck Valley, A Profile of the CNVR: 2012

¹ Council of Governments: Central Naugatuck Valley, A Profile of the CNVR: 2012

Town of Prospect

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Population by Block Group, 2010



POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The Connecticut State Data Center at the University of Connecticut has projected populations for Prospect based on levels of fertility. The projections are shown in Figure 1 and listed in Table 2. The projections show an overall continued increase in the population over the next ten years. The fertility level projection shows a relatively small but stable increase in the population of approximately 0.2-0.3% per year, or an increase of 6.91% from 2010 to 2025. The Connecticut Department of Transportation also compiles its own population projections, which have been plotted in Figure 1, as well.

In comparison, fertility rate population projections for the State and New Haven County out to 2025 show a 4.8% and 6% increase, respectively, over 15 years. In addition, the neighboring communities of Cheshire and Bethany are projected to decrease by 1.13% and increase by 8.57% from 2010 to 2025, respectively. As shown in the trend line in Figure 1, the average growth in Prospect since 1970 was 1% per year, though the trend is not necessarily projected to continue.

FIGURE 1

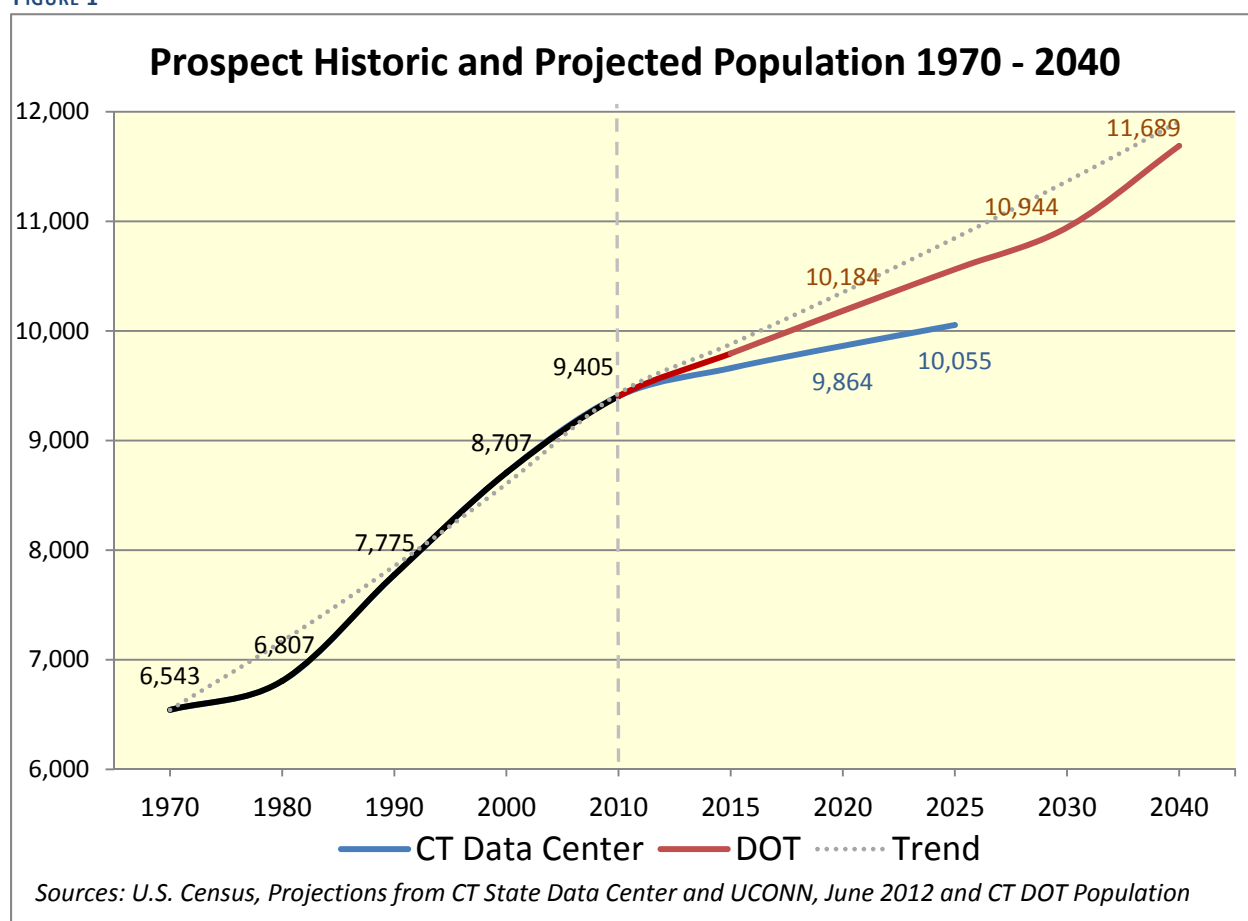


Table 2 presents a comparison of population projections by The Connecticut State Data Center at UConn and the Connecticut Department of Transportation, as well as 2000 and 2010 census counts, for Prospect and the surrounding towns and region.

TABLE 2

Population Projections				
	Census Population		UConn CTSDC Projection	CT DOT Projection
	2000	2010	2020	2040
Prospect	8,707	9,405	9,864	11,689
Cheshire	28,543	29,261	29,120	35,831
Bethany	5,040	5,563	5,910	6,648
Middlebury	6,451	7,575	8,471	8,964
Oxford	9,821	12,683	14,714	18,001
Naugatuck	30,989	31,862	32,877	36,615
Connecticut	3,405,565	3,574,097	3,702,472	4,013,596
New Haven County	824,008	862,477	898,513	948,647

Source: UConn CTSDC, CT DOT

ELEMENTS OF POPULATION CHANGE

Population changes result from natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration. Overall, annual births in Prospect have declined during the last decade, as shown in Table 3. However, other communities and the State as a whole have experienced a more significant decline in annual births than the Town of Prospect. Indeed, national fertility and birth rates have declined precipitously since 2007 according to the National Center for Health Statistics.

Annual births are down 13% from 2000 to 2010 in Connecticut, compared to an 18% decline in Prospect (from 1999-2009). However, given Prospect's small population, it is important to also look at the average change in births, which was a decrease of 0.48% per year, or 4.8% for the same ten years.

The number of deaths each year has remained relatively stable, however after 2008, the number of deaths outpaces births resulting in a net natural decrease. The Town's natural increase from 2000 to 2010 was approximately 198 people. Given that the 2010 Census indicated a gain of 698 residents between 2000 and 2010, one can assume the community experienced an in-migration of approximately 500 people over the last decade.

TABLE 3

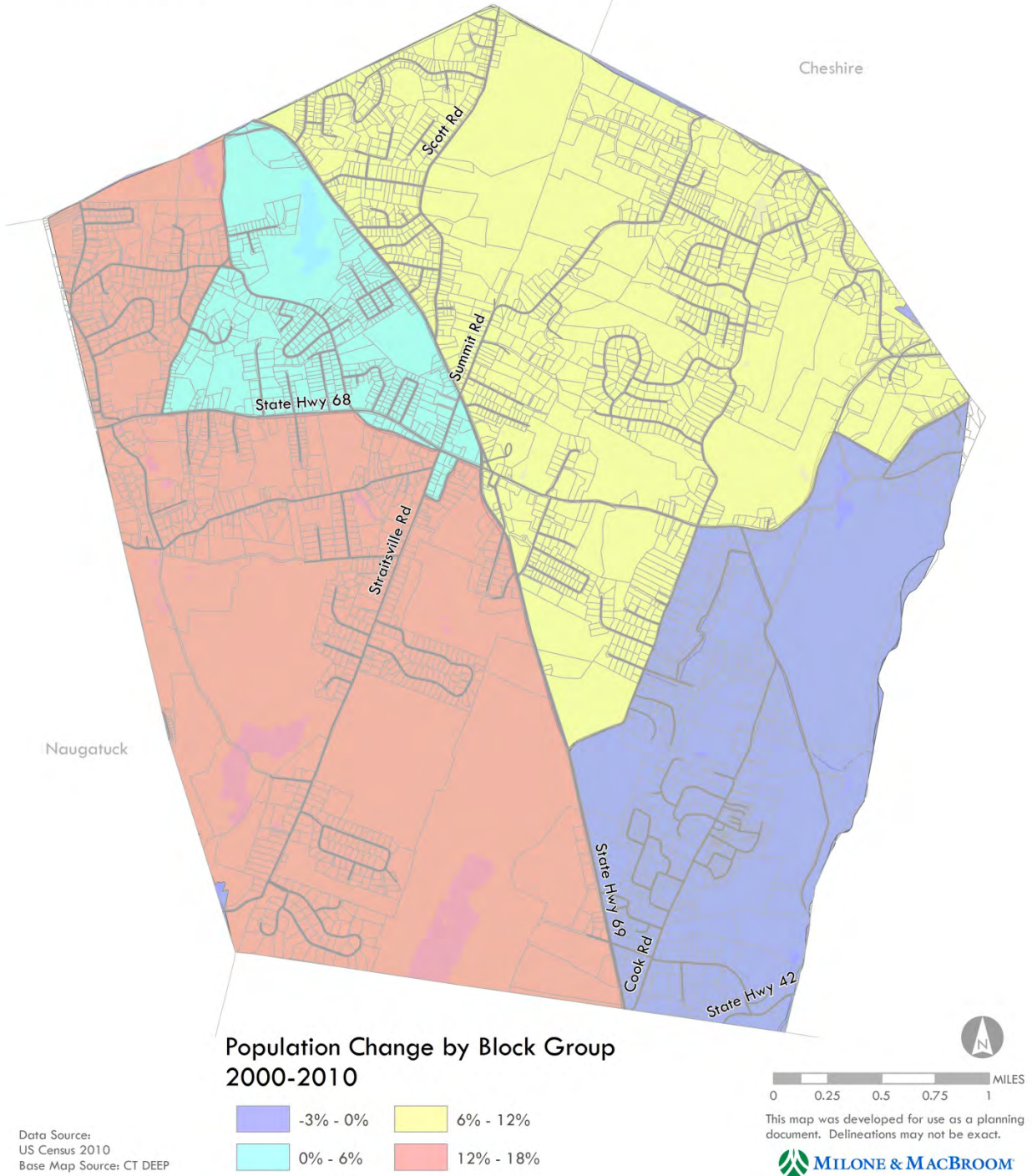
Prospect Natural Increase 1998-2009		
	Births	Deaths
1998	82	72
1999	93	61
2000	102	78
2001	86	73
2002	110	71
2003	84	74
2004	104	76
2005	100	73
2006	79	83
2007	88	64
2008	75	75
2009	76	81
Total	1,079	881
<i>Source: CT Dpt of Public Health, Office of Vital Statistics</i>		

As is the case in all communities, the population in various areas of the community changes at different paces. Map 2, *Population Change by Block Group*, shows changes in Prospect by census block groups.

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Population Change by Block Group



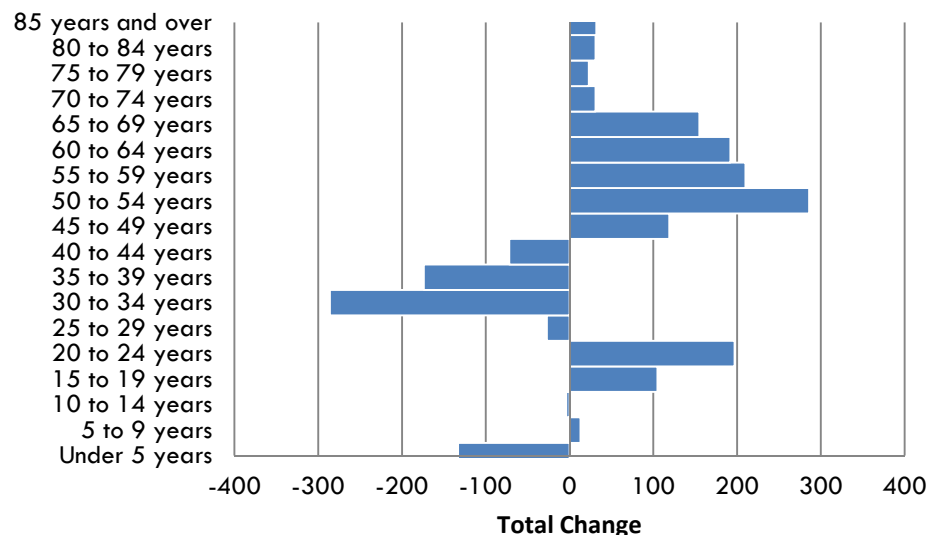
AGE

In line with state and regional trends, Prospect's population aged between 2000 and 2010. The median age in Prospect was 43.8 in 2010, up 11 % from 2000 figures. These numbers reflect the overall national and state trends of an aging population.

Looking more specifically at changes in population by age cohorts within Prospect, it is evident that Prospect has experienced a loss in the young family age population, including infants. Figure 2 shows changes by age groups from 2000 to 2010, and Figure 3 shows projected changes by age groups from 2010 to 2020, using the UConn model. The increases in the 15 to 30-year old population and the sizeable 50 year and older population suggest the trend of young single working people staying in or moving to the area, and people over 50 (generally the 'baby boomer' population) keeping their homes. The increase in population over 50 may also be a result of recent age restricted developments in the Town. The loss of young families and increase in older age groups has implications on facilities and service planning for the Town. It also affects the type of housing that may be required to support the changing population.

FIGURE 2

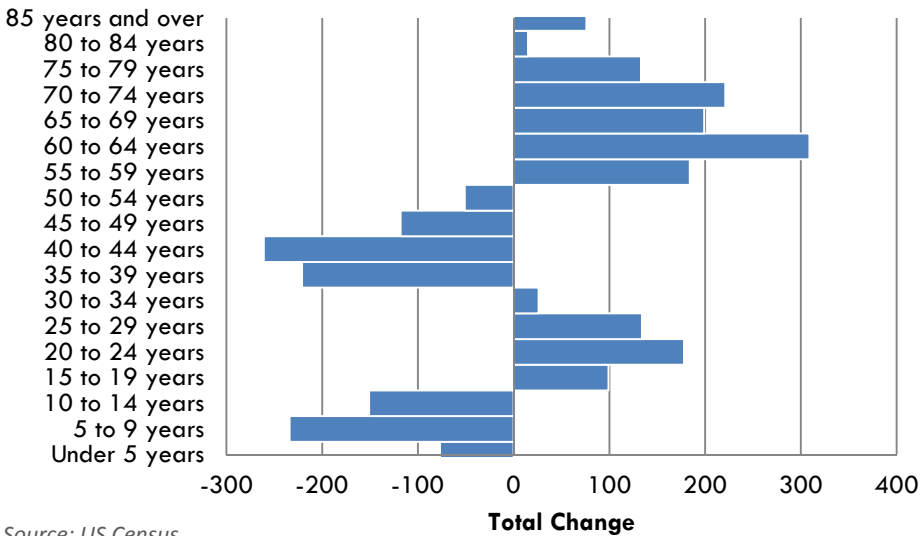
Prospect Change in Population by Age Group, 2000-2010



Source: US Census

FIGURE 3

Prospect Change in Population by Age Group, 2010-2020

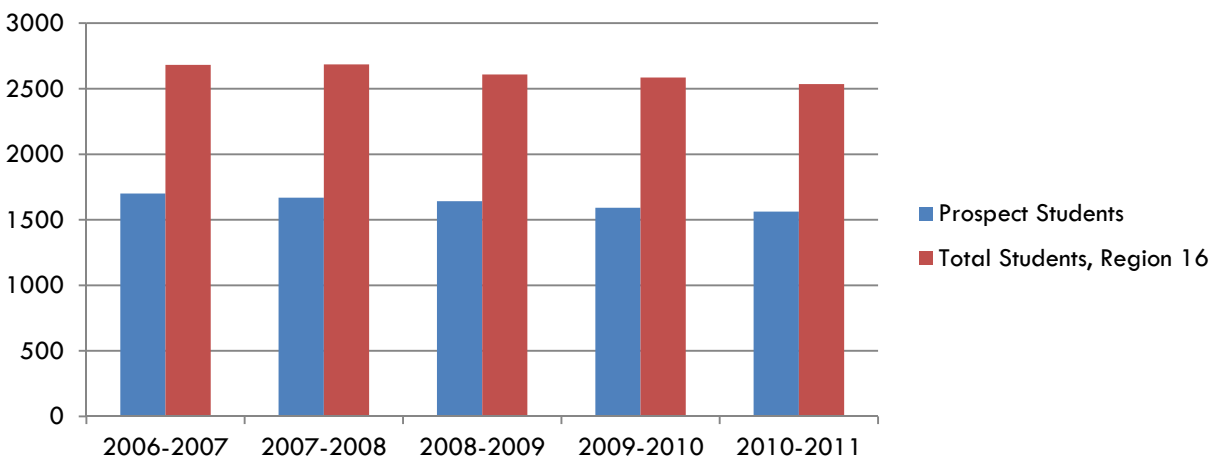


SCHOOL AGE POPULATION

A projected decline in school aged population can have an effect on present school facilities. Although a decline in the number of students would not negatively impact the adequacy of existing facilities (versus a sudden increase), the subsequent lack of state funding tied to enrollment could affect the overall school district. Because Prospect is part of a regional school district, the effects of the enrollment for the entire district would have to be analyzed to gauge any impact to the facilities or budgets, however actual enrollment figures from the Connecticut Department of Education included in Figure 4 , shows that Region 16 and Prospect have seen a similar proportion of declining enrollment.

FIGURE 4

Change in School Enrollment



RACIAL AND ETHNIC COMPOSITION

Prospect's racial composition is less diverse than the composition of New Haven County or the Central Naugatuck Valley Region.

Figure 5 shows the breakdown of Prospect's population by race. The majority, or 95%, is white. This is less diverse than New Haven County where the 2010 population was 75% white, or the CNVR which was 79.4% white in 2010. The COGCNV report found, however, that 76.9% of the region's minority population resides in Waterbury. As shown in Table 4, Prospect has seen an increase in all races. Some of these increases may be the result of self-reporting differences. Figure 5 shows racial composition in graphic form.

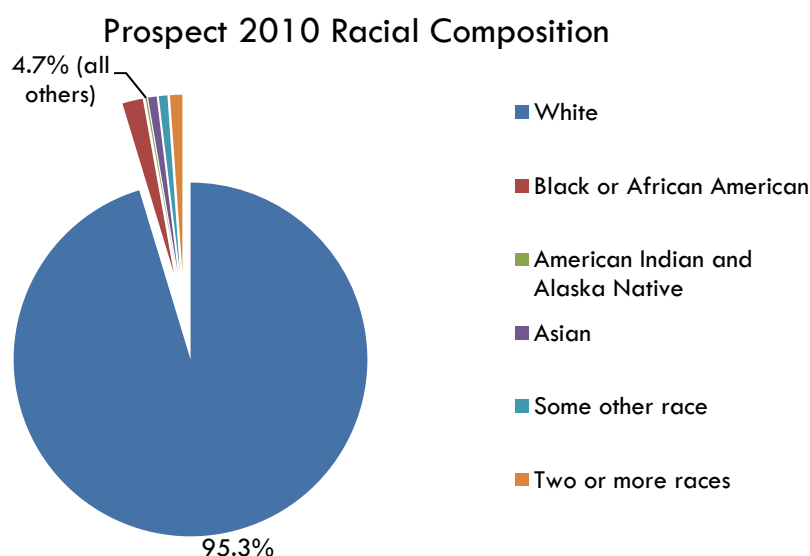
The Hispanic population, of any race, in Prospect was 3% in 2010. That is significantly less than the Hispanic population throughout New Haven County, which was about 15% 2010, or the CNVR, which was 14.8% in 2010. The COGCNV report found that as with minorities in general, 81% of Hispanics in the region reside in Waterbury.

TABLE 4

Change in Prospect Racial Composition, 2000-2010			
RACE	2000	2010	Change
One race	8,644	9,299	7.6%
White	8,386	8,964	6.9%
Black or African American	124	177	42.7%
American Indian and Alaska Native	8	12	50.0%
Asian	63	73	15.9%
Some other race	63	73	15.9%
Two or more races	63	106	68.3%

Source: US Census

FIGURE 5



Source: US Census

HOUSEHOLDS

In addition to changes in age and racial composition, the types of households in which Prospect residents live are changing. The Town experienced a moderate increase in total households between 2000 and 2010, of 337 or about 11%. More significantly, the number of single-person households, especially households over 65 and non-family households, increased as did the number of female households with children (see Table 5 below). The COGCNV report indicates that even as married-couple families are the majority of households in the region, their numbers are declining. This is not the case for Prospect, as shown in Table 5. Married-couple families overall grew by 4%, although the number of married-couple families with children declined by the same amount.

TABLE 5

Households by type	2000	2010	Change	% Change
Total households	3,020	3,357	337	11.2%
Family households (families)	2,456	2,616	160	6.5%
With own children under 18 years	1,087	1,088	1	0.1%
Married-couple family	2,142	2,226	84	3.9%
With own children under 18 years	974	934	-40	-4.1%
Male householder, no husband present	N/A	125		
With own children under 18 years	N/A	48		
Female householder, no husband present	214	265	51	23.8%
With own children under 18 years	76	106	30	39.5%
Nonfamily households	564	741	177	31.4%
Householder living alone	456	602	146	32.0%
Householder 65 years and over	202	282	80	39.6%
Households with individuals under 18 years	1,161	1,173	12	1.0%
Households with individuals 65 years and over	727	953	226	31.1%
Average household size	2.83	2.76		-2.5%
Average family size	3.16	3.15		-0.3%

Source: US Census

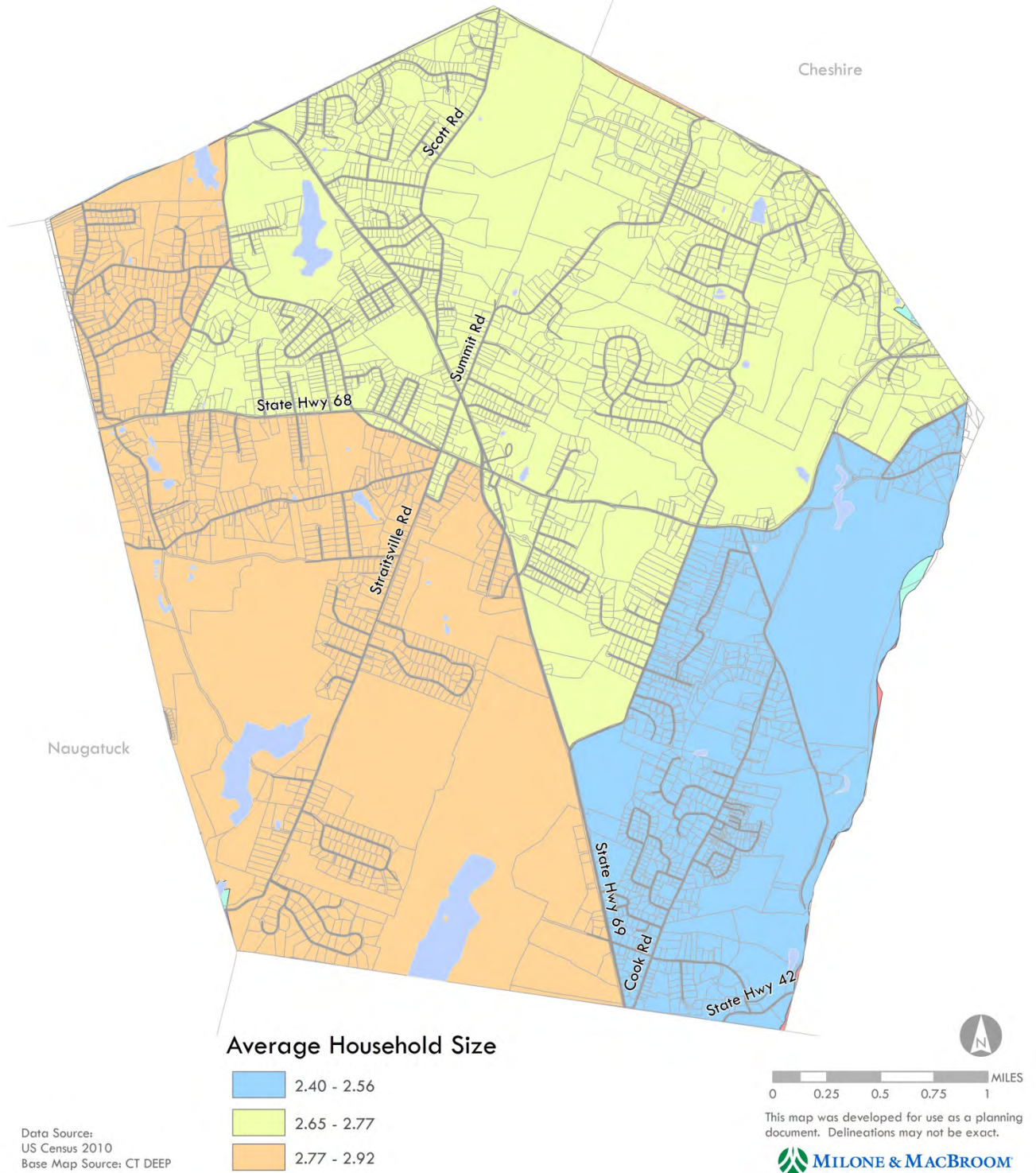
While the number of households in the entire Town of Prospect increased between 2000 and 2010, the average household size and average family size both decreased. As Map 3 indicates, the average population size varies by area, with larger households mostly located in the southwest section of the Town, and the smallest households in the southeast.

Additionally, while Prospect experienced only 11% growth in the overall number of households, the number of households headed by a person age 65 or older grew by 31%, from 727 in 2000 to 953 in 2010. This aging of householders has implications for the future of housing units in the community, especially when the real estate market recovers and householders decide to leave their family homes.

Town of Prospect

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Average Household Size by Block Group, 2010



WHERE IS PROSPECT'S POPULATION HEADING?

Prospect's population has grown quite steadily for the last 30 years. While incremental changes in population characteristics have occurred and will continue, the Town's trend of relatively high growth is expected to taper off. The following demographic trends can be expected over the next decade.

- Stable population – Prospect will likely maintain a steady population of around 10,000.
- Aging population - The population will continue to age, not just in Prospect, but across the Region and State.
- Decreasing household sizes – Prospect's household sizes will continue to decrease as fewer families with fewer children occupy housing units.