

# The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South

200 Hopmeadow Street  
Simsbury, Connecticut

PREPARED FOR

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# 1

## Introduction

VHB (VHB) has been retained by SL Simsbury LLC to prepare a Demographic & Fiscal Impact Study for the 580-unit residential development known as “The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South” proposed for the Town of Simsbury, Connecticut. The primary objective of this study is to identify the potential impacts that The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South development could have on the resident population, housing stock and municipally funded services of Simsbury Town.

Estimates of these impacts are informed by a thorough analysis of existing conditions and trends that are detailed in this study as Chapter Two and Three. Chapter Two’s deep exploration into the Town’s demographic and housing characteristics, including its share of affordable housing, and Chapter Three’s overview of the existing and historic capacity of its municipal services, most importantly the Simsbury Public School District, and budgetary realities define the assumptions and conclusions that are made in Chapter Four and Five, and summarized in Chapter Six of this study. While the estimates calculated in this study are not firmly conclusive, given the uncertainty of predicting future conditions, extensive analysis into the present day and historic conditions of Simsbury, CT offer an as-accurate-as-possible projection of the future benefits and impacts of the development known as The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South.

## Project Overview

### Project History

The project site of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South development lies in the southeastern quadrant of the Town of Simsbury, CT, a municipality in Hartford County, Connecticut. Specifically, the project site at 200 Hopmeadow Street abuts Hopmeadow Street (cosigned as Connecticut State Highway Route 10 and US Route 202), which serves as the main gateway and commercial corridor of the Town of Simsbury. The project is surrounded by protected wetlands that abut the 46-mile Farmington River.

The 175-acre property at 200 Hopmeadow Street was formerly home to a 645,239 square foot office complex for The Hartford Insurance Group, which closed in 2013. In 2014, the Town of Simsbury approved a form-based zoning code, titled the Hartford-Simsbury Form Base Code District (HS-FBC), for the project site. The HS-FBC divided the property at 200 Hopmeadow Street into two developable sites - the “North Hartford” site and “South Hartford” site<sup>1</sup>. The “North Hartford” site was undeveloped and primarily agricultural which was directly north of the built office complex for The Hartford. The “South Hartford Site,” which is the 125 acres that the Ridge at Talcott Mountain South is proposed for, contained the former buildings and parking lot of The Hartford complex.

The HS-FBC established a vision and the procedures and standards for development of the two sites. Six component zones were established for the HS-FBC District; any of which can be applied to the project sites by a

<sup>1</sup> The Hartford-Simsbury Form-Based Code, [https://www.simsburyct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf9751/f/file/file/final\\_the\\_hartford-simsbury\\_form\\_based\\_code.pdf](https://www.simsburyct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf9751/f/file/file/final_the_hartford-simsbury_form_based_code.pdf).

## Demographic & Fiscal Impact Study | The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South

proposed development: 1) Neighborhood Commercial, 2) Neighborhood Transition, 3) Neighborhood, 4) Cluster Neighborhood, 5) Mixed-Use Transition and 6) Special District.

As currently proposed, The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South's Master Site Development Plan, as required by the HS-FBC, would apply the Neighborhood Zone on 40% of the site and the Neighborhood Transition Zone on 51% of the site, with the remaining 9% dedicated to a landscape buffer. Both of these zones permit residential uses, with neighborhood commercial permitting residential uses only on the upper floors (not the ground floor). As part of the standards set out by the HS-FBC, the proposal of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will be an Alternative Compliance Application (Type 4 application) for development, in accordance with the HS-FBC.

In 2015, the Hartford Site (both north and south sites) was purchased by SL Simsbury LLC, which demolished the former Hartford Office Complex in 2016 to prepare the site for redevelopment<sup>2</sup>.

In accordance with the HS-FBC zoning code, SL Simsbury LLC developed and completed The Ridge at Talcott Mountain *North* development, the counterpart to the currently proposed The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, on the 40 acre, undeveloped "North Hartford" Site in 2019. The completed northern development features 111 townhouse units, 188 apartment units, a 120-bed assisted living space which was subdivided and sold to Anthology Senior Living, a resident clubhouse and 11,600 square-feet of retail/office space.

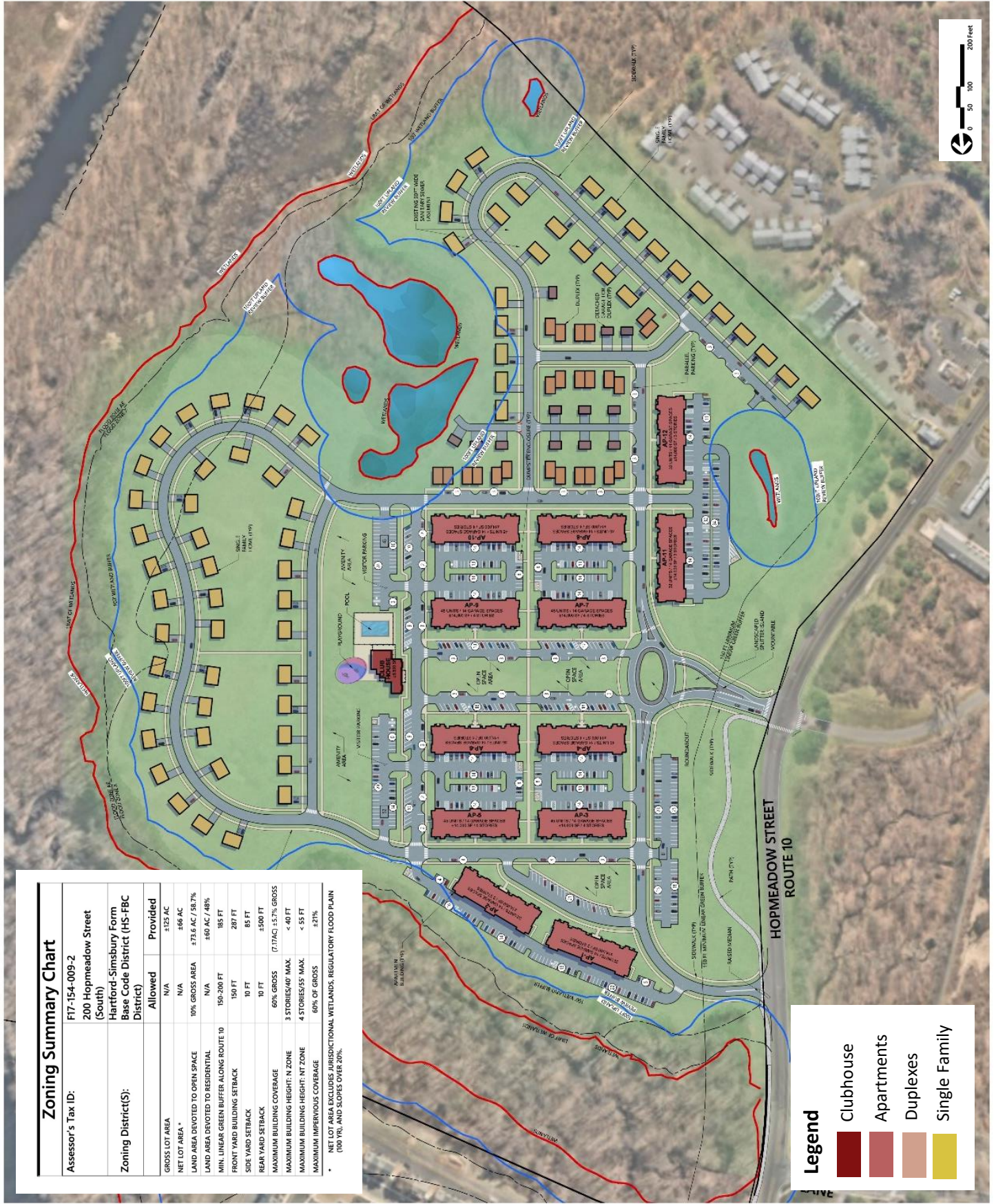
### The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South Proposal

The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will be developed on the "South Hartford" site, which is defined as the roughly 125 acres encompassing the footprint of the demolished Hartford Office Complex and parking lot (See Figure 1.1). The project would consist of 580 residential units, including 216 one-bedroom units, 296 two-bedroom units, 32 three-bedroom units and 36 four-bedroom units (See Table 1.1). These units would be located in a mix of building types, including three- and four-story apartment/stacked flat buildings, duplexes and single-family homes (See Table 1.2). These buildings will be oriented with the cluster of the twelve proposed apartment/stacked flat buildings bounded by duplexes directly to the south and single-family homes to the south and east of the apartments. A total of 10% (or 58 units) of these units will be set aside for affordable units, including 5% of units requiring affordability based on 60% of average family income and 5% requiring affordability based on 80% of average family income, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 8-30g. In addition to these residential units, a 5,500 square foot community building, including a playground, gym, game room and other amenities, is proposed to be centrally located among the cluster of apartment buildings.

The development proposal also includes dedicated open space and recreational trails. The front lawn of the property will be dedicated to public use and include a multi-use trail system that will connect the Farmington River Trail. Dedicated shared open community space throughout the site for the development's residents, including a grand lawn, will enable programming such as art shows, farmer's markets, outdoor music events, nature and educational classes. Full build-out of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South is estimated to be completed by mid-2027 to 2028 and will cost a total of \$115 to \$150 million.

<sup>2</sup> Silverman Group, "Developer Will Demolish Buildings on the Former Campus of the Hartford in Simsbury," Silverman Group, January 24, 2018, <http://www.silvermangroup.net/2016/02/23/developer-will-demolish-buildings-on-the-former-campus-of-the-hartford-in-simsbury/>.

Figure 1.1: Site Plan of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South



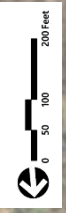
**Zoning Summary Chart**

Assessor's Tax ID:	F17-154-009-2		
Zoning District(S):	200 Hopmeadow Street (South) Hartford-Simsbury Form Base Code District (HS-FBC District)		
GROSS LOT AREA	Allowed	Provided	
NET LOT AREA *	N/A	±125 AC	±66 AC
LAND AREA DEVOTED TO OPEN SPACE	10% GROSS AREA	±73.6 AC / 58.7%	±60 AC / 48%
MIN. LINEAR GREEN BUFFER ALONG ROUTE 10	150-200 FT	185 FT	287 FT
FRONT YARD BUILDING SETBACK	10 FT	85 FT	±500 FT
REAR YARD SETBACK	10 FT	±500 FT	
MAXIMUM BUILDING COVERAGE	60% GROSS	(7.7)AC ±5.7% GROSS	
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: N ZONE	3 STORIES/40' MAX.	± 40 FT	
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT: NT ZONE	4 STORIES/55' MAX.	± 55 FT	
MAXIMUM IMPERVIOUS COVERAGE	60% OF GROSS	±21%	

\* NET LOT AREA EXCLUDES JURISDICTIONAL WETLANDS, REGULATORY FLOOD PLAIN (100 YR), AND SLOPES OVER 20%.

**Legend**

- Clubhouse
- Apartments
- Duplexes
- Single Family



**Table 1.1: The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South - Unit Mix**

Unit Type	Number of Units	Number of Bedrooms
One Bedroom	216	216
Two Bedroom	296	592
Three Bedroom	32	96
Four Bedroom	36	144
<b>Total</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>1,048</b>

**Table 1.2: The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South – Building Types**

Building Type	Quantity	Units Per Building	Total Units
Single Family Residences (3-4 Bedroom)	68	1	68
Duplexes (2 Bedroom)	12	2	24
Three-Story Apartment (1-2 Bedroom)	4	32	128
Four-Story Apartment (1-2 Bedroom)	8	45	360
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>580</b>

## Development Trends in Simsbury, CT

The residential developments at 200 Hopmeadow Street are just two of several multi-family residential projects that have been developed or proposed for the Town of Simsbury over the past decade. Table 1.3 lists examples of recent resident development in Simsbury and the corresponding number of units built for each development<sup>3</sup>.

**Table 1.3: Recent Residential Development in Simsbury, CT**

Development Name	Number of Units	Year Built
Mill Commons	88	2013
Kings Ridge	24	2013
Carson Way	74	2014
Mill Pond Crossing	20	2014
The Pointe at Dorset Crossing	168	2015
Highcroft Place	272	2016
Aspen Green	180	2017-2019
The Ridge at Talcott Mountain (North)	299	2019

<sup>3</sup>Simsbury Public School District, October 2023 Enrollment Report, October 2023, [https://www.simsbury.k12.ct.us/uploaded/District\\_Content/BOE/Budget\\_Update/2022-23\\_Budget\\_Year/Board\\_of\\_Education\\_Approved\\_Budget.pdf](https://www.simsbury.k12.ct.us/uploaded/District_Content/BOE/Budget_Update/2022-23_Budget_Year/Board_of_Education_Approved_Budget.pdf).



# 2



## Simsbury Demographics & Housing Characteristics

The Town of Simsbury, Connecticut, located in Hartford County, is one of the five communities that make up what is known locally as the Farmington Valley, in which the Farmington River runs through. The studied development, The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, gets its name from Talcott Mountain which is located in the most southeastern corner of the Town and encompasses two Connecticut State Parks. Three distinct Census Designated Places (CDP) lie within Simsbury Town – Weatogue, Simsbury Center and West Simsbury. The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South project directly abuts the southeast border of the Village of Weatogue.

The CDP known as the Simsbury Center contains the town’s central commercial corridor which aligns Hopmeadow Street, directly north of the project site. The primary portion of this corridor overlaps with the Simsbury Center Historic District, which was established on the National Register of Historic Places in 1996. The project site is located just 2.5 miles south of this Historic District and commercial corridor.

Simsbury, CT has consistently been ranked as one of the best places to live in Connecticut, especially for young families<sup>4</sup>. This recognition is one reason of many for the trends detailed in this section. This profile of Simsbury, CT explores the demographics and housing characteristics and trends to provide the requisite context for fully understanding the demographic and fiscal impacts of the development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South.

### Demographics

#### Total Population

The total population of the Town of Simsbury, CT was estimated to be 24,517 residents in the 2020 Decennial Census<sup>5</sup>. There has been a 4.3% increase in the Town’s population since 2010<sup>5</sup>. While experiencing a higher rate of increase than the stagnant growth observed across Hartford County or the State of Connecticut between 2010 and 2020, Simsbury, CT observed a population increase that is relatively consistent with its neighboring municipalities of similar size in and around the Farmington Valley area (See Figure 2.1)<sup>5</sup>.

**Table 2.1: Population Growth, 2010 – 2020<sup>5</sup>**

Jurisdiction	Population, 2010	Population, 2020	Percent Growth
Simsbury, CT	23,511	24,517	+4.3%
Avon, CT	18,098	18,932	+4.6%
Bloomfield, CT	20,486	21,535	+5.12%
Farmington, CT	25,340	26,712	+5.4%
Windsor, CT	29,044	29,492	+1.5%
Hartford County	894,014	899,498	+ .61%
State of Connecticut	3,574,097	3,605,944	+ .89%

<sup>4</sup> Town of Simsbury, Simsbury Neighborhoods Highly Ranked for Best Places to Live and Raise a Family, March 2022, <http://tinyurl.com/34ncktuh>

<sup>5</sup> US Census Bureau, 2010 & 2020 Decennial Census, <https://data.census.gov/>

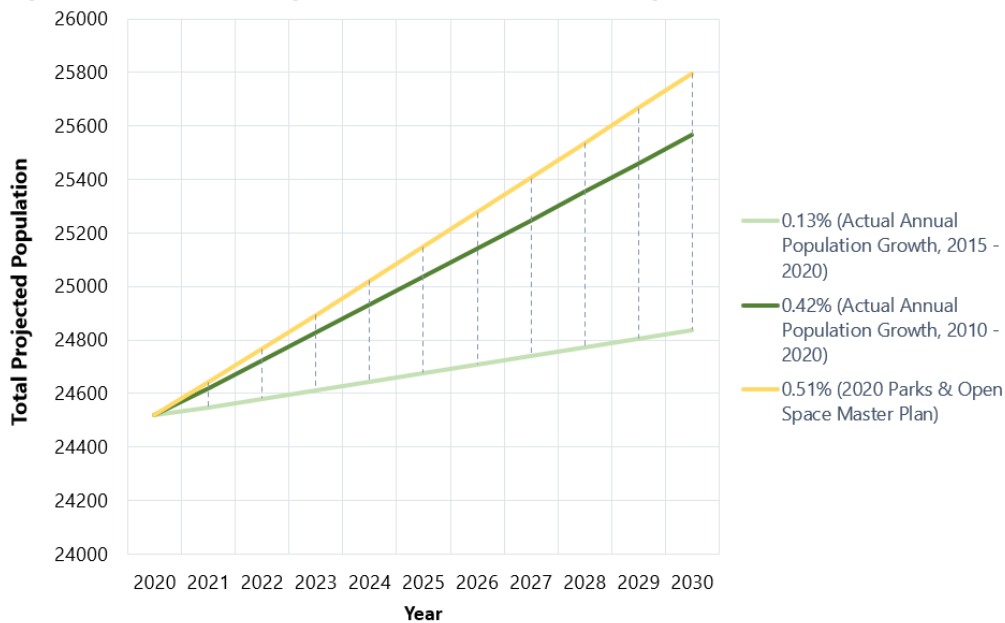
## Population Projections, 2020 - 2030

In 2020, the Town of Simsbury published the Simsbury Parks & Open Space Master Plan. Using data from the US Census Bureau, the Town projected Simsbury’s population growth until 2035 as part of the study’s demographic profile for Simsbury. The population projections that were calculated used an estimated 2019 population of 24,647, approximately 130 residents more than the actual 2020 Decennial Census estimate for Simsbury’s total population<sup>6</sup>. Assuming an annual growth rate of .51%, based upon estimated growth rates between 2010 and 2019, the Town projected a population of 25,278 residents by 2024 and 26,052 residents by the year 2030<sup>6</sup>.

In reality, the Town of Simsbury will likely experience a slower population growth than what was anticipated by the 2020 Parks and Open Space Master Plan over the course of the next decade. The actual annual growth rate between the 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census for the Town of Simsbury was .42% (.9% lower than what was assumed by the Master Plan)<sup>7</sup>. At an assumed annual growth rate of .42%, the projected Simsbury population in 2027 would be roughly 300-400 residents less than originally anticipated in the 2020 Study.

However, when comparing the American Community Survey’s Five-Year Estimates for 2008 – 2012, 2013 – 2017 and 2018-2022, it is clear that the Town’s population grew at a faster rate earlier in the 2010s than in the latter half of the decade<sup>8</sup>. Between the periods of 2008 – 2012 and 2013-2017, the American Community Survey estimated an increase of 772 residents or a 3.3% increase. In comparison, there was an estimated increase of 310 residents or 1.2% between the 2013 – 2017 and 2018 – 2022 periods. For example, the Town of Simsbury experienced an estimated growth rate of only .13% between 2015, when the population was estimated to be 24,348, and 2020, when the population was estimated to be 24,517. Comparatively, the Town of Simsbury experienced an annual growth rate of .71% between 2010 and 2015, with the Town growing from 23,507 to 24,348. In other words, this observed trend combined with the actual 2020 Simsbury population being lower than the Master Plan’s estimate for 2019 indicates that the actual 2027 population in the Town of Simsbury will be lower than originally planned for by the Parks and Open Space Master Plan.

Figure 2.1: Comparison of Annual Population Growth Rate Assumptions<sup>6,7,8</sup>



<sup>6</sup> Simsbury Parks & Open Space Master Plan, October 2020, <http://tinyurl.com/45axzn6d>

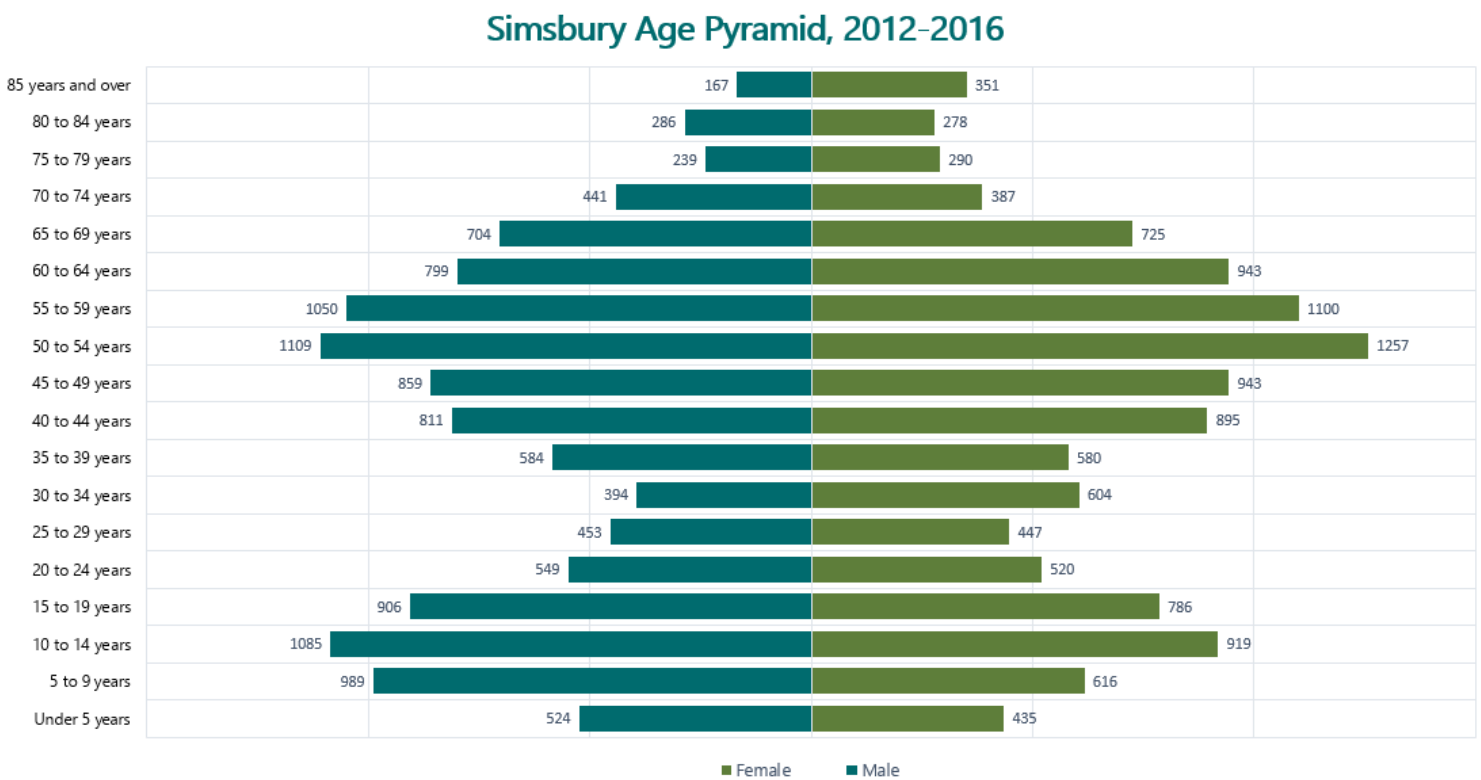
<sup>7</sup> US Census Bureau, 2010 & 2020 Decennial Census, <https://data.census.gov/>

<sup>8</sup> US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2012-2016 & 2017-2021, <https://data.census.gov/>

## Age of Population

The growing population of Simsbury, CT has become younger since 2012 (see Figure 2.2). Using estimates from the US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey five-year estimates, the percentage of Simsbury’s population under the age of 18 years (i.e. school children) increased between the time ranges of 2012-2016 and 2017-2021 from 24.5% to 25.6%<sup>9</sup>. Increases in the number of residents under the age of 5 years and between 5 and 9 years were the largest drivers of growth in this age cohort (See Figure 2.3). The largest growth across the entire age distribution for Simsbury’s population was observed within the 35-to-39-year cohort (likely the primary parents group of the 0 – 9 year cohort), which increased by 2.33% over the periods of 2012-2016 and 2017-2021<sup>9</sup>. With these trends, the median age of the Town of Simsbury slightly decreased between the two periods of 2012-2016 and 2017-2021 from 44.8 years to 43.4 years<sup>9</sup>. However, this median age is still older than the estimated median age for Simsbury for the period of 2007-2011 (42.0 years), when the under 18-year-old cohort represented nearly 28 percent of the population<sup>9</sup>.

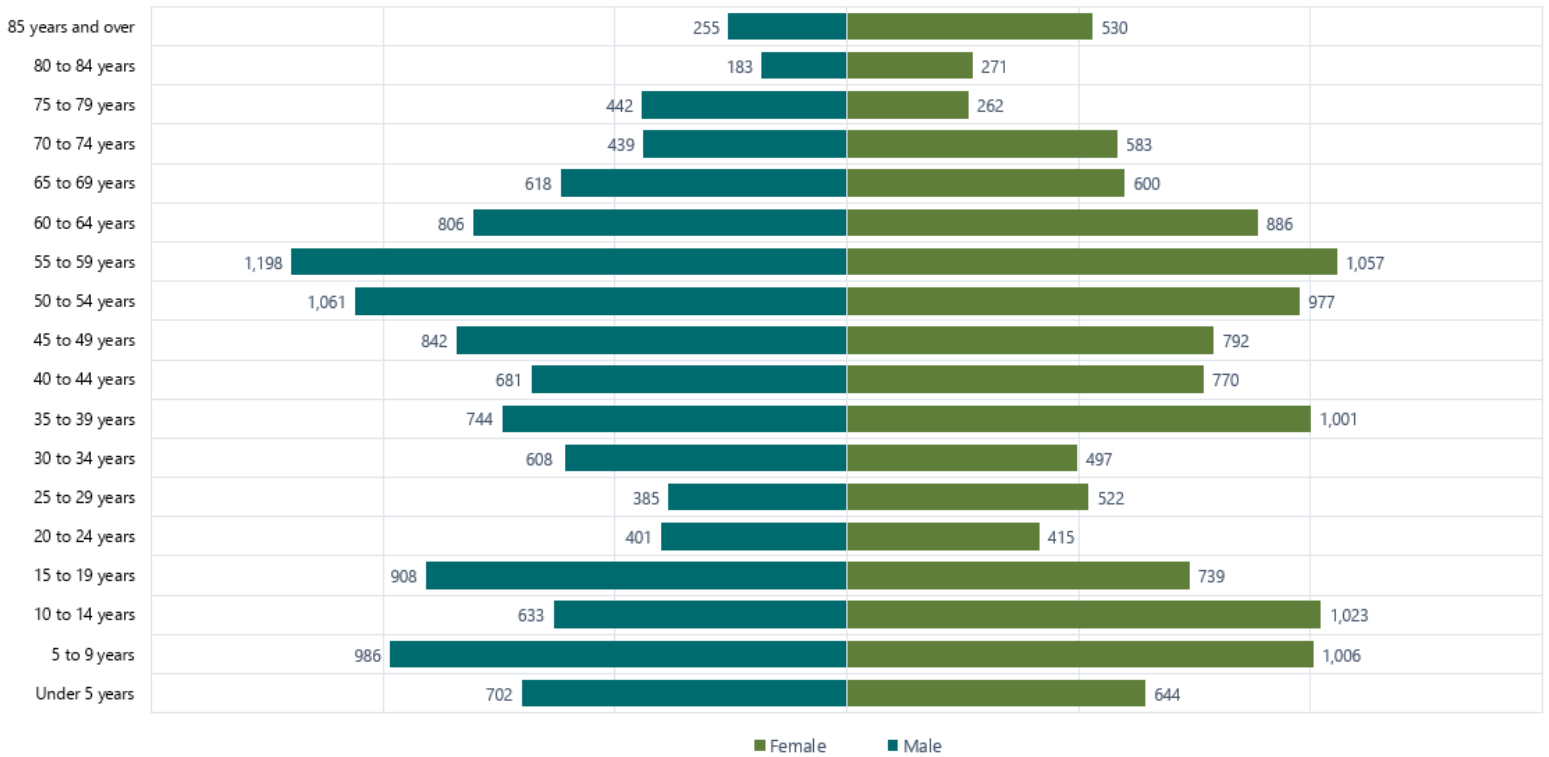
Figure 2.2: Simsbury Age Pyramids, 2012-2016 and 2017-2021<sup>9</sup>



% of Population	Under 5 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	15 to 19 years	20 to 24 years	25 to 29 years	30 to 34 years	35 to 39 years	40 to 44 years	45 to 49 years	50 to 54 years	55 to 59 years	60 to 64 years	65 to 69 years	70 to 74 years	75 to 79 years	80 to 84 years	85 years and over
<b>Male</b>	2.18%	4.12%	4.52%	3.77%	2.28%	1.89%	1.64%	2.43%	3.38%	3.58%	4.62%	4.37%	3.33%	2.93%	1.84%	0.99%	1.19%	0.70%
<b>Female</b>	1.81%	2.57%	3.83%	3.27%	2.16%	1.86%	2.52%	2.42%	3.72%	3.93%	5.23%	4.58%	3.93%	3.02%	1.61%	1.21%	1.16%	1.46%

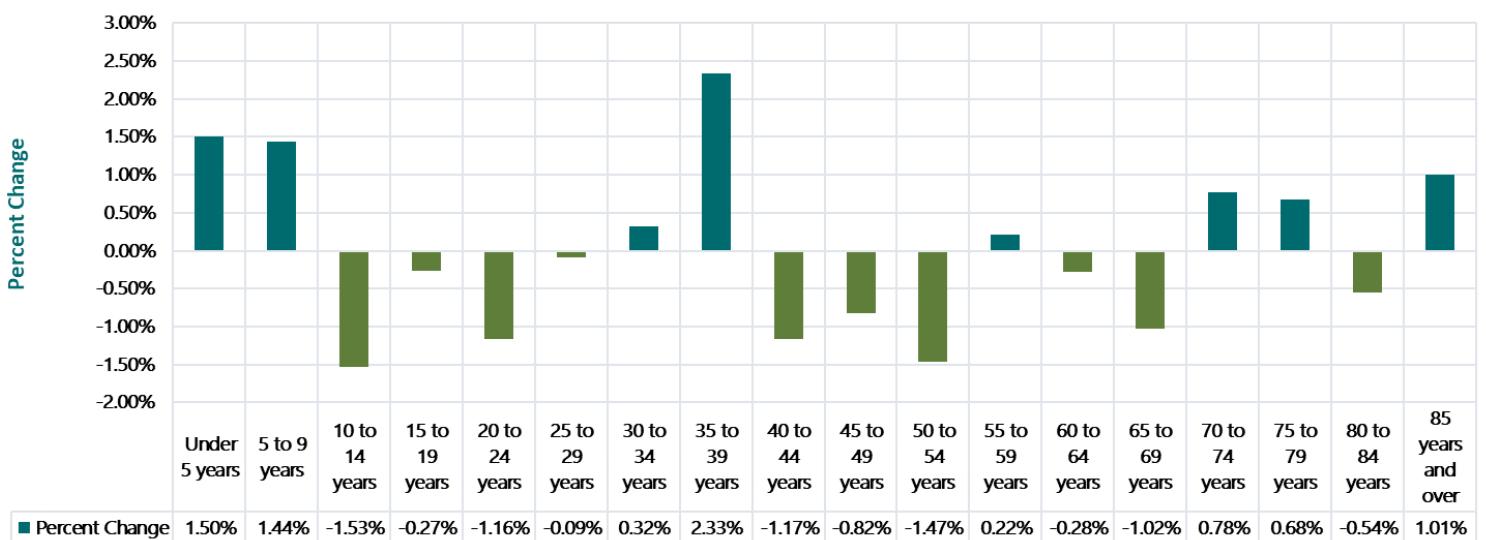
<sup>9</sup> US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Age & Sex), 2012-2016 & 2017-2021, <https://data.census.gov/>

### Simsbury Age Pyramid, 2017-2021



% of Population	Under 5 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	15 to 19 years	20 to 24 years	25 to 29 years	30 to 34 years	35 to 39 years	40 to 44 years	45 to 49 years	50 to 54 years	55 to 59 years	60 to 64 years	65 to 69 years	70 to 74 years	75 to 79 years	80 to 84 years	85 years and over
<b>Male</b>	2.87%	4.03%	2.59%	3.71%	1.64%	1.57%	2.48%	3.04%	2.78%	3.44%	4.34%	4.90%	3.29%	2.53%	1.79%	1.81%	0.75%	1.04%
<b>Female</b>	2.63%	4.11%	4.18%	3.02%	1.70%	2.13%	2.03%	4.09%	3.15%	3.24%	3.99%	4.32%	3.62%	2.45%	2.38%	1.07%	1.11%	2.17%

Figure 2.3: Age Cohort Population Growth (2012-2016, 2017-2021)<sup>9</sup>



## Housing and Household Characteristics

### The Simsbury Housing Stock

The Town of Simsbury has 9,492 housing units, with 96% of units occupied<sup>10</sup>. Simsbury is predominantly characterized by traditional owner-occupied single-family housing, with 74% of its total units identified as single detached units<sup>10</sup>. Housing units with two or three bedrooms represents over 45% of the housing stock in Simsbury and units with four or more bedrooms represents an additional 47%<sup>10</sup>. In other words, over 90% of housing units in Simsbury are traditionally the most likely to generate children. Of the 9,110 total housing units that are occupied, approximately 78% are owner-occupied<sup>10</sup>. The median value of these owner-occupied units is \$352,800, a 7.3% increase in unit value since 2012-2016<sup>11</sup>. Per the US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 5-year estimates, there has been a growth in the portion of renters in Simsbury since 2012-2016. During the period of 2012-2016, rented units (1,553) represented 17.3% of all occupied housing units<sup>10</sup>. The 2017-2021 period saw a rise to 22.2% (2,023) of all occupied units being rented, a likely result in part due to the recently completed multi-family residential developments in the Town of Simsbury<sup>10</sup>.

Over 65 percent of the housing unit inventory in Simsbury was built prior to 1980<sup>12</sup>. Between 2010 and 2019, over 600 of the currently occupied housing units in Simsbury were constructed, with over 80 percent of these units occupied by renters<sup>12</sup>. This reality of the existing occupied housing stock that was constructed over the past decade is in stark contrast to units built between 2000 to 2009. Of those occupied units built between 2000 and 2009, 71 percent of the 382 units are occupied as owner-occupied units<sup>12</sup>. In other words, it can be concluded that the construction of owner-occupied units in recent years has largely slowed in favor of the construction of renter-occupied units.

**Table 2.2: Housing Units in Simsbury, 2017-2021<sup>10</sup>**

Occupancy Status	Number of Units	Percentage of Total Housing Stock	Percent with Single Unit Detached	Percent with Two or More Units
Owner-Occupied	7,087	75%	90%	4.2%
Renter-Occupied	2,023	21%	19.3%	75.6%
Vacant	382	4%	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,492</b>	<b>100%</b>	-	-

**Table 2.3: Number of Bedrooms by Occupancy Type, 2017-2021<sup>10</sup>**

Owner-Occupied Units			Renter-Occupied Units		
Bedroom Type	Number	Percentage of Owner-Occupied Units	Bedroom Type	Number	Percentage of Owner-Occupied Units
No Bedroom	12	0%	No Bedroom	69	3.4%
One Bedroom	127	2%	One Bedroom	533	26.3%
2-3 Bedroom	2,860	40%	2-3 Bedroom	1,254	62%
4+ Bedrooms	4,088	58%	4+ Bedrooms	167	8.3%

<sup>10</sup> US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Selected Housing Characteristics, 2012-2016 & 2017-2021

<sup>11</sup> US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Financial Characteristics, 2012-2016 & 2017-2021

<sup>12</sup> US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Physical Housing Characteristics, 2012-2016 & 2017-2021

Table 2.4: Age of Housing Stock in Simsbury Town<sup>12</sup>

Time Period Structure Built	Number of Occupied Units	Percent of Units Occupied by Renters
2010 - 2019	610	80.3%
2000 - 2009	382	28.5%
1980 - 1999	2,129	22.2%
1960 - 1979	3,823	13.1%
1940 - 1959	1,454	15.8%
1939 or earlier	712	31%

## Household Size

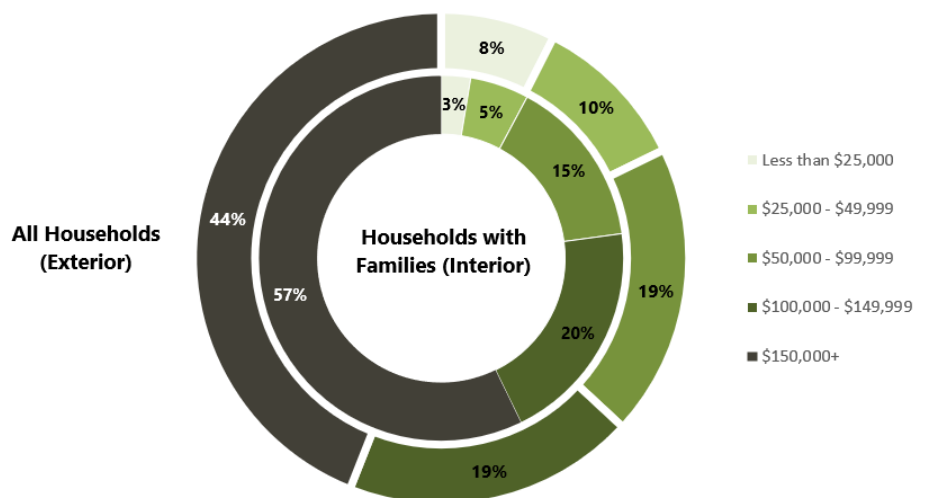
On average, 2.76 persons reside in owner occupied households and 2.14 persons reside in renter-occupied units in Simsbury<sup>13</sup>. The average family size in Simsbury Town is 3.15, which is slightly below the national average of 3.20, but above the average for Hartford County (3.07)<sup>13</sup>. 34.6% of households in Simsbury Town have at least one child under the age of 18, compared with 27% across Hartford County<sup>13</sup>. Consistent with observed age trends, including the growth of young families between the periods of 2012-2016 and 2017-2021 in Simsbury, the average family size in Simsbury has grown from 3.09 to 3.15 since 2012-2016<sup>13</sup>. Despite this, the percentage of households with at least one child has remained unchanged, meaning that more families are likely having more than one child since the 2012-2016 period<sup>13</sup>.

## Household Affordability in Simsbury

### Household Income

The median household income for the Town of Simsbury is \$134,688, a 22% increase from the period of 2012-2016 and roughly \$16,500 higher than the median household income for the Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford metro area<sup>14</sup>. The largest income group within the Town, representing 29.4% of households, are households earning over \$200,000<sup>14</sup>. Over 63 percent of households in Simsbury earn over \$100,000<sup>14</sup>. Among households with families, the median income was \$164,191 in 2017-2021. Roughly 64 percent of family households have more than one earner<sup>14</sup>.

Figure 2.4: Distribution of Income Groups Among All Households and Households with Families<sup>14</sup>



<sup>13</sup> US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Selected Housing Characteristics, 2012-2016 & 2017-2021

<sup>14</sup> US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Income in the Past 12 Months, 2012-2016 & 2017-2021

### Housing Costs

Though incomes within the Town of Simsbury are higher than the regional and state-wide estimates, the cost of living for residents is also significantly higher. The median gross rent for the over 2,000 renters-occupied units within the Town of Simsbury is estimated to be \$1,632<sup>15</sup>. This median gross rent is nearly 40 percent higher than the estimated median gross rent for Hartford County (\$1,191) and 30 percent higher than the statewide median gross rent (\$1,260)<sup>15</sup>. Over 30 percent of renter-occupied units within Simsbury have monthly rents over \$2,000, compared to 6 percent across Hartford County and 13 percent across Connecticut<sup>15</sup>. Overall, 36 percent of renter-occupied households pay 35 percent or more of their household income on rent<sup>15</sup>. The percentage of households that are significantly rent-burdened in Simsbury is less than both the estimate for all of Hartford County and the State of Connecticut, with both having 42 percent of renters paying over 35 percent of their income on rent<sup>15</sup>.

For owner-occupied units, as mentioned, the median unit value in Simsbury is estimated to be \$352,800, with nearly 67 percent of owner-occupied units valued above \$300,000<sup>15</sup>. In comparison, the median owner-occupied unit value for Hartford County and Connecticut are estimated to be \$249,000 and \$286,700, respectively<sup>15</sup>.

### Defining Affordability: Connecticut General Statute 8-30g and HUD Income Limits

The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South has committed to dedicating 10% of proposed units to be “affordable”, in the spirit of Connecticut General Statute 8-30g. This statute governs much of the effort to increase the share of affordable housing across the State of Connecticut. Specifically, 8-30g created a pathway for developments that feature affordable housing units and are denied by a municipality to appeal if a municipality has less than 10% of its housing stock identified as affordable. An “affordable” unit is one where either it receives government assistance, tenant rental assistance, or has been deed restricted for families earning either 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI) or less or 80% of the AMI or less (in a development, half of affordable units must be set at 60% of AMI or less) and half must be set at 80% of AMI or less)<sup>16</sup>. The statute’s definition for AMI is based upon the Income Limits established by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development for the state level and identified “Fair Market Rent (FMR) Areas”<sup>16</sup>. The Town of Simsbury is specifically included in the Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, CT HUD Metro FMR Area and, therefore, the relevant income limits for the Town of Simsbury are those calculated for the Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford FMR area.

Overall, the median income for this FMR is \$118,100<sup>17</sup>. For a family of four, a family income of \$94,500 would meet the 80% of AMI threshold, while a \$70,850 would meet the 60% of AMI threshold<sup>17</sup>. Table 2.5 identifies what is affordable within the Town of Simsbury based upon family size.

**Table 2.5: 2023 Income Limits for Simsbury Town (Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford FMR)<sup>17</sup>**

Income Limit Category	Family of 1	Family of 2	Family of 3	Family of 4	Family of 5
30% of AMI	\$24,850	\$28,400	\$31,950	\$35,450	\$38,300
50% of AMI	\$41,350	\$47,250	\$53,150	\$59,050	\$63,800
60% of AMI	\$49,600	\$56,700	\$63,750	\$70,850	\$76,250
80% of AMI	\$66,150	\$75,600	\$85,050	\$94,500	\$102,100
100% of AMI	\$82,700	\$94,500	\$106,300	<b>\$118,100</b>	\$127,600

<sup>15</sup> US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Financial Characteristics, 2012-2016 & 2017-2021

<sup>16</sup> Chapter 126A - Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals, [https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap\\_126a.htm](https://www.cga.ct.gov/current/pub/chap_126a.htm).

<sup>17</sup> FY 2023 Income limits, US Department of Housing & Urban Development, <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html>.

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By using these Income Limits, it is also possible to estimate the recommended monthly housing cost limits for the Town of Simsbury, based upon the traditionally established standard that a household’s housing costs should not exceed 30 percent of its annual income. With the use of this standard, it is estimated, as an example, that an “affordable” housing unit for a family of four earning an income of 80% of the AMI would cost no more than \$2,363 per month<sup>17</sup>.

**Table 2.6: 2023 “Affordable” Monthly Housing Cost Limits for Simsbury Town<sup>17</sup>**

Income Limit Category	Family of 1	Family of 2	Family of 3	Family of 4	Family of 5
30% of AMI	\$621	\$710	\$799	\$886	\$958
50% of AMI	\$1,034	\$1,181	\$1,329	\$1,476	\$1,595
60% of AMI	\$1,240	\$1,418	\$1,594	\$1,771	\$1,906
80% of AMI	\$1,654	\$1,890	\$2,126	\$2,363	\$2,553
100% of AMI	\$2,068	\$2,363	\$2,658	\$2,953	\$3,190

\*Defines “affordable” rent as 30 percent of family income

### Housing Affordability in Simsbury

According to the 2022 Affordable Housing Appeals List, published by the Connecticut Department of Housing, approximately only 5% of the housing stock in Simsbury is affordable, per the definitions established by General Statute 8-30g and defined above<sup>18</sup>. As a result of this, the Town of Simsbury is classified as a non-exempt municipality by the Connecticut Department of Housing, as defined by the Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals Procedure.

**Table 2.7: Connecticut DOH 2022 Affordable Housing Appeals List – Simsbury Town Estimate<sup>18</sup>**

2022 Affordable Housing Appeals Metrics	# of Units
Total Housing Units	9,110
Government-Assisted	289
Tenant Rental Assistance	60
Single Family CHFA/USDA Mortgages	86
Deed Restricted	28
<b>Total Assisted Units</b>	<b>463</b>
<b>Percentage of All Units</b>	<b>5.08%</b>

<sup>18</sup> Affordable Housing Appeals List, 2022, <https://portal.ct.gov/DOH/DOH/Programs/Affordable-Housing-Appeals-Listing>.





# 3

## Profile of Simsbury Municipal Services

### Town of Simsbury 2023-2024 Municipal Budget Overview

For the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year, the Town of Simsbury approved a municipal budget totaling \$121,668,337, a 5.83% increase from the 2022-2023 Municipal Budget<sup>19</sup>. To support these expenses, the Town of Simsbury raised \$121,948,06 in revenues, with 87% originating from local property taxes (including real property and vehicle)<sup>19</sup>. An additional 7% and 6%, respectively, are sourced from intergovernmental funding and other sources<sup>19</sup>. The mill rate for Simsbury residents in 2023-2024 is 30.82 mills<sup>19</sup>. For property taxes, this mill rate is applied separately to both real property and the vehicles owned by each household.

A supermajority (roughly 67%) of the budgeted expenditures for the Town is allocated towards the Simsbury Public School District Board of Education budget, which totals \$81,576,437 for FY 2023-2024 (see “Simsbury Public School District” below)<sup>19</sup>. An additional \$605,699 is allocated towards non-public schools within the Town<sup>19</sup>. The operating budget for the Town’s Board of Selectmen, the executive body of the Town, for 2023-2024 is \$31,679,397 or roughly 26% of the overall budget<sup>19</sup>. On a per capita basis, the Simsbury municipal operating budget costs \$1,292 per resident.

### 2023-2024 Operating Budget Expenditures

Of the \$31.679 million allocated for the Town of Simsbury’s 2023-2024 operating budget, the cost of Fringe Benefits and Liability Insurance (\$7.8 million) represents the largest expenditure, followed by the budget for public safety (\$6.56 million) which represents 20% of the overall operating budget<sup>19</sup>. The budget line of Public Safety includes funding for the Simsbury Police Department and emergency management services<sup>19</sup>. Fire services for the Town are funded separately from the Town’s operating budget through the Simsbury Fire District’s annual operating budget, which has a separate mill rate of 1.00 in addition to the 30.82 mill rate for the Town’s operating budget<sup>19</sup>. Altogether, the 2023-2024 Fire District budget equals \$3,169,952.27, a 4.7% increase from 2022-2023<sup>20</sup>. Notable expenditures of the 2023-2024 Simsbury budget are listed in Table 3.1.

<sup>19</sup> Town of Simsbury Adopted Budget - FY 2023-2024, [https://www.simsburyct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf9751/f/pages/fy24\\_adopted\\_budget\\_book\\_w\\_page\\_numbers.pdf](https://www.simsburyct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf9751/f/pages/fy24_adopted_budget_book_w_page_numbers.pdf).

<sup>20</sup> 2023/2024 Simsbury Fire District Budget,” Simsbury Volunteer Fire Department, <https://simsburyfire.org/district/draft-proposal-of-2023-2024-simsbury-fire-district-budget/>

Table 3.1: 2023-2024 Simsbury Town Budget Expenditures<sup>19</sup>

Budget Item	Total Expenditure	% Increase from 2022-2023	% of Budget	Expenditure Per Capita
Police/Public Safety	\$6,559,196	5.15%	20.7%	\$267.53
Public Works	\$4,592,199	4.77%	14.5%	\$187.30
Social Services	\$746,008	2.3%	2.3%	\$30.42
Parks & Recreation	\$1,255,156	4.57%	3.96%	\$51.19
Library	\$1,885,158	4.67%	5.95%	\$76.89
Other Budget Items	\$16,641,680	-	-	\$678.78
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$31,679,397</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$1,292.14</b>

## The Simsbury Police Department

Of the \$6,559,196 allocated towards the Police and Public Safety budget item in the Simsbury 2023-2024 Municipal Budget, \$5,836,568 is specifically directed towards the Simsbury Police Department<sup>21</sup>. This budget is equivalent to roughly \$238 per resident. The Simsbury Police Department has jurisdiction over the entire Town of Simsbury, which is consistently ranked as one of the safest communities not only in the State of Connecticut, but in the United States by the organization SafeWise<sup>22</sup>. The Town consistently has an estimated violent crime rate of .1 to .2 per 1,000 residents, which is drastically under the national average of around 3 – 4 per 1,000 residents<sup>22</sup>.

The largest single expenditure of the Police Department’s budget are salaries and wages, with a total of \$4,579,041 or 78 percent of the total Police Department budget allocated towards full-time staff salaries<sup>21</sup>. Other pay-related budget items include overtime (\$300,000 budgeted for 2023-2024) and holiday pay (\$150,331 budgeted for 2023-2024)<sup>21</sup>. For the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year, the Police Department of Simsbury employs 42 full-time law enforcement uniformed officers, including 13 Patrol Officers and 15 Patrol 1<sup>st</sup> Class Officers<sup>21</sup>. Per the 2021-2024 Employment Agreement that governs the Police Department’s pay rates, Patrol Officers in the Town of Simsbury earn a salary of between \$70,341 and \$98,832, depending on the officers’ rank and date of hire<sup>23</sup>.

Table 3.2: 2023-2024 Simsbury Police Department Staff<sup>21,23</sup>

Title	Number of Officers	Pay Range (Effective 07/01/2023)
Chief	1	~\$147,000 (2022 Estimate)
Deputy Chief	1	~\$133,661 (2022 Estimate)
Lieutenant	3	\$119,771.24
Sergeant	9	\$115,609.43
Patrol 1 <sup>st</sup> Class	15	\$102,934.62
Patrol Officer	13	\$70,341.34 - \$98,832.25 (Rank of 1 – 9)
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>-</b>

With 42 sworn officers in the Department, the Town of Simsbury currently has 1.7 police officers per 1,000 residents. While the Simsbury Police Department strives to reach a ratio of 1.8 officers per 1,000 population and the national average 2.4, the current ratio of police officers in Simsbury is comparable with similar neighboring communities and for the State of Connecticut<sup>24</sup>. Statewide, there are, on average, roughly 2.1 police officers per 1,000 residents. The Town of Simsbury’s rate of police officers per 1,000 residents is close to the median among

<sup>21</sup> Town of Simsbury Adopted Budget - FY 2023-2024

<sup>22</sup> Rich Scinto, “Simsbury among the 100 Safest in U.S.: Safewise,” Newtown, CT Patch, June 24, 2022, <https://patch.com/connecticut/newtown/2-ct-towns-among-100-safest-u-s-safewise>.

<sup>23</sup> IBPO Police Union Employment Agreement - 2021-2024,” Town of Simsbury, [https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif9751/f/pages/2021-2024\\_ibpo\\_contract\\_executed.pdf](https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif9751/f/pages/2021-2024_ibpo_contract_executed.pdf).

<sup>24</sup> Police Officers in Connecticut (2010-2019),” Connecticut General Assembly, December 2020, <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2020/rpt/pdf/2020-R-0316.pdf>.

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neighboring communities, with the Town of Granby have the lowest rate at 1.3 police officers per 1,000 population and the community of Bloomfield having the highest rate at 2.2 officers per 1,000 population<sup>24</sup>.

**Table 3.3: Comparative Examples of Rates of Police Officers Per 1,000 Population<sup>24</sup>**

Jurisdiction	Police Officers Per 1,000 Population
Simsbury, CT	1.7
Avon, CT	1.7
Bloomfield, CT	2.2
Canton	1.4
Granby	1.3
Farmington, CT	1.7
Windsor, CT	1.7
State of Connecticut	2.10

## The Simsbury Volunteer Fire Company

As noted above, the Simsbury Volunteer Fire Company is administered and funded by the Simsbury Fire District. The Fire Company operates six stations, with seven engines and provides both fire and rescue services<sup>25</sup>. The Fire Company's Weatogue Fire Station, which is located directly across the street from the project site, would serve the site of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South. For 2023-2024, the Simsbury Fire Company is supported by an operating budget of \$3,169,952.27. These expenditures are funded by revenue raised by a separate 1.00 mill rate for the Fire District. The single largest expenditure of the Fire District budget is payroll at \$854,777.23<sup>26</sup>. However, this payroll does not include the Town's 95 volunteer firefighters as the Simsbury Volunteer Fire Company, as its name suggests, provides fire services at no charge. As the 2023 Fire Chief Report for Simsbury notes, "an agreement exists with the Simsbury Fire District that the members of the Simsbury Volunteer Fire Company would provide their firefighting services at no charge. This savings in labor cost amounts to millions of dollars that are saved by Simsbury Taxpayers versus the cost of a fully or partially paid fire department."<sup>25</sup>

As noted, the Simsbury Volunteer Fire Company currently has a staff of 95 volunteer firefighters, including 89 regular and 6 junior firefighters<sup>25</sup>. At this staffing level, Simsbury Town has 3.63 regular firefighters per 1,000 population. In 2022, the Fire Company reported to a total of 748 incidents over the course of the year, which equals a daily rate of 2.4 incidents per day<sup>25</sup>.

Unlike recommended rates of police officer staffing, there is no existing median rate of firefighters per 1,000 population. Among communities of less than 25,000 across the United States, there is a median rate of between .9 and 18.9 volunteer firefighters per 1,000 population<sup>27</sup>. The National Fire Protection Association recommends at least four firefighters per engine<sup>27</sup>. At this recommended rate, the seven engines operated by the Simsbury Volunteer Fire Company would require a total of 28 firefighters for full engine capacity. However, with a daily incident rate of 2.4, full capacity is likely rarely needed. Additionally, as a Volunteer Fire Company, Simsbury's 89 regular volunteer firefighters are typically on-call for incidents.

<sup>25</sup> Annual Report of the Fire Chief, Simsbury Volunteer Fire Company, May 2023, <https://simsburyfire.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/FIRE-CHIEFS-Annual-Report-2023.pdf>.

<sup>26</sup> Town of Simsbury Adopted Budget - FY 2023-2024

<sup>27</sup> 2022 US Fire Department Profile, National Fire Protection Association, September 2022, <https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/research/nfpa-research/fire-statistical-reports/us-fire-department-profile>.

## The Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association

The Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association serves as the primary 9-1-1 ambulance response service for the Town of Simsbury. The Ambulance Association operates independently of the Town of Simsbury's budget and funds all of its services through donations and billing and does not receive any operating money from the Town Budget or from taxes<sup>28</sup>. The ambulance services maintains a fleet of three ambulances and includes a staff of volunteer and professional EMTs and paramedics<sup>28</sup>. Annually, the Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association responds to over 1,600 medical calls, a rate of 4 calls per day<sup>28</sup>.

## Senior Services

The Town of Simsbury allocates a total of \$746,008 to the funding of Senior Services<sup>29</sup>. In addition to the operation of the Town's Senior Center, this budget includes funding for senior transportation services, namely the Town's Dial-a-Ride program. Specifically, \$170,540 is allocated towards contractual services for the operation of the Town's Dial-a-Ride program<sup>29</sup>. The service is operated through a contract by Martel Transportation<sup>30</sup>. The program allows residents who are 60 years of age or older, or those who receive Social Security Disability to travel door-to-door to destinations throughout Simsbury anytime on Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 3:30 PM<sup>30</sup>. As of 2019, the most recent available ridership data, the Simsbury Dial-A-Ride program served over 400 riders and an average of over 7,650 trips annually, which equals roughly 19 trips per registered rider<sup>30</sup>. The overall number of registered riders of the Dial-a-Ride program represent approximately 7% of the overall population in Simsbury that is 60 years of age or over.

## Public Works

The Town of Simsbury's Public Works Department, which is allocated \$4,592,199 in funding for 2023-2024, is divided among six divisions, including Administrative, Highway, Buildings and Grounds (i.e. maintains all Town-owned properties), Transfer Station, Water Pollution Control, and Engineering<sup>29</sup>.

The Town's Highways Department is responsible for maintaining over 165 miles of Town roadways, including paving, curbing, storm drainage and plowing work, and employs 20 employees (\$1,485,260 total budget for Highway employee salaries)<sup>29</sup>. In 2023-2023, the Highways Department paved an estimated 11.8 miles of town roadways (equal to 7% of the total inventory of town-owned roadways)<sup>29</sup>.

The Simsbury Water Pollution Control Authority (SWPCA) is a town-owned utility that operates the Simsbury Wastewater Treatment Plant and employs 11 staff members<sup>29</sup>. The SWPC is, in part, funded by permits & fees collected from the utilities' customers. Properties that are connected to the Town's sewer system are required to pay a one-time Facility Connection Charge and an annual Sewer Use fee. The annual Sewer Fee is calculated by an equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) rate that is adjusted by the SWPC annually. For multi-family developments, each single-family unit in a multi-family structure is billed one (1) EDU per year. For 2023-2024, the EDU rate for residential developments is set at \$375 / EDU<sup>31</sup>. As the 2023-2024 Town Budget notes, considering these fees, "large scale developments within the Town continue to create more customers for the SWPC". Properties that are

<sup>28</sup> "About Us, Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association," Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association, <https://www.simsburyems.com/about-us/>.

<sup>29</sup> Town of Simsbury Adopted Budget - FY 2023-2024

<sup>30</sup> "Dial-A-Ride Contractor RFQ," Town of Simsbury, 2019, [https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf9751/f/uploads/dial-a-ride\\_rfq\\_3-6-19.pdf](https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf9751/f/uploads/dial-a-ride_rfq_3-6-19.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> "April 13, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes," Simsbury Water Pollution Control Authority, April 2023, [https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf9751/f/minutes/draft\\_april\\_13\\_2023\\_wPCA\\_minutes.pdf](https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf9751/f/minutes/draft_april_13_2023_wPCA_minutes.pdf).

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not connected to the Town's public sewer system utilize septic systems that are under the jurisdiction of the Farmington Valley Health District<sup>31</sup>.

While the Department of Public Works is responsible for the coordination of three regional collections of hazardous waste annually, the Town of Simsbury does not provide trash pick-up service for its residents<sup>32</sup>. As an alternative, residents are able to coordinate curbside household trash pick-up with one of two private vendors.

## Open Space and Recreation

The 2023-2024 Town of Simsbury Budget includes a total of \$1,255,156 dedicated to the Town's park and recreational resources administered by the Department of Culture, Parks and Recreation<sup>33</sup>. The largest single expenditure for the Parks and Recreation Budget is for the payroll of the Department's full-time staff, totaling \$739,371<sup>33</sup>. The Parks and Recreation Department employs 18 overall full-time employees among three divisions, including Administration, Parks and the Golf Division which maintains the Town's three public golf courses<sup>33</sup>. Within the Parks Division specifically, the Town employs nine park maintenance workers as well as a Park Foreman. Specific budget items are dedicated to the operation and maintenance of the Town's War Memorial Pool (\$88,378 total budget) and for the War Memorial Park/Fields (\$42,003 total budget)<sup>33</sup>.

In 2020, the Town of Simsbury completed its Parks and Open Space Master Plan to help guide the future planning of the Town's cultural, open space and recreational assets. As part of this Master Plan, the Town of Simsbury identified the most common types of recreation that Simsbury households participate in. Hiking is the most population recreational activity among Simsbury households, with a participation rate of 18%, followed by running (17%) and road biking (14%)<sup>34</sup>.

Per the Town's Parks and Open Space Master Plan, a total of 30% of the Town's land area is covered by parks and open space<sup>34</sup>. Specifically, the Town's Department of Culture, Parks and Recreation maintains over 535 acres of parks, including 40 athletic fields (roughly 600 residents per field), and 2,400 acres of open space for a collective 2,900 acres of parkland and open space<sup>34</sup>. The 535 acres of parkland alone equals a rate of 22 acres per 1,000 residents in Simsbury, a rate that is nearly double than the National Recreation and Park Association's standard of 10.8 acres per 1,000 residents<sup>35</sup>. When including the additional 2,400 acres of open space, this rate increases to 118 acres per 1,000 Simsbury residents. The park facility closest to the site of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South is the 8-acre Weatogue Park, which is directly north of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain North development and features three sports fields and a playground<sup>34</sup>. In addition, the Farmington River Trail system connect to the project site.

Following this inventory and analysis, the Parks and Open Space Master Plan presented a number of key recommendations for the future improvement of the Town's parks and open spaces. Relevant recommendations from the Plan, include, but are not limited to:

- The need to hire at least two-three additional full-time staff "to allow for the proper maintenance of parks, trails, and open space facilities"
- Seek "additional opportunities to develop shared-use paths and/ or sidewalks/ trails to connect neighborhoods to parks, open spaces, places of work, and commercial centers."

<sup>32</sup>"Bulky Waste / Recycling / Landfill," Town of Simsbury, , <https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/public-works/pages/bulky-waste-recycling-landfill>.

<sup>33</sup> Town of Simsbury Adopted Budget - FY 2023-2024

<sup>34</sup> Simsbury Parks & Open Space Master Plan, October 2020, <http://tinyurl.com/45axzn6d>

<sup>35</sup> "NRPA Park Metrics: Research," National Recreation and Park Association, <https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/ParkMetrics/>.

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Since the publication of the 2020 Parks and Open Space Master Plan, an additional park maintenance staff member has been hired, according to the Town of Simsbury Budget<sup>33</sup>.

## The Simsbury Public School District

The entirety of the Town of Simsbury is served by the school district of Simsbury Public School, which educates a student population of 4,104 pupils, as of the 2023-2024 school year, and oversees seven school facilities across the Town of Simsbury<sup>36</sup>.

Both Henry James Memorial School (serving Grades 7 and 8) and Simsbury High School (serving Grades 9 – 12) are located within approximately four miles north of the project site and would serve any children generated by development between the Grades of 7 and 12. Per an inventory of new construction within the Town of Simsbury provided by the Simsbury Public School District dated 10/1/2023, the elementary school slated to serve young students generated by The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South is to be determined<sup>36</sup>.

The project site for both The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South and the completed The Ridge at Talcott Mountain North are located less than one mile south of Latimer Lane School (serving Grades K-6). However, due to concerns over capacity at Latimer Lane and in order to accommodate the 51 students generated by the development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain North, the Simsbury Public School District redistricted the northern development to be served by Central School at the elementary level<sup>36</sup>. Therefore, it is assumed that redistricting for the Ridge at Talcott Mountain South would be possible in a similar fashion.

## School Facility Renovations

Since the time of the construction of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain North, the Simsbury Public School District has undertaken a considerable renovation project for Latimer Lane School as well as its other educational facilities. Starting in Fall 2022, the Latimer Lane School Building Project aims to add nearly 22,000 square feet of new facility space, including new and refurbished classrooms and special education rooms<sup>37</sup>. This improvement of the Latimer Lane School to enhance educational spaces and address capacity concerns is part of a larger district-wide effort to develop a School Facilities Master Plan and Reconfiguration Study that will include the renovation of all elementary schools in the district. Through the renovation of Latimer Lane School, the enrollment concerns for the facility that had caused students generated from The Ridge at Talcott Mountain North to be redistricted to Central School should likely be alleviated.

## Simsbury School Enrollment

### Total Enrollment

The Simsbury Public School District is one of the largest school districts of its immediate neighbors in Hartford County, with 4,100 students and the administration of seven schools, including five elementary schools (i.e. Pre-K or K to Grade 6) (See Table 3.4). As of the 2023-2024 school year, 2,177 (53%) pupils were enrolled in one of the five elementary schools within the district, 634 were enrolled in Grades 7 or 8 and 1,293 were enrolled in Grades 9 – 12 (See Table 3.5)<sup>36</sup>. The two largest classes were Grades 7 and 12, while the two smallest classes were kindergarten and 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> Simsbury Public School District, October 2023 Enrollment Report, October 2023

<sup>37</sup> "Latimer Lane School Building Project," Simsbury Public Schools, <https://www.simsbury.k12.ct.us/district/latimer-lane-school-building-project#:~:text=As%20a%20result%20of%20a,%E2%80%9Crenovate%20as%20new%E2%80%9D%20status.>

Table 3.4: School Enrollments in Hartford County<sup>38</sup>

School District	School Enrollment (2023)	Population Served	Housing Units Served	Students: Population Served	Students: Housing Units
Simsbury Public School	4,100	24,517	9,492	1:6	1:3
Farmington Public School	4,100	26,712	11,599	1:7	1:3
Windsor Public School	3,300	29,492	11,872	1:9	1:4
Avon Public School	3,100	18,932	7,777	1:6	1:3
Bloomfield Public School	2,000	21,535	9,717	1:11	1:5

Table 3.5: Simsbury Public School Enrollment by Grade<sup>36</sup>

Grade Level	2023-2024 Enrollment	Grade Level	2023-2024 Enrollment
<b>K</b>	275	<b>7</b>	338
<b>1</b>	302	<b>8</b>	296
<b>2</b>	332	<b>9</b>	324
<b>3</b>	295	<b>10</b>	310
<b>4</b>	333	<b>11</b>	321
<b>5</b>	318	<b>12</b>	338
<b>6</b>	322	<b>7-12 Total</b>	<b>1,927</b>
<b>K-6 Total</b>	<b>2,177</b>		

### Enrollment Trends

Compared to the 2022-2023 academic year, Simsbury Public Schools observed an increase of their student body by 40 pupils, an increase supported by recent developments in the Town which contributed roughly 50 (i.e. 145 to 196 students) additional students in 2023<sup>39</sup>. Despite this, 105 fewer students are currently enrolled in the School District than originally projected, including 98 fewer elementary school pupils, for the 2023-2024 school year<sup>39</sup>. Based upon this, the enrollment of school age students generated by recent developments helped to prevent a decrease in overall student enrollment for Simsbury Public Schools for the 2023-2024. Without the additional 51 students in 2023 generated by recent residential development, overall student enrollment would have likely declined.

Based upon enrollment data from 2012 to the present day, it is plausible that recent residential development in Simsbury has played a role in recent years to stem a decline in student enrollment that the Simsbury Public School District had been consistently experiencing before 2018. Between 2012 and 2018 alone, the Simsbury Public School District witnessed a decline in their student enrollment by 483 students<sup>39</sup>. This trend especially affected the elementary school enrollment of the School District, with a continual decline of elementary pupils observed

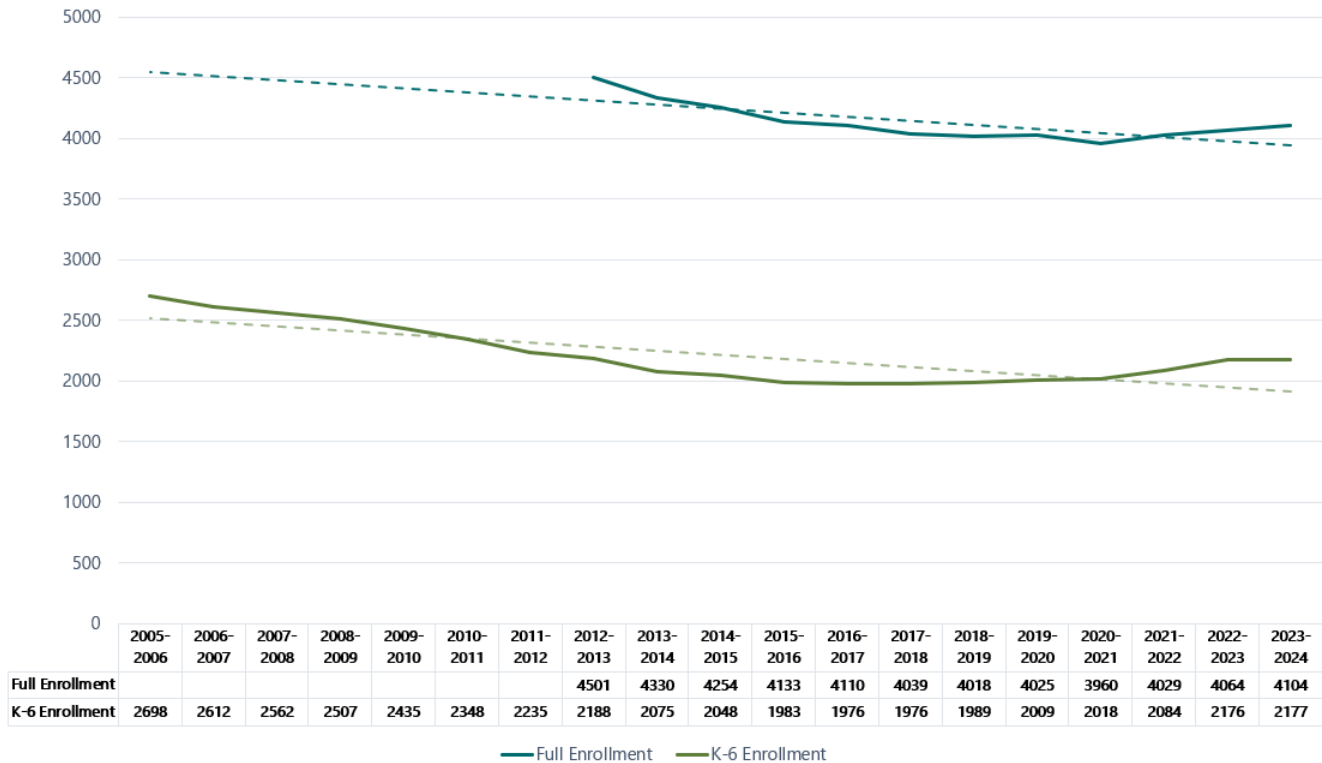
<sup>38</sup> "Enrollment Dashboard," CT EdSight, [https://public-edsight.ct.gov/students/enrollment-dashboard?language=en\\_US](https://public-edsight.ct.gov/students/enrollment-dashboard?language=en_US).

<sup>39</sup> Simsbury Public School District, October 2023 Enrollment Report, October 2023c

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between 2005 and 2016, totaling 722 students<sup>39</sup>. As of 2023, the Simsbury Public School District has 521 fewer elementary school students enrolled than during the 2005-06 school year<sup>39</sup>. The generation of students from residential developments between 2017 and 2023, as detailed in the School District’s 2023-2024 Enrollment/Class Size Report, is likely to have contributed to restoring some of the enrolled students that were lost over the past decade and a half.

**Figure 3.1: Simsbury Student Enrollment, 2005-2023<sup>39</sup>**



**Table 3.6: Students Generated by Recent Residential Development, 2017-2023<sup>39</sup>**

Development Name	Elementary School Facility Serving Site	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Carson Way	Central School	5	7	5	6	12	11	11
Highcroft Place/#1,2, 3	Central School	11	12	13	21	21	16	30
Mill Commons	Central School	8	12	10	7	5	2	0
Mill Pond Crossing	Central School	0	5	5	4	4	3	2
Dorset Crossing	Tariffville School	17	24	22	26	27	25	26
Cambridge Crossing	Squadron Line School	0	0	0	15	20	23	32
Kings Ridge	Latimer Lane School	3	2	2	2	0	0	0
Aspen Green	Latimer Lane School	13	27	27	37	40	32	44
The Ridge at Talcott Mountain (North)	Central School	0	0	0	11	27	33	51
<b>Total Students Generated</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>196</b>
<b>Total School District Enrollment</b>		<b>4,039</b>	<b>4,018</b>	<b>4,025</b>	<b>3,960</b>	<b>4,029</b>	<b>4,064</b>	<b>4,104</b>



**School Capacity and Class Size**

Compared with student enrollment levels from 2000-2009, the Simsbury Public School District has significantly fewer pupils enrolled in recent years. From 4,908 students in 2009 to 4,104 in 2023-2024, roughly 800 fewer students currently attend Simsbury Public Schools than at peak capacity<sup>40</sup>. This decreased enrollment, combined with an analysis of class sizes and the expectation of alleviating capacity concerns from the completion of the Latimer Lane School Renovation project in 2024, indicate that the Simsbury Public School District has adequate resources to accommodate additional students generated from the development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South. As aforementioned, the development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South would be served by Henry James Memorial School (Grades 7 and 8) and Simsbury High School (Grades 9 – 12). For the elementary school level, it is assumed that the project would most likely be served by Latimer Lane High School or redistricted to Central School, similar to The Ridge at Talcott Mountain North. Therefore, the below analysis of the specific enrollment and capacity of each school facility in the Simsbury Public School District places special focus on these four school facilities.

**Table 3.7: Student Enrollment by School Facility<sup>40</sup>**

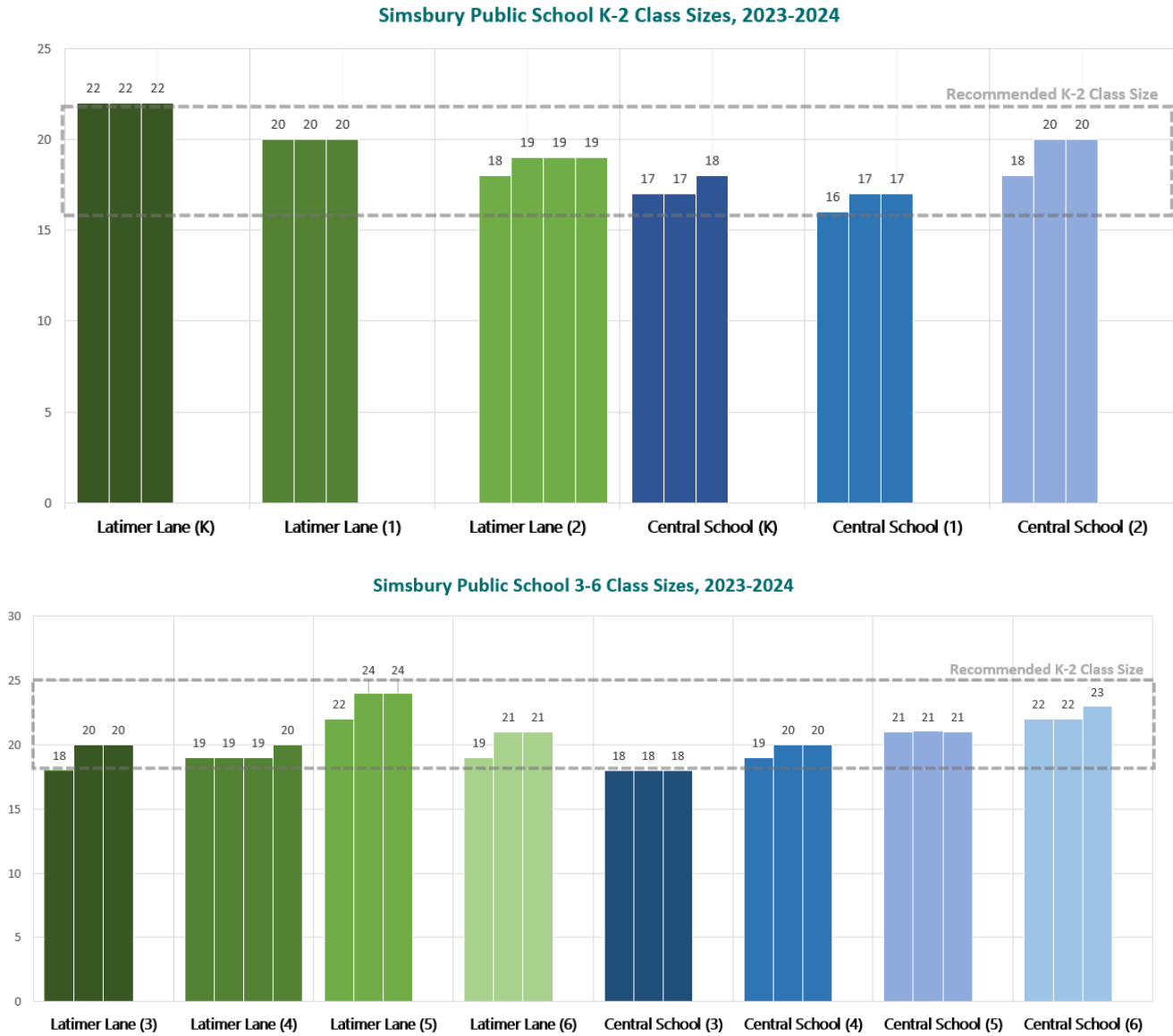
School Facility	Grade Levels	2023-2024 Enrollment
Central School	K – 6	404
Latimer Lane School	K – 6	470
Squadron Line School	Pre K - 6	655
Tariffville School	K - 6	263
Tootin’ Hills School	K – 6	385
Henry James Memorial School	7 – 8	634
Simsbury High School	9 – 12	1293
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>4,104</b>

Per the 2023-2024 Enrollment Report, dated 10/1/23, published by the Simsbury Public School District, none of the classes in any of the district’s five elementary schools exceed the recommended class size range used by the School District<sup>40</sup>. The average K-2 class size for Simsbury Public Schools is 18.9 students, an increase of .01 from the previous school year, and the average Grade 3-6 class size is 20.5 students, which remains unchanged from the previous year<sup>40</sup>. For Grades K-2, the recommended class size range is between 16 and 22 students, while the recommended range for Grades 3-6 is between 18 and 25 students<sup>40</sup>. Four classes in the Grade 3-6 cohort were found to be below the recommended class size ranges, including two in the Tariffville School and two in the Tootin’ Hills School, meaning that there was ample capacity for students per classroom<sup>40</sup>.

Of note, for Latimer Lane School, the most likely elementary school to serve The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South development, each of the three kindergarten classes attending Latimer Lane had class sizes at the high end of the recommended class size range (22 students per class)<sup>40</sup>. All other grades were around the median of the recommended ranges. Each class size for both Central School and Latimer Lane are included below in Figure 3.2.

<sup>40</sup> Simsbury Public School District, October 2023 Enrollment Report, October 2023

Figure 3.2: Simsbury Class Sizes (K-6), 2023-2024<sup>40</sup>



On the middle school and high school level, more classes are below the recommended class size range than exceed it. For Grades 7 and 8 at Henry James Memorial School, 31 core classes have fewer students than the recommended range, while 10 core classes exceed the class size range<sup>40</sup>. 90 core classes at Simsbury High School have fewer students than the recommended class size range, compared to just four classes that exceed the range<sup>40</sup>. In other words, capacity for both Henry James Memorial School and Simsbury High School are not a concern in light of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South’s development.

### 2023-2024 Simsbury Public School Budget

The total 2023-2024 budget for the Simsbury Public School District, which was approved by public referendum in May 2023, is \$81,576,438, a 6.7% increase from the 2022-2023 budget<sup>41</sup>. The School District budget represents 67% of all expenditures for the Town of Simsbury<sup>41</sup>. The single largest expenditure, representing over \$50 million or roughly 61 percent of the total School District budget, is dedicated towards direct instructional costs<sup>41</sup>. These

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expenses include salaries for teachers, textbooks, education software and instructional supplies. Other significant expenditures include administrative costs, maintenance costs, and pupil transportation services (see Table 3.8).

**Table 3.8: 2023-2024 Simsbury School Budget Expenditures<sup>41</sup>**

Budget Item	Total Expenditure	% Change from 2022-2023	Percentage of Budget
General Control/Administrative	\$2,451,497	+6.63%	3.00%
Instruction	\$50,024,730	+4.78%	61.32%
Health Services	\$742,608	-4.48%	.91%
Pupil Transportation Services (Contracted)	\$3,057,488	+4.4%	3.74%
Operation & Maintenance of Plant	\$6,872,797	+8.8%	8.42%
Student Body Activities	\$807,785	+6.88%	.99%
Other	\$17,619,533	-	21.60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$81,576,438</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>100%</b>

With 4,104 students enrolled in 2023-2024, the total net expenditures per student is \$19,877, a roughly 2% increase from the 2022-2023 school year. In determining the exact cost of educating a pupil, the total net expenditures can be misleading. When a new student is enrolled, the budgeted items including maintenance, administrative costs, and salaries of support staff are already in place regardless of the new enrollment and, therefore, a 1:1 increase of the total net expenditure per student cost will not occur. Instead, a more accurate estimate of additional costs incurred with the enrollment of a new student in an already operating school is the cost to instruct per pupil. For the Simsbury School District, the cost to instruct would be roughly \$12,189 per student.

**Table 3.9: Simsbury Public School District Net Expenditures Per Pupil (2019-2024)<sup>42</sup>**

Budget Year	Budget Total (A)	2023-2024 Student Enrollment (B)	Net Expenditures Per Pupil (B/A)
2023-2024	\$81,576,438	4,104	\$19,877
2022-2023	\$77,030,820	4,064	\$18,954
2021-2022	\$74,336,172	4,029	\$18,450
2020-2021	\$72,308,474	3,960	\$18,260
2019-2020	\$70,880,978	4,025	\$17,610

**Table 3.10: Calculation of Cost to Instruct for Simsbury Public School (2023-2024)**

Metric Calculated	2023-2024 Budget	Percentage of Budget	Total Cost of Educating Student Body	2023-2024 Student Enrollment	Cost Per Pupil
Budget Expenses Per Pupil	\$81,576,457	100%	\$81,576,457	4,104	\$19,877
Cost to Instruct Per Pupil	\$81,576,457	61%	\$50,024,730	4,104	\$12,189

<sup>41</sup> Town of Simsbury Adopted Budget - FY 2023-2024

<sup>42</sup> "Historic Budgets," Simsbury Public Schools, <https://www.simsbury.k12.ct.us/boe/budget>.



# 4

## Demographic & Housing Impact Analysis

Like any residential development, The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will undoubtedly introduce new residents, households, consumers, and students to the local community of Simsbury. This influx of residents will not only influence the demographic and housing trends discussed in Chapter Two, but will have implications for the local communities' economy and market trends. Quantifying these specific implications are a key to gaining a full understanding of all of the impacts - both direct and indirect - that can be expected as a result of the development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South.

This Chapter is divided into two sections. The first section calculates the potential number of residents that may be generated by the 580-units of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South. These calculations are based on nationally renowned Residential Demographic Multipliers developed by Rutgers University, which enable projections of residents based on age, and of schoolchildren in addition to the overall resident population of the development. The second section is an analysis on the housing impacts, including affordable housing impacts, and the projected market impacts and consumer expenditures that will occur due to The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South.

### Demographic Impacts of Proposed Project

#### Impact on the Total Population of Simsbury

Until a development is fully occupied, it is impossible to determine the exact number of residents that new residential units will generate. Instead, an estimate can be produced that gives a broad outlook into the likely number of residents that will reside in a development based on the number and type of residential units included in the development project. The first step for any methodology is to identify an appropriate multiplier which can then be multiplied by the number of units to project the number of residents generated. For the purposes of this study, the national recognized set of Residential Demographic Multipliers developed by the Rutgers University Center for Urban Policy Research, which provide accurate multipliers based upon unit type and number of bedrooms, was used<sup>43</sup>.

For The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South project, the 580 units will be divided among single family residences, duplexes and three- and four-story apartments. Specific multipliers for each type of these units and their corresponding proposed number of bedrooms were identified to calculate as accurate of an estimate as possible. Through the use of Rutgers University's Residential Demographic Multipliers, it is estimated that a total of 1,101 – 1,159 residents will reside at The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South at full build-out.

<sup>43</sup> Robert Burchell, David Listokin, and William Dolphin, "Residential Demographic Multipliers," Rutgers University, Center for Urban Policy Research, 2006, [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DPH/dph/environmental\\_health/environmental\\_engineering/2021-Uploads/Rutgers-CT-Occupants-of-New-Home-multipliers.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DPH/dph/environmental_health/environmental_engineering/2021-Uploads/Rutgers-CT-Occupants-of-New-Home-multipliers.pdf).

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**Table 4.1: Estimate of Residents to be Generated by The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South<sup>43</sup>**

Unit Type	Number of Units	Relevant Multiplier	Residents Generated
Single Family, 3 BR	32	3.10	100
Single Family, 4 BR	36	3.64	131
Duplex, 2 BR	12	2.38	29
Apartment, 1 BR	216	1.39	300
Apartment, 2 BR	272	1.99-2.20	541-599
<b>Total</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,101 – 1,159</b>

\*Residential demographic multipliers factor in unit rent amount. This multiplier assumes that apartment rents may range between \$2,050 and \$2,800 (~\$1,300 - \$1,800 in 2005). The multiplier could, therefore, vary depending on rent amounts of the development.

The Residential Demographic Multipliers enable a more detailed look into these projected residents by providing tailored multipliers for defined age cohorts. Based upon these multipliers, between 31% and 34% of the estimated generated residents would be either under 18 years old or over 65 years old. The age cohort of 25- to 44-year-olds would be the largest portion of all residents of the development, representing between 42% and 45% of residents.

**Table 4.2: Estimate of Residents to be Generated by The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, By Age<sup>43</sup>**

Unit Type	Estimate of Residents Generated	0-4	5-17	18-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Single Family, 3 BR	100	12	21	3	42	18	4
Single Family, 4 BR	131	16	38	4	49	21	3
Duplex, 2 BR	29	3	5	3	10	5	3
Apartment, 1 BR	300	4	2	35	130	26	103
Apartment, 2 BR (1)	541	35	35	46	240	95	90
<b>Total (1)</b>	<b>1,101</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>203</b>
Apartment, 2 BR (2)	599	52	52	92	294	68	41
<b>Total (2)</b>	<b>1,159</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>154</b>

While it is projected that the proposed development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will be home to between 1,101 and 1,159 residents, these new residents may not necessarily represent a 1:1 increase in the total population for the Town of Simsbury. Some current residents of Simsbury, such as a young adult living with parents (ex. a commuter student of the University of Hartford, which is 8 miles away from Simsbury) or one of the roughly 450 renter-occupied households living in units that are over 50 years old and may be substandard (and therefore, would not be re-occupied when vacated), may choose to relocate to the units at The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South. In other words, the Town of Simsbury may experience an increase in the Town's overall population that is less than the overall resident population of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South.

In addition, due to the fact that the 2027 population projections for the Town of Simsbury that were included in the 2020 Parks and Open Space Master Plan were based on annual growth rates that may be higher than actual growth rates (as discussed in Chapter Two), the Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will likely not increase the Town's actual 2027 population by 1,101 – 1,159 residents beyond the originally predicted Town population. In other

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words, the number of residents estimated to be generated by The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will likely exceed the projected 2027 population for the town by a fraction of the actual number of residents expected to reside within the residential development.

### Estimate of Public-School Students to be Generated by The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South

An estimate of the total public-school students to be generated by The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South is an important subset of the overall generated residents to analyze due to public school children’s particular potential for demographic and fiscal impacts on the local community. Overall, using multipliers for the generation of public-school children (PSAC) included in Rutgers University’s Residential Demographic Multipliers Study, it is estimated that The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will generate between 96 and 115 additional public-school students.

This estimate is further supported by using the comparative example of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain North. The generation of 51 students from 298 occupied residential units of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain North is equivalent to a multiplier of .17 (note: this rough calculation does not take into account differences in unit mix). When applied to the 580 units of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, it would be estimated that 100 public school children would be generated by the proposed development. This is similar to an estimate projected by Simsbury Public School Assistant Superintendent Neil Sullivan for The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South.

**Table 4.3: Estimate of Public-School Children to be Generated by The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South<sup>44</sup>**

Unit Type	Number of Units	Relevant Multiplier	Students Generated
Single Family, 3 BR	32	0.59	20
Single Family, 4 BR	36	0.94	34
Duplex, 2 BR	12	0.39	10
Apartment, 1 BR	216	0.01	2
Apartment, 2 BR	272	0.11 - 0.18*	30-49
<b>Total</b>	<b>580</b>		<b>96-115</b>

\*Residential demographic multipliers factor in unit rent amount. This multiplier assumes that apartment rents may range between \$2,050 and \$2,800 (~\$1,300 - \$1,800 in 2005). The multiplier could, therefore, vary depending on rent amounts of the development.

## Housing and Market Impact Assessment

### Affordable Housing Assessment

Among The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South’s 580 proposed units, a total of 58 or 10% will be set-aside and deed restricted for affordable housing, with half of these units limited to rents equivalent to 60% of the area’s median family income or lower and the other half limited to rents equivalent to 80% of the area’s median family income or lower. These 58 units will be evenly distributed among the development’s proposed apartment buildings. With these additional 58 units added to the Town’s existing stock of roughly 463 assisted units, the percentage of affordable housing units in the Town will increase to 5.38% from the existing 5.08%. In other words, though a marginal improvement, the development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will provide assistance to the Town of Simsbury in complying with the State of Connecticut’s requirement for municipalities to have 10% of all housing units set-aside for “affordable” and, therefore, be designated as “non-exempt” under Connecticut General Statutes 8-30g.

<sup>44</sup> Robert Burchell, David Listokin, and William Dolphin, “Residential Demographic Multipliers,” Rutgers University, Center for Urban Policy Research, 2006

Table 4.4: Projected Share of Affordable Housing in Simsbury with The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South<sup>45</sup>

Affordable Housing Appeals Metrics	# of Units (2022)	# of Units (with the Ridge at Talcott Mountain South)
Total Housing Units	9,110	9,690
Government-Assisted	289	289
Tenant Rental Assistance	60	60
Single Family CHFA/USDA Mortgages	86	86
Deed Restricted	28	86
<b>Total Assisted Units</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>521</b>
<b>Percentage of All Units</b>	<b>5.08%</b>	<b>5.38%</b>

### Household Spending Assessment

Each of the roughly 1,100 new residents living in the 580 new households as part of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South development will not only live in the community of Simsbury as residents, but as consumers. In this role, each resident of the proposed project will spend money into the Simsbury economy, thus creating jobs and producing secondary benefits of the residential development. Though it is not possible to predict the consumer preferences or exact distribution of consumer spending that The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will generate, it is possible to estimate spending on average through the use of expenditure reports accessible through Esri Business Analyst. These expenditure reports estimated the average annual household spending on a variety of expenditures for the area 1-mile around the project site at 200 Hopmeadow Street. It is important to note that, while these estimates reflect the area averages for household expenditure household, they do not take differences in unit type into account, with the existing predominant residential unit in Simsbury being single-family housing. In other words, the actual spending by residents of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South’s duplexes and apartment units may have slight variations than what is currently observed.

Overall, it is expected that the residents contribute roughly between \$11 million and \$13 million annually in new consumer spending for local and regional retail goods and services, with a majority of these expenditures likely to be directed towards the local Simsbury economy<sup>46</sup>. This estimate was reached after identifying key expenditures that are the most likely to remain within the local and regional economies (i.e. excluding expenditures for insurance, stock, travel, etc.). As the units at The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will be renter-occupied, the expenditure estimates provided by the Esri Business Analyst were adjusted to account for the median household income of renters both within the entire Town, which produced the low-end estimate, and more specifically the project site’s Census Tract (Tract 4661.02), which produced the high-end estimate. While a rough estimate based upon broad consumer assumptions, the estimated consumer spending shown in Table 4.5 reinforces the conclusion that The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will induce extensive benefits and growth to the economy of Simsbury and the region. As part of any purchased household expenditures, it is assumed that the residents of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South would additionally contribute new sales tax revenue for the State of Connecticut, which is equal to 6.35%<sup>47</sup>. This sales tax includes the purchase of motor vehicles (with those of \$50,000 in value taxed at 7.75%)<sup>47</sup>.

<sup>45</sup> Affordable Housing Appeals List, 2022, <https://portal.ct.gov/DOH/DOH/Programs/Affordable-Housing-Appeals-Listing>.

<sup>46</sup> Estimates were calculated based upon Esri Business Analyst projections, which utilize Consumer Expenditure Surveys (BLS)

<sup>47</sup> "Tax Information," State of Connecticut, <https://portal.ct.gov/DRS/Sales-Tax/Tax-Information>

**Table 4.5: Estimated Annual Household Spending Generated by The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South for Local and Regional Economy<sup>46</sup>**

<b>Expenditure Type*</b>	<b>Average Annual Amount Spent / Household (HH)</b>	<b>Adjusted for Median Income of Renters (Census Tract 4661.02)</b>	<b>Percentage of Income</b>	<b>Ridge at Talcott Mountain South Impact (580 HH)</b>
Apparel and Services	\$3,673	\$2,048	2.66%	\$1,188,071
Computer	\$495	\$276	0.36%	\$160,113
Entertainment and Recreation	\$6,540	\$3,647	4.73%	\$2,115,434
Food	\$17,348	\$9,674	12.55%	\$5,611,399
Health	\$1,050	\$585	0.76%	\$339,633
Child Care	\$970	\$540	0.70%	\$313,757
Household Supplies	\$1,564	\$872	1.13%	\$505,892
Household Furnishings and Equipment	\$1,697	\$946	1.23%	\$548,913
Personal Care Products	\$915	\$510	0.66%	\$295,966
School Supplies	\$214	\$119	0.15%	\$69,220
Transportation (Gas and Vehicle Maintenance)	\$5,937	\$3,311	4.29%	\$1,920,387
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$40,403</b>	<b>\$22,532</b>	<b>29.23%</b>	<b>\$13,068,790</b>
<b>Assumed Median Household Income</b>	<b>\$138,236</b>	<b>\$77,093</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

\*Certain expenditures such as insurance, financial, mortgage payments, travel and insurance have been excluded from analysis as they are less likely to contribute to the local economy.

## Impact on Employment

The development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South is estimated to cost between \$115 million and \$150 million to complete. A significant portion of this construction cost can be expected to be directed towards the local Simsbury economy, including supporting the Town’s construction industry, including its estimated 416 employees and 78 businesses (equal to 7.8% of all businesses in Simsbury), per Esri Business Analyst data, and generating new jobs in construction<sup>48</sup>. Overall, it is estimated that the construction of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will employ, on average, between 230 and 375 construction workers annually (assuming an average annual salary of \$50,000)<sup>49</sup>.

While it is not possible to quantify, the above discussed household spending that would be expected from the 580 new households created from The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South would be likely to induce new jobs and workers, especially in prominent industries in Simsbury that correspond to the listed expenditures in Table 4.5. For example, a large portion of the estimated \$5,611,399 in household food expenditures among residents of the proposed development will likely go towards the roughly 80 businesses (equal to 11% of all businesses in the Town) identified as either Food & Beverage or Food Service establishments within Simsbury<sup>48</sup>. This influx of revenue for these establishments could subsequently encourage the expansion of business and the hiring of new employees.

<sup>48</sup> Estimates were calculated based upon Esri Business Analyst projections, which utilize Consumer Expenditure Surveys (BLS)

<sup>49</sup> Based upon an assumption that 50% of construction costs (\$115 - \$150 M) will be dedicated to labor costs over the life of the project



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**Table 4.6: Corresponding Simsbury Industries of Projected Annual Household Expenditures of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South<sup>48</sup>**

Industry Type	Number of Businesses	% of All Businesses in Simsbury	Number of Employees	% of All Employees in Simsbury	Corresponding Household Expenditure	Projected Spending by The Ridge at Talcott Mountain
Furniture & Home Furnishings	7	.7%	242	2%	Household Furnishings and Equipment	\$548,913
Electronics & Appliances	4	.4%	121	1%	Computer	\$160,113
Food & Beverage	16	1.6%	357	3%	Food	\$5,611,399
Food Services	64	6.4%	954	8.1%		
Health and Personal Care	8	.8%	94	.8%	Personal Care Products	\$295,966
					Health	\$339,633
Gasoline Stations and Fuel Dealers	3	.3%	10	.1%	Transportation (Gas and Vehicle Maintenance)	\$1,920,387
Automatic Repair and Maintenance	15	1.5%	134	1.1%		\$1,920,387
Clothing and Clothing Accessories	8	.8%	85	.7%	Apparel and Services	\$1,188,071
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	33	3.3%	328	2.8%	Entertainment and Recreation	\$2,115,434

In addition to the demand for construction workers as well as any secondary employment benefits that the increase in household spending that will accompany the project’s increase of 580 households will produce, it is estimated that six new permanent operations jobs for the property of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, including a property manager, two leasing agents, and three maintenance workers, will be created by the development<sup>50</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> This estimate of direct, permanent job creation was derived by SL Simsbury LLC based upon The Ridge at Talcott Mountain North



# 5

## Municipal Service Impact Analysis

The addition of roughly 1,100 new residents to the population of the Town of Simsbury will impact and benefit the municipal services that the Town provides to varying degrees. While new residents represent additional demand for services and usage of the Town's facilities and infrastructure, a development like The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South also represents potential new volunteers for the Town's emergency services, such as the Simsbury Fire Department and the Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association, to counteract the increase in required service levels. In addition, a development like The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South represents significant increases in tax revenue that will, for the most part, offset the costs of maintaining adequate municipal service levels.

Using Chapter Four's overview of the demographic and housing impacts as a basis for analysis, this Chapter provides a glimpse into two aspects of the projected impacts of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South on the Town of Simsbury's municipal services, both those included and independent of the Town Budget. For each type of service, this Chapter quantifies both the costs that will be incurred as a result of the increase in the total Town population compared to the overall tax benefits of development and the impacts on the current service capacity levels. Overall, based upon this analysis, it can be concluded that the development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will have no fiscal impacts on the Town of Simsbury or the Town's municipal services that will not be likely offset by the fiscal benefits to be generated by the project.

## Overall Fiscal Benefit of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain

### Real Property Tax Revenues

It is estimated that the development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will generate an annual real property tax levy/income of between \$2,991,227 to \$3,322,531 (see Table 5.1)<sup>51</sup>. This estimate was calculated based upon the assessment value and taxes paid by the comparative example of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain North. Using a revised tax assessment for the north property appraised by SL Simsbury LLC, the low end of the estimate was calculated by multiplying the Town's mill rate of 31.82 by every \$1,000 of assessment. This determined how much tax levy The Ridge at Talcott Mountain North would have paid under the appealed tax assessment value. This tax levy was then adjusted based upon the number of units (580 units) proposed for The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South. The high end of the estimate was calculated by refining this original estimate by adjusting for the size differences between the units of the Ridge at Talcott Mountain South based upon the per unit tax levy calculated from the northern property example. This assumption was based upon a mill rate of 31.82, including a mill rate of 1.00 dedicated to the funding of the Simsbury Fire District. An estimated \$94,005 to \$104,416 of the tax levy for The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South is estimated to be dedicated to the Fire District.

Based upon the current distribution of the Simsbury Municipal Budget among the Town's municipal departments, it can be assumed that this tax benefit would be allocated as follows:

<sup>51</sup> Based upon an estimated tax assessment value of \$94,004,615 - \$104,416,437, which is lower than the actual assessment that the 2022 taxes paid by the northern development were based on. This was derived by utilizing SL Simsbury LLC's appraised value for The Ridge at Talcott Mountain North (\$48,461,000) and adjusting this value for the 580 units proposed for the southern development.

Table 5.1: Municipal Budget Distribution of Projected Real Property Tax Benefits of Development<sup>52</sup>

Budget Item	Total Expenditure	% of Budget	Distribution of Estimated Real Property Tax Benefit
Simsbury School Budget	\$81,576,437	67.05%	\$1,942,588 to \$2,157,746
Non-Public School	\$605,699	0.50%	\$14,486 - \$16,091
Police/Public Safety	\$6,559,196	5.39%	\$156,160 to \$173,456
Public Works	\$4,592,199	3.77%	\$109,225 to \$121,323
Social Services	\$746,008	0.61%	\$17,673 to \$19,631
Parks & Recreation	\$1,255,156	1.03%	\$29,841 to \$33,147
Library	\$1,885,158	1.55%	\$44,907 to \$49,881
Other Operating Budget Items	\$16,641,680	13.68%	\$396,340 to \$440,238
Debt Service	\$7,806,810	6.42%	\$186,002 to \$206,603
<i>Total (Mill Rate: 30.82)</i>	<i>\$121,668,343</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>\$2,897,222 to \$3,218,115</i>
<i>Fire District (Mill Rate: 1.00)</i>	-	-	<i>\$94,005 to \$104,416</i>
<b>Total (Mill Rate: 31.82)</b>			<b>\$2,991,227 to \$3,322,531</b>

## Vehicle Property Tax Revenues

This estimated tax benefit from the projected assessment of the development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South would further be supplemented by the Town of Simsbury’s assessment on vehicles owned by each household. Specifically, the Town taxes motor vehicles at a rate of \$30.82 per \$1,000 of assessment. As it is not possible to accurately predict how many vehicles a household will own or the value of those owned vehicles, the tax benefits of the Town’s future assessment on The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South residents’ vehicles are separated from the projected real property tax benefits detailed in this Chapter. Based upon the 2023/2024 Municipal Budget’s assessment, a vehicle in Simsbury, on average, is assessed at a value of \$16,440 (assuming roughly 17,500 vehicles in Simsbury based upon American Community Survey data)<sup>52</sup>. Using the estimated workday vehicle peak of 293 vehicles as a conservative estimate and the projected number of parking spaces (972) as a high-end estimate of the number of vehicles generated by the 580 proposed units of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, it is estimated that the project will generate between \$148,450 and \$492,493 in additional vehicle property tax revenue. This benefit would be distributed at the same percentage as those listed in Table 5.1.

In addition to this tax levy, The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will also generate one-time building permit fee revenue for the Simsbury Building Department. Based upon the comparative example of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain North, it is estimated that the development will pay roughly \$153,495 in building permit fees<sup>53</sup>. This will be paid to the Simsbury Building Department and represent approximately a 19% increase in collected building fees from FY 2022/2023.

## Impact on Municipal Services

### Impact on the Simsbury Police Department

With the addition of between 1,101 and 1,159 new residents to the jurisdiction of the Simsbury Police Department, the ratio of Simsbury’s police force and the total resident population would decrease by .1 to 1.6 officers per 1,000 population. As the community of Simsbury has been consistently ranked as one of the safest communities in Connecticut, with a violent crime rate of .1 to .2 per 1,000 residents, the Town may deem this

<sup>52</sup> Town of Simsbury Adopted Budget - FY 2023-2024

<sup>53</sup> This estimate of building fees was based upon an adjustment of the \$79,121 in building fees paid for the Ridge at Talcott Mountain North

## Demographic & Fiscal Impact Study | The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South

service level adequate for the needs of the community<sup>54</sup>. However, if the Town wishes to maintain current levels of service of its police force, roughly between 1 to 2 new patrol officers would be required as a result of the development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South.

Assuming that these two new patrol officers would start their careers at the lowest tier of the Simsbury Police Department's payroll, each new officer would be expected to earn an annual salary of \$70,341.34 for a total additional annual salary expense of \$140,682.68 for the Simsbury Police Department<sup>55</sup>. As The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South is projected to generate between \$156,160 to \$173,456 in new real property tax revenue for the Police Department (not including motor vehicle taxes), there would be between \$15,477 and \$32,773 remaining of the new tax revenue to support supplemental staffing costs such as overtime, holiday pay and equipment. While it is not possible to estimate the additional costs for overtime for each new police officer, it is estimated that roughly \$7,000 - \$7,500 in overtime is budgeted for each uniformed staff member (total overtime 2023-2024 budget equals \$300,000)<sup>56</sup>. As a result, it can be assumed that roughly \$14,000 - \$15,000 in overtime would be budgeted for these two additional officers. After salary and overtime expenses, up to \$18,000 would be remaining to cover any additional expenses required for recruiting the two additional police officers that are necessary to maintain the Town's ratio of 1.7 officers per 1,000 population. Even if the highest estimated costs are incurred, the tax revenue allocated to the Public Safety Department would offset these salary and overtime expenses, especially with the addition of tax revenue generated by the motor vehicle property tax assessment. Any potential equipment needs for these two officers including additional police cruisers would be included in the town's non-recurring capital budget, which currently includes three police cruisers for the 2023/2024 – 2028/2029 Capital Non-Recurring Plan.

### Impact on the Simsbury Volunteer Fire Company

Assuming a mill rate of 1.00, the Simsbury Fire District and, by relation, the Simsbury Fire Company, can expect a \$94,005 to \$104,416 fiscal benefit from the development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South. This revenue will help support the Fire District's budget, which funds the administration of the Fire District. As the Simsbury Fire Company is entirely staffed by volunteer firefighters and provides firefighting and rescue services free of charge, there are no possible staffing cost implications in light of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South's development.

In terms of capacity implications, the introduction of 1,100 new residents would decrease the coverage of the Town's 89 regular firefighters from 3.63 to 3.4 firefighters per 1,000 residents. As the median rate of firefighters per 1,000 residents in communities similar in size to Simsbury range widely from .9 to 18.9 across the United States, this decline is likely a minimal impact<sup>57</sup>. At a rate of roughly 30.5 incidents per 1,000 residents responded to in 2022, it is estimated that the Ridge at Talcott Mountain South could generate (at a maximum) a demand for an additional 33.5 incidents requiring the response of the Simsbury Fire Department annually. This incident rate is equal to an additional 1.28 incidents every other week that would be generated by the development's residents. Any responses to incidents generated by the development would benefit from the location of the Fire Company's Weatogue Station in relation to the project, as the Fire Station is directly across the street from the proposed development.

<sup>54</sup> Rich Scinto, "Simsbury among the 100 Safest in U.S.: Safewise," Newtown, CT Patch, June 24, 2022, <https://patch.com/connecticut/newtown/2-ct-towns-among-100-safest-u-s-safewise>.

<sup>55</sup> IBPO Police Union Employment Agreement - 2021-2024," Town of Simsbury, [https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf9751/f/pages/2021-2024\\_ibpo\\_contract\\_executed.pdf](https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf9751/f/pages/2021-2024_ibpo_contract_executed.pdf).

<sup>56</sup> Town of Simsbury Adopted Budget - FY 2023-2024

<sup>57</sup> 2022 US Fire Department Profile, National Fire Protection Association, September 2022, <https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/research/nfpa-research/fire-statistical-reports/us-fire-department-profile>.

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While the introduction of 1,100 new residents to Simsbury will increase demand for firefighting services, these new residents will also provide a new supply of potential volunteers for the Simsbury Fire Company, thus potentially offsetting these impacts. For example, with a current staff of 89 regular firefighters, Simsbury has a volunteer rate of .48% among its over 18 population. Adjusted for the projected adult (over 18) residents at The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, this would equal roughly 4 new potential volunteers that could be generated by the proposed development.

*The Simsbury Fire Marshall has reviewed the development proposal for The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, per a letter dated November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023.*

### Impact on the Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association

As noted in Chapter Three, ambulance services in the Town of Simsbury are the sole responsibility of the Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association, which is funded through donations and the billing of services. As a result, the development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will have no negative fiscal impact on the ambulance services of Simsbury. Any additional 9-1-1 calls that are generated by the new development's 1,100 residents would be funded by consumers, i.e. the residents that would call for an ambulance. Overall, at a current rate of over 65 calls per 1,000 population per year, it can be expected that The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will induce roughly .195 new calls each day or 1.37 calls each week for The Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association.

It is important to note that there is a possibility for some fiscal benefit for the Volunteer Ambulance from The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South in the form of the generation of a new potential donor base among the 1,100 new residents. In addition, with 930-950 new residents over the age of 18 estimated to be generated by the project, The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South also represents additional opportunity for new volunteers to support the Volunteer Ambulance.

### Impact on Social/Senior Services

Per analysis in Chapter Four, between 154 and 203 residents of the 1,100 new residents of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South are predicted to be over the age of 65. It is expected that the estimated \$17,673 to \$19,631 in fiscal benefit (not including motor vehicle tax revenue) that will be allocated to the Social Services of Simsbury will be sufficient to support any additional demand induced by the slight influx of 65+ residents produced by the proposed development. For instance, the Town's Dial-a-Ride program, which has a \$170,540 budget, is operated by a contractor. As a result, any additional registered riders of the program would not have an impact of the current Town Budget of Simsbury. In addition, with a current program participation rate of only 7 percent of all 60+ residents in Simsbury, The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South is not expected to create any significant additional demand for the Town's Senior Services. At an assumed participation rate of 7%, only 10-14 residents of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South at most may use the Dial-a-Ride program. Overall, it is projected that the \$17,673 to \$19,631 in real property tax revenue from The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South expected to be allocated to the Town's Social Services will represent additional funds for supporting and expanding the town's social service programs.

### Impact on Public Works

*The Simsbury Department of Public Works and Water Pollution Control Authority have reviewed the development proposal for The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South. The SCWPCA approved the sanitary sewer flow allocation for the project site, per a correspondence dated November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and a meeting of the WPCA on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023.*

## Demographic & Fiscal Impact Study | The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South

Representing nearly 4% of the overall Simsbury Town Budget, the Department of Public Works can expect to receive between \$109,225 to \$121,323 in additional revenue levies (not including motor vehicle tax revenue) from The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South. The Preliminary Traffic Study prepared for The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South as part of the project's Master Site Development Plan estimates that there would be approximately 3,944 trips (1,972 trips exiting and 1,972 trips entering the property), on average, generated from the project site each day<sup>58</sup>. On weekdays, an estimated 224 vehicles are estimated to enter or exit the site during peak morning hours and 293 vehicles are estimated to enter/exit the site during peak evening hours<sup>58</sup>. It is estimated that 60% of this traffic would be directed towards or come from the north, while the other 40% would be directed towards or come from the south of the project site<sup>58</sup>. As both exits for the property are located directly on Hopmeadow Street, all 3,944 trips will begin and end on this roadway<sup>58</sup>.

While some of this projected generated traffic will likely disperse across the Town of Simsbury, it is likely that most of the weekday traffic entering and exiting The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South property will primarily remain on Hopmeadow Street, which serves as the main corridor through the Town, while traffic is within the Town's boundaries. In addition, with a majority of the town's commercial land uses concentrated along Hopmeadow Street, it is likely that residents of the development will predominately stay on Hopmeadow Street for other leisure trips, including shopping, dining, and entertainment. As Hopmeadow Street is concurrently owned as a State (CT Route 10) and US (US 202) highway, the impacts of this increased traffic on Hopmeadow Street will not be the responsibility of the Town of Simsbury's Public Works Department to address or maintain. In addition, as all on-site streets will be maintained by the operations staff of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, the development's property will not pose any additional responsibilities for the Simsbury Department of Public Works. Traffic for this development has already been analyzed and approved by State Department of Transportation.

In terms of impacts on the Simsbury Water Pollution Control Authority (SWPCA), it is expected that The Ridge at Talcott Mountain will generate \$217,500 in new revenue annually in Sewer Use Fees based upon an assumed equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) rate of \$375/EDU. This annual benefit is in addition to both the estimated tax levy benefit of the project as well as the one-time Facility Connection Charge (TBD). Lastly, in terms of on-site garbage pick-up, as the Town of Simsbury does not provide curbside pick-up, it is assumed that The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will be serviced by one of the two private vendors identified by the Town. Overall, the impacts of the project on the Town's Department of Public Works are expected to be minimal and the Department can expect new revenue sources to be generated by The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South.

## Impact on Open Space and Recreation

*The Simsbury Director of Culture, Parks and Recreation has reviewed the development proposal for The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, per a correspondence dated November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023.*

It is expected that the Town of Simsbury's Department of Culture, Parks and Recreation will receive between \$29,841 to \$33,147 additional annual revenue (not including motor vehicle tax revenue) from the distribution of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South's tax levy. While there will be a minimal possibility of increased maintenance needs with the development's increase of 1,100 residents, the Simsbury Culture, Parks and Recreation Department would likely not experience a significant increase in expenses. In the event that the Town determines a need to hire an additional parks maintenance worker, there would be a roughly \$53,000 increase in salary expenditures (assuming the hired position would be for a Parks Maintainer I position at an hourly rate of \$25.73)<sup>59</sup>.

<sup>58</sup> 200 Hopmeadow Street Preliminary Traffic Evaluation, VHB, September 25, 2023

<sup>59</sup> "AFSCME Parks/Public Works Union Employment Agreement, 2019 - 2023," Town of Simsbury, [https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf9751/f/pages/2019-2023\\_afscme\\_contract.pdf](https://www.simsbury-ct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf9751/f/pages/2019-2023_afscme_contract.pdf).

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With a slight increase in overtime expenses in addition to the required salary, The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South may slightly increase the expenses (by roughly \$14,781 - \$21,630, even with the addition of motor vehicle tax revenue) to the Department of Culture, Parks and Recreation in this scenario. However, per the 2020 Simsbury Parks and Open Space Master Plan, as the hiring of additional park maintenance staff was previously identified as a goal of the Town's, this expense may be incurred regardless of and prior to the development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South<sup>60</sup>.

In addition, The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will generate additional secondary entertainment and recreational spending (approximately \$2 million annually) among the additional 1,100 Simsbury residents projected to live in the development, as discussed in Chapter Four.

Apart from the fiscal implications of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, the dedication of the project site's 5-acres of open space that fronts Hopmeadow Street to public use will benefit the Town's inventory of parks and open space. This open space will include a multi-use trail, open to both pedestrians and bicyclists, that will link to the newly extended Farmington River Trail to the north. In addition to supporting the most common recreational activities among Simsbury households (hiking, jogging and road biking, per the 2020 Parks and Open Space Master Plan), this multi-use trail will fulfill the Parks and Open Space Master Plan's objective to pursue opportunities "to develop shared-use paths and/ or sidewalks/ trails to connect neighborhoods to parks, open spaces, places of work, and commercial centers", as noted in Chapter Three.

Overall, considering the increase in residents as well as the dedication of 5-acres to open space, the ratio of open space and parkland per 1,000 residents in Simsbury would decrease slightly from 118 to 113 acres per 1,000 Simsbury residents. The ratio of parkland alone would decrease from 22 to 20.6 acres per 1,000 residents. For the Town's 40 athletic fields, once The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South is built, each field will serve roughly 640 residents, an increase of 30-40 residents<sup>61</sup>. As a comparison, nationally the median number of residents per multi-purpose athletic fields are around 6,000 to 12,000 residents<sup>62</sup>. These ratios would still be well above the ratio standard recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association. A playground, pool, common area space and a community garden for the use of the development's residents will also be developed as part the proposed project and, thus, mitigate some of the impacts on the Townwide park and open space facilities.

## Impact on Simsbury School District

### Impact on School Enrollment and Capacity

It is estimated that The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South project would have the potential to generate between 96 and 115 new students for enrollment at the Simsbury Public School District. It is important to recognize that these 96 – 115 students, however, would be distributed among as many as 13 grade levels (K -12) and, therefore, the overall impact on the School District would be minimized. Using the residential demographic multipliers outlined in Chapter Four, it is estimated that between 57 and 67 % of these students would be enrolled in elementary school (K-6), with the most generated for Grades 3 – 6 (29 to 43 students total or 7 to 11 students per grade).

<sup>60</sup> Simsbury Parks & Open Space Master Plan, October 2020, <http://tinyurl.com/45axzn6d>

<sup>61</sup> Athletic field capacity was a concern identified by the Simsbury Director of Culture, Parks and Recreation in a memo dated 11/27/23

<sup>62</sup> NRPA Park Metrics: Research," National Recreation and Park Association, <https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/ParkMetrics/>.

Table 5.2: Estimate of Public School Children to be Generated, By Grade<sup>63</sup>

Unit Type	Estimate of Students Generated	K-2	3-6	7-9	10-12
Single Family, 3 BR	20	6	7	4	3
Single Family, 4 BR	34	9	11	8	6
Duplex, 2 BR	10	3	3	2	2
Apartment, 1 BR	2	2	0	0	0
Apartment, 2 BR (1)	30	6	8	11	5
<b>Total (1)</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>16</b>
Apartment, 2 BR (2)	49	14	22	5	8
<b>Total (2)</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>

Per 2023-2024 class size information published by the School District, the current capacity of the Simsbury Public School and, specifically, Latimer Lane School would be able to accommodate these generated students. For example, the increase of between 7 and 11 students in Grade 3 at Latimer Lane would be distributed among the existing three classes, which have collective space for 17 additional students before exceeding the recommended class size range<sup>64</sup>. Lastly, it is important to note that these estimates for generated students would not occur at one time but be a gradual increase in student enrollment. The only grade level with potential capacity constraints, per current class sizes, for Latimer Lane School would be kindergarten. An estimated increase of roughly 2-3 students per kindergarten class would exceed the recommended range for K-2 class sizes, under current conditions<sup>64</sup>. Based upon current class sizes, available capacity at Central School could accommodate The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South’s generated school age children for every grade, including kindergarten (currently available space for 14 additional students across three kindergarten classes).

It is important to note that by the time of projected full build-out in 2027/2028, class size distribution will differ from current conditions. However, observed increases in the age 0 – 5 population for Simsbury, CT may maintain current demand levels for K-2 education in the near future. With renovations to the School District’s elementary schools, however, and available capacity in facilities like Central School, the Simsbury School District would likely be able to accommodate this demand.

### Impact on School District Budget Expenditures

The total tax revenue that the Simsbury School District can expect to receive from the real property tax levy of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South is approximately \$1,942,588 to \$2,157,746. This was calculated based upon the 2023-2024 Municipal Budget which allocates 67% of the total budget to the School District. In addition, the School District may receive between \$99,500 to \$330,200 in revenue from the Town’s motor vehicle property tax levy, depending on the number of vehicles generated by the 580 new households and value of vehicles.

As noted in Chapter Three, while the Simsbury School District’s total net expenditures per student in 2023-2024 is \$19,877, this cost is not an accurate reflection of the additional cost that would be incurred to educate the additional students generated by The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South. The cost to enroll a new student does not equal the traditionally calculated cost per pupil derived from the total school budget as resources that are included in this cost are already in place (i.e. teachers, maintenance, facility expenses, health services) and would

<sup>63</sup> Robert Burchell, David Listokin, and William Dolphin, “Residential Demographic Multipliers,” Rutgers University, Center for Urban Policy Research, 2006, [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DPH/dph/environmental\\_health/environmental\\_engineering/2021-Uploads/Rutgers-CT-Occupants-of-New-Home-multipliers.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DPH/dph/environmental_health/environmental_engineering/2021-Uploads/Rutgers-CT-Occupants-of-New-Home-multipliers.pdf).

<sup>64</sup> Simsbury Public School District, October 2023 Enrollment Report, October 2023



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occur regardless if these additional students were generated by new development or not. Therefore, a more accurate estimate for the actual additional cost to educate these new school children is to look specifically at the instructional expenses of the school budget. Per the 2023-2024 Simsbury Public School budget, approximately 61% of the total approved \$81,576,457 budget is allocated towards instructional cost, which is equivalent to \$50,024,730 or \$12,189 per student enrolled for the 2023-2024 school year.

At a total cost of \$12,189 per generated student, it is estimated that the development of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South would add an additional \$1,170,144 - \$1,401,735 in expenses to the Simsbury Public School system based on a conservative estimate of 96-115 new project generated students.

**Table 5.3: The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South’s Total Estimated Cost to School System**

Estimated # of Students Generated	Cost Per Student	Total Estimated Cost to School System
<b>96</b>	<b>\$12,189</b>	<b>\$1,170,144</b>
<b>115</b>	<b>\$12,189</b>	<b>\$1,401,735</b>
96	\$19,877	\$1,908,192
115	\$19,877	\$2,285,855

At this estimated amount, the real property tax revenue (not including motor vehicle property tax revenue) that the Simsbury School District will receive from the development annually will offset the costs for the additional school children generated that have been outlined. At an assumed cost per student of \$12,189, the revenue generated by the residential development for the Simsbury Public School District will be more than double the cost of educating the students that move into this development. Overall, it is estimated that the development would generate a total fiscal benefit for the Simsbury Public School District of between \$540,853 to \$987,602.

The Simsbury Public School District Assistant Superintendent has reviewed the development proposal for The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, per a correspondence dated November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The Simsbury Public School District Assistant Superintendent estimated the generation of 100 – 130 school students from the development. Even at the highest estimated enrollment of 130 school students, The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South would still represent a net fiscal benefit of between \$358,018 and \$573,176 (assuming total student expenditures of \$1,584,570) from real property taxes alone. The additional 15 students would be distributed across the School District’s 13 grade levels and pose minimal additional capacity issues beyond those discussed in this study.

**Table 5.4: Total Fiscal Impact of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South Development**

Revenue / Expense	Assumption	Total	% Allocated for Education <sup>ix</sup>	Total
Real Property Tax Revenue Collected	\$4,995.21 - \$9,590.80 Taxes Per Unit	\$2,897,222 to \$3,218,115	67%	\$1,942,588 to \$2,157,746
Cost to Instruct Project Generated Students	\$12,189 / Student	\$1,170,144 - \$1,401,735	-	\$1,170,144 - \$1,401,735
<b>Total Fiscal Benefit for School District from Real Property Tax</b>				<b>\$540,853 to \$987,602</b>
<i>Estimate Including Motor Vehicle Property Tax</i>				<i>\$871,053 - \$1,317,802</i>

## 6



## Summary of Findings

With full-build out of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South not expected until 2027/2028, the ability to confidently and accurately predict the future demographic, housing and market conditions within the Town of Simsbury by this time is limited. As the best available alternative, this study utilized current day data and trends, outlined in Chapters Two and Three, in order to contextualize the possible benefits and impacts of the residential development and quantify them. Through this analysis, clear direct and induced benefits of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South for the community of Simsbury were revealed.

Altogether, it is estimated that The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will generate between 1,101 – 1,159 new residents for the Town of Simsbury, including 96 – 115 public school children, across 580 new households. 29 of these new households will be set-aside for families with incomes of 80% or less of the median family income and 29 of these households will be set-aside for families with incomes of 60% or less of the median family income. These 58 households will not only increase the economic inclusivity of the Town, but assist with the improvement of its share of affordable units and move the Town closer to the State issued goal of having 10% of the overall housing stock set-aside as affordable.

These new households are estimated to generate roughly \$11 to \$13 million annually for the regional and local economies through typical household expenditures, which will induce job growth for the Town of Simsbury and the region. In addition to these jobs, The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South is slated to directly create six new permanent jobs for the operation and maintenance of the residential property once built and create a demand for between 230 and 375 construction workers annually throughout the course of construction.

With an influx of over 1,100 residents, there is no denying that greater demand for the municipal services provided by the Town of Simsbury as well as volunteer services, in the case the Simsbury Volunteer Fire Company and Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association, will exist as a result of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South's development. In terms of capacity, the Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will impact these various services in the following ways:

- **Simsbury Police Department:** The proposed residential development will decrease the existing ratio of Simsbury Police Officers per 1,000 residents from 1.7 to 1.6 officers per 1,000 residents. This may require the recruitment of two new Police Officers. *The increase of Simsbury's population by 1,100 residents, while increasing service demand, will also increase the pool of potential individuals that can be recruited as police officers.*
- **Simsbury Volunteer Fire Company:** The proposed project will decrease the ratio of firefighters per 1,000 residents in Simsbury from 3.63 to 3.4 firefighters per 1,000 residents. Based upon incident rate data for 2022, it is projected that 1,100 residents of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South may generate up to 1.28 new incidents every two weeks. *The increase of Simsbury's population by 1,100 residents, while increasing service demand, will also increase the pool of potential individuals that may volunteer to be a firefighter.*
- **Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association:** Based upon current call records for the ambulance services, it is projected that the residents of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South may generate 1.37 additional calls per week. *The increase of Simsbury's population by 1,100 residents, while increasing*

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*service demand, will also increase the pool of potential individuals that may volunteer to join the Ambulance Association.*

- **Simsbury Social/Senior Services:** The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will generate roughly 200 new residents over the age of 60 years of age. At a current participation rate in the Town's Dial-a-Ride program of approximately 7%, it is estimated that the demand for the Town's contracted service will only increase by a maximum of 10 to 14 residents. This will likely not significantly impact of the service of the Dial-a-Ride program.
- **Simsbury Public Works:** As both Hopmeadow Street (a State and US right of way), which, as the primary corridor in the Town, will be the main roadway affected by traffic generated by the development, and the on-site roadway network will both not be the responsibility of the Town of Simsbury, there will likely be little capacity impacts on the Simsbury Department of Public Works.
- **Simsbury Open Space and Recreation:** It is estimated that the influx of 1,100 new residents will not significantly impact the ability of the Town of Simsbury to provide quality parkland and recreational facilities. With the increase of residents, the ratio of parkland and open space per 1,000 residents will decrease from 118 acres to 113 acres per 1,000 Simsbury residents. With pre-existing concerns regarding the number of park maintenance staff employed by the Simsbury Parks Department, the Town may choose to hire one addition maintenance worker to maintain service levels. The proposed inclusion of a multi-use trail on a dedicated 5-acre parcel for public use on site of The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will further improve the offerings of the Simsbury Park and Open Space system.
- **Simsbury Public School District:** Overall, the estimated 96 to 115 public school children slated to be generated by the development would be enrolled in the Simsbury Public School District. Distributed among 13 grade levels (K – 12), it is projected (based on current enrollment levels) that no significant capacity issues will arise from this development, especially if the development is redistricted to the Central School, similar to its counterpart, The Ridge at Talcott Mountain North.

Apart from capacity considerations, the fiscal impact on these services and on the entirety of the Town of Simsbury were examined. Overall, The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South will generate between \$2,991,227 to \$3,322,531 in annual real property tax revenue, including \$94,005 to \$104,416 for the separated Simsbury Fire District. In addition, there is potential for an additional \$148,450 and \$492,493 in tax revenue from motor vehicle property taxes. In the case of nearly all examined municipal services, these tax revenues as well as other revenue sources will, for the most part, offset any potential financial costs incurred as a result of the residential development. As a service independent of the Town of Simsbury and entirely funded through donations and billing of services, the Simsbury Volunteer Ambulance Association will not incur any additional added expenses and will, in fact, potentially realize increases in donations. In addition to these tax revenues, the Simsbury Department of Public Works' Water Pollution Control will receive an annual Sewer Use Fee of \$217,500 from the development. Representing 67% of all municipal expenditures, the Simsbury School District represents the largest beneficiary of the tax revenue generated by The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South, with an annual estimated fiscal benefit of \$540,853 to \$987,602 from real property taxes alone, after consideration of the costs to educate the additional 96 to 115 students. Overall, The Ridge at Talcott Mountain South's fiscal, demographic and housing benefits outweigh the projected costs that will arise with an influx of 1,100 new residents arriving in the Town of Simsbury.