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TOWN OF SEYMOUR: MARKET FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THREE LAND PARCELS

Prepared for Town of Seymour
Prepared by Connecticut Economic Resource Center, Inc.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report explores the economic feasibility of three unique parcels of land. Parcel 1 *(15 Franklin Street and 38 Rimmon Street)* is located behind Stop & Shop and extends back along the Naugatuck River and across to include a wooded area on Rimmon Street. A portion of this parcel is currently being used by the construction company Haynes Group. Parcel 2 *(109 River Street and 79-101 Bank Street)* is located at the intersection of Bank Street and River Street with access to Downtown Seymour via Bank Street and Interstate 313 via River Street across from the Naugatuck River. This parcel encompasses an unused lot adjacent to a cemetery as well as a row of houses and a family owned business going uphill along Bank Street. Parcel 3 (*600-842 Derby Avenue)* encompasses a stretch of land (currently in use by miscellaneous service providers) and the Tri-Town Plaza which houses the popular Seymour Cinemas. This parcel is easily accessible via Derby Avenue and Interstate 334. It is also adjacent to the Ansonia-Derby-Shelton Expressway.

In exploring the economic feasibility of the parcels, the Connecticut Economic Resource Center, Inc. (CERC) considered the demographic and economic trends, as well as the constraints of the property and 2012 Downtown Action Strategy outlined by the Town. Key findings from the demographic and economic data gathering process include:

- The population in Seymour is approximately 16,540 residents. The majority of Seymour residents are either very experienced or highly educated employees with employment either concentrated in construction and manufacturing or education, health, scientific, or professional industries.
- Seymour is a family-oriented community with an aging population. The median age, 40.9 years, is older than the surrounding counties and state.
- 90% of Seymour residents are pulled to southern municipalities for work. Many commute to Stratford while some travel deeper south into Fairfield County.
- Seymour residents also travel up to 30 minutes for medical care (including emergency medical), entertainment, and retail.
- Seymour has unmet retail demand; in a resident survey many request additional options for dining, entertainment, and family fun.

As a result of these factors and trends along with development initiatives of the Town, CERC finds that the parcels could be best utilized as follows:

- Parcel 1 *(15 Franklin Street and 38 Rimmon Street)*
    - **Mixed-use Residential and Retail**: geared towards the younger population to aid with retaining and attracting young and educated people to Seymour
- Parcel 2 *(109 River Street and 79-101 Bank Street)*

- o **Dining/Entertainment**: provide entertainment for residents; capitalize on the proximity to Naugatuck River and developments (Greenway and enhanced Downtown rail service)
- Parcel 3 (*600-842 Derby Avenue*)
  - o **Urgent Care Facility**: healthcare jobs and easier access to emergency medical care for the aging population and families
  - o **Community College Continuing Education Collaboration**: train and enhance the high skilled workforce in Seymour and surroundings; frame Seymour as a regional asset to the emerging advanced manufacturing industry

Given the economic development plans outlined in Seymour's 2012 Downtown Action Strategy, the economic feasibility of the parcels has been reassessed and prioritized. Each of the proposed developments therefore either has short-term potential which can be acted upon immediately to produce favorable economic returns, or long-term potential where maximum returns to the development of the parcel rely on the revelation of certain development initiatives outlined by the Town. For example, the dining/entertainment venue proposed for Parcel 2 and mixed-use development proposed for Parcel 1 have greater long-term potential because the transformation of the Naugatuck River area, expansion of a nearby intersection, and addition of a Greenway will rebrand the River, provide scenic views for diners, and bring additional traffic. Furthermore, enhanced rail service would be an asset to the aforementioned developments but could potentially enhance the economic outcomes of the community college satellite proposed for Parcel 3. Combined with a shuttle, it could expand the reach of the satellite program helping brand Seymour as a manufacturing destination for both workers and employers from as far as Bridgeport and Waterbury.

1 STUDY PURPOSE & METHODOLOGY

The Town of Seymour is interested in exploring the market economic feasibility of three parcels outside the downtown area: (1) 15 Franklin Street and 38 Rimmon Street (behind Stop & Shop); (2) 79-101 Bank Street and 109 River Street (former Seymour Lumber and Housatonic Wire site); and (3) 600-842 Derby Avenue (stretch of parcels).

In 2012 the Economic Development Commission completed a Downtown Action Strategy, which provides a number of useful insights about Seymour's downtown history and possibilities for its future. It will be important to incorporate the Downtown Action Strategy findings into a larger analysis that looks at regional industry trends and the feasibility of sites throughout the Town.

The Town would now like to consider the economic development possibilities for the sites, keeping in mind the demographic and economic trends, as well as any constraints of the property. To that end, the Connecticut Economic Resource Center, Inc. (CERC) developed an economic market feasibility analysis for the sites using available demographic and economic data as follows:

- Define the Market Area. Based upon commuter data, Seymour residents and employees have connections to New Haven and Fairfield counties. This two-county market area was used for the trend analyses that follow.
- Analyze Demographic Trends. CERC analyzed the current demographic patterns to determine the area's anticipated ability to support additional enterprises. Demographic trends including population, age, race and ethnicity, education attainment, income, , housing, and commuting patterns were gathered and analyzed with implications from the findings being drawn. Data sources included both public and private sources, such as the US Census American Community Survey, and Connecticut Office of Policy and Management.
- Interpret Economic Trends. The slow economic recovery has changed the long-term prospects of a number of industries because of structural changes in the industrial mix of the state, region, and town; however recent trends indicate a growing state economy. The economic forces that may drive or hinder demand for industries were analyzed including the effects of current economic conditions, and the identification of the current industry mix in the town and surrounding region. Industries that may be poised for growth were determined based on employment data compared with state and national estimates.
- Estimate Preliminary Market Potential Scenarios. Based on the demographic and economic trends for the town, region and state, a list of industries with market potential for Seymour were developed. These preliminary market potential scenarios provided the base of questions for stakeholders regarding the most suitable use options for the sites.
- Identify Suitable Uses for the Sites. Now that potential scenarios have been identified using quantitative data, qualitative data was gathered from residents through an online survey to help further characterize the Town and get a sense of the lifestyle and economic activity of the residents.
- Define Market Potential Scenarios. Based on the demographics and economic trends, and qualitative resident inputs, scenarios of industries and uses with the best market potential for the three identified parcels were suggested.

2 DEMOGRAPHIC TREND ANALYSIS

The purpose of a demographic analysis is to provide an overall picture of the composition and characteristics of the local economy within the Town of Seymour and surrounding communities. Knowledge of the demographic characteristics of the Town will contextualize the subsequent economic analysis and industry segmentation analysis.

With approximately 16,540 residents and population growth outpacing the county and state, Seymour is a growing town in New Haven County. Seymour maintains a strong manufacturing sector and blue-collar workforce. With the highest earners being high skilled and experienced workers, the top employers in Seymour are in the construction, manufacturing, and retail trade industries.

There are some potential development initiatives in Seymour's future that will have implications for the economic activity of the Town. There is a Metro-North train running through the quaint downtown area. With fiscal aid and track improvements, enhanced train service could increase traffic to the area. In addition to this prospect, environmental and passive recreation developments in the works, particularly a greenway trail along the Naugatuck River, could make the river and nearby downtown area an attractive destination for leisure activities.

Though retail is not a natural strength of Seymour due primarily to logistical barriers (hills, infrastructure, etc.), there is potential for some retail development to address unmet demand as well as other ventures to support sustainable economic development and supplement the culture of the Town of Seymour.

2.1 Population and Earnings

Seymour has a slightly older median age than the surrounding counties and the state (Figure 2.1.1). The median age of the town of Seymour is 40.9 years, while the median ages of New Haven County and the state of Connecticut are 39.4 years and 40.2 years respectively.

Figure 2.1.1 Seymour Population by Age

Source: ACS 5-year estimates, 2009-2013

Seymour has less racial diversity compared to the surrounding counties of New Haven and Fairfield. For example, Fairfield County is 17.4% Hispanic while Seymour is only 6.8% Hispanic (Figure 2.1.2).
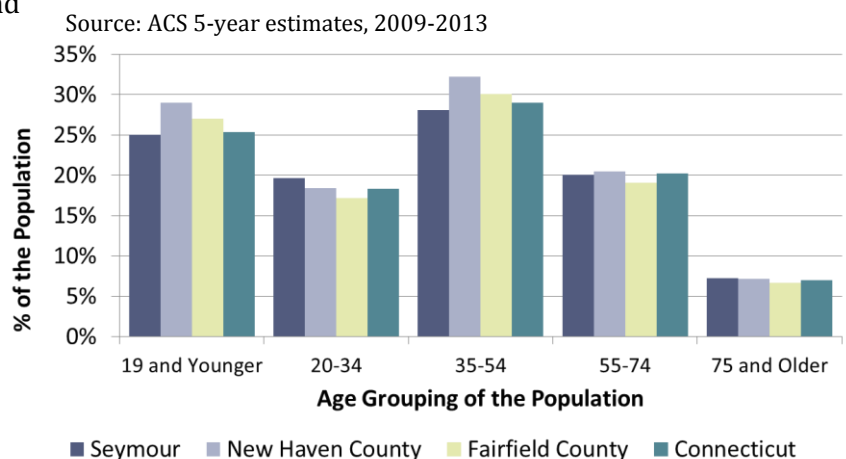
Figure 2.1.2 Seymour Demographic Breakdown by Race

Source: 2009-2013 ACS 5-year Estimates

Seymour

White, 14,688

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian and Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian
- Two or more races

New Haven County

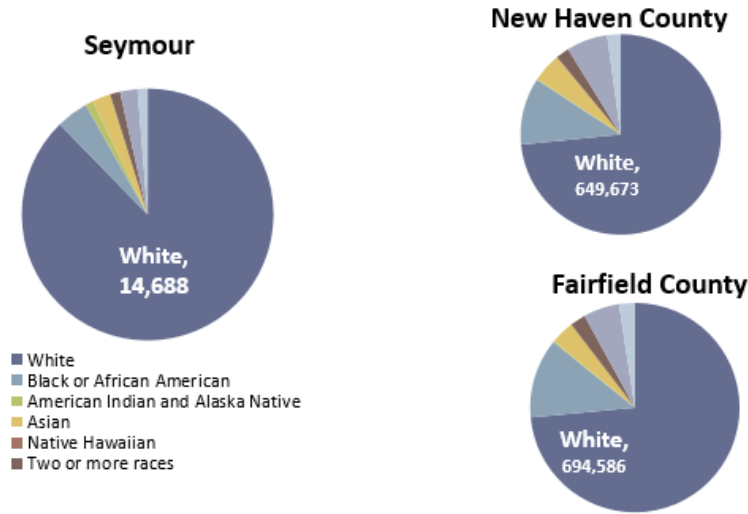White, 649,673

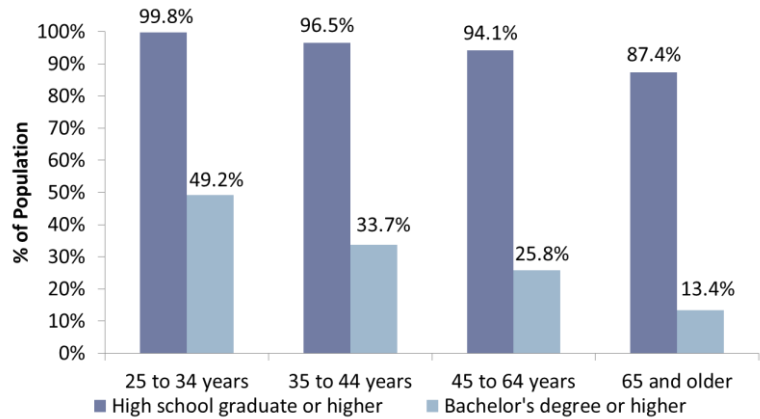**Fairfield County**

White, 694,586

Figure 2.1.3 Educational Attainment by Age

Source: 2009-2013 ACS 5-year Estimates

Seymour residents are also well educated. Approximately half of the population in the 25-34 age cohort holds a bachelor's degree or higher. (Figure 2.1.3).

The high educational attainment of the youngest cohort implies greater prospects for higher earnings and increased demand for higher-end products and services. Median earnings over the last twelve months however show that the highest earners in Seymour are not the most highly educated. This indicates that Seymour's labor force participants (the supply of workers) have the potential to successfully leverage their practical skills and experience in Seymour.

Those with less than a high school degree make up the top 23% of earners in Seymour followed by those with a graduate degree and above (Figure 2.1.4). This indicates that high skilled workers with experience are prized in Seymour's labor market.
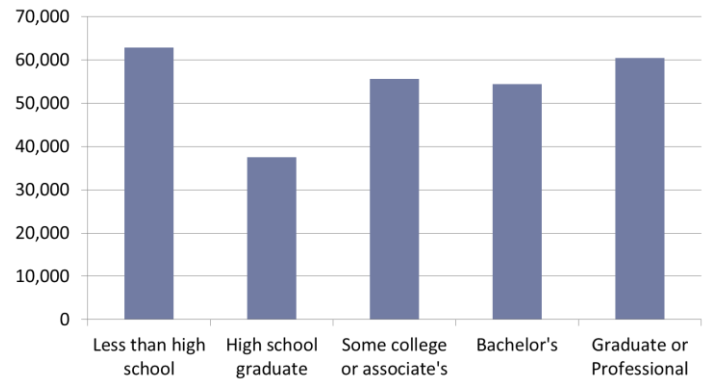
Figure 2.1.5 below shows income earnings in the past 12 months for households in Seymour compared to New Haven County, Fairfield County, and Connecticut. Though Seymour follows the same income trend as the state; 34% of Seymour households reported incomes greater than $100,000 in the past 12 months. 37% of households earned less than $50,000 in the last 12 months.

Figure 2.1.4 Median Earnings by Educational Attainment

Source: 2009-2013 ACS 5-year Estimates

Figure 2.1.5 Annual Household Income by % of Households

Source: 2009-2013 ACS 5-year Estimates
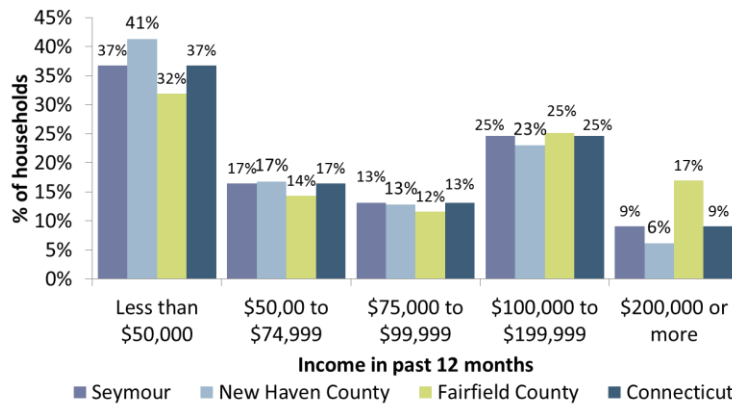
2.2 Household Composition

Similar to the state and surrounding counties, Seymour has almost twice as many family households as non-family households (Figure 2.2.1). According to the 2014 American Community Survey, 30.8% of Seymour households have children under 18 years old.

Figure 2.2.1 Household Composition

Source: 2010 U.S. Census

Households	Seymour	%	New Haven County	%	Fairfield County	%	Connecticut	%
Family	4,453	67%	215,749	65%	232,896	69%	908,661	66%
Nonfamily	2,201	33%	118,753	35%	102,649	31%	462,426	34%
Total	6,654		334,502		335,545		1,371,087	

Additionally, as illustrated by Figure 2.2.2, the ratio of home owners to home renters in Seymour is greater than that of the surrounding counties and state. 76.3% of houses in Seymour are owner occupied compared to the 23.7% that are renter occupied. This high home ownership rate has important implications for future commercial development. These permanent residents could serve as a strong consumer base for a potential retail industry expansion.

Figure 2.2.2 Home Ownership

Source: 2009-2013 ACS 5-year Estimates

	Seymour	New Haven County	Fairfield County	Connecticut
Owner occupied	76.3%	63.7%	69.0%	67.8%
Renter occupied	23.7%	36.3%	31.0%	32.2%

3 COMMUTING PATTERNS

Commuting patterns for Seymour were analyzed to understand how the population fluctuates over the course of the day and week. This is important to detail because the influx of visitors or flow of residents out of the town can help to dictate retail potential. Whether an area is a net importer or exporter of workers can influence the types of retail or recreation developments in a particular area.

Figure 3.1 shows that Seymour is a net exporter of workers. With only 10.7% of residents living and working in Seymour, the largest majority of Seymour residents commutes to nearby Shelton. Though many Seymour residents go south and east (Figure 3.2), 3,423 residents of other towns commute to Seymour for work. As shown in Figure 3.3, one third of workers that commute into Seymour come from neighboring towns.

Figure 3.1 Commuting Patterns
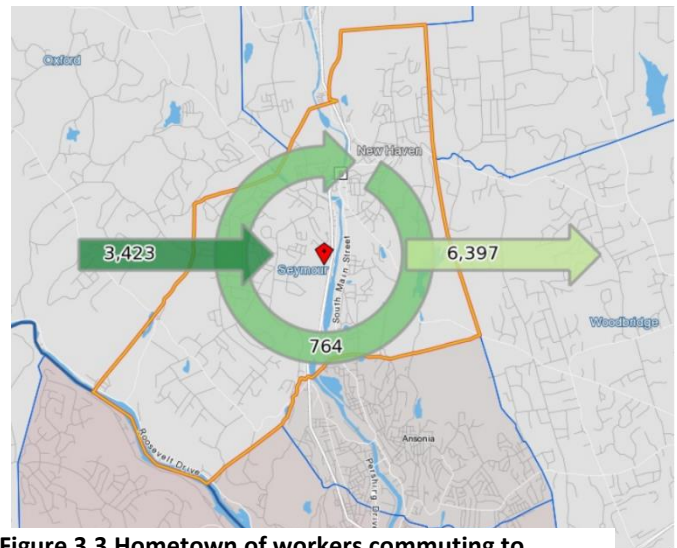
Source: On the Map, US Census 2013

Figure 3.2 Where Seymour Residents Work

Source: On the Map, US Census 2013

Where Seymour Residents Commute for Employment	#	% of Total
Seymour	764	11%
Shelton	647	9%
Stratford	592	8%
New Haven	465	7%
Milford	347	5%
Bridgeport	307	4%
Derby	266	4%
All Other	3773	53%
Total	7161	100%

Figure 3.3 Hometown of workers commuting to Seymour

Source: On the Map, US Census 2013

Workers commuting into Seymour come from…	#	% of total
Seymour town	764	18%
Waterbury town	283	7%
Naugatuck town	232	6%
Ansonia town	226	5%
Oxford town	222	5%
Shelton town	149	4%
Derby town	135	3%
All Other	2176	52%
Total	4187	100%

4 ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

This section of the report provides an overview of macroeconomic and industrial trends in the Town of Seymour.

Overall, Seymour has fared well in the post-2008 economic recovery. Unemployment has been declining steadily from its 2010 peak of 9.6% to 5.5% in June of 2015 (Figure 4.1). This low unemployment rate bodes well for the jobs climate in Seymour and indicates nearly full employment. Despite five years of contraction, Seymour's labor force grew 1.5% as of this from June of 2014 to June of 2015,

Figure 5.1 Unemployment Rate
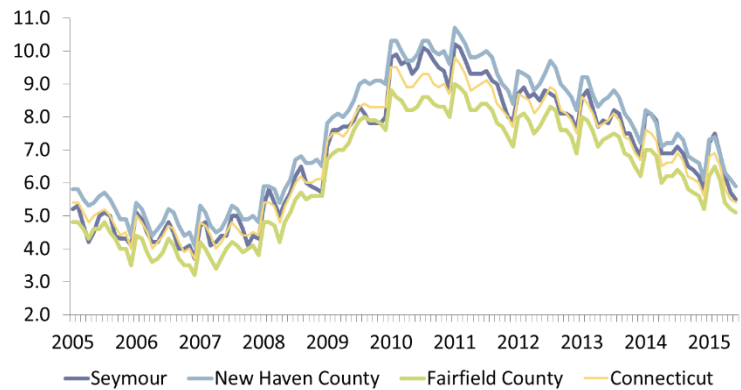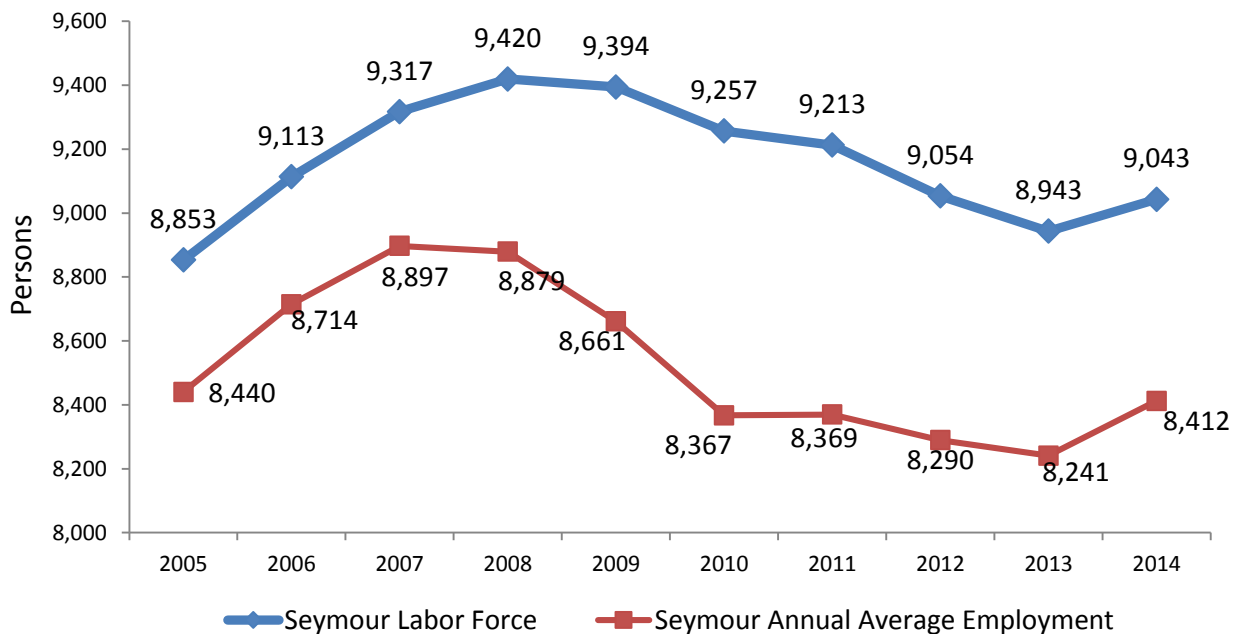
Source: CT DOL

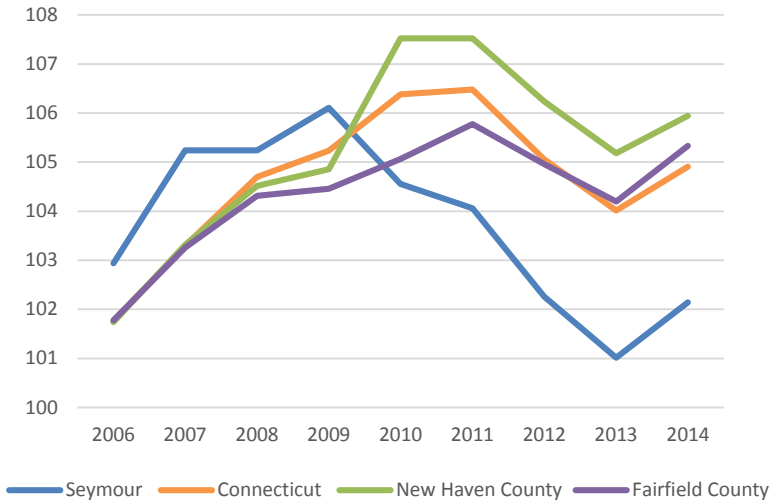**Figure 4.2 Seymour Labor Force vs. Employment Growth**

Source: CT DOL

driven by 3.1% employment growth (Figure 4.2). By comparison, state labor force growth over the

Figure 6.3 Labor Force Growth, State and Region Comparison (indexed to 2005)

Source: CT DOL

Legend: Seymour — Connecticut — New Haven County — Fairfield County

same time period was 1.6% with employment growth of 2.9%. This growth in employment presents an optimistic outlook for the labor market and implies that hiring is on an upswing. As of 2014, Seymour's labor force participation rate (percent of workers per population) was 54.7%, a few percentage points higher than the Connecticut rate of 52.5%. This labor force participation rate indicates that residents also perceive a positive labor market outlook and feel encouraged by the state of the job market to seek employment.

The top five industries by employment in Seymour are featured in Figure 4.5. The majority of Seymour residents (as with New Haven County and Connecticut state residents overall) are employed in education, health care and social assistance. This industry cluster encompasses Connecticut's growing healthcare industry. More unique to Seymour however is high employment in the manufacturing sector. Approximately 18.2% of Seymour residents are employed in manufacturing. By contrast, New Haven and Fairfield counties only employ 11.9% and 8.8% respectively in manufacturing.

Figure 7.4 Employment Growth State and Region Comparison (indexed to 2005)
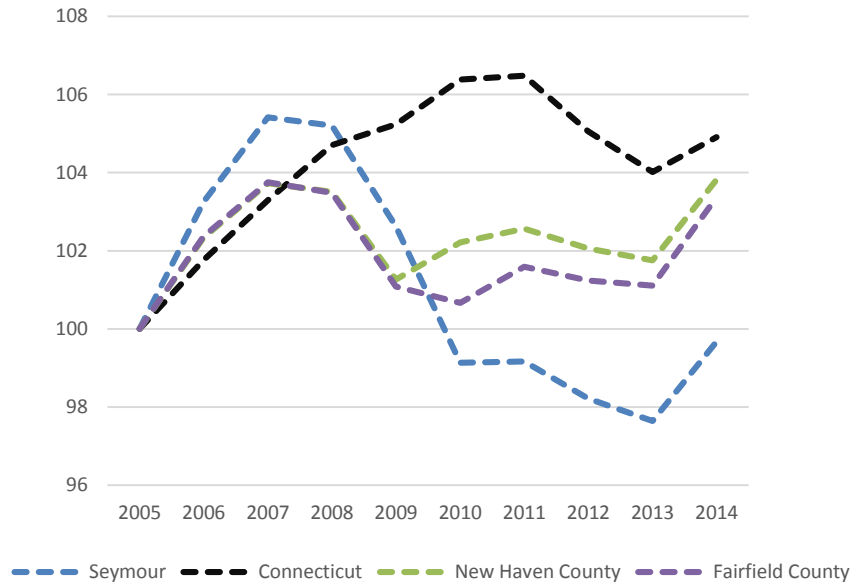
Source: CT DOL

Legend: Seymour — Connecticut — New Haven County — Fairfield County

Figure 4.5 Top 5 Industries by Employment

Source: 2009-2013 ACS 5-year Estimates

Industry	Seymour		New Haven Cnty		Fairfield Cnty	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Education, health care and social assistance	2,212	26.0	131,941	31.5	98,100	21.8
Manufacturing	1,548	18.2	49,939	11.9	39,461	8.8
Professional, scientific, and management	877	10.3	38,502	9.2	69,728	15.5
Retail Trade	678	8.0	45,349	10.8	48,422	10.8
Arts, ent., and rec., and accom. and food services	663	7.8	32,236	7.7	34,826	7.8
Total Employment	8,517	100	418,622	100	449,106	100

Emerging industries in the Northwest Workforce Investment Area (WIA), of which Seymour is a part, were analyzed from 2006-2011 to assess their performance through the recession and recovery. The manufacturing industry remained a strength in the Northwest WIA. Figure 4.6 shows the strongest manufacturing sub-sectors in the area pre-recession (paper, chemical, computer and electronics, electrical equipment and appliance) and their performance through the early years of recovery. Of these sub-sectors, computer and electronic product firms were the most prevalent in the Northwest WIA by 2011, employing up to 3,500 residents at the time (Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.6 Northwest WIA Manufacturing Sub-Sectors by Employment

Source: CT DOL
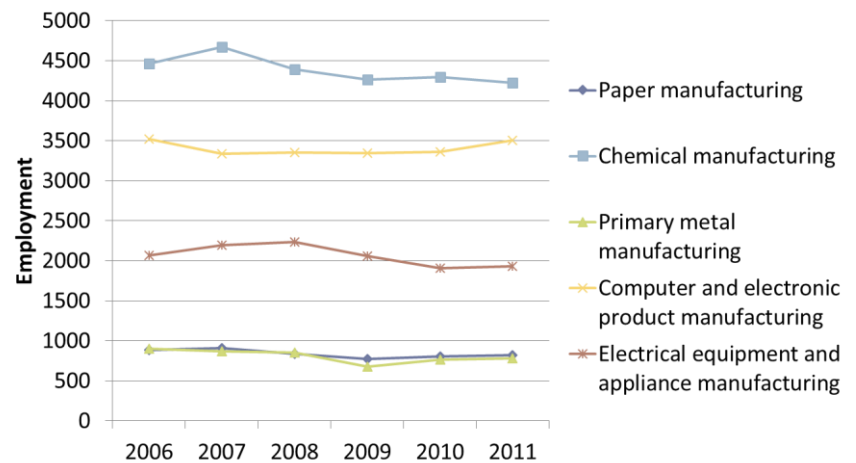
Despite having almost half as many facilities, chemical firms (Figure 4.8) employed nearly 700 more than computer and electronics firms in the WIA. This finding seems to relate to the income and employment trends. Chemical manufacturing for example, encompasses pharmaceutical firms which tend to value high skill workers and those with advanced degrees making Seymour a prime labor market due to its highly educated work force.

In addition to manufacturing, retail and recreation historically had a strong presence in the WIA employing upwards of 13,000 people in food services to slightly over 2,000 in amusement, gambling and recreation (CT DOL). Following closely behind, electronic markets, agents, and brokers, engineering and construction, and warehousing and storage were also major industries going into the 2008 recession. Each of these industries recovered their hiring into 2011 while emerging industries going into the recession (crop production, merchant wholesalers, and niche manufacturers) had a diminishing hiring presence by 2011.

According to the Connecticut Department of Labor, the largest employers in Connecticut are a mixture of contractors and manufacturing/hardware suppliers, making Seymour a predominately industrial town. Other establishments employing 100+ people in Seymour are the Seymour Middle School, Shady Knoll Healthcare (convalescent home), and Super Stop and Shop (Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.7 Computer and Electronics Firms and Employment in the Northwest WIA

Source: CT DOL
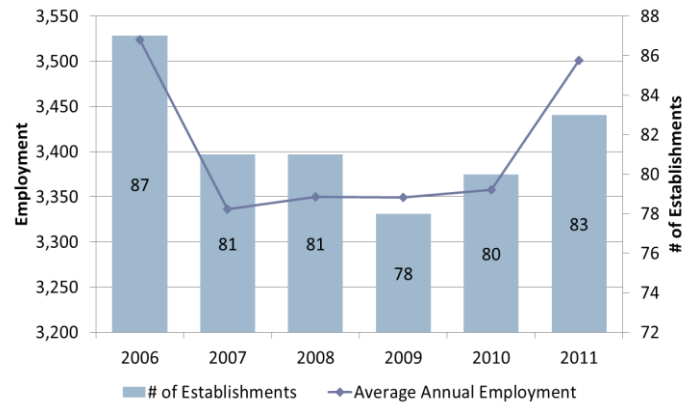
Figure 4.8 Chemical Manufacturing Firms and Employment in the Northwest WIA

Source: Source: CT DOL

In the towns that Seymour residents are commuting to for employment the top industries are healthcare, manufacturing, and retail trade. It is likely that Seymour is effectively exporting workers for these industries indicating that Seymour has adequate labor supply but a lack of firms to accommodate them.
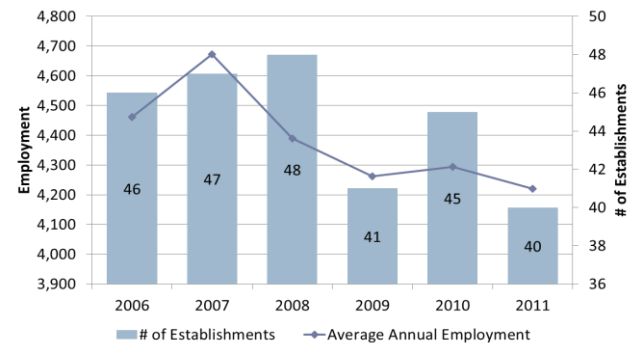
Further analysis of the economic activity in towns that Seymour residents typically commute to (given the commuter data), revealed that these towns may be hubs for certain industries. For example, as shown in Figure 4.10 , Stratford (where 8% of Seymour residents work) has the highest employment in manufacturing in the region (by place of employment as opposed to worker residence) with 34% of all employment in the town occurring in manufacturing. Figure 4.11 shows the Health Care and Social Assistance industry by employment for a collection of towns that Seymour residents commute to. It is clear that New Haven has large employment in the industry but towns nearer to Seymour such as Derby and Ansonia also employ a significant amount in Healthcare and Social Assistance and could be absorbing some of Seymour's healthcare workforce.

Figure 4.9 Top employers in Seymour

Source: CT DOL

Employer	Industry	Size
Basement Systems Inc	Waterproofing Contractors	100 - 249 employees
Haynes Group Inc	General Contractors	100 - 249 employees
Kerite Marmon Utility Llc	Electric Supplies-Manufacturers	100 - 249 employees
Microboard Processing Inc	Computer Parts & Supplies	100 - 249 employees
R A F Electronic Hardware	Screw Machine Products (Mfrs)	100 - 249 employees

Figure 4.10 Manufacturing Employment in Neighboring Towns

Source: CT DOL, 2013

Town	Manufacturing Employment	% of Total Employment
Stratford	8,718	34%
Bridgeport	4,082	10%
Waterbury	3,265	8%
Milford	3,232	11%
New Haven	2,679	3%
Seymour*	**1,548**	**18.2%**

Figure 4.11 Healthcare Employment in Neighboring Towns

Source: CT DOL, 2013

Town	Healthcare Employment	% of Total Employment
New Haven	21,274	27%
Bridgeport	12,381	29%
Waterbury	10,354	27%
Trumbull	3,312	21%
Milford	3,209	11%
Stratford	2,843	11%
Derby	1,799	37%
Ansonia	467	14%
Oxford	382	12%
Seymour*	**2,212**	**26%**

* ACS data used for Seymour employment by industry because of suppression in CT DOL data

5   RETAIL GAP ANALYSIS

This section aims to examine retail expenditures of Seymour residents. It also examines retail spending within five, ten, and thirty mile radii of the prospective development parcels. The final analysis details retail sub-sectors in which there is a surplus or leakage within a drivable distance of the parcels. Retail leakage indicates a condition where demand is high in the marketplace but there is insufficient supply. As a result, this unmet demand leaks out of the marketplace and is fulfilled by outside retailers. Retail leakage ultimately represents revenue loss in the market area. Retail surplus represents supply exceeding demand and potentially attracting outside shoppers to the marketplace. Identifying retail gaps furthers the analysis of potential developments for Seymour because certain developments can rectify inefficiencies in the current retail marketplace.

5.1 Household Expenditure Patterns

Comparing retail potential estimates against actual retail sales, Seymour had an estimated annual average retail revenue gap (including food and drink industry) of $128 million in 2014. When comparing this gap to that of the surrounding counties it becomes clear that Seymour is somewhat underserved. Consumer spending patterns in Seymour follow those of New Haven and Fairfield counties where residents spend more on average on food, particularly groceries.

Figure 5.1. Household Expenditure Summary: Average Amount Spent per Year (2014)

Source: ESRI

Industry	Seymour	Fairfield County	New Haven County
Apparel and Services	$2,574.54	$3,790.37	$3,117.21
Computer	$295.85	$432.32	$359.02
Entertainment and Recreation	$3,797.86	$5,348.77	$4,503.42
Food	$9,441.16	$13,519.63	$11,217.60

In addition to the spending patterns of Seymour residents, it is also important to remember the median age and household composition of these residents. With an older median age, middle class, family, homeowner demographic thriving on predominately manufacturing industries, the best retail prospects for this town will more than likely be geared towards families.

It is also important to note that Seymour residents spend considerably less on Entertainment and Recreation than Fairfield and New Haven county residents (Figure 5.1). This is likely because (as we will explore in later sections) Seymour residents have far fewer entertainment opportunities at their immediate disposal.

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5.2 Retail Gap Analysis

According to the Town, despite speculation from national retailers, Seymour has not been able to field many national retail accounts due to logistical barriers (terrain and other building restrictions). The retail gap analysis below will reflect this failure to meet the existing demand, however fulfilling retail demands is not always necessarily the best venture for sustainable, long-term economic development.

The map (Figure 5.2.1) shows the proximity of the parcels. All parcels share proximity to the Naugatuck River.

Parcels 1 and 2 (*15 Franklin Street and 38 Rimmon Street; 79-101 Bank Street and 109 River Street)* are clustered very close together and reach to the very outskirts of Bridgeport within a 30 minute drive.

Figure 5.2.1 Seymour Parcels

Source: SeymourGIS

Parcel 3 (*600-842 Derby Avenue)* is a stretch of land leading up to the Tri-Town Plaza and has more unique characteristics than Parcels 1 and 2 which are both in a more populous, residential area. Each of the proposed parcels are within proximity of residential areas, a library, and a church. Given the distance to the nearest community college, Naugatuck Valley Community College, and travel hubs (Waterbury-Oxford Airport and New Haven Regional Airport), the focus of this analysis will be on supporting local demand from within as opposed to generating demand by drawing from nearby popular locations. As such, the retail gaps presented below emphasize leakage within a 5 to 10 minute radius of the proposed parcels.

Figure 5.2.2 Seymour Parcels

Source: SeymourGIS

Parcels 1 and 2

15 Franklin Street and 38 Rimmon Street; 79-101 Bank Street and 109 River Street

Within a 5 minute drive of Parcels 1 and 2 there are approximately 9,527 people and 4,074 households with a median disposable income of $52,936. Within a 10 minute drive or 30 minute drive, though more households are included, median disposable income decreases. See Figure 5.2.4 for the details.

Retail leakage and surplus in a five mile radius of this cluster of parcels is shown in figure 5.2.5 below with retail areas identified as having a leakage within a 5 minute radius listed. This leakage represents demand that is not being met within the immediate surroundings of the parcel. While firms in these industries may be visible, evidence of retail revenue leaking outside of the market area illustrates that the supply of firms is not large enough to fulfill the demand. Retail surplus however is caused by overrepresentation of certain retail industry subsectors. This means that there is more supply than demand and is also an indication of inefficiencies in the retail marketplace.

Figure 5.2.3 Radius approximations Parcels 1 and 2
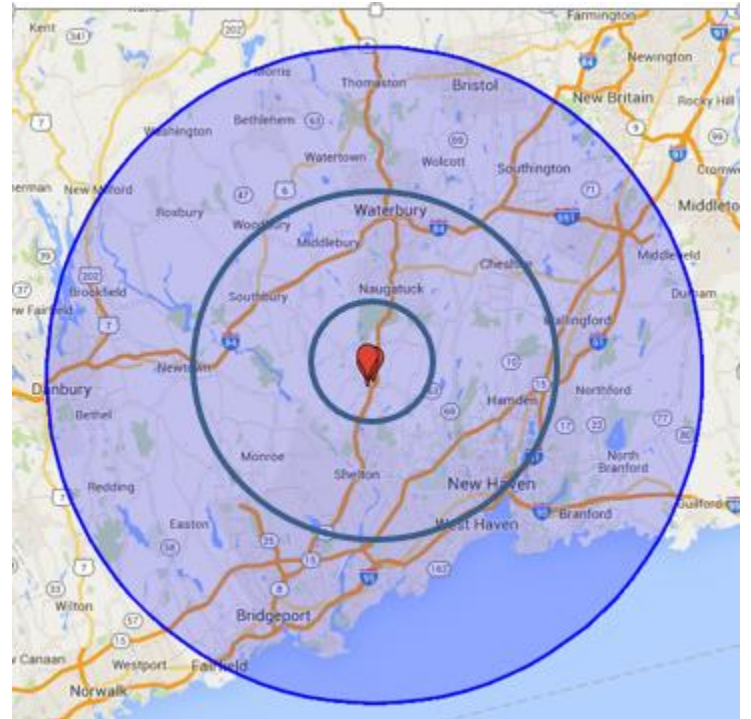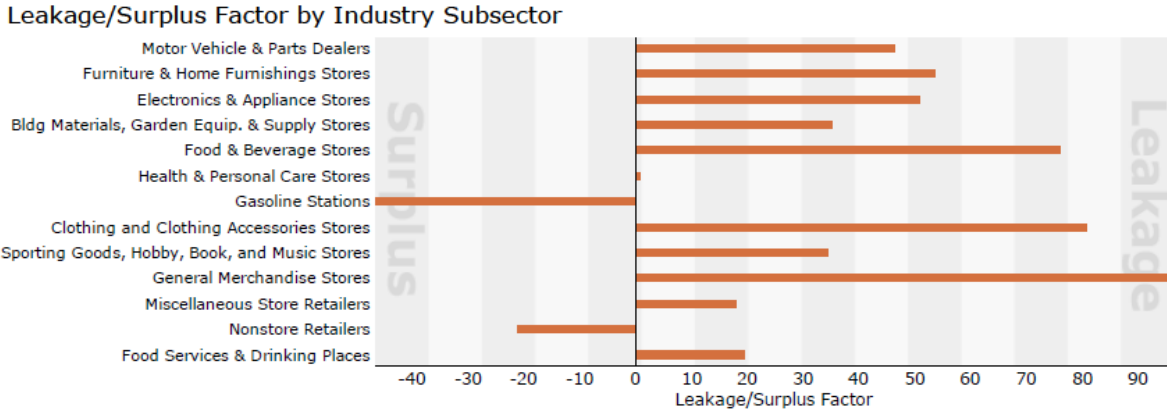
Source: Google Maps

Figure 5.2.4 Surrounding Areas Demographics

Source: ESRI

	5 minute radius	10 minute radius	30 minute radius
Median Disposable Income	$52,936	$51,149	$47,921
Number of Households	4,074	19,853	372,297
Population	9,527	49,898	987,515

Figure 5.2.5 Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector (5 minute radius)
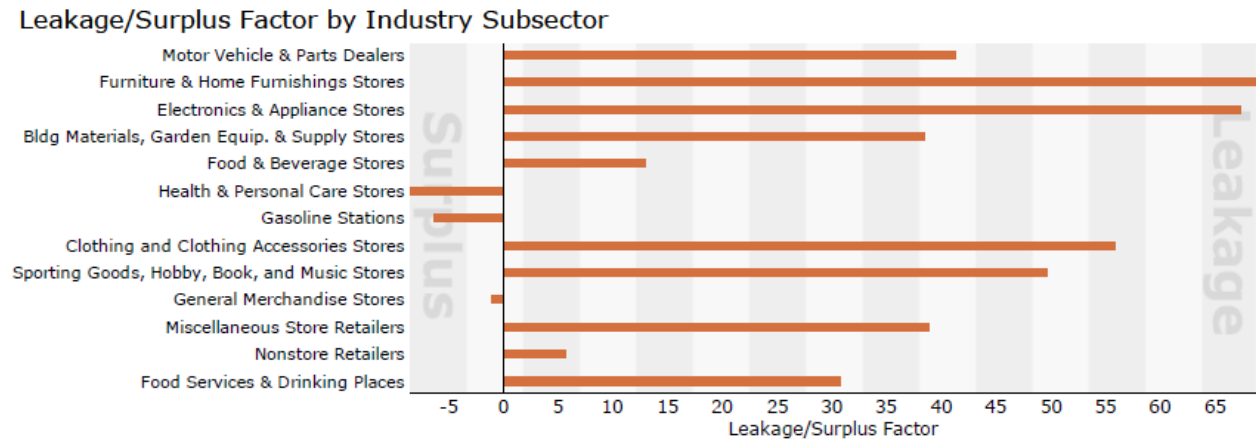
Source: ESRI

Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector

Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers
Furniture & Home Furnishing Stores
Electronics & Appliance Stores
Building Materials, Garden Equipment & Supply Stores
Food & Beverage Stores
Health & Personal Care Stores

Clothing & Accessories Stores
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, & Music Stores
General Merchandise Stores
Misc. Store Retailers
Food Service & Drinking Places

Increasing the radius of the market area incorporates more households as well as more firms. In this way, demand and supply will increase, however the factor by which they increase (whether one increases more than the other for any given retail subsector) determines whether retail leakage or surplus intensifies with distance. Whether residual demand from within a 5 minute radius is met within a 10 minute radius for example will also influence retail gaps within a 10 minute radius (See Figure 5.2.6).

Figure 5.2.6 Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector (10 minute radius)

Source: ESRI

Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector

The industries below were identified as having a leakage within a 10 minute radius:

Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers
Furniture & Home Furnishing Stores
Electronics & Appliance Stores
Building Materials, Garden Equipment & Supply Stores
Food & Beverage Stores

Clothing & Accessories Stores
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, & Music Stores
Misc. Store Retailers
Food Service & Drinking Places

Parcel 3

600-842 Derby Avenue

Similar to parcels 1 and 2, Parcel 3 has a disposable income of approximately $45,000. There are considerably fewer households within a 5 minute radius from Parcel 3 however and from the vicinity of Parcel 3, Seymour residents can drive slightly deeper into Bridgeport and Fairfield County for retail needs within 30 minutes.

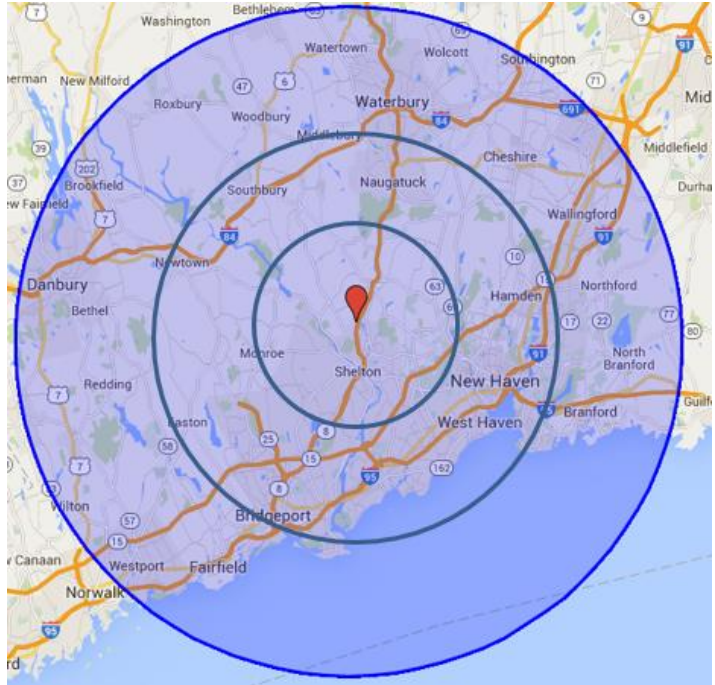*Figure 5.2.7 Radius approximations Parcel 3*

Source: Google Maps

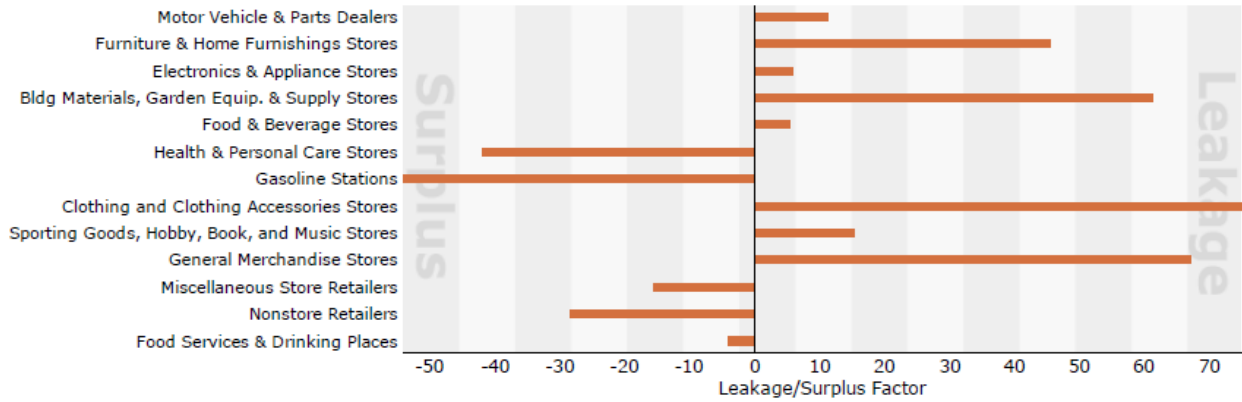*Figure 5.2.8 Surrounding Area Demographics*

Source: ESRI

	5 minute radius	10 minute radius	30 minute radius
Median Disposable Income	$44,502	$47,624	$47,311
Number of Households	1,865	19,984	367,542
Population	4,406	48,818	972,706

Figure 5.2.9 Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector (5 minute radius)

Source: ESRI

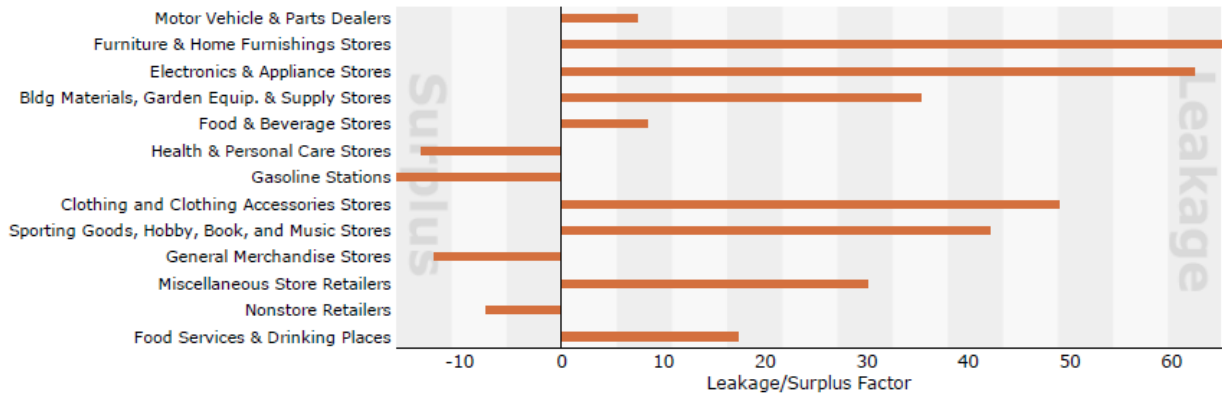Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector

Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers   Clothing & Accessories Stores
Furniture & Home Furnishing Stores   Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, & Music Stores
Electronics & Appliance Stores   General Merchandise Stores
Building Materials, Garden Equipment & Supply Stores
Food & Beverage Stores

Figure 5.2.10 Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector (10 minute radius)

Source: ESRI

Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector

Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers   Clothing & Accessories Stores
Furniture & Home Furnishing Stores   Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, & Music Stores
Electronics & Appliance Stores   Misc. Store Retailers
Building Materials, Garden Equipment & Supply Stores   Food Services & Drinking Places
Food & Beverage Stores

To review, Figure 5.2.11 shows a list of all retail subsectors for which a revenue gap was identified. These retail subsectors are potential opportunities for any of the parcels. Retail gaps existing further away are more likely to satisfy Seymour residents as well as residents from nearby towns, bringing additional traffic and retail revenue to Seymour. Though that leakage is felt more urgently and could potentially be more profitable, the best practice for Seymour's economic development is to support local demand by focusing on retail gaps that are up to a 10 minute radius of the parcels to serve Seymour residents more exclusively.

Figure 5.2.11 Summary of Retail Gaps (Leakage indicated with an x)

Source: ESRI

|	5 minute radius	10 minute radius
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	X	X
Furniture & Home Furnishing Stores	X	X
Electronics & Appliance Stores	X	X
Building Materials, Garden Equipment & Supply Stores	X	X
Food & Beverage Stores	X	X
Health and Personal Care	X	
Gas Stations		
Clothing & Accessories Stores	X	X
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, & Music Stores	X	X
General Merchandise	X	
Misc. Store Retailers	X	X
Food Services & Drinking Places	X	X

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6   RESIDENT SURVEY

An online survey of residents was conducted during the winter of 2016. The resident survey was distributed through the first selectman's office. A total of 165 responses were collected.

6.1   Survey Demographics

As shown in figure 6.1.1, the majority of respondents have lived full time in Seymour for 20 years or more.

Figure 6.1.1 Survey Demographics: Length of Residence in Seymour
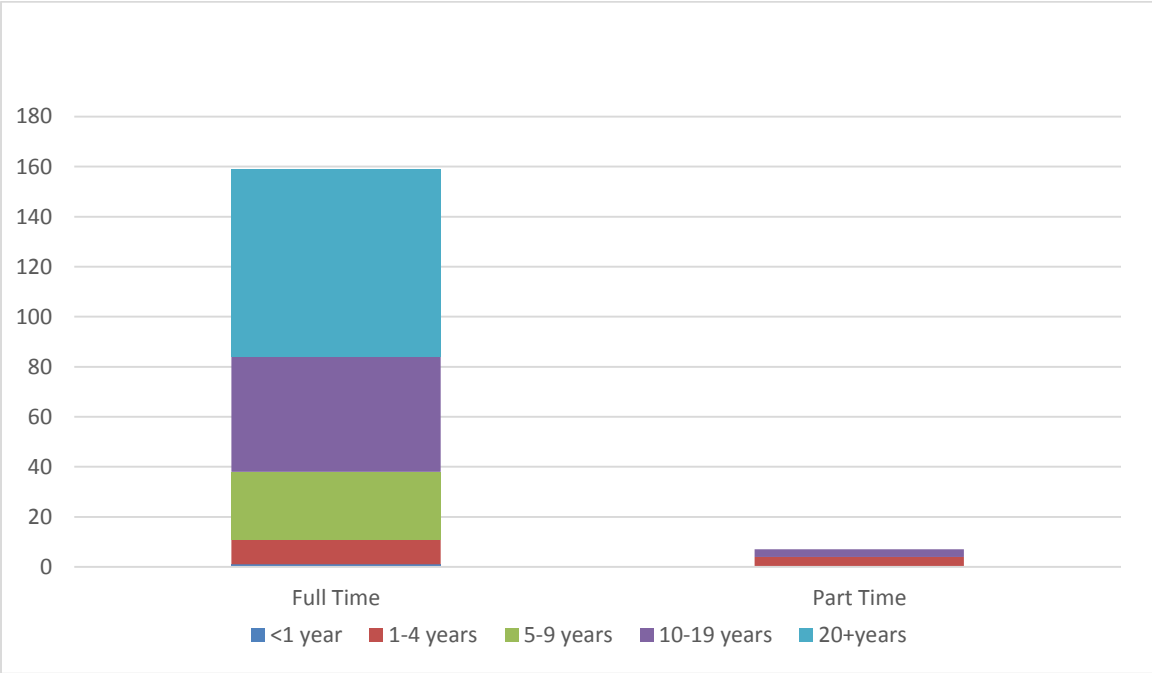
The next figure 6.1.2 shows the age demographics of the survey respondents. As shown, the majority of respondents were between the ages of 35 and 54.

Given the data in figure 6.1.1 and written responses, many Seymour residents likely grew up in Seymour or lived there for the majority of their lives.
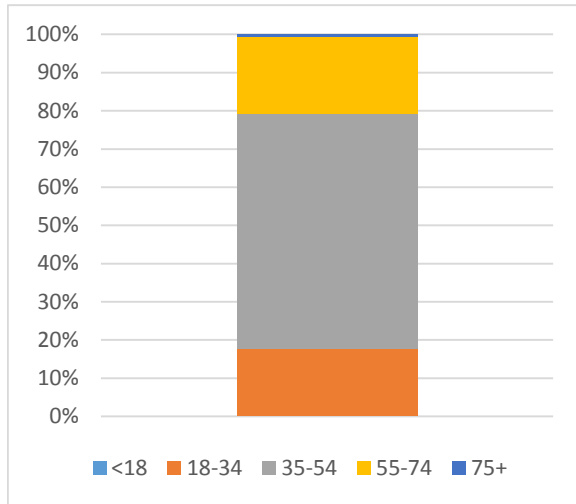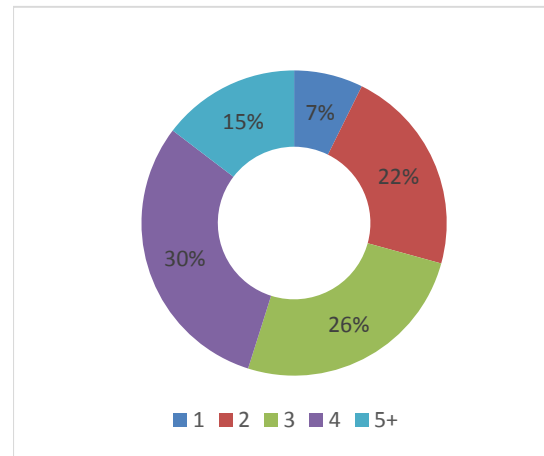
Figure 6.1.2 Survey Demographics: Age

Figure 6.1.3 Survey Demographics: Number of persons in household

| Income	Response %
Less than 50,000	7.3%
50,000-99,000	27.3%
100,000-249,000	47.3%
250,000-499,999	3.0%
500,000 or more	1.8%
Prefer not to say	13.3%

The demographics of the survey is representative of the town demographics presented earlier in the report depicting middle-aged, family-oriented population of long term residents, though the majority of respondents were wealthier than the average Seymour resident.

6.2 Analysis of Survey Questions

The first few questions of the survey were intended to characterize Seymour. Respondents said that Seymour is best known for its town events, river views, and history (Figure 6.2.1) with most choosing to live in Seymour equally as much for family reasons, neighborhood characteristics, and the cost of living. One commenter even stated that Tri-Town Plaza is a recognizable feature of the town while "Antiques", "Sports" and "Valley" were among the words mentioned most often.

Considerably fewer chose proximity to work as a motivator for moving to Seymour which is consistent with our findings that the majority of Seymour residents commute outside of town for work. The comments for this question were even more telling. Overall, respondents called Seymour their home stating they lived there all their lives and stayed because they found that housing was affordable and the sense of community offered was very conducive to raising a family. Most of the commenters however seemed to agree that these factors were what drew them to settle in Seymour but do not carry the same weight now.

*Figure 6.2.1 What is Seymour known for?*
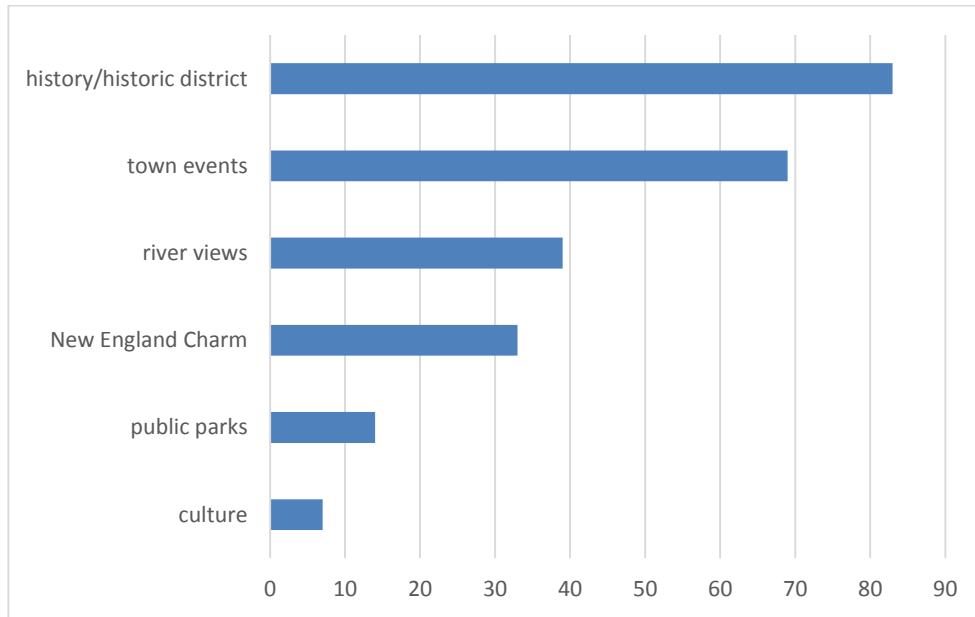
When asked what town Seymour is most similar to, respondents overwhelmingly wrote Oxford, Beacon Falls, Ansonia, Derby and Shelton. The overall sentiment was that Seymour has a typical, quaint, valley atmosphere. Most Seymour respondents travel within a five mile radius for day-to-day items with 61% stating that they also shop within Seymour (more than likely Stop & Shop). A few respondents did mention patronizing Walmart in Naugatuck, and traveling as far as north as Waterbury and as far south as Norwalk (Figure 6.2.2).

*Figure 6.2.2 Where do you travel for groceries and day-to-day items?*
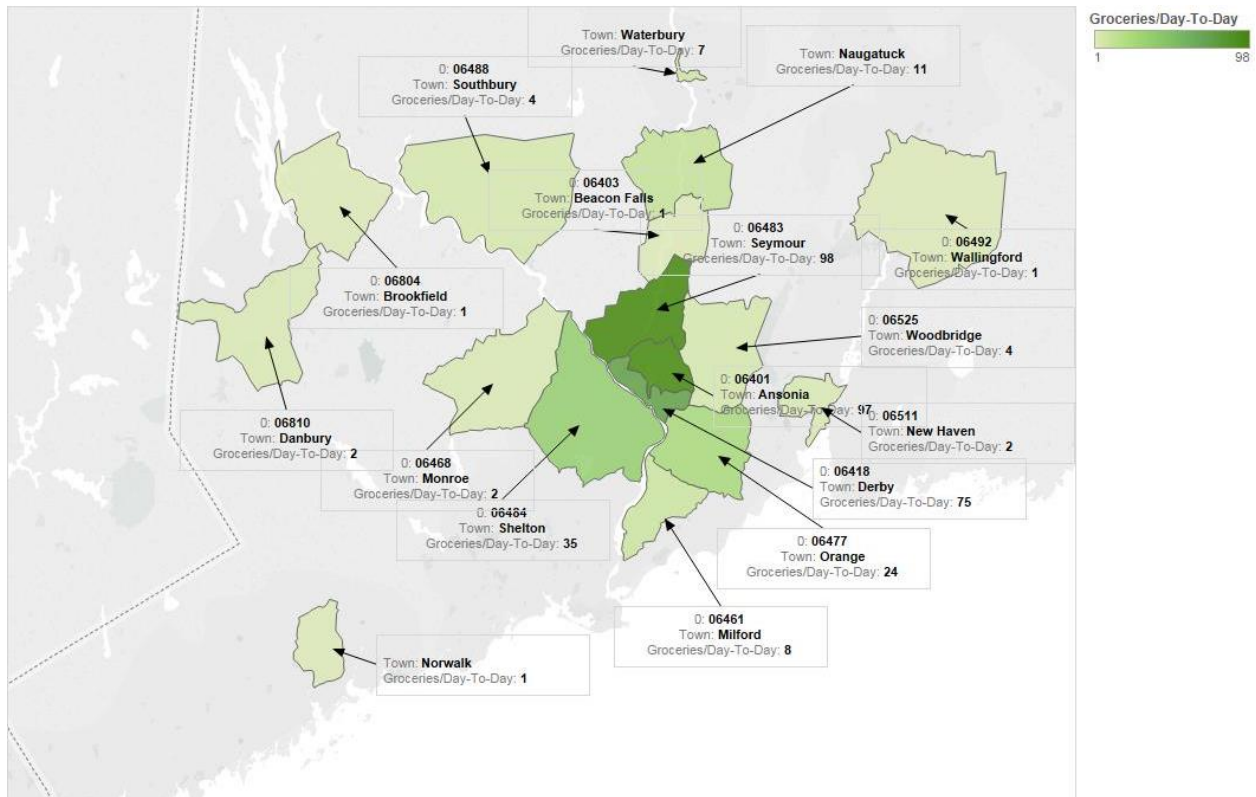
While the respondents seem to concentrate near Seymour and immediate surroundings to fulfill their day-to-day needs, for clothing and other retail items Seymour residents pushed outwards towards the southeast. While 56% of respondents shop in Ansonia, 60% of respondents traveled as far as Orange (Figure 6.2.3) for clothing and retail. Of 122 responses 115 mentioned other towns: 29% stated they travel south to Trumbull, 57% shop in Milford, and there were a few minor mentions of New York City and Greenwich. 10% of respondents stated that they shop online. A similar trend persists for the respondents' home goods needs with slightly more staying in Seymour.

Figure 6.2.3 Where do you travel for clothing and retail items?
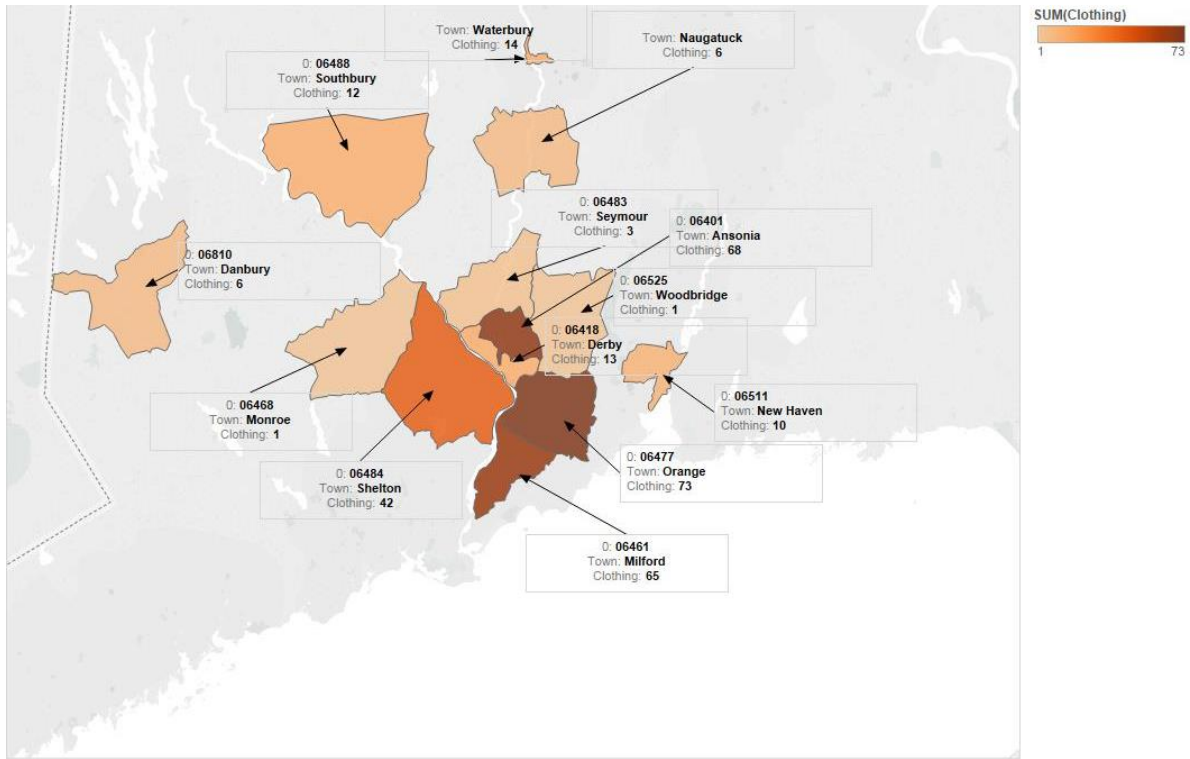
For Medical care, survey respondents expressed a series of options. While Shelton was a popular destination for primary care and healthcare specialist treatments for 50% of respondents, the other half of respondents seem to be dispersed across a handful of towns. While Shelton is a hub for primary care, a different picture emerged for emergency medical care.

Figure 6.2.3 Where do you travel for doctors and healthcare specialists?
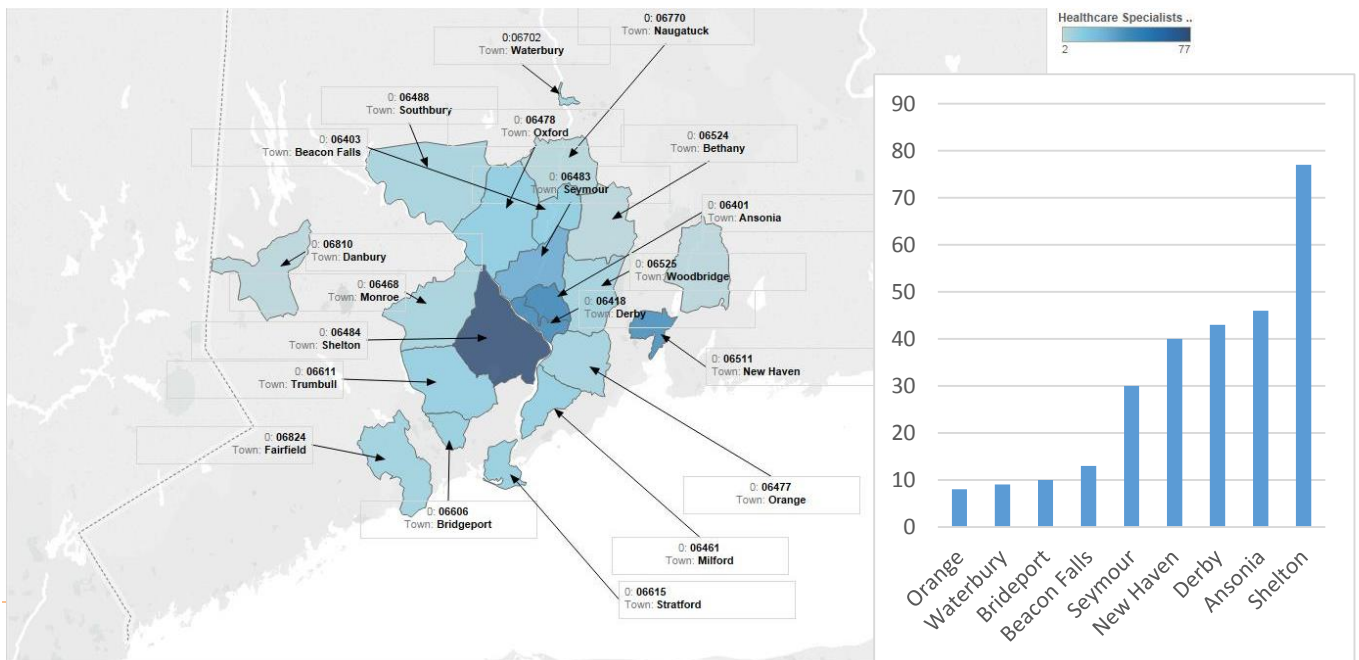
For medical emergencies, respondents appear to split their patronage between five major urgent care destinations. 63% of respondents indicated that they travel to Derby for emergency medical care, most likely Griffin Hospital. Despite this however, comments showed that people traveled further south (for example Shelton) and to the cities, New Haven and Bridgeport, for care.

Figure 6.2.4 Where do you travel for emergency medical care?
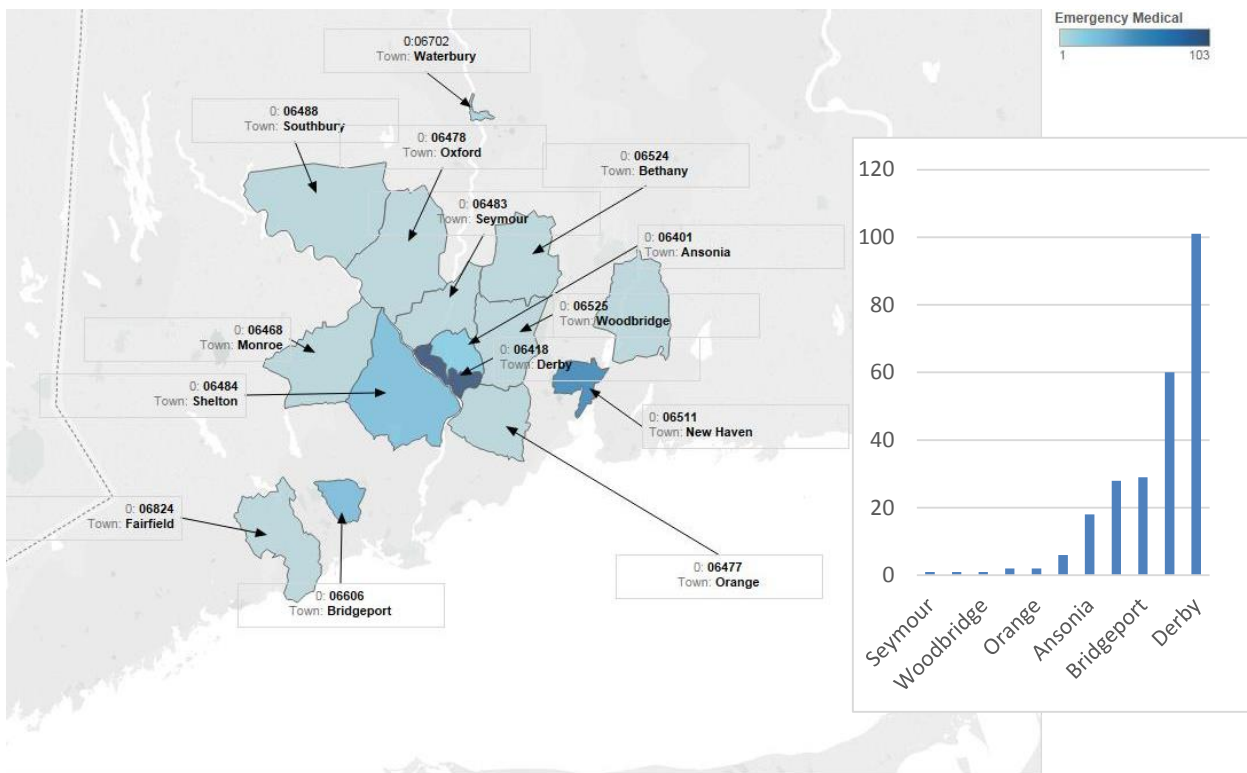
For entertainment, survey respondents expand their radius traveling as far north as Waterbury and as far south as Norwalk. Shelton (58%) and New Haven (45%) were the most popular destinations.

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Figure 6.2.5 Where do you travel for entertainment?
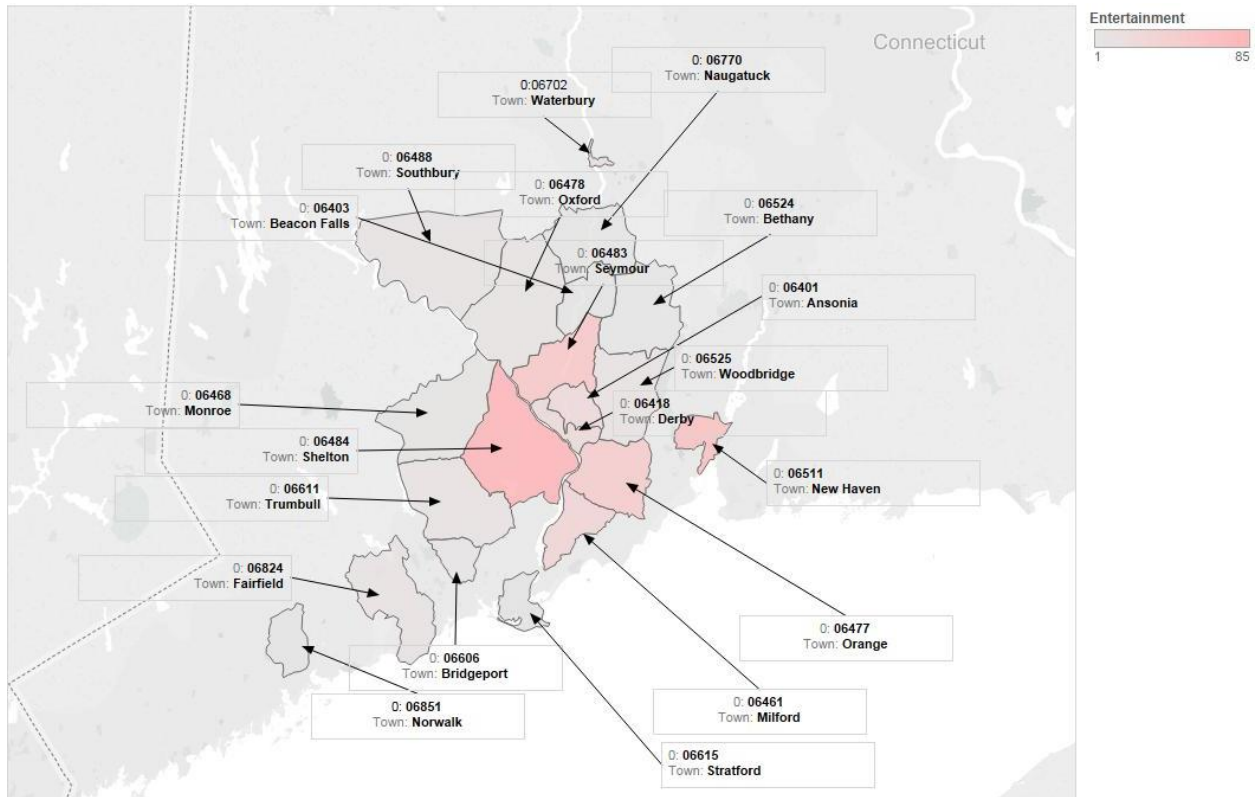

Though 38% of respondents reported patronizing establishments in Seymour for a night out, 90% indicated that they would like to see more entertainment opportunities in Seymour. When asked what venues they would like to see in Seymour respondents commented as follows:

- *Family activities*: movie theatre, museum, children's museum, go karting, bowling, roller skating, trampoline park, rock climbing
- *Culture*: Theatre, piano bar, beer garden, coffee shop with live entertainment, bookstore coffee shop, karaoke, comedy club
- *Restaurants*: upscale and fine dining

In terms of retail opportunities, respondents expressed a preference for clothing retail/accessories, and dine-in restaurants. (Figure 6.2.6). In the comments some called for more downtown development to help highlight and bring more culture to Seymour. Others reflected the overabundance of convenience and package stores and echoed the call for more health food stores, family restaurants, and clothing retail stores.

Figure 6.2.6 What type of retail stores would you like to see in town?
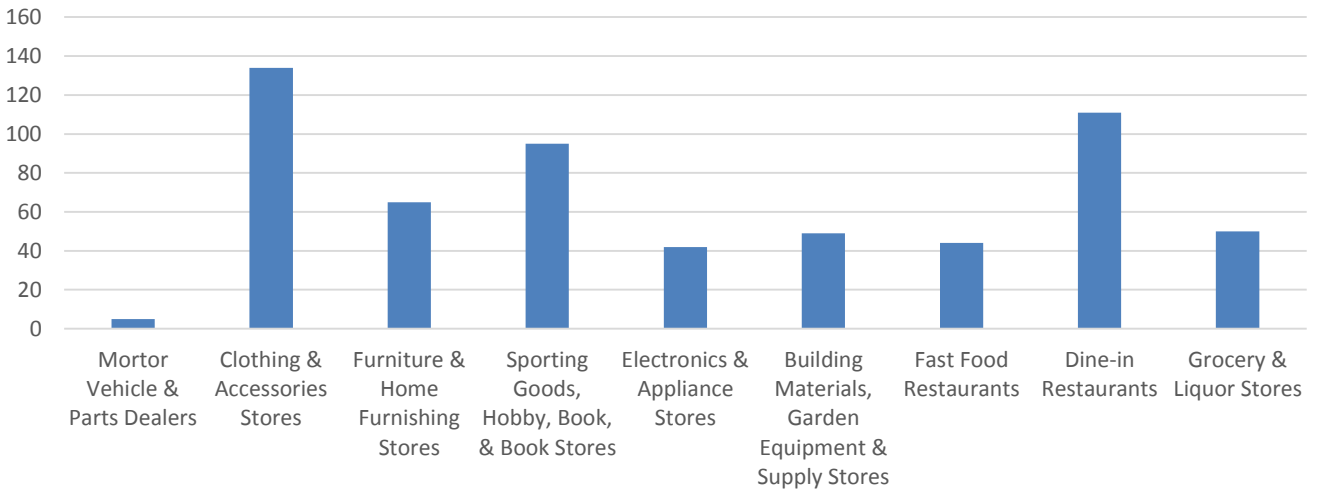
Without revealing to the survey takers any of the development parcels in question, two respondents requested a Dave & Busters or Trader Joes for what is known by the residents as the "Ames Plaza", Tri-Town Plaza. 100% respondents indicated that they travel primarily by car with 2.5% of those respondents also indicating that they occasionally travel by Commuter Rail. Overall, MetroNorth usage is unpopular among survey respondents (Figure 6.2.7) and 57% said that expanded commuter rail service would not influence their MetroNorth usage. 43% however did say that expanded service to Seymour would change their usage and expressed interest in easier access to New York City for leisure and Bridgeport/Fairfield or even Stamford or New Haven for work. The comments revealed that expanded train service would give them more "options", an easier "commute", and better access to more towns.

Figure 6.2.6 How frequently do you use MetroNorth?

daily 1% weekly 1% monthly 3% rarely 22% never 73%

■ daily ■ weekly ■ monthlty ■ rarely ■ never
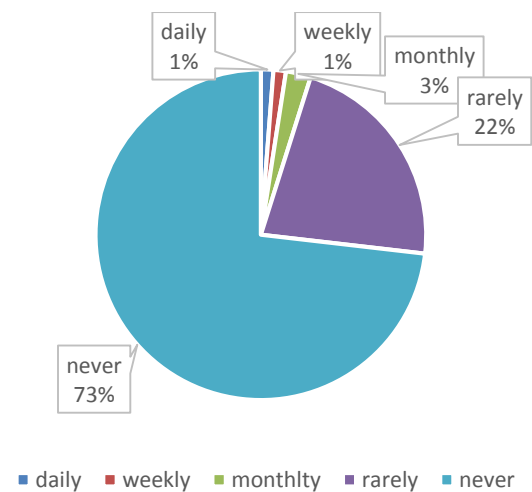
7 SITE USES AND POTENTIAL SCENARIOS

Before potential developments were conceived, each parcel was visited and assessed on the merits of its own unique real estate characteristics and relationship to the physical and cultural landscape of Seymour. Below is a brief description of each parcel, its accessibility, current use, and notable features.

A portion of Parcel 1, *15 Franklin Street* is currently being used by the construction company Haynes Group. *38 Rimmon Street* is currently a wooded area and offers further development potential as the site is primed for development. The accessible portion of this parcel is behind Stop & Shop which is frequented by residents as it is the only grocery store in the Town. Any development chosen for this parcel would profit from this existing traffic and proximity to CT 313 and Bank Street.

Parcel 2 (*109 River Street and 79-101 Bank Street*) is in the vicinity of Parcel 1. 109 River Street is not currently in use and borders a cemetery. 79-101 Bank Street encompasses a few houses and a drycleaner that appear to all be occupied and maintained. This portion of the parcel also extends uphill. This parcel will also benefit from proximity to Downtown Seymour via Bank Street, and the proximity to CT 313. The River Street portion of the parcel is along the Naugatuck River and has a small creek running through the property which provides a unique opportunity for a development that incorporates the environment.

Parcel 3 (*600-842 Derby Avenue)* stands out as a more clearly defined commercial property than the former two parcels. The stretch of land leading up to the Tri-Town Plaza is currently being used by various service providers (mechanics, auto-parts suppliers, etc.) and is easily accessible via Derby Avenue and CT 334. It is also adjacent to the Ansonia-Derby-Shelton Expressway. The Tri-Town Plaza is also in use and houses Seymour Cinemas, which is a popular entertainment destination for residents.

Considering the analysis and development initiatives for Seymour outlined by the Town, the real estate parcels have been assessed and prioritized based on development prospects that could yield favorable short-term returns and those that could yield favorable returns to development in the long-term.

7.1 Short-term Potential
Urgent Care Center

Given that Seymour has a number of residents who work in the healthcare field and are employed in neighboring counties and healthcare hubs such as New Haven, Shelton, Ansonia, and Derby, an urgent care center in the Tri-Town plaza (Parcel 3) would fill two immediate needs. The first would be creating more healthcare jobs for the labor force within Seymour itself and the second would be

increasing Seymour residents' access to quality emergency medical care. With its location near the Ansonia-Derby-Shelton Expressway and CT 334 it would be easily accessible.

Additionally, Seymour has an aging population composed predominantly of families with one or more children. This demographic needs easy access to urgent care for accidents and medical emergencies. Currently, Seymour residents travel as far as Fairfield and Bridgeport for emergency medical care as evidenced by the survey. Emergency care beyond Derby's Griffin Hospital is isolated to nearby Shelton and Ansonia, and the cities of Bridgeport and New Haven, Hamden, Naugatuck, and Ansonia also have urgent care facilities, but were not recognized as destinations by survey respondents.

7.2 Long-Term Potential
Given the proposed developments outlined by the Office of the First Selectmen and the 2012 Downtown Action Strategy, the following parcels and proposed developments could be feasible long-term assets to the economic activity in Seymour.

Mixed-Use Development

15 Franklin Street and 38 Rimmon Street (Parcel 1) though currently being used productively by Haynes Group, a construction company, could be converted in later years to a mixed-use residential and retail development. This development should be geared towards the younger population to aid with retaining and attracting young and educated people to Seymour, but could also attract anyone looking to move to a more prime location in Seymour.

In addition to the natural attributes of the location, its proximity to Stop & Shop could prove to be a main selling point along with its easy access to the train station Downtown. Enhanced commuter rail service to the downtown area could attract commuters to the proposed residential development.

Furthermore, additional development of Parcel 2, planned expansion of Route 42, and the Greenway walking trail would make Parcel 1 an attractive residential location with light recreation and trendy food and beverage prospects within a short walking distance.

Retail-Food and Beverage

109 River Street and 79-101 Bank Street (Parcel 2) can be reimagined as a retail food and beverage establishment. Situated along the Naugatuck River, a gastro-brewery or other dining establishment would be ideal for 109 River Street. A portion of the adjacent land could be used as parking. Adding an entertainment experience (live music or comedy for example) could enhance the lifestyle that Seymour residents seem to be looking for.

In addition to the scenic views provided by the Naugatuck River, the Greenway could potentially bring foot-traffic from downtown Seymour making it the perfect location for an innovative and

trendy restaurant concept. Not only could this venue become a major attraction bringing patrons from all over Seymour, but it could also potentially gain the regular patronage of those in the adjacent office complex and the residents of the mixed-use development envisioned for Parcel 1.

Community College Education Collaboration

Seymour is failing to retain its younger population as many venture out for higher education and professional development. Though Seymour has a strong history as a manufacturing community, there are no institutions to cultivate advanced manufacturing skills or maximize the human capital of its blue-collar labor force. Beyond the local economy, there are national and global trends that make advanced manufacturing a good long-term investment for Seymour. Advanced manufacturing is a global emerging industry and as the United States tries to position itself for success in advanced manufacturing, procuring an adequate labor supply persisted as a major challenge. The average age of workers in some manufacturing subsectors is approximately 55 years[2] and while the Commission on Connecticut's Future reports a surplus of openings in entry-level positions, there is also a high demand for skilled workers. This demand is projected to grow as an average of 10,000 baby boomers retire nationally each day[3]. In this way, an advanced manufacturing focused satellite of the community college or a major employer sponsored advanced manufacturing program could be ideal for the stretch of land leading up to the Tri-Town Plaza (Parcel 3).

In situating an advanced manufacturing educational institution in Seymour, not only does this support and enhance the local labor force but could ultimately make Seymour a regional manufacturing hub. Enhanced commuter rail service to Downtown Seymour combined with a shuttle to the college satellite could increase the reach of this educational initiative to nearby towns where manufacturing is a major industry like Bridgeport (35 minutes by commuter rail), Stratford, and Waterbury (as illustrated by Figure 4.9 above) which could in turn increase the program's donor base. Since, Housatonic Community College in Bridgeport is the nearest institution to Seymour offering advanced manufacturing courses it could be a prime sponsor for a satellite program.

With the support of a major manufacturer in Seymour[4] or neighboring town and the surrounding educational institutions, a collegiate satellite offering an advanced manufacturing curriculum geared towards recent high school graduates, community members, and adults' continuing education could train and enhance the high skilled workforce in Seymour and surroundings. This would frame Seymour as a regional asset to the manufacturing industry and attract national and

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[2] Commission on Connecticut's Future. 2014. "Report on Connecticut's Future".
http://www.ct.gov/ecd/lib/ecd/futures/commission_on_connecticuts_future_report.pdf
[3] Social Security Administration. 2013. "Annual Performance Plan for Fiscal Year 2013"
https://www.ssa.gov/performance/2013
[4] For example JV Percision Machine Co (ranked in the top 10 of the Grand List in Seymour), Microboard Processing Inc (a number 1 employer in Seymour in 2013), Kerite Co. (a number 3 employer in Seymour in 2013)

local manufacturing firms to build campuses in Seymour to recruit from its newly-skilled advanced manufacturing labor force.

8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

This report explored the economic feasibility of three unique parcels of land at the request of the Town of Seymour: (1) 15 Franklin Street and 38 Rimmon Street (behind Stop & Shop); (2) 79-101 Bank Street and 109 River Street (former Seymour Lumber and Housatonic Wire site); and (3) 600-842 Derby Avenue (stretch of parcels). The recommendations for the development of these parcels were conceived after visiting and assessing each parcel's unique real estate characteristics and relationship to the physical and cultural landscape of Seymour. Additionally, the market feasibility of the parcels was informed by demographic and economic trends, a resident survey, and the 2012 Downtown Action Strategy. Findings from the aforementioned analysis revealed that these parcels presented a mixture of short-term potential development opportunities and long-term development opportunities. Developments that have been prioritized for short term development include:

- Parcel 3 (*600-842 Derby Avenue)*
    - o Urgent care facility to provide healthcare jobs and easier access to emergency medical care for the aging population and families

Given the development of a greenway, expansion of Route 42, and the improvements to the downtown Metro-North Train station in Seymour as outlined by the Office of the First Selectman, the following parcels and proposed developments have increased economic outcomes in the long-run:

- Parcel 1 *(15 Franklin Street and 38 Rimmon Street)*
    - o Mixed-use residential and retail development with housing and retail geared towards younger population to aid with retaining and attracting young and educated people to Seymour; create residential space near the downtown area as Downtown Seymour becomes a prime entertainment and retail location.
- Parcel 2 *(109 River Street and 79-101 Bank Street)*
    - o Dining/entertainment to provide entertainment for residents, capitalize on the proximity to Naugatuck River and long-term developments (Greenway, Route 42 expansion, and enhanced Downtown rail service).
- Parcel 3 (*600-842 Derby Avenue)*
    - o Community College Continuing Education Collaboration to train and enhance the high skilled workforce in Seymour and surroundings and frame Seymour as a regional asset to the manufacturing industry.

The developments listed above have been determined to have maximum returns in the long-run because the transformation of the Naugatuck River area and addition of a greenway will rebrand the River, enhance the scenic views of the area, and provide additional foot traffic. Furthermore, enhanced rail service will ease transportation for commuters (attracting them to live in the

proposed Parcel 1 development), bring additional traffic to the downtown area which could feed Parcels 1 and 2, and expand the reach of the proposed college satellite in Parcel 3.