Norwalk at a Glance

Who we are

• Norwalk is a growing community of more than 88,000 people.
• We’re the sixth-largest city in Connecticut, second-largest in the WestCOG region, and third-largest in the county.
• We’re getting older, like the rest of Fairfield County and the state, with a median age of 40 in 2015 compared to 37 in 2010.
• We are increasingly diverse. Our share of foreign-born residents increased 84% since 2000.

Our households
ACS Estimates [2011-2015]

Family 63% family households 37% non-family
(related by blood, marriage, or adoption)

29% households with children under 18
2.55 people
Average household size

We’re growing faster than the state
Census Bureau, Population Division, Annual Estimates,
Population Growth Index – 2010 to 2016

Family vs. Non-family
We’re a diverse community
Census Bureau [2010] and ACS Estimates [2011-2015]

74% White
15% Black
5% Asian
4% Some Other Race
24% Latino (any race)
26% foreign-born

Fiscal resources

• The City’s primary source of revenue is the property tax—89.5% of total revenue. Other revenue primarily comes from operating grants and charges for service.
• The most significant government expenditures are for education, public safety, and public works.
• The City maintains an Aaa/AAA bond rating.

Economy

• Norwalk has the second-largest office market in Fairfield County behind Stamford, but both are struggling with high vacancy rates and limited to flat growth since the recession.
• Norwalk has a very small manufacturing sector, but a relative industry concentration in wholesale trade compared to the metro area and state.
• Information and finance, insurance, and real estate (IFIRE) saw the greatest job gains in Norwalk during 2002-2015. Manufacturing saw the biggest job decline, losing almost 4,000 jobs.

Our economic strengths and challenges

• Norwalk has a diverse economy not dominated by a single sector, providing resilience through downturns.
• Our 3.8% unemployment rate is below the state’s 4.6% rate, and down from a peak of 7.7% in 2010.
• Large employers, such as the Western Connecticut Health Network, provide a steady employment base. Despite this, office market growth is limited due to a large amount of existing space and shrinking employer requirements.
• The industrial market has potential due to Norwalk’s access to I-95 and rail, but outdated space and zoning limitations constrain growth. A clear plan for the future of local industry is needed.
• Educational attainment remains relatively high in Norwalk, with 41% of the population aged 25 and older holding a bachelor’s degree or higher (compared to 38% statewide and 46% in Fairfield County).
• 41% of employed residents work outside the city; 25% of employed residents also work in Norwalk.
• Stamford is the top commute destination for Norwalk residents working outside the city, followed by New York City and other Connecticut cities and towns.

Over one-third of jobs provide more than $75k per year
ACS 2011-2015 estimates, % of jobs

Prosperity and opportunity

Our prosperity

• Our city is strategically located and well-connected via highway and train to New York City, Stamford, and other regional centers of economic activity. In many ways, it is the first place with a “New England” feel outside New York City.
• The recession ended in 2009 and Norwalk is growing again, but has not yet reached pre-recession levels of jobs or home sales.
• There are 45,469 jobs in Norwalk.
• The largest employment sector in Norwalk is healthcare and social assistance, accounting for 14% of all jobs. Retail trade is the second-largest jobs sector.
• Information, finance and insurance, professional/technical services, and miscellaneous business services have a relatively large share of jobs in Norwalk.
• Approximately 32% of our working population commutes more than 30 minutes to work, and 9.2% commutes more than an hour to work.
• Our median household income of $77,000 is above the state median but lower than the county’s.

Fiscal resources

• The City’s primary source of revenue is the property tax—89.5% of total revenue. Other revenue primarily comes from operating grants and charges for service.
• The most significant government expenditures are for education, public safety, and public works.
• The City maintains an Aaa/AAA bond rating.
How we live

Housing
ACS 2011-2015, Zillow.com 2017
• The median home value in Norwalk is $410,000.
• Norwalk home values have gone up 2.2% over the past year, and are predicted to rise 1.5% within the next year.
• The median rent in Norwalk in mid-2017 was approximately $2,200.

Norwalk’s home prices are rebounding
Zillow.com home prices index (through August 2017)

Most housing is owner-occupied & single-family
62% owner-occupied
38% rental
54% single-family
46% multifamily

Dining and shopping
Commercial areas are located in the CBD and SoNo and along major corridors like Route 1 and Main Avenue.

Norwalk attracts shoppers from outside the city
Source: ESRI and Infogroup (2017), retail surplus/leakage.
Note that the chart contains top categories but does not show all spending.

Institutions
• Public and non-profit institutions are distributed throughout Norwalk neighborhoods including schools, police and fire stations, and community centers.
• Norwalk has one major hospital, Norwalk Hospital, and several smaller health centers.
• Norwalk Community College is the only post-secondary educational institution in the city.

Downtown and South Norwalk
Important assets in downtown and South Norwalk include:
• South Norwalk train station (serving Metro-North) and WHEELS transit hub (buses).
• Norwalk Harbor.
• Maritime Aquarium.
• Mathews Park and Stepping Stones Museum for Children.
Issues and opportunities for these areas include:
• SoNo Collection, approved for 1 million square feet of retail and public space.
• Development opportunities on Wall Street and West Avenue.
• Need for improved pedestrian environments.

Healthy, ‘green,’ and infrastructure systems

Healthy for Life
• City program started in 2012 with primary goals to “Eat Well” and “Move More”.
• Popular NorWALKer program encourages increased physical activity.
• Program recognized by the Mayor’s Challenge for Safer People and Safer Streets in 2016 for its progress and improvements.

Norwalk’s home prices are rebounding
Zillow.com home prices index (through August 2017)

Norwalk water front

Infrastructure and utilities

Energy: The Second Taxing District and Third Taxing District provide electricity to most of Norwalk.
Water: The First Taxing District and Second Taxing District provide water to most of Norwalk.
Mobility: Our transportation assets connect us to the region but require upgrades and investment.

Most residents drive alone to work

Norwalk attracts shoppers from outside the city
Source: ESRI and Infogroup (2017), retail surplus/leakage. Note that the chart contains top categories but does not show all spending.

Open space, parks and the waterfront
• From the first settlement in 1640, Norwalk’s character and quality of life have been intrinsically tied to the water and shoreline resources.
• Our location on Long Island Sound provides a unique environment and city identity.
• We have 32 park facilities on more than 500 acres providing a variety of recreation opportunities.
• Cranbury Park, Mathews Park, Calf Pasture Beach, and Taylor Farm are popular attractions for the entire city.
• Coastal waters provide a haven for boaters, fisherman, swimmers and birders.

Norwalk attracts shoppers from outside the city
Source: ESRI and Infogroup (2017), retail surplus/leakage. Note that the chart contains top categories but does not show all spending.

Most residents drive alone to work

Norwalk attracts shoppers from outside the city
Source: ESRI and Infogroup (2017), retail surplus/leakage. Note that the chart contains top categories but does not show all spending.

Open space, parks and the waterfront
• From the first settlement in 1640, Norwalk’s character and quality of life have been intrinsically tied to the water and shoreline resources.
• Our location on Long Island Sound provides a unique environment and city identity.
• We have 32 park facilities on more than 500 acres providing a variety of recreation opportunities.
• Cranbury Park, Mathews Park, Calf Pasture Beach, and Taylor Farm are popular attractions for the entire city.
• Coastal waters provide a haven for boaters, fisherman, swimmers and birders.

Norwalk attracts shoppers from outside the city
Source: ESRI and Infogroup (2017), retail surplus/leakage. Note that the chart contains top categories but does not show all spending.

Open space, parks and the waterfront
• From the first settlement in 1640, Norwalk’s character and quality of life have been intrinsically tied to the water and shoreline resources.
• Our location on Long Island Sound provides a unique environment and city identity.
• We have 32 park facilities on more than 500 acres providing a variety of recreation opportunities.
• Cranbury Park, Mathews Park, Calf Pasture Beach, and Taylor Farm are popular attractions for the entire city.
• Coastal waters provide a haven for boaters, fisherman, swimmers and birders.

Norwalk attracts shoppers from outside the city
Source: ESRI and Infogroup (2017), retail surplus/leakage. Note that the chart contains top categories but does not show all spending.

Open space, parks and the waterfront
• From the first settlement in 1640, Norwalk’s character and quality of life have been intrinsically tied to the water and shoreline resources.
• Our location on Long Island Sound provides a unique environment and city identity.
• We have 32 park facilities on more than 500 acres providing a variety of recreation opportunities.
• Cranbury Park, Mathews Park, Calf Pasture Beach, and Taylor Farm are popular attractions for the entire city.
• Coastal waters provide a haven for boaters, fisherman, swimmers and birders.

Norwalk attracts shoppers from outside the city
Source: ESRI and Infogroup (2017), retail surplus/leakage. Note that the chart contains top categories but does not show all spending.

Open space, parks and the waterfront
• From the first settlement in 1640, Norwalk’s character and quality of life have been intrinsically tied to the water and shoreline resources.
• Our location on Long Island Sound provides a unique environment and city identity.
• We have 32 park facilities on more than 500 acres providing a variety of recreation opportunities.
• Cranbury Park, Mathews Park, Calf Pasture Beach, and Taylor Farm are popular attractions for the entire city.
• Coastal waters provide a haven for boaters, fisherman, swimmers and birders.

Norwalk attracts shoppers from outside the city
Source: ESRI and Infogroup (2017), retail surplus/leakage. Note that the chart contains top categories but does not show all spending.

Open space, parks and the waterfront
• From the first settlement in 1640, Norwalk’s character and quality of life have been intrinsically tied to the water and shoreline resources.
• Our location on Long Island Sound provides a unique environment and city identity.
• We have 32 park facilities on more than 500 acres providing a variety of recreation opportunities.
• Cranbury Park, Mathews Park, Calf Pasture Beach, and Taylor Farm are popular attractions for the entire city.
• Coastal waters provide a haven for boaters, fisherman, swimmers and birders.

Norwalk attracts shoppers from outside the city
Source: ESRI and Infogroup (2017), retail surplus/leakage. Note that the chart contains top categories but does not show all spending.

Open space, parks and the waterfront
• From the first settlement in 1640, Norwalk’s character and quality of life have been intrinsically tied to the water and shoreline resources.
• Our location on Long Island Sound provides a unique environment and city identity.
• We have 32 park facilities on more than 500 acres providing a variety of recreation opportunities.
• Cranbury Park, Mathews Park, Calf Pasture Beach, and Taylor Farm are popular attractions for the entire city.
• Coastal waters provide a haven for boaters, fisherman, swimmers and birders.

Norwalk attracts shoppers from outside the city
Source: ESRI and Infogroup (2017), retail surplus/leakage. Note that the chart contains top categories but does not show all spending.

Open space, parks and the waterfront
• From the first settlement in 1640, Norwalk’s character and quality of life have been intrinsically tied to the water and shoreline resources.
• Our location on Long Island Sound provides a unique environment and city identity.
• We have 32 park facilities on more than 500 acres providing a variety of recreation opportunities.
• Cranbury Park, Mathews Park, Calf Pasture Beach, and Taylor Farm are popular attractions for the entire city.
• Coastal waters provide a haven for boaters, fisherman, swimmers and birders.

Norwalk attracts shoppers from outside the city
Source: ESRI and Infogroup (2017), retail surplus/leakage. Note that the chart contains top categories but does not show all spending.

Open space, parks and the waterfront
• From the first settlement in 1640, Norwalk’s character and quality of life have been intrinsically tied to the water and shoreline resources.
• Our location on Long Island Sound provides a unique environment and city identity.
• We have 32 park facilities on more than 500 acres providing a variety of recreation opportunities.
• Cranbury Park, Mathews Park, Calf Pasture Beach, and Taylor Farm are popular attractions for the entire city.
• Coastal waters provide a haven for boaters, fisherman, swimmers and birders.

Norwalk attracts shoppers from outside the city
Source: ESRI and Infogroup (2017), retail surplus/leakage. Note that the chart contains top categories but does not show all spending.

Open space, parks and the waterfront
• From the first settlement in 1640, Norwalk’s character and quality of life have been intrinsically tied to the water and shoreline resources.
• Our location on Long Island Sound provides a unique environment and city identity.
• We have 32 park facilities on more than 500 acres providing a variety of recreation opportunities.
• Cranbury Park, Mathews Park, Calf Pasture Beach, and Taylor Farm are popular attractions for the entire city.
• Coastal waters provide a haven for boaters, fisherman, swimmers and birders.

Norwalk attracts shoppers from outside the city
Source: ESRI and Infogroup (2017), retail surplus/leakage. Note that the chart contains top categories but does not show all spending.