

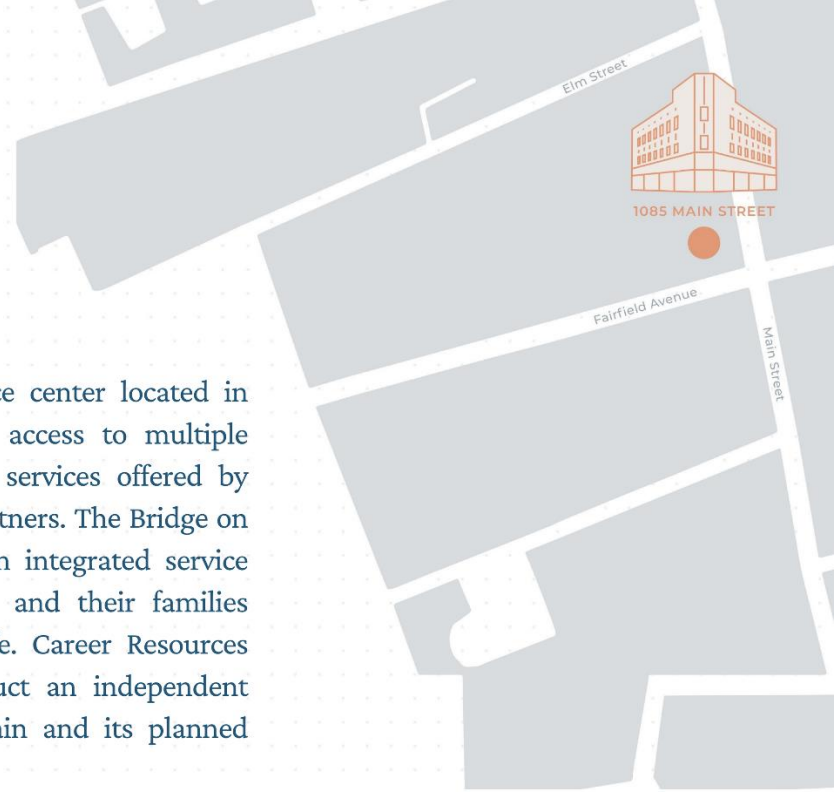


ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT
APRIL 2025



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Bridge on Main is a collaborative resource center located in downtown Bridgeport that will provide direct access to multiple workforce development-centered programs and services offered by Career Resources and other community-based partners. The Bridge on Main will spur economic growth by utilizing an integrated service model, stewarding system-impacted individuals and their families towards a financially independent and fuller life. Career Resources commissioned Zenith Economics, LLC to conduct an independent economic impact analysis of The Bridge on Main and its planned construction and operations activities.

TOTAL CONSTRUCTION IMPACT *CT, Over 18 Month Construction Period:*



56 Total

Full-Time
Equivalent Jobs



\$7mm+

Direct Labor Income
for Construction



\$18mm+

Public-Private Partnership
Total Funding



42,500 Sq. Feet

Revitalized Urban Core
City of Bridgeport

ANNUAL OPERATIONS IMPACT *CT, Each Year In Full Capacity Operation:*



\$24mm

Total Labor Income
for Connecticut Residents



500+

Full-Time Jobs Supported
for System Impacted Individuals



\$1.8mm

State/Local
Tax Revenue



20

Full-time Programmatic and
Administrative Jobs Created

**The Bridge on Main Will Collectively Serve
180+ Clients per Month**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY CONTINUED

The Bridge on Main represents a transformative economic development initiative for the City of Bridgeport, Connecticut. Led by Career Resources, Inc. (Career Resources), the workforce development project entails the renovation and operation of a **42,500-square-foot** collaborative workforce development center at 1085 Main Street. This \$18 million public-private investment is designed to deliver comprehensive employment training, reentry services, and wraparound support programs, particularly for system-impacted individuals and their families.

Zenith Economics, LLC independently conducted this economic impact analysis of The Bridge on Main using leading methods, including multi-regional input-output (MRIO) modeling via IMPLAN software. The analysis quantifies the direct, indirect, and induced economic and fiscal impacts generated by both the construction and operations phases of the facility across three geographies: the City of Bridgeport, Greater Bridgeport (as defined by MetroCOG), and the State of Connecticut.

The construction phase, scheduled for 2025–2026, is projected to generate approximately **121 job-years** statewide, with **\$10.4 million** in total labor income, **\$14.1 million** in GDP, and **\$26.4 million** in total output. The construction activity will also yield an estimated **\$2.9 million** in total fiscal revenues across all levels of government, including **\$1.1 million** for state and local entities.

Upon reaching full operational capacity in 2026, The Bridge on Main will annually support over **500 jobs** for system-impacted individuals, with average wages exceeding **\$16.35 per hour**. These positions will contribute to more than **\$16 million** in gross income for participants each year. The facility will directly create over **260 permanent full-time equivalent jobs** in Bridgeport and approximately **560 jobs** statewide, generating **\$24 million** in annual labor income and **\$54.3 million** in total statewide economic output. Operations will yield an estimated **\$6.2 million** in annual public revenues, including **\$1.8 million** to state and local governments.

The project's ancillary components—a ground-level coffee shop, a **7,000+ square foot** event space, and a commercial kitchen—will further enhance the center's impact by stimulating foot traffic and supporting new business formation. Under conservative assumptions, the facility is expected to draw **23,000 trips** annually (such as a coffee stop or a client visiting the facility) to downtown Bridgeport. Additionally, The Bridge on Main is poised to reduce recidivism by securing employment for formerly incarcerated individuals, yielding estimated net public savings of **\$1.4 million** annually due to avoided incarceration costs. These savings underscore the fiscal prudence of integrating economic development with social reintegration strategies.

The Bridge on Main strengthens downtown Bridgeport's urban core, enhances regional workforce development infrastructure, and promotes inclusive economic growth. By integrating federal, state, and private capital, the project exemplifies effective public-private collaboration. Its long-term impact will not only be measured in jobs and revenue but also in increased economic resilience, reduced social costs, and improved quality of life for Bridgeport residents.

About This Report

Zenith Economics, LLC is an independent and nonpartisan economic consultancy practice providing leading expertise in [Economic and Social Impact Analysis](#), [Land Use Policy](#), and [Economic Insights](#) to a wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit clients across the country. Zenith's team members have conducted dozens of economic impact analyses within the past five years and Zenith founder Samuel Maury-Holmes is one of just two dozen people in the world certified in IMPLAN input-output modeling software.

The economic impact analysis in this report was conducted independently by **Zenith Economics, LLC**. This report utilizes data from various sources, including Career Resources, IMPLAN, and a variety of government and public data sources.

For more information about Zenith Economics, or to inquire about conducting a similar analysis, please visit www.zenithecon.com

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1. Introduction

Career Resources, Connecticut's pre-eminent workforce development nonprofit agency, has proposed the renovation and operation of The Bridge on Main, a groundbreaking collaborative workforce development resource center in downtown Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The proposed 42,500 square foot facility will bring together over 10 non-profit organizations to provide comprehensive workforce development programs and wraparound services, with capacity to serve over 180 clients onsite per month. The facility is expected to begin Construction in late-2024 and open its doors in 2026. Once completed, The Bridge on Main will become one of Connecticut's largest integrated workforce development centers primarily focused on serving system-impacted individuals and their families.

Career Resources commissioned Zenith Economics, LLC to estimate the economic and fiscal impacts of The Bridge on Main project in downtown Bridgeport. This Economic Impact Study (EIS) provides a comprehensive analysis of the economic and fiscal impacts associated with the renovation and operation of this collaborative resource center. The assessment examines both the construction/renovation phase and operations phase of the project, considering direct, indirect, and induced impacts at the city and state levels.

The facility represents a transformative investment in Bridgeport's workforce development infrastructure, with a total construction and renovation investment of approximately \$18 million and the projected creation and support of over 500 jobs for system-impacted individuals annually.

Through detailed economic input-output modeling and analysis, this assessment demonstrates that the project will generate substantial and lasting economic effects through multiple channels, including job creation, increased economic output, reduced recidivism-related costs, increased foot traffic, and significant economic benefits across the City of Bridgeport, Greater Bridgeport, and the State of Connecticut.

Additionally, the development of The Bridge on Main aligns with regional economic development goals and the state's strategic focus on workforce development and reducing recidivism. By establishing an integrated service model that combines job readiness training, employment placement, and critical wraparound support services in downtown Bridgeport, The Bridge on Main positions the region as a leader in innovative workforce development while creating sustained economic opportunities for local residents facing barriers to employment.

2. Key Terms and Methods

This section of the report details the key terms and methodology employed to estimate the economic impact of the planned The Bridge on Main collaborative resource center across the City of Bridgeport, Greater Bridgeport, and the State of Connecticut.

It is recommended that readers familiarize themselves with the terms that will be used throughout the report by reading section [2.1 Key Terms](#). Likewise, section [2.2 Methodology](#) provides critical information about the process, data, tools, and assumptions used throughout this report. This Economic Impact Study (EIS) utilizes standard economic impact terminology and incorporates industry best-practices in estimating the total economic impacts of The Bridge on Main during its construction/Construction phase and operations phase.

Image: The Site of The Bridge on Main, Circa 2022



2.1 Key Terms

The following list gives definitions of key terms used throughout the report. Each of these terms is a standard term used in economic impact analysis. Examples of each term in use can be found in practice within the full report.

Table 1: Economic and Fiscal Impact Analysis Definitions

Term	Definition
Input-Output	An economic analysis model showing how different sectors of the economy interact and depend on each other through purchases and sales.
Employment	The total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs created or supported, as measured at the site of employment, including full-time, part-time, and seasonal positions, by spending related to The Bridge on Main.
Job-Years	Job-Years are equal to the number of jobs (employment) times the number of years each job existed. For example, 1 job held for 2 years would be equal to 2 Job-Years
Labor Income	The value of the total wages, salaries, and benefits paid to workers.
Value Added	The additional value created during production processes related to The Bridge on Main – similar to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or Gross Regional Product (GRP) at a local level.
Output	The total value of all goods and services produced - essentially total sales or revenue.
Tax Revenue	Money generated for local, state, and federal governments through various taxes.

Table 1 Continued: Economic and Fiscal Impact Analysis Definitions

Term	Definition
Direct Effect	The immediate economic impact created by The Bridge on Main itself, like its own jobs and spending directly related to the Construction and/or operations of the facility.
Indirect Effect	Economic activity generated by The Bridge on Main’s supply chain and business-to-business purchases.
Induced Effect	Economic activity created when workers (from direct and indirect effects) spend their wages in the studied City of Bridgeport and/or State of Connecticut economies.
Secondary Effect	The sum of the indirect and the induced effects - all the "ripple effects" beyond the direct impact.
Total Impact	The sum of direct, indirect, and induced effects - the overall economic activity attributable to The Bridge on Main.
Leakages	Dollars that leaves the local economy (and thus has no “ripple effects”) through purchases from outside the study region. Imports are an example of this.
Multipliers	Factors that show how much additional economic activity is generated per unit of direct effect. This is typically measured as the ratio of Total Effect to Direct Effect for a given variable such as Employment or Output.

Table 2: General Term and Programmatic Term Definitions

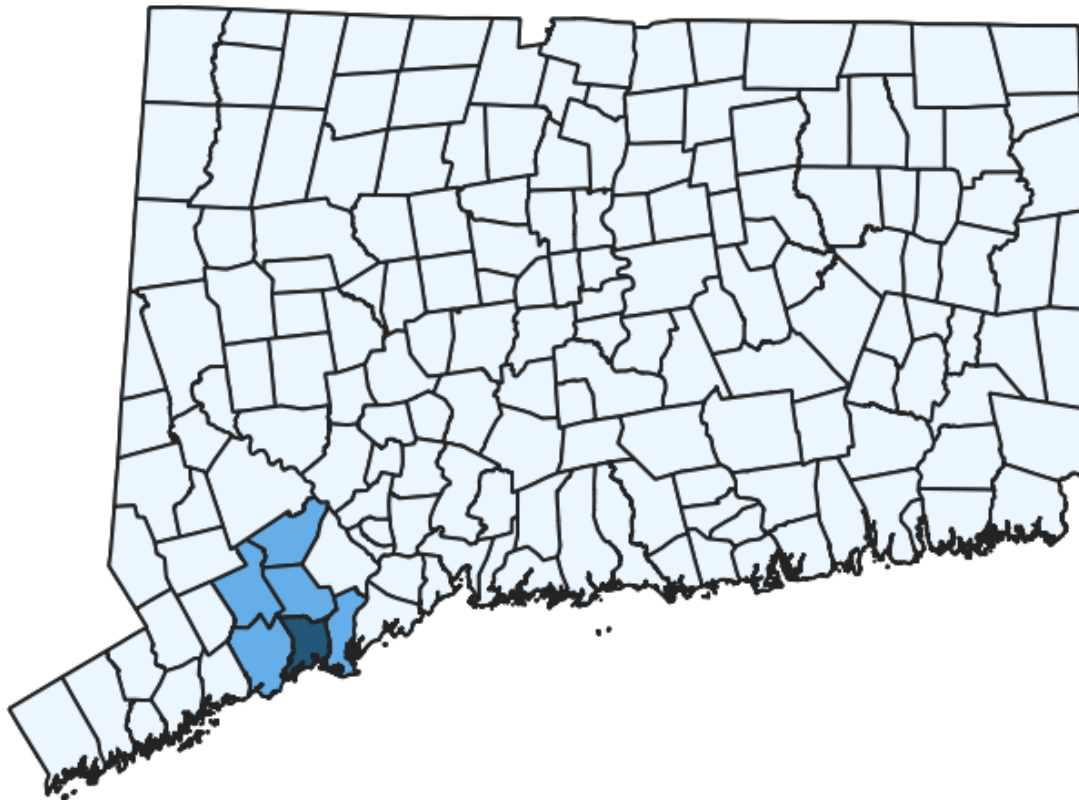
Term	Definition
The Bridge on Main	A collaborative resource center in downtown Bridgeport, Connecticut, focused on workforce development for system impacted individuals and their families.
Recidivism	A re-offense by a previously incarcerated individual, often leading to multiple bouts of incarceration.
System-Impacted Individual	Someone who, either directly or indirectly, has been affected by the criminal justice system. This can range from someone who personally spent time in prison to the family and kids of convicted individuals; examples of interactions with the system can include prison/jail, active cases, and parole.
Workforce Development	A set of programs or opportunities that help people improve their skills and job prospects, increasing the human capital of a region.

2.2 Methodology

This Economic Impact Study (EIS) evaluates the potential gross economic contributions of The Bridge on Main. The study employs a Multi-Regional Input-Output (MRIO) modeling approach using Impact Analysis for Planning (IMPLAN) software to capture both direct and secondary economic effects across the City of Bridgeport, Greater Bridgeport (which includes the City of Bridgeport) and the State of Connecticut (which includes Greater Bridgeport). The methodology outlined here details the analytical framework, data sources, and modeling assumptions underpinning this report.

The EIS focuses on three geographic regions to capture the varying economic impacts at different spatial scales: the City of Bridgeport, Greater Bridgeport, and the State of Connecticut. The primary impact area encompasses the immediate vicinity (Bridgeport) of the proposed facility, while the secondary regions (the Greater Bridgeport and State of Connecticut regions) capture broader spillover effects. This tri-region approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of how economic benefits from The Bridge on Main disperse across the state and identifies potential inter-regional economic linkages.

Figure 1: Economic Impact Analysis Study Regions



The City of Bridgeport (Dark Blue), the Remainder of Greater Bridgeport (Medium Blue), and the Remainder of Connecticut (Light Blue) Combine to Form the State of Connecticut Study Region

Career Resources provided Zenith with the primary data inputs for this analysis in the form of planning documents and other sources of information. Examples of data provided to Zenith by Career Resources include projected capital expenditures for facility construction, anticipated annual operating employment (broken out by job type), and projected rent for The Bridge on Main spaces.

These proprietary inputs from Career Resources were supplemented with industry-standard data from IMPLAN's built-in databases, which provide detailed information on regional economic structures, industry relationships, and trade flows across both the City of Bridgeport, Greater Bridgeport, and the broader State of Connecticut.

The study utilizes an MRIO modeling approach to capture the economic relationships between regions and industries. This methodology offers several advantages over traditional single-region input-output (IO) models by explicitly accounting for trade relationships between the three study regions, allowing for more accurate estimation of spillover effects while avoiding double-counting of economic impacts. The MRIO model incorporates IMPLAN's trade flow data to estimate how The Bridge on Main-related economic activity in one region affects the other through supply chain linkages and consumer spending patterns. The use of an MRIO model rather than a standard IO model is the best-practice for multi-region economic impact studies.

Zenith used IMPLAN, the industry-leading software for economic impact modelling and Input-Output analysis, for this project with Career Resources. IMPLAN software is widely regarded as the best-in-class tool for economic and fiscal impact analysis and is used by government organizations and private researchers throughout the United States. By using IMPLAN for this analysis, Zenith was best able to provide objective impact analysis.

The IMPLAN model underpinning the gross outputs reported in the EIS Report was configured to, as best as possible, reflect the specific anticipated characteristics of the proposed project and its operating environment as estimated by Career Resources. This approach embraced adjustments to the model and its outputs to reflect the nonprofit status of The Bridge on Main, including the zeroing out of proprietor incomes and the removal of direct taxes on production and imports (TOPI) and direct corporations' tax (OPI) for relevant event types in IMPLAN.

Please note that IMPLAN defines regions using ZIP Codes, not cities; additionally, The Bridge on Main was required to define its geographic region using Census Tracts. To best approximate the City of Bridgeport, this report relied on the 38 provided Census Tracts, which were then crosswalked to Zip Codes. The crosswalk used to construct Bridgeport in IMPLAN out of Zip Codes is found to the right and is sourced from the [2024 HUD-USPS ZIP Crosswalk](#) files.

Across all 38 Census Tracts used to define the City of Bridgeport, the following corresponding ZIP Codes were identified and modeled as the City of Bridgeport in IMPLAN:

- 06601
- 06602
- 06604
- 06605
- 06606
- 06607
- 06608
- 06610
- 06699

With the City of Bridgeport defined in IMPLAN using the above ZIP Codes, Greater Bridgeport was defined in IMPLAN to best match the Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments (MetroCOG) [2021 CEDS](#) definition of Greater Bridgeport, which included the city of Bridgeport and the towns of Easton, Fairfield, Monroe, Stratford, and Trumbull, as defined in IMPLAN using ZIP Codes and guidance from [CT Data](#).

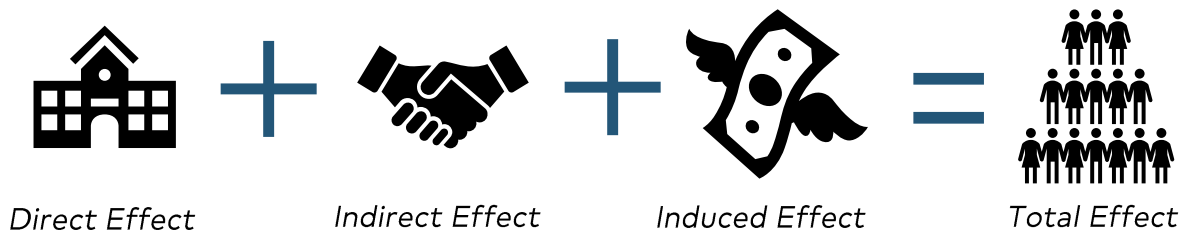
Table 3: Census Tract to ZIP Crosswalk

Census Tract	ZIP Code(s)
9001070100	06605
9001070200	06605
9001070300	06604, 06605
9001070400	06604
9001070500	06604
9001070600	06601, 06602, 06604, 06699
9001070900	06604, 06605
9001071000	06604, 06605
9001071100	06604, 06605
9001071200	06604, 06605
9001071300	06604
9001071400	06604, 06606
9001071600	06604
9001071900	06604, 06606
9001072000	06604, 06606
9001072100	06604
9001072200	06604, 06606
9001072300	06606
9001072400	06606
9001072500	06604, 06606
9001072600	06604, 06606
9001072700	06606
9001072800	06606
9001072900	06606
9001073000	06610
9001073100	06610
9001073200	06610
9001073300	06610
9001073400	06606, 06608, 06610
9001073500	06608, 06610
9001073600	06608, 06610
9001073700	06610
9001073800	06608, 06610
9001073900	06608
9001074000	06608
9001074300	06607, 06608, 06610
9001074400	06607
9001257200	06604, 06606

The EIS quantifies economic impacts across three primary categories, which when summed together form the total economic impact of Career Resource’s planned facility:

1. Direct Effects: These represent the immediate economic activity generated by The Bridge on Main’s operations, including employment, labor income, and value added directly attributable to The Bridge on Main.
2. Indirect Effects: These capture the economic activity generated through the facility's supply chain, including purchases from local suppliers and their subsequent economic activities.
3. Induced Effects: These encompass the broader economic impacts resulting from household spending of income earned through direct and indirect activities.

Figure 2: Composition of Total Gross Effects



The model utilized for this EIS calculates impacts through a series of iterative steps:

1. Initial direct effects are entered as inputs based on data provided by Career Resources projecting Construction and operations expenditures and headcounts
2. The MRIO framework in IMPLAN traces these inputs through the regional economies, with inter-regional linkages calculated to capture cross-region impacts
3. Total impacts are aggregated for each region and across both regions while avoiding double-counting

Outputs are estimated for the following variables, which are defined more exhaustively in Section [2.1 Key Terms](#):

- Employment (as measured in full-time equivalents, or FTEs)
- Labor income (including wages, salaries, and benefits)
- Value added (contribution to regional GDP, or GRP)
- Output (total economic activity generated, including intermediate inputs)
- Tax revenue implications for local, state, and federal governments

While Zenith Economics performed this Economic Impact Study using industry best practices, this Methodology acknowledges several important assumptions and limitations:

- The analysis assumes that current economic relationships captured in the most up-to-date IMPLAN model year data (2023) will remain stable into the future, when many of the Construction and operations activities of The Bridge on Main occur
- All operations estimates assume full capacity; there will likely be a ramp-up period
- The analysis assumes that normal tax rates apply to all for-profit expenditures
- The analysis assumes, based on The Bridge on Main Prospectus, that 500 system-impacted individuals are placed into jobs by The Bridge on Main with average hourly wages of \$16.35 (and no additional direct labor income) across a 2,000-hour work year. Zenith assumes half (250) of those jobs would be in the City of Bridgeport and the remaining 250 in the rest of Connecticut. These jobs are currently in an unknown industry, so were modeled using the Social Advocacy organization industry type, which provides reasonably conservative multipliers
- Zenith assumed a reasonable headcount for the coffee shop and the event space based off employment data for comparable coffee shops and event spaces
- The model assumes that adequate regional labor and capital resources will be available to meet the increased economic activity generated by the project
- Impact results represent potential gross impacts based on expected parameters
- The analysis assumes that 100% of projected on-site investment and employment is attributable to The Bridge on Main, rather than the third-party businesses and partner organizations which may or may not be part of site operations

Additionally, all dollar amounts provided to Zenith by Career Resources were in 2024 dollars, including the Construction costs and any operational costs. For consistency, all reported impact figures throughout this report are also in 2024 dollars. Zenith does not at any point in this report escalate or discount prices, costs, or impact figures to account for past or future inflation, and instead exclusively reports findings using 2024 dollars.

Overall, the methodology utilized in this project for economic impact analysis provides a comprehensive framework for assessing the economic implications of The Bridge on Main while maintaining analytical rigor and transparency. The MRIO approach, combined with detailed proprietary data from Career Resources, enables a thorough understanding of potential economic impacts in the City of Bridgeport and the State of Connecticut.

Other components of this report, such as the estimates of foot traffic brought to downtown Bridgeport by The Bridge on Main, and the estimate of reduced public costs due to lower recidivism rates, are based off reasonable assumptions using reputable data sources, high quality academic research, and methods outlined in the respective section of the report, as necessary to estimate studied variables.

3. City of Bridgeport Economic Context

Bridgeport has experienced significant economic transitions over the years. Historically, it was recognized for its strong manufacturing base. However, the latter half of the 20th century saw a steep decline in regional manufacturing employment. This shift led to structural changes in the local economy, influencing various aspects such as retail businesses, housing values, and municipal tax revenues.

In recent years, Bridgeport has been transitioning to a more diversified economy, though this process is ongoing. The downtown area, characterized by its historic architecture, symbolizes both the challenges and opportunities of urban revitalization. Investments in modernizing these historic buildings have attracted new residents and businesses, contributing to increased street-level activity. Significant projects, such as the adaptive reuse of former office buildings, the renovation of the Steelpoint coal plant, the expansion of the Housatonic Community College campus, and improvements to cultural venues like the Klein Memorial Auditorium, have played pivotal roles in this transformation. These developments highlight the evolving nature of downtown Bridgeport and its potential for continued economic growth and revitalization.

The following section outlines key economic indicators, demographic statistics, and other useful context for evaluating The Bridge on Main and this economic impact analysis.

Image: Downtown Bridgeport and The Bridge on Main (Center, White Building with Flag)



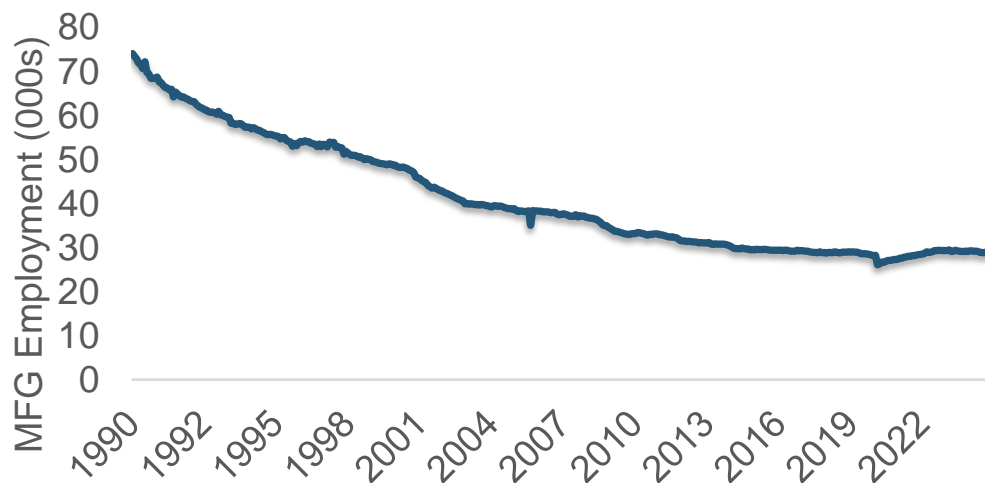
3.1 The Past

Bridgeport, Connecticut's most populous city, has a rich industrial heritage that shaped much of its current economic landscape. Once known as the "Arsenal of Democracy" for its manufacturing prowess during World War II, Bridgeport's economy was historically built on a foundation of heavy industry, manufacturing, and maritime commerce. However, like many northeastern industrial centers, the latter half of the 20th century brought significant economic challenges as manufacturing declined and economic activity shifted to other industry sectors.

The city's transformation from an industrial powerhouse to its current economic state provides important context for understanding today's challenges and opportunities. According to data from the Connecticut Department of Labor, manufacturing employment in Bridgeport declined by over 70% between 1970 and 2020, creating a structural shift in the local economy that continues to influence current conditions.

The manufacturing decline in Bridgeport was particularly acute during the 1970s and 1980s, when several major employers either closed operations or significantly reduced their workforce. Companies like General Electric, Remington Arms, and Singer Sewing Machine Company, which once employed thousands of workers, gradually reduced their presence. This exodus created a ripple effect throughout the local economy, impacting everything from retail businesses to housing values and municipal tax revenues, and forced new industries to take hold in the region to support the local economy.

Fig. 3 Bridgeport Manufacturing Employment Has Declined



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

3.2 The Present

Today, Bridgeport's economy presents a complex picture of challenges and emerging opportunities. The city has seen a gradual transition from its manufacturing base to a more diverse economic portfolio, though this transition is still underway.

Downtown Bridgeport represents both the challenges and potential of urban revitalization in mid-sized northeastern cities. The district, roughly bounded by Interstate 95, Route 8, and Bridgeport Harbor, contains a sizeable collection of historic architecture, much of it dating from the city's industrial heyday. These buildings, while requiring significant investment for modernization, provide the kind of authentic urban environment increasingly sought by both residents and businesses.

Recent years have seen several significant changes in the downtown area's character and function. The conversion of former office buildings to residential use has brought new residents to the district, creating demand for services and contributing to street-level activity. Projects like the renovation of the former Mechanics & Farmers Bank building into offices demonstrate the potential for adaptive reuse of historic structures, while also highlighting the changing nature of downtown real estate demand.

The presence of major institutional anchors continues to influence downtown development patterns. The Housatonic Community College campus, which underwent significant expansion in recent years, brings thousands of students to the district daily. Likewise, the Klein Memorial Auditorium and other cultural venues generate evening activity. Additional government buildings, including federal, state, and local facilities, provide stable employment and generate consistent daytime activity.

The Bridgeport labor market presents a complex picture of both challenges and opportunities. The city's workforce of approximately 74,000 people includes significant numbers of skilled workers in healthcare, education, and remaining manufacturing operations. However, there is often a mismatch between the skills needed by employers and those possessed by local residents, particularly in emerging technical fields.

Table 4: Employment by Industry, Bridgeport vs. Connecticut, 2023

Industry Sector	Civilian Employment		% of Total	
	Bridgeport	State of CT	Bridgeport	State of CT
Healthcare	12,534	300,016	16.9%	15.9%
Construction	8,927	114,383	12.0%	6.1%
Professional Services	8,678	239,073	11.7%	12.7%
Manufacturing	8,476	198,895	11.4%	10.6%
Retail Trade	7,562	185,022	10.2%	9.8%
Recreation and Food	6,333	150,779	8.5%	8.0%
Educational Services	5,754	226,485	7.8%	12.0%
Logistics	4,741	91,215	6.4%	4.8%
Other Services	4,002	77,977	5.4%	4.1%
Financial Activities	3,603	154,846	4.9%	8.2%
Public Admin.	1,998	65,831	2.7%	3.5%
Wholesale Trade	1,183	31,820	1.6%	1.7%
Information	433	37,947	0.6%	2.0%
Natural Resources	6	9,836	0.0%	0.5%
TOTAL	74,230	1,884,125	100.0%	100.0%

Sources: ACS 2023 1-Yr Estimates, Table ID S2403. Analysis by Zenith Economics.

Bridgeport has a unique industry composition relative to the State of Connecticut. Comparatively, a larger share of Bridgeport’s 74,000 Civilian Employees work in the Construction, Logistics, and Other Services industries. Conversely, Bridgeport has comparatively less employees in the Educational Services, Financial Activities, and Information industry sectors.

Table 5: Economic Overview:

	Bridgeport	State of CT
Population	148,028	3,675,069
Households	55,498	1,420,170
Median Age	36.4	41.2
Median HH Income	\$56,584	\$93,760
High School or More	77.8%	91.3%
Poverty Rate	22.5%	10.3%
Land Area (Mi²)	16.1	4,842.4

Sources: ACS 2023 5-Yr Estimates; US Census; US Bureau of Labor Statistics

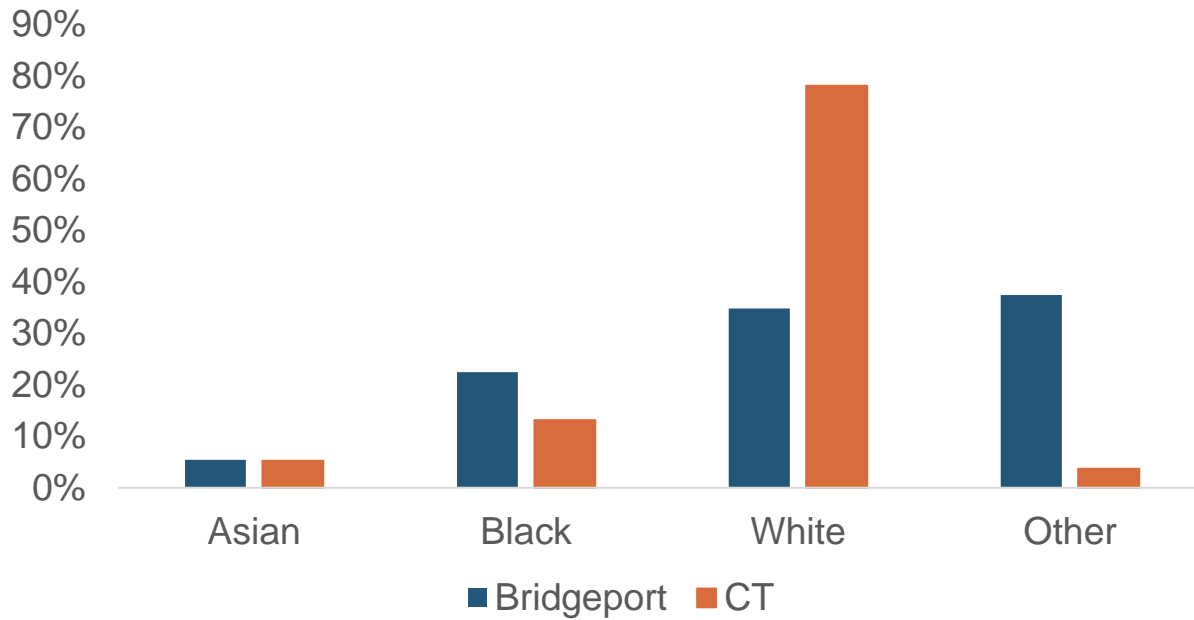
Bridgeport has over 148,000 residents, per the most recent census, or approximately 4% of the total population of Connecticut. Bridgeport has the largest population of any city or town in the state.

The median household in Bridgeport has an annual income of approximately \$57,000, or around 60% of the median household income for the state. Additionally, the 22.5% poverty rate in the city is over double the poverty rate for Connecticut.

The (comparatively) lower income, high level of diversity, and generally younger demographic profile of Bridgeport residents (as seen on the following page) emphasizes the importance of workforce development initiatives and community resource centers like The Bridge on Main. There remains a substantial opportunity for the City of Bridgeport to expand employment opportunities, create job stability, and connect community members with resources in a way that bolsters the local economy and provides improved lives to city residents.

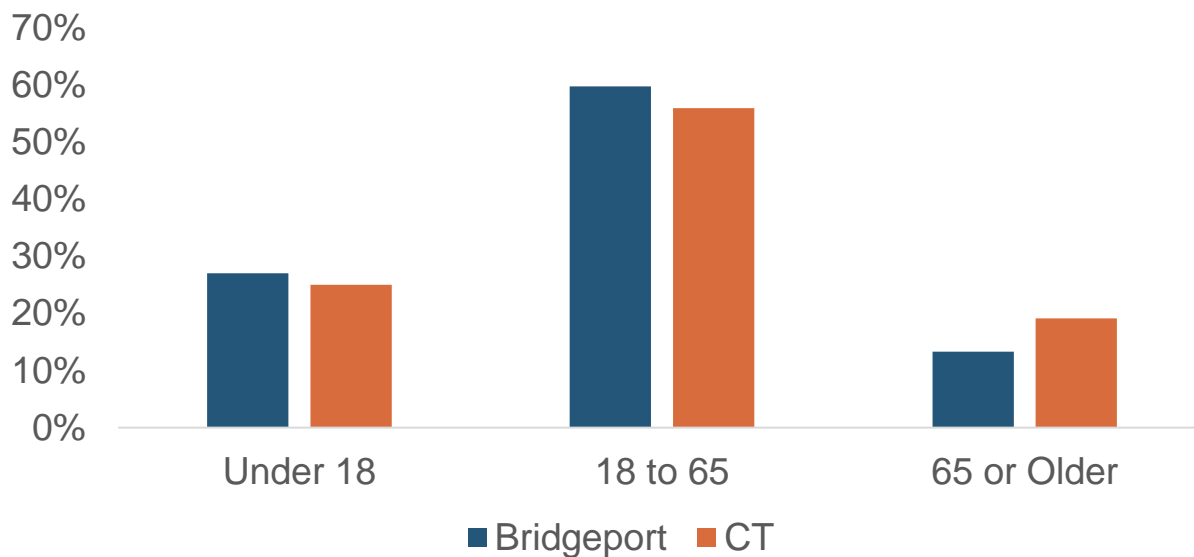
Figures 4 and 5: Demographics Overview

Bridgeport is More Diverse...



Sources: ACS 2023 5-Yr Estimates; US Census. "Other" includes American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, two or more races, and Hispanic or Latino Alone.

...And Younger than the State of CT



Sources: ACS 2023 5-Yr Estimates; US Census.

3.3 The Future and the Role of The Bridge on Main

Looking ahead, Bridgeport's economic future appears to be at a crucial juncture. The city possesses significant assets that could support economic revitalization, including its strategic location, transportation infrastructure, existing downtown buildings, and relatively affordable real estate. The presence of major healthcare institutions provides a stable economic base that could support future growth in related sectors.

Several major development initiatives currently underway could significantly impact the city's economic trajectory. These include the redevelopment of the former Remington Arms factory site, ongoing improvements to the Port of Bridgeport, the Steelpoint development, the Brownfield Coal Plant redevelopment, and various downtown residential conversions. The success of these projects, coupled with broader regional economic trends, will likely play a crucial role in determining Bridgeport's economic future.

Bridgeport's workforce development landscape reveals complex challenges requiring innovative solutions. The city's labor force includes significant untapped potential, particularly among younger workers and those with barriers to employment like system-impacted individuals. Traditional workforce development approaches, while valuable, have often struggled to fully address the needs of employers while also serving those facing the greatest barriers to employment.

As noted in the preceding sections, Bridgeport has undergone substantial economic change over previous decades. It is currently highly diverse, with lower wages and unique industry composition relative to the rest of Connecticut. The Bridge on Main represents a significant economic development initiative in downtown Bridgeport and is scheduled to open in 2026. The project furthers the goals of Bridgeport's economic development initiatives and is in alignment with the Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments' (MetroCOG) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

The Bridge on Main will transform 1085 Main Street into a 42,500-square-foot collaborative resource and workforce development center. Career Resources is leading this \$18 million public-private partnership to create an integrated service delivery model supporting system-impacted individuals and their families.

The project directly advances MetroCOG's core economic development priorities through job creation and workforce development. The initiative also addresses the CEDS emphasis on workforce development through comprehensive job training, placement services, and support programs. The facility will house multiple workforce development organizations, creating an integrated service delivery model that maximizes efficiency and effectiveness.

Planning documents indicate that the facility will create over 20 direct positions, and support and maintain over 500 jobs for program participants, generating approximately \$15 million in annual gross income for system-impacted individuals.

By renovating a vacant downtown property and creating new business activity through its coffee shop and event spaces, the project advances the CEDS goal of strengthening Bridgeport's urban core. The development will increase foot traffic and create new commercial opportunities in the downtown district.

The project exemplifies the CEDS recommendation for leveraging public-private partnerships. The funding structure, including some initial operational costs, combines:

- Federal funding: \$500,000
- State of CT Community Investment Fund: \$4.5 million+
- Private/corporate contributions: \$8.5 million+
- Additional funding being cultivated: \$4.5 million

By bringing federal funding, state investment, and funding from other sources outside the City of Bridgeport, a substantial component of the renovation phase of this project represents a net, not gross, economic impact and benefit to Bridgeport. Much of the renovation budget for The Bridge on Main is an investment that, if not for The Bridge on Main, would not have been invested in the city.

The Bridge on Main development and its future operations are led by several key partners:

- Career Resources
- MKRS Family Foundation
- The Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation
- M&T Bank
- Webster Bank
- Multiple other state agencies and nonprofits

4. Impacts - Construction

The Bridge on Main's construction and renovation phase will kickstart tremendous economic growth in downtown Bridgeport and the broader Connecticut economy. When crews begin work in mid-2025, they will launch a 14–18-month transformation that is creating jobs, generating income, and revitalizing a key corner of downtown. It is expected that benefits will flow through direct construction jobs, supply chain activity, and increased spending across the community as workers earn and spend their wages locally.

The renovation team will bring new life to the historic 42,500 square foot building at 1085 Main Street, creating dozens of jobs in construction and skilled trades. But the impact goes far beyond just the construction workers on site. Local vendors will supply materials and services, restaurants will serve lunch to the crews, and local shops will see increased foot traffic – all generating a multiplier effect throughout Bridgeport's economy.

When finished in 2026, the building will house modern workforce development facilities, a sprawling 7,000+ square foot event space with commercial kitchen, a street-level coffee shop, and new offices where over 120 employees from 10+ public and private organizations will work together to serve the community.

This renovation sets the stage for long-term job creation, workforce development programs, and community revitalization that will potentially benefit residents for decades.

4.1 Construction Investment

Career Resources will transform 1085 Main Street in downtown Bridgeport into The Bridge on Main, an innovative collaborative resource center that will serve as a catalyst for workforce development and community revitalization. Construction teams will begin work in mid-2025, with doors opening to the community in 2026 after a 14–18-month renovation period. During this time, crews will completely rehabilitate the 42,500 square foot building, creating a state-of-the-art facility that brings multiple community services under one roof, including a street-level coffee shop, a 7,000+ square foot event space with commercial kitchen, and modern office facilities for over 10 public and private organizations.

The total investment in The Bridge on Main will reach approximately \$18 million, with funding coming from an innovative mix of public and private sources. The project budget includes \$1.15 million for the initial property purchase, which was not modeled as part of this economic impact analysis.

Please note that construction-related jobs are temporary and will exist only during the construction period, whereas operations jobs outlined in [Section 4. Operations](#) will exist every year that The Bridge on Main exists. The Construction phase is 18 months, and IMPLAN reports impact figures on an annualized basis; as a result, all economic and fiscal impact estimates in [Section 4. Impacts - Construction](#) are cumulative effects for the entire renovation duration. Jobs are reported in job-years rather than as headcounts.

4.2 Economic Impacts

The Construction phase of The Bridge on Maine has and will continue to generate transformative economic benefits for the City of Bridgeport, Greater Bridgeport, and the State of Connecticut across multiple impact channels, creating opportunities for local businesses and workers while strengthening the city's economic base.

Table 6: Construction Phase Summary Economic Impacts

Region	Impact Type	Employment (Job-Years)	Labor Income (\$mm)	Value Added (\$mm)	Output (\$mm)
City of Bridgeport	Direct	84	\$7.4	\$7.9	\$17.0
	Indirect	2	\$0.1	\$0.3	\$0.5
	Induced	1	\$0.1	\$0.7	\$0.8
	Total	87	\$7.6	\$8.8	\$18.3
Greater Bridgeport	Direct	84	\$7.4	\$7.9	\$17.0
	Indirect	4	\$0.4	\$0.8	\$1.2
	Induced	1	\$0.1	\$0.7	\$0.9
	Total	90	\$7.8	\$9.3	\$19.0
State of Connecticut	Direct	84	\$7.4	\$7.9	\$17.0
	Indirect	22	\$1.9	\$3.6	\$5.7
	Induced	15	\$1.1	\$2.6	\$3.7
	Total	121	\$10.4	\$14.1	\$26.4

Source: CRI, The Bridge on Main, IMPLAN. Analysis by Zenith Economics. Figures Rounded.

The project will directly create an average of 56 construction-related employment opportunities over the course of the project, or approximately 84 job-years of labor opportunities. These positions span multiple skill levels and trades, offering substantial prospects for local workforce participation. Those directly involved with the construction in full-time positions will have an average labor income significantly above the City's median personal income.

Through supply chain “indirect” effects, the construction of The Bridge on Main will support around 22 additional job-years in supporting industries throughout the state.

These positions will emerge across construction materials suppliers, equipment rental companies, restaurants, professional services firms, and other local industry sectors.

The spending of construction workers and indirect employees will support approximately one additional job-year of full time equivalent employment throughout the local economy over the course of construction. These induced effects will primarily benefit retail establishments, restaurants, healthcare providers, and personal service businesses.

Throughout the state, projected cumulative economic activity related to the 18-month Construction period will generate over \$10 million in total labor income, over \$14 million in value added, and over \$26 million in total output.

4.3 Fiscal Impacts

The economic activity that takes place because of Career Resources and its partners’ investment in The Bridge on Main will also generate substantial tax receipts for the state government, federal government, and various types of local government. For example, limited property taxes for the site and the homes of Career Resources workers may be collected by the city government; payroll taxes for each construction worker hired by Career Resources may be collected by the state government; and construction worker incomes may be taxed by the federal government.

Table 7: Construction Phase Summary Fiscal Impacts

Region	Impact Type	State and Local (\$mm)	Federal (\$mm)	Total (\$mm)
City of Bridgeport	Direct	\$0.3	\$1.1	\$1.4
	Indirect	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.1
	Induced	\$0.1	\$0.0	\$0.1
	Total	\$0.4	\$1.1	\$1.5
Greater Bridgeport	Direct	\$0.3	\$1.1	\$1.4
	Indirect	\$0.1	\$0.1	\$0.2
	Induced	\$0.1	\$0.0	\$0.1
	Total	\$0.5	\$1.2	\$1.7
State of Connecticut	Direct	\$0.3	\$1.1	\$1.4
	Indirect	\$0.5	\$0.5	\$0.9
	Induced	\$0.3	\$0.3	\$0.6
	Total	\$1.1	\$1.8	\$2.9

Source: CRI, The Bridge on Main, IMPLAN. Analysis by Zenith Economics. Figures Rounded.

Zenith Economics estimates that economic activity in the City of Bridgeport related to the construction phase will generate approximately \$1.1 million in cumulative state and local tax revenues throughout Connecticut over the 18-month Construction period, alongside an additional \$1.8 million in receipts towards the federal government. The portion of the total tax receipts collected by local governments will represent significant new funding for local school districts and city services, supporting enhanced public services and infrastructure investments throughout the City of Bridgeport and the state.

5. Impacts - Operations

The ongoing operations of The Bridge on Main will create lasting economic benefits for Bridgeport, Greater Bridgeport, and the State of Connecticut while expanding the region's workforce development capacity. When doors open in 2026, the collaborative resource center will establish downtown Bridgeport as a regional leader in innovative workforce development while creating high-quality, permanent jobs across multiple sectors, including for those recently impacted by incarceration.

The Bridge on Main's impact will extend far beyond direct employment and jobs provided through its programs. The transformative project will launch at least 5 new businesses owned and operated by returning citizens each year, create a preferred downtown destination through a new coffee shop, provide event space in the 7,000+ square foot venue, and offer short-term workspace rentals for local businesses.

Additionally, the facility will serve over 180 clients on-site monthly through its comprehensive array of programs and wraparound services, driving increased foot traffic and commercial activity throughout downtown Bridgeport. Most importantly, by focusing on employment placement for returning citizens, the project will generate substantial public savings, as discussed thoroughly in [Public Costs Related to Recidivism](#).

5.1 Operations Overview and Investment

The Bridge on Main's operations will generate substantial recurring economic impacts across downtown Bridgeport, Greater Bridgeport, and Connecticut starting in 2026. The collaborative resource center will create and support over 500 jobs for system-impacted individuals with average wages exceeding \$16.35 per hour, contributing to more than \$16 million in gross annual income.

The facility will also create over 20 new full-time programmatic and administrative positions paying \$45,000-\$50,000 annually, while supporting work functions for an additional 120 full-time and part-time staff working within the 42,500 square foot building. These positions include comprehensive wraparound services staff, workforce development professionals, and social enterprise employees.

5.2 Economic Impacts

The ongoing operations of The Bridge on Main, once at full capacity, will generate significant annual economic benefits for the City of Bridgeport, Greater Bridgeport, and the State, creating sustainable economic growth and development opportunities throughout the local economy.

Table 8: Operations Phase Summary Economic Impacts

Region	Impact Type	Employment (Headcount)	Labor Income (\$mm)	Value Added (\$mm)	Output (\$mm)
City of Bridgeport	Direct	261	\$9.7	\$15.7	\$21.4
	Indirect	1	\$0.1	\$0.2	\$0.3
	Induced	-	\$0.0	\$0.1	\$0.1
	Total	262	\$9.9	\$16.0	\$21.8
Greater Bridgeport	Direct	495	\$17.8	\$28.8	\$39.1
	Indirect	6	\$0.6	\$0.8	\$1.2
	Induced	1	\$0.1	\$0.3	\$0.3
	Total	502	\$18.4	\$29.9	\$40.7
State of Connecticut	Direct	495	\$17.8	\$28.8	\$39.1
	Indirect	49	\$5.0	\$7.2	\$11.6
	Induced	15	\$1.2	\$2.4	\$3.5
	Total	558	\$24.0	\$38.4	\$54.3

Source: CRI, The Bridge on Main, IMPLAN. Analysis by Zenith Economics. Figures Rounded.

It is estimated that The Bridge on Main will contribute to employment for nearly 260 fulltime workers in the City of Bridgeport, including many system-impacted individuals. These jobs will generate an estimated \$9.9 million in annual direct labor income and contribute approximately \$16.0 million in annual direct value added to the local economy. The positions created and supported by the facility will include technical and professional opportunities that will enhance the city's workforce capabilities and create career advancement pathways for local residents.

Statewide impacts are even more substantial, with approximately \$54 million in Output generated annually.

5.3 Fiscal Impacts

The economic transfers that take place in Connecticut because of The Bridge on Main’s operational activities will also generate substantial tax receipts for the state government, federal government, and various types of local government.

Table 9: Operations Phase Summary Fiscal Impacts

Region	Impact Type	State and Local (\$mm)	Federal (\$mm)	Total (\$mm)
City of Bridgeport	Direct	\$0.6	\$1.5	\$2.2
	Indirect	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
	Induced	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
	Total	\$0.7	\$1.6	\$2.2
Greater Bridgeport	Direct	\$1.1	\$2.9	\$4.1
	Indirect	\$0.0	\$0.1	\$0.1
	Induced	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.1
	Total	\$1.2	\$3.0	\$4.2
State of Connecticut	Direct	\$1.7	\$2.9	\$4.1
	Indirect	\$0.1	\$1.1	\$1.6
	Induced	\$0.1	\$0.3	\$0.6
	Total	\$1.8	\$4.4	\$6.2

Source: CRI, The Bridge on Main, IMPLAN. Analysis by Zenith Economics. Figures Rounded.

Zenith Economics estimates that economic activity throughout Connecticut related to the operations phase will generate approximately \$1.8 million in cumulative state and local tax revenues annually, alongside an additional \$4.4 million in annual receipts towards the federal government.

The specific taxes expected to generate the most total government (including local, state, and federal) revenue as related to construction-related economic activity in Connecticut include payroll taxes (\$2.9 million), income taxes (\$2.1 million), and property taxes (\$0.9 million).

5.4 Operations Economic Impact Breakout – Coffee Shop

As part of this analysis, Zenith Economics modeled the economic impact of the planned ground-level coffee shop on the City of Bridgeport. The coffee shop will be a social venture with profits reinvested into the service population.

The exact operating parameters of the coffee shop are not currently known; Zenith assumed a reasonable six (6) person staff, or approximately five full-time equivalents, including the manager and all barista and other positions. The coffee shop was modeled as part of the larger The Bridge on Main operations phase and is therefore already included in all figures from sections 5.1 through 5.3.

Table 10: Operations Phase Summary Economic Impacts - Bridgeport

Impact Type	Employment (Job-Years)	Labor Income (\$mm)	Value Added (\$mm)	Output (\$mm)
Direct	5	\$0.3	\$0.4	\$0.5
Indirect	-	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Induced	-	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Total	5	\$0.3	\$0.4	\$0.6

Source: CRI, The Bridge on Main, IMPLAN. Analysis by Zenith Economics. Figures Rounded.

Image: Rendering of the First Floor of The Bridge on Main, Including the Future Coffee Shop



5.5 Operations Economic Impact Breakout – Event Space

As part of this analysis, Zenith Economics modeled the economic impact of The Bridge on Main event space on the City of Bridgeport. Exact operating parameters of the event space are not currently known; Zenith assumed a reasonable two (2) person (full-time) operating staff. The event space was modeled as part of the larger The Bridge on Main operations analysis and is therefore already included in all figures from sections 5.1 through 5.3.

Table 11: Operations Phase Summary Economic Impacts - Bridgeport

Impact Type	Employment (Job-Years)	Labor Income (\$mm)	Value Added (\$mm)	Output (\$mm)
Direct	2	\$0.2	\$0.3	\$0.5
Indirect	-	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Induced	-	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Total	2	\$0.2	\$0.4	\$0.5

Source: CRI, The Bridge on Main, IMPLAN. Analysis by Zenith Economics. Figures Rounded.

Image: Rendering of The Bridge on Main Event Space



5.6 Operations Economic Impact Breakout – Commercial Kitchen

As part of this analysis, Zenith Economics modeled the planned economic impact of The Bridge on Main commercial kitchen on the City of Bridgeport. The kitchen will be used for job training, credential attainment, and other on-site activities related to The Bridge on Main.

The exact operating parameters of the kitchen are not currently known; Zenith assumed a reasonable one (1) person average daily operating staff; note that the one average staff operating the kitchen daily will be provided through program partners and will change depending on the day. The commercial kitchen was modeled as part of the larger The Bridge on Main operations analysis and is therefore already included in all figures from sections 5.1 through 5.3.

Table 12: Operations Phase Summary Economic Impacts - Bridgeport

Impact Type	Employment (Job-Years)	Labor Income (\$mm)	Value Added (\$mm)	Output (\$mm)
Direct	1	\$0.0	\$0.1	\$0.1
Indirect	-	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Induced	-	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Total	1	\$0.0	\$0.1	\$0.1

Source: CRI, The Bridge on Main, IMPLAN. Analysis by Zenith Economics. Figures Rounded.

Image: Rendering of The Bridge on Main Commercial Kitchen



5.7 Operations Economic Impact Breakout – The Bridge on Main Administration

As part of this analysis, Zenith Economics modeled the economic impact of The Bridge on Main’s administrative activities on the City of Bridgeport. The Bridge on Main anticipates employing 20 full-time administrative workers at salaries ranging from \$45,000 to \$50,000. The Bridge on Main’s administrative capacity was modeled as part of the larger The Bridge on Main operations analysis and is therefore already included in all figures from sections 5.1 through 5.3.

Table 13: Operations Phase Summary Economic Impacts - Bridgeport

Impact Type	Employment (Job-Years)	Labor Income (\$mm)	Value Added (\$mm)	Output (\$mm)
Direct	20	\$0.9	\$1.5	\$2.0
Indirect	-	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Induced	-	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Total	20	\$0.9	\$1.5	\$2.0

Source: CRI, The Bridge on Main, IMPLAN. Analysis by Zenith Economics. Figures Rounded.

Image: Rendering of the Entrance to The Bridge on Main



6. Other Impact Considerations

Sections 6.1 through 6.3 of this EIS discuss additional impacts of The Bridge on Main beyond its estimated economic impact effects. The planned facility will have substantial effects beyond those assessed as part of this economic impact analysis.

Bridgeport is undergoing a period of economic revitalization in its downtown area. A core component of bolstering the local economy is increasing foot traffic in underutilized neighborhoods; The Bridge on Main and its coffee shop and event space will drive tens of thousands to over a hundred thousand visits annually once operational. Likewise, the employment provided to formerly incarcerated individuals will reduce recidivism rates. This reduction in recidivism will potentially lead to millions in net public savings from reduced incarceration costs while strengthening family outcomes and general living conditions for system-impacted individuals. Finally, The Bridge on Main represents an investment in economic resiliency for the city and surrounding Greater Bridgeport region.

6.1 Downtown Bridgeport Foot Traffic

As discussed in Section [3. City of Bridgeport Economic Context](#), the City of Bridgeport is currently undergoing substantial economic change, with local economic development initiatives focusing on revitalizing downtown Bridgeport. Downtown Bridgeport has seen substantial public and private investment in multifamily developments, mixed-use developments, and other development types.

A key component of creating a strong, durable community is increasing foot traffic. People who come to a region and walk, work, and live in a neighborhood are more likely to form community relationships, support local businesses, and drive an economically sustainable regional economy.

The Bridge on Main and the related coffee shop and event space in downtown Bridgeport will drive substantial foot traffic. Employees and guests of The Bridge on Main will frequently come to downtown Bridgetown for work. Likewise, customers visiting the coffee shop or coming to the location for the event space will also come to downtown Bridgeport in substantial numbers.

This analysis evaluates a range of outcomes for the impact of The Bridge on Main on foot traffic; this analysis finds that the building will, under extremely conservative assumptions, bring around 23,000 unique daily visitors per year, and under extremely optimistic assumptions bring around 119,000 unique daily visitors per year to downtown Bridgeport. It is likely the actual number of unique daily visitors will fluctuate each month within this range, depending on the classes and programs held at The Bridge on Main, the weather and time of year, and the number and type of events hosted in the event space. This analysis does not consider the uniqueness of each person visiting the building over multiple days, so a person getting coffee shop on two different days would count as two unique daily visits for the purpose of this analysis.

Table 14: Foot-Traffic Estimates	Conservative	Optimistic
The Bridge on Main	10,000	14,000
Coffee Shop	9,000	87,000
Event Space	3,000	18,000
Total Visitors per Year	23,000	119,000

Source: CRI, The Bridge on Main. Analysis by Zenith Economics. Figures Rounded.

6.2 Public Costs Related to Recidivism

The relationship between recidivism and economic development in Bridgeport merits careful examination. Hundreds of individuals return to Bridgeport annually from incarceration; this represents not just a social challenge but a significant economic opportunity. The current cost structure of incarceration in Connecticut provides strong evidence for the economic benefits of successful reentry programs.

The Connecticut Department of Correction's annual per-inmate cost of approximately \$103,000 represents a significant public expenditure.¹ This figure includes direct costs such as housing, food, and security, as well as administrative overhead and facility maintenance. When examining the potential economic impact of reducing recidivism, these costs must be considered alongside the potential economic contributions of successfully reintegrated individuals.

Dozens of studies have been conducted on the impact of post-incarceration employment on recidivism rates. A more recent study on prisoners found statistically significant effects; approximately 26% of formerly incarcerated individuals employed after release are registered for a new crime in the 6 months after release, whereas 37% of formerly incarcerated individuals who did not secure a job were registered for a new crime. The difference is even more stark for individuals who secure jobs at higher occupational levels (12% vs 28%).²

The Bridge on Main will operate and maintain reentry programs focused on job trainings, placement, and its clients. As discussed in the economic impact analysis sections, The Bridge on Main expects to secure and maintain jobs for 500+ system-impacted individuals once it enters operations.

At Connecticut's average current cost per-inmate of \$103,000, the services provided by The Bridge on Main and its partners, assuming that a conservative 25% of served system-impacted individuals are formerly incarcerated individuals, would have the following direct cost-savings benefits related to lower recidivism rates for the State of Connecticut:

- Gross public savings of \$12.9 million annually, relative to when all formerly incarcerated individuals were incarcerated

¹ Connecticut had \$102,942 in spending per incarcerated person in 2021, per the US Census Bureau Annual Survey of State and Local Government Finances and the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Source: <https://usafacts.org/articles/how-much-do-states-spend-on-prisons/>

² Ramakers, Anke, et al. "Not just any job will do: A study on employment characteristics and recidivism risks after release." *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, vol. 61, no. 16, 28 July 2016, pp. 1795–1818, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624x16636141>.

- Net public savings of approximately \$1.4 million annually, relative to if formerly incarcerated individuals who receive employment through services provided by The Bridge on Main and its partners had not gotten employment, assuming recidivism leads to an average of one (1) year of additional time incarcerated in Connecticut's prison system

Note that the net public savings estimate is likely conservative, subject to the following conditions and assumptions:

- This model assumes an average incarceration period of one year.
- It is possible that either more or less system-impacted individuals served by The Bridge on Main were formerly incarcerated than the assumed 25%; this number is likely low due to the goals of The Bridge on Main and the population of formerly incarcerated individuals who reside in Bridgeport.
- Formerly incarcerated individuals who recidivate may be likely to have longer-than average prison stays due to their prior criminal history.
- This analysis assumes incarceration costs decrease proportionally to the decrease in the incarcerated population, e.g. if a prison had 1,000 incarcerated individuals then a decline of one incarcerated person to a population of 999 incarcerated individuals reduces prison costs by 1/1,000.

More than the public savings associated with lower recidivism rates, the economic impact of successful reentry extends into the economic impacts modeled in this report and into other positive community outcomes.

When formerly incarcerated individuals secure stable employment, they generate multiple positive economic effects. They become consumers in the local economy, supporting retail businesses and services. They pay taxes, contributing to municipal and state revenues. Many become renters or homeowners, supporting the local housing market and building personal wealth.

Furthermore, successful reentry often has intergenerational economic implications. Children of formerly incarcerated individuals who maintain stable employment show better educational and economic outcomes themselves, creating a positive cycle that can help break patterns of intergenerational poverty. This long-term effect, while harder to quantify, represents a significant potential economic benefit for the community.

6.3 Economic Resiliency

The Bridge on Main represents a significant step forward in enhancing the economic resiliency of Bridgeport, in accordance with the definition outlined by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). Economic resiliency refers to the ability of a region to anticipate, withstand, and recover from economic disruptions.

These disruptions may take the form of major economic shocks—such as job losses from industry decline or natural disasters—and also encompass chronic economic stressors such as persistent unemployment, poverty, and underinvestment. By investing in adaptive, inclusive workforce infrastructure, The Bridge on Main directly supports Bridgeport’s capacity to endure and recover from such shocks and contributes to a more stable, diversified, and equitable local economy.

Bridgeport has faced persistent structural economic challenges, including a decades-long decline in manufacturing, comparatively low median household incomes, and elevated poverty rates. In addition to social and economic vulnerabilities, Bridgeport faces substantial physical vulnerabilities related to climate change. As a coastal city with aging infrastructure and extensive development in flood-prone areas, Bridgeport is at heightened risk of flooding due to sea-level rise, storm surges, and increased rainfall intensity. Several downtown neighborhoods, including areas proximate to The Bridge on Main, are subject to regular flooding events. These risks pose long-term challenges to infrastructure integrity, housing stability, and economic continuity.

These long-term stressors have contributed to chronic underemployment and have left large segments of the population vulnerable to economic instability. The Bridge on Main strengthens regional resiliency by expanding workforce readiness and job placement services, particularly for system-impacted individuals—residents who are disproportionately affected by labor market fluctuations. The integration of wraparound services with workforce programming ensures that economic opportunities are not only accessible but also sustainable, improving employment and community outcomes.

7. Conclusion

The Bridge on Main stands as a transformative investment in the economic infrastructure of Bridgeport, Greater Bridgeport, and the broader Connecticut region. This Economic Impact Study demonstrates that the project will yield substantial and sustained benefits in employment, output, income generation, and public fiscal returns, while also enhancing regional capacity for long-term economic growth and resilience.

During its 18-month construction phase, The Bridge on Main is projected to generate over 120 job-years of employment across the State of Connecticut, \$10.4 million in labor income, and \$26.4 million in total economic output. These construction activities will contribute an estimated \$2.9 million in state, local, and federal tax revenues, supporting essential public services and infrastructure improvements. Once operational, the facility is expected to sustain over 500 full-time jobs annually at the state level, including over 250 within the City of Bridgeport alone. Annual operational impacts will generate \$24.0 million in labor income and \$54.3 million in total economic output across the state, with \$1.8 million in annually recurring revenues to state and local governments.

To maximize the economic and social impact of The Bridge on Main, this report recommends the following:

1. **Establish a Long-Term Evaluation Framework:** Implement ongoing performance monitoring to track employment outcomes, recidivism rates, and economic impacts over time. A formal impact dashboard—updated annually—would provide transparency and support future funding efforts.
2. **Strengthen Local Supplier Engagement:** Prioritize procurement from small and minority-owned businesses in the Greater Bridgeport area during both construction and operations to maximize local multiplier effects and build community wealth.
3. **Secure Operational Sustainability:** While initial funding sources are substantial, long-term operational viability (and all related economic impacts) should be supported through diversified revenue streams, including service contracts, earned income from onsite enterprises, and sustained philanthropic partnerships.

In sum, The Bridge on Main is well-positioned to serve as a regional model for integrated workforce development and community reinvestment. By addressing systemic barriers to employment, expanding economic opportunity, and reinforcing downtown Bridgeport as an engine of inclusive growth, the project delivers both immediate and long-term value to residents, businesses, and the State of Connecticut.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The following section is intended to provide important context and address common questions about economic impact studies and this specific report:

Q1: What is an economic impact study?

An economic impact study is a comprehensive analysis that quantifies how a particular event, project, industry, or policy influences an economy. It typically evaluates direct gross spending, indirect supply chain effects, and the induced economic activity generated by increased incomes and spending.

Q2: Why are economic impact studies important?

They provide valuable insights to policymakers, investors, and community leaders by illustrating the broader economic benefits or drawbacks associated with a project or initiative. This information aids in informed decision-making and strategic planning.

Q3: What types of data are used in these studies?

Researchers rely on a variety of data sources including government statistics, industry reports, surveys, and financial records. This diverse data helps ensure that the analysis covers various sectors and captures both immediate and ripple effects within the economy. This study relies on a variety of data sources, as outlined in the [Methodology](#).

Q4: How are economic impacts measured?

Economic impacts are typically assessed through:

- **Direct Effects:** Initial spending or investments that generate immediate economic activity.
- **Indirect Effects:** Secondary impacts on suppliers and related industries.
- **Induced Effects:** Additional economic activity generated when employees spend their income locally.

For more information about terminology used in this report, and the various ways economic impacts are measured, please refer to the [Key Terms](#) section.

Q5: What are some common limitations of these studies?

Limitations may include:

- **Assumptions:** Studies often depend on assumptions related to future spending and regional economic interactions.
- **Data Gaps:** Incomplete or outdated data can affect the accuracy of the results.

To see discussion of the limitations of this specific study, please refer to the [Methodology](#) section, which includes substantial discussion of the assumptions, data used, and limitations of this analysis.

Q6: Who typically conducts an economic impact study?

These studies are usually performed by independent research firms, academic institutions, or government agencies. This study was conducted by Zenith Economics, LLC, an independent and nonpartisan economic consultancy practice based in Los Angeles that specializes in Economic Impact Analysis. The research team was headed by one of two dozen people in the world certified in IMPLAN, the most known and utilized economic input-output modeling software, and members of the research team for this project have conducted over four dozen economic impact studies for a wide variety of public and private institutions.

Q7: How can stakeholders use the results of an economic impact study?

Stakeholders can use the findings to:

- Inform policy and investment decisions.
- Develop economic development strategies.
- Assess the potential return on investment for community initiatives.

Q8: What are some common criticisms of economic impact studies?

Critics point out that impact studies can sometimes overestimate benefits due to:

- **Overly Optimistic Assumptions:** Relying on ideal spending patterns and multiplier effects without fully accounting for economic circumstances.
- **Methodological Variations:** Differences in study design can lead to inconsistent results.

These critiques underscore the importance of transparency in methodology and assumptions. This specific study was conducted with these points in mind; Zenith Economics performed the study using a highly transparent, generally conservative approach with industry-standard modeling techniques discussed in more detail in the [Methodology](#) section. All assumptions and techniques are clearly defined and replicable.

Q9: What is IMPLAN?

IMPLAN is the industry-leading software for economic impact modelling and Input-Output analysis. IMPLAN software is widely regarded as the best-in-class tool for economic and fiscal impact analysis and is used by government organizations and private researchers throughout the United States. By using IMPLAN for this analysis, Zenith Economics was best able to provide objective impact analysis of The Bridge on Main.

Q10: What methodology was used in this study, and how was IMPLAN utilized?

This report relies on economic impact modeling done in IMPLAN software. The methodology used for the report is considered the current best practice for a study of this nature, including the employment of a multi-regional input-output (MRIO) model. For more details about this analysis, see section [2.2 Methodology](#).



ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
THROUGH SYSTEMS CHANGE

