



2025 Impact Report



**Center for
Housing
Opportunity**

Eastern CT

Introduction

Eastern Connecticut is under growing housing pressure. Rents continue to rise. Housing supply lags behind demand. Employers struggle to attract and retain workers. Young families and longtime residents are increasingly priced out of the communities they call home. The Center for Housing Opportunity Eastern Connecticut (CHO-EC) exists to change this trajectory.

Led by The Housing Collective in partnership with LISC CT, Partnership for Strong Communities, Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut, Connecticut College, Eastern Connecticut State University, and United Way of Southeastern Connecticut, CHO-EC aligns municipal leaders, planners, developers, tenant leaders, students, philanthropies, and residents around coordinated, data-informed housing solutions.

We build regional capacity to preserve, protect, and produce housing at scale.

2025 Impact

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT & PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

- 550+ residents and stakeholders engaged
- 13 regional events and 12 community presentations
- Statewide recognition for advancing government transparency

RESIDENT STABILITY & ORGANIZING

- 6 tenant unions supported
- Evictions blocked
- Rent increases negotiated or prevented

HOUSING PRODUCTION & IMPLEMENTATION

- Nearly 550 housing units advanced toward production
- \$2.1 million in government funding leveraged for housing development
- Technical assistance delivered to 4 municipalities and 1 Council of Government
- 1 regional training provided to 23 land use commissioners

These results reflect more than activity.

They represent strengthened institutional capacity, expanded resident power, and advanced housing opportunity.



What Changed in 2025

RESIDENTS PROTECTED THEIR HOMES

In Niantic and New London, tenants organized in response to significant rent increases and eviction threats. CHO-EC supported these efforts in partnership with the Connecticut Tenants Union, helping coordinate advocacy strategy, media engagement, and participation in Fair Rent Commissions.

The result: Families remained housed and local leaders engaged directly with residents to address instability.

HOUSING PLANS MOVED TOWARDS PRODUCTION

CHO-EC provided technical assistance to municipalities and nonprofit partners to help advance affordable housing plans from paper to implementation, resulting in nearly 550 units in various stages of development. We facilitated Community Development Block Grant support for nonprofit-led housing projects and trained land use commissioners across Northeastern Connecticut to strengthen local implementation practices.

**State policy alone does not produce housing. Local capacity does.
CHO-EC bridges the gap between policy and practice so that plans become homes.**

PUBLIC WILL FOR SOLUTIONS EXPANDED

Through public programming with Connecticut College and Eastern Connecticut State University, regional data briefs, webinars with housing experts and thought leaders, and sustained media engagement, CHO-EC continues to reframe housing as a driver of economic mobility, workforce stability, and community health.

As understanding deepens, resistance decreases and implementation accelerates.

INTERNS BUILT COMMUNITY AWARENESS

In 2025, CHO-EC partnered with the Holleran Center at Connecticut College to host six interns during the Spring, Fall, and Winter sessions. The interns, including Program in Community Action (PICA) Scholars and Summer Civic Leaders, supported a range of community engagement and research projects.



Baypoint Tenants Union Rally, September 2025

Why Regional Infrastructure Matters

Eastern Connecticut has no regional housing authority and no unified governance structure to address housing affordability. CHO-EC fills that gap.

We provide backbone leadership and dedicated staffing that:

- Align municipalities around shared data and strategy
- Engage residents most impacted by housing instability
- Strengthen local implementation capacity
- Bridge state and national policy with on-the-ground practice
- Leverage philanthropic and public dollars for maximum impact

This work is not episodic. It is infrastructure.

Looking Ahead

In the coming year, CHO-EC will:

- Expand tenant leadership and organizing capacity
- Launch “We Live Here New London,” a public humanities housing exhibition in New London with Connecticut College
- Deepen municipal technical assistance to accelerate affordable housing plan implementation
- Strengthen peer networks among planners and land use leaders
- Expand resident participation in zoning and land use processes
- Work with municipalities and property owners to preserve existing affordable housing throughout the region



(Un)Freedom Colloquium event series with Connecticut College, February 2025

A Platform for Lasting Impact

Eastern Connecticut cannot solve its housing challenges one development at a time. It requires coordinated regional leadership, strong local implementation capacity, and sustained civic infrastructure.

CHO-EC provides that backbone – while ensuring residents most impacted by housing instability help shape the solutions.

With continued partnership from funders, board members, and regional stakeholders, we will expand resident leadership, accelerate housing production, and strengthen the systems that enable housing stability. Your investment builds the institutional capacity required to preserve opportunity, advance economic mobility, and deliver housing solutions at scale.

CONTACT

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