

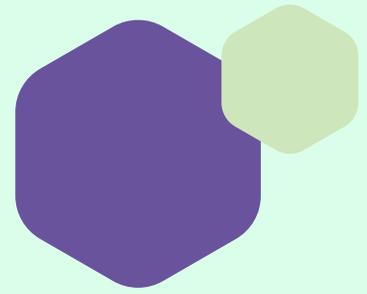
2021

community  
innovation



Benefit Corporation Report  
April 2022

# Introduction



CIL was founded by care service providers who recognized that people and families thrive best when they have a place to call home – and are fully included in the community. Our founders also knew that care providers would need an ally to navigate the complexities of real estate to make those homes within the community a reality. For over 40 years, CIL has served as that ally – partnering with service providers to deinstitutionalize care for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities and enable the independent living, support, and services they need to be fully engaged in their communities. Along the way, we found out that what makes a community is more than just housing – so we expanded our development services to serve other needs.

We have seen first-hand the positive impact that accessible, community-based housing has on people’s lives, and we think we can have even more impact by creating additional options for that housing: options such as neighborhood networks, integrated apartment buildings, accessory dwelling units, and more. That is one reason why, in January of 2021, CIL formed a new Benefit Corporation: Community Innovation Lab. “The Lab,” for short, will explore opportunities developing housing and other options beyond community residences for the populations we serve. The Lab will also look at all the elements that make a community – because we know that having an address is not the same as being fully included in a community.

What makes The Lab unique is that it taps into CIL’s internal and external real estate industry expertise to identify, research, and evaluate new development opportunities, serving as CIL’s research and development wing while we explore new supportive housing models and development trends. Opportunities that move forward then proceed under the appropriate corporate entity for the project. As a Benefit Corporation, The Lab is dedicated to maximizing our economic, environmental, and social impacts in the communities where CIL works. Additionally, The Lab’s creation allows CIL to develop vital, impactful projects which might not be possible solely within CIL’s 501(c)(3) non-profit structure.

We are pleased to present the 2021 annual report for Community Innovation Lab, publication of which is a requirement of the Connecticut Benefit Corporation Act. This report provides an overview of The Lab’s governance structure, public benefits, and information on past projects completed by CIL.



Samantha VanSchoick  
Corporate Benefit Officer, Community Innovation Lab  
Director of Strategic Partnerships, CIL  
April 27, 2022 | sam@cil.org

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This report has been prepared in accordance with guidelines for a GRI-referenced document, based on the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards, issued by the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB), 2016. This material references "Topic Specific Standard GRI 203: Indirect Economic Impacts 2016", "Topic Specific Standard GRI 307: Environmental Compliance 2016", and "Topic Specific Standard GRI 413: Local Communities 2016".



**The Community Innovation Lab is dedicated to maximizing CIL's economic, environmental, and social impacts in the communities where we work.**

## What's a Benefit Corporation?

Benefit corporations are a class of for-profit corporations that have a purpose of creating public benefits. Legislation allowing benefit corporations in Connecticut went into effect in 2014. These benefits may include serving low income individuals, providing economic opportunity, protecting the environment, improving health, and other social or environmental benefits. Such corporations are required to use a recognized standard for defining, reporting and assessing corporate social and environmental performance.

## Governance

Community Innovation Lab is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of seven members. These members include the President/CEO and CFO of the CIL parent corporation, three members of the CIL Board of Directors, and two at large members with expertise in real estate development who are not members of the CIL board. Please see page 5 for a complete listing of our 2021 Board.

## Current Landscape

For many years, home and community-based service (HCBS) providers have faced a workforce crisis. The pandemic has brought that crisis to a tipping point: the need for services, and housing, is only increasing as more and more people become eligible, but insufficient state reimbursements mean providers cannot hire the staff necessary to meet the need and support new housing.

In "The State of America's Direct Support Workforce Crisis 2021," the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) surveyed community providers to quantify the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the direct support professional (DSP) workforce. The survey found that as of fall 2021, 77% of providers were turning away new referrals and 84% were delaying the launch of new programs and services due to lack of staffing. Additionally, more than half of respondents indicated that they had discontinued programs or service offerings due to insufficient staffing, representing a 70.6% increase since the beginning of the pandemic.

This challenge creates even more urgency to consider how the built environment can be modified to reduce demands on staff time with supportive housing models such as integrated apartment buildings and networked neighborhoods. It also presents the opportunity to look at integrating supportive technology that facilitate staffing efficiencies where appropriate.

While the staffing crisis is almost certainly the biggest challenge facing the provision HCBS, another challenge that impedes new models of housing development is land use policy. Many areas across the country suffer from severe housing shortages driven by state and local land-use policies. This shortage impacts everyone but is particularly negative for providers and people with disabilities as it limits options for community living, drives up costs, stretches public resources thin, and exacerbates the workforce crisis.

[continued on next page]



## Current Landscape Continued

The impact of land use policy in shaping housing options for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) is massive: it can make many desirable forms of housing illegal, it only allows car-dependent neighborhoods to be built, and it drives up development costs to the point that many areas are off-limits and affordable housing money is stretched thin. Changes to these policies would not only expand the possibilities for other models, but it would also benefit community residence development by reducing minimum lot sizes. There are bipartisan grass-roots efforts across the country to reform bad land-use policies, including two in our region, Desegregate CT and Abundant Housing Massachusetts, both organizations that CIL is a member of. CIL has been an active participant in this movement, presenting to The Arc of Massachusetts, drafting op-eds, and we are looking forward to a 2022 presentation to ANCOR members.

## Looking to the Future

The Lab won't come up with the answers for developing more housing options for people with disabilities all on our own – we need the participation of self-advocates, providers, disability professionals, real estate experts, and financing partners. That's why when we look to the future, it is our intention to participate in as many national conversations as possible concerning the development of housing and other community resources, because sometimes what a community needs looks different from housing.

In 2022, we look forward to upcoming speaking engagements, as well as featuring a special blog series on alternative housing models on our website that deep dives into the details on each. We are interested in hosting a virtual national cohort group that would meet regularly to discuss housing options and trends across the country, to explore great ideas, and to find opportunities for The Lab to get involved. If this is a concept that sounds interesting to you, let us know by emailing [ideas@cil.org](mailto:ideas@cil.org). Additionally, we are looking for opportunities to consult with local governments, planners, developers, and other parties who are interested in making their communities and projects inclusive.



Top image: Capewell Lofts, Hartford, CT after being redeveloped by CIL. Bottom image is before.

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# Board of Directors



**William Farley / Board Chair**

Retired, President, CBRE, CT Region

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**Michael Goman / Vice Chair & Treasurer**

Principal, Advisory & Development Services, Goman + York

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**Kent Schwendy / President**

President & CEO, CIL

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**Maria Green / Secretary**

VP & CFO, CIL

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**Patrick Pinnell / Director**

Owner, Patrick Pinnell, Architecture & Town Planning

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**Gioia Zack / Director**

Economic Development Coordinator, Town of Wethersfield

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**James D. Parry / Director**

Retired, Fuss & O'Neill

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## BENEFIT OFFICER

**Samantha VanSchoick / Benefit Officer\***

Dir. of Strategic Partnerships, CIL

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## WELCOMING A NEW BOARD MEMBER & LIAISON FOR FY '22!

**Joseph C. Black, Jr. / Director**

Retired, Vice President of Procurement and Real Estate Services, Aetna-CVS;  
Pastor, Spirit & Truth Apostolic Church

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**Marisa Chrysochoou / CIL Board Liaison\***

Professor and Head of Civil and Environmental Engineering at UCONN; Director of  
the Connecticut Brownfields Initiative

*Marisa will act as a liaison between the CIL & The Lab boards*

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\*indicates no voting rights



Public  
Benefits

# Public Benefits

## Economic



Many towns and cities nationwide are burdened by deteriorated and distressed properties that, despite their existing negative economic status, retain tremendous potential to their communities. These include former mills and factories, abandoned school buildings, and vacant lots that are located in strategically important locations. Often, they are located in or close to town centers and public transportation and, if redeveloped properly, can greatly enhance the vitality of these centers while increasing the local tax base and eliminating blight.



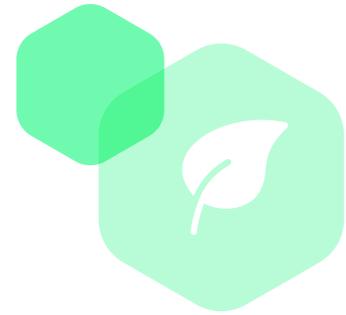
### Topic Specific Standard GRI 203: Indirect Economic Impacts 2016

- 1) Revitalize neighborhoods through the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of deteriorated or distressed properties.
- 2) Increase population density in urban and town centers that enhances the economic viability of small businesses located in and around those centers.
- 3) Increase the local property tax base by increasing the Grand List value of properties that are distressed, vacant or otherwise underutilized.
- 4) Promote employment opportunities within the community.

# Public Benefits

## Environmental

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Manufacturing sites used during the country's industrial revolution have left behind dark remnants of environmental contamination in and around historic sites throughout the US. Many of these sites are located in or close to town centers and public transportation, and many are of significant historic importance. CIL searches for sites that with the proper environmental remediation, can be restored into safe, vibrant residential and/or commercial centers. While redeveloping these sites, measures are taken to utilize best practices in low impact design, stormwater management and energy efficiency.



### Topic Specific Standard GRI 307: Environmental Compliance 2016

- 1) Remediate/abate historical environmental contamination and hazardous building materials.
- 2) Increase population density in urban and town centers that enhances regional sustainability and lessens pressure for greenfield development and limits negative impact on endangered species and wetlands/watercourses.
- 3) Facilitate walkable neighborhoods and the use of public transportation, and thus reduce the production of greenhouse gas emissions and traffic congestion.
- 4) Consider resilient community planning concepts and best management practices.
- 5) Include low impact design, sustainable stormwater management, energy/water efficiency and or green infrastructure considerations into planning and design.
- 6) Preserve public access to natural resources and open space.

# Public Benefits

## Social

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CIL seeks out partnerships with local governments, community organizations, developers, and other partners to develop projects that correspond to their strategic initiatives and align with our mission. These goals feature the inclusion of people with disabilities and other underserved groups, the preservation of historic structures, the promotion of walkable neighborhoods, the promotion of income diversity and the preservation of access to natural resources and open space.

### Topic Specific Standard GRI 413: Local Communities 2016

- 1) Correspond with the strategic goals of local municipalities, community organizations and/or state.
- 2) Ensure new development is complementary to existing neighborhood character and/or community goals/needs.
- 3) Preserve and redevelop structures that contribute to the historic and cultural heritage of communities.
- 4) Facilitate walking communities that provide consumers with better access to goods, services and amenities and reduce their reliance on the automobile.
- 5) Promote income diversity by including units for households with varying incomes levels.
- 6) Enhance diversity, inclusiveness, and opportunities for underserved groups.



Previous  
Work



# Previously Completed Projects

## 01 – First Town Square, Windsor, CT

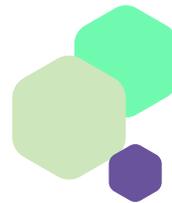
A vacant factory was converted into 50 market rate condominiums and completed in 2009. It is located on a strategically important site – adjacent to the town center, next to the Windsor Amtrak stop, and connecting the town center with the Farmington River walking trails. CIL completed a removal of hazardous waste under the DEEP’s voluntary compliance program. It added hundreds of thousands of dollars per year to the Windsor tax base, and provided a boost to local businesses. The Town of Windsor provided financial support for the environmental cleanup through tax increment financing, one of the first times this has been used in the state.

## 02 – Kenyon Falls, Coventry, CT

The historic Kenyon Woolen Mill was redeveloped into 8 ownership units and 26 additional units were constructed on this site located close to the town center. CIL secured zoning approval under the town’s new village district regulations that allowed for added density. Work included a cleanup of hazardous waste as required under the State Transfer Act. CIL secured historic tax credits under the state’s program to allow for the restoration of the Kenyon Mill.

## 03 – Sherwood Falls, Kensington, CT

Located on Main Street in the Kensington section of Berlin, the former Sherwood Tool Company factory is one of the most historic buildings in the town. Built originally by the American Paper Goods Company, it served as a major employer and the producer of millions of the iconic “We Are Happy to Serve You” coffee cups found in diners across the country. Seventy-one market rate condominiums were created after substantial environmental site work was completed. The Town of Berlin provided financial assistance through tax increment financing.



# Previous Projects Continued

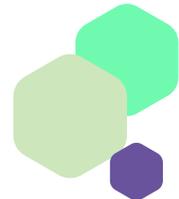
## 04 – Depot Crossing, Berlin, CT

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The New Haven-Springfield Amtrak line runs through the Town of Berlin. For years, a partially completed, abandoned building served as an eyesore for anyone passing through the center of town via car or train. CIL acquired the building and created 16 apartment units and 8,800 square feet of commercial space. Depot Crossing serves as a model for the town going forward in its efforts to add residential density to its town center and foster transit oriented development near its train station. In 2019 CIL entered into a purchase agreement for the sale of the property to a developer planning a large mixed-use, transit-oriented development project on adjacent parcels. The transaction was completed in early 2020.



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## 05 - Capewell Lofts, Hartford, CT

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The Capewell Horse Nail Factory was a prominent structure located in Hartford’s oldest and most historic neighborhood. Working with community stakeholders, CIL transformed the debilitated structure into beautiful modern apartments and commercial space. Construction was completed in late 2016 and 100% occupancy was achieved by the summer of 2017. The project contains 72 apartments ranging in size from 665 SF efficiencies to 2,400 SF three-bedroom units. Twenty percent of the units are set-aside for households with incomes at or below 100% of the area median income. The project has received LEED Gold certification.



[www.cil.org](http://www.cil.org)

#### **About CIL**

Corporation for Independent Living (CIL) partners with care service providers to develop safe and accessible housing for those with I/DD, ABI, and other disabilities to enable the independent living, support, and services they need to be fully engaged in their communities. We were founded by service providers who recognized that people and families thrive best when they have a place to call home – and are fully included in the community.

Service providers need an ally to navigate the complexities of real estate to make those homes within the community a reality. CIL serves as that ally. As a non-profit, we put people before revenue and personal and community growth above all else. And since many of our clients are also non-profits, we share a similar approach and commitment – meaning we're on the same page from the very first discussion.