

# RATING 25,000 - 50,000 THE TOWNS

During the last couple of years, a pair of interlopers migrated up from the next smallest population group and landed smack in the Top 10 of this one. Farmington nudged out Glastonbury to take the No. 2 spot, largely on the basis of excellent schools, a healthy local economy and lots of things to see and do. And Mansfield, where the University of Connecticut's main campus is located (in the community of Storrs), enters this group at No. 7, with a low crime rate and good schools (its SAT scores are second only to Westport here).

After the top three, there's a fair drop to Newtown at No. 4, and then incremental jockeying around after that. Among those towns dropping are Branford, from No. 6 last time to No. 10, largely due to a worse crime ranking; New Milford, down to No. 8 from No. 5 because of a slightly worse showing in the education category; and Shelton, whose scores dropped from above average to quite average across the board as it traveled down from No. 11 to No. 18.

As we've pointed out before, sometimes the rankings don't quite do justice to the tremendous disparity between two positions. In cost of living, for instance, Westport's 2011 median price of \$1,074,000 for a house sale is larger than the combined median selling prices of the next three overall finishers, Farmington, Glastonbury and Newtown—and they're not exactly known for their bargains.

## KEY TO THE NUMBERS

The numbers below represent only a small portion of all the data collected to determine town rankings.

Crime rate is the average number of major crimes in 2007, 2008 and 2009 per 1,000 population.

SAT score is the average combined verbal, math and writing scores in 2010 (perfect score is 2400).

The median house price is based on first-half 2011 sales.

The 2009 equalized mill rate determines the local tax burden by dividing the tax rate by the grand list.

Library expenditures per capita are for 2010.

PIC points take into account per-capita income, equalized mill rate, adjusted equalized grand list per capita and aid to children. It is an indicator of wealth and need—the number shows where the town ranks among all 169 cities and towns in the state; the greater the number, the less need in the community.

Voter turnout reflects those voting in the November 2008 presidential election.

## HOW TO READ THE CHART

The chart at right shows the 26 Connecticut towns with populations between 25,000 and 50,000. The best possible rating in any category is 1 and the worst is 26. Remember: Low scores are good. Ties were broken in favor of the town with the higher voter turnout.

**1** Westport

population . . . . . 26,391  
 crime rate . . . . . 3.71  
 SAT score . . . . . 1776  
 median house . \$1,074,000  
 equalized mill rate . . . 9.43  
 library per capita . \$201.99  
 PIC points . . . . . 166  
 voter turnout . . . . . 86.05%

**2** Farmington

population . . . . . 25,340  
 crime rate . . . . . 4.30  
 SAT score . . . . . 1643  
 median house . . \$320,000  
 equalized mill rate . . 13.47  
 library per capita . . \$88.30  
 PIC points . . . . . 141  
 voter turnout . . . . . 81.37%

**3** Glastonbury

population . . . . . 34,427  
 crime rate . . . . . 3.30  
 SAT score . . . . . 1691  
 median house . . \$354,000  
 equalized mill rate . . 19.83  
 library per capita . . \$50.05  
 PIC points . . . . . 128  
 voter turnout . . . . . 85.48%

**4** Wallingford

population . . . . . 45,135  
 crime rate . . . . . 4.05  
 SAT score . . . . . 1558  
 median house . . \$229,700  
 equalized mill rate . . 13.86  
 library per capita . . \$58.96  
 PIC points . . . . . 71  
 voter turnout . . . . . 85.42%



MAURICO HANDLER

**7** Mansfield

population . . . . . 26,543  
 crime rate . . . . . 3.62  
 SAT score . . . . . 1703  
 median house . . \$216,000  
 equalized mill rate . . 16.07  
 library per capita . . \$30.12  
 PIC points . . . . . 49  
 voter turnout . . . . . 79.63%

Mansfield Hollow State Park

TOWN	EDUCATION	CRIME	ECONOMY	COST	LEISURE	TOTAL
1. WESTPORT	1	5	1	26	1	34
2. FARMINGTON	2	10	2	21	2	37
3. GLASTONBURY	3	3	4	23	5	38
4. NEWTOWN	6	1	3	25	13	48
5. CHESHIRE	4	2	7	22	15	50
6. WALLINGFORD	14	7	12	15	6	54
7. MANSFIELD	8	4	17	14	11	54
8. NEW MILFORD	11	6	8	18	12	55
9. TRUMBULL	5	9	6	24	16	60
10. BRANFORD	13	17.5	5	19	7	61.5
11. SOUTH WINDSOR	7	8	10	17	23	65
12. WETHERSFIELD	9	14	16	13	14	66
13. GROTON	17	20	14	12	4	67
14. WINDSOR	23	12	15	9	10	69
15. SOUTHWINGTON	10	16	11	16	19	72
16. NEWINGTON	12	22	13	8	17	72
17. MIDDLETOWN	19	21	19	11	3	73
18. SHELTON	15	13	9	20	21	78
19. NORWICH	21	25	24	1	8	79
20. ENFIELD	16	17.5	18	5	24	80.5
21. VERNON	18	15	21	7	22	83
22. TORRINGTON	22	19	22	4	18	85
23. NAUGATUCK	20	11	23	6	26	86
24. NEW LONDON	26	26	25	3	9	89
25. WINDHAM	25	24	26	2	20	97
26. EAST HAVEN	24	23	20	10	25	102

## Newtown

population . . . . . 27,560  
 crime rate . . . . . 1.77  
 SAT score . . . . . 1634  
 median house . . \$380,000  
 equalized mill rate . . 16.00  
 library per capita . . \$43.84  
 PIC points . . . . . 134  
 voter turnout . . . . . 88.97%



ROBERT GREGGSON

Westport Historical Society

## Cheshire

population . . . . . 29,261  
 crime rate . . . . . 2.61  
 SAT score . . . . . 1635  
 median house . . \$347,400  
 equalized mill rate . . 16.32  
 library per capita . . \$50.35  
 PIC points . . . . . 115  
 voter turnout . . . . . 74.96%

## New Milford

population . . . . . 28,142  
 crime rate . . . . . 3.74  
 SAT score . . . . . 1572  
 median house . . \$270,000  
 equalized mill rate . . 13.60  
 library per capita . . \$45.95  
 PIC points . . . . . 111  
 voter turnout . . . . . 76.84%

## Trumbull

population . . . . . 36,018  
 crime rate . . . . . 4.23  
 SAT score . . . . . 1597  
 median house . . \$358,500  
 equalized mill rate . . 16.18  
 library per capita . . \$51.16  
 PIC points . . . . . 126  
 voter turnout . . . . . 80.12%

## Branford

population . . . . . 28,026  
 crime rate . . . . . 5.97  
 SAT score . . . . . 1565  
 median house . . \$271,700  
 equalized mill rate . . 12.65  
 library per capita . . \$51.55  
 PIC points . . . . . 127  
 voter turnout . . . . . 77.53%