

What Type of Place Do You Live In?

People are always looking for a good place to live. For thousands of years Native Americans lived in Connecticut and still do. They made camps in different places according to the season. In the summer they lived along rivers or the shoreline. In the winter they moved inland.

When the English settlers came, they first settled along the Connecticut River and the shoreline. They built towns near good harbors for their ships. This type of community is called a **maritime village**. Essex, Stonington Borough, and Mystic are maritime villages.



Mystic, Connecticut. Photo: Carol M. Highsmith. Library of Congress

The English settlers were looking for good farmland, too. This type of community is called a **rural or country town**. Rural towns can be found where two important roads cross. This is called a “four-corners.” Lebanon, Colebrook, and Woodstock are rural towns.

After the American Revolution, Connecticut became a state of the United States of America. It needed a state capitol. It already had two colonial capitals: New Haven and Hartford. The government moved back and forth between the two cities. In 1875 Hartford became the **capital city**.

A capitol is a building that houses the government.

A capital is a town or city where the government has its headquarters.

As travel improved, communities grew along stagecoach lines, canals, and railroads. They became **transportation centers**. Farmers brought produce there to send to market. Litchfield was at the crossroads of major stagecoach routes. Farmington was on the Farmington Canal. Many products were shipped to and through transportation centers.

Towns with fast-moving streams became **mill towns**. These towns had mills and factories. They had housing for millworkers and shops. New Britain, Waterbury,



Norwich, and Bridgeport started as mill towns. They became large cities. Many factories there produced many different products. Smaller communities can be mill towns, too.

Manchester, Willimantic, and Taftville are mill towns.

Communities are made up of neighborhoods. A **neighborhood** is a smaller

area in a town or city. It usually is an area that you can walk around and get to know people who live nearby or go to your school. A neighborhood might have small stores, a school, a playground, and houses. The Beman Triangle in Middletown is a small neighborhood with a special history.

You will explore buildings from each of these types of communities.

What Type of Place Do You Live In?

Think about where you live as you explore different types of communities and the kinds of buildings in them. Do you live in a:

maritime village

suburban neighborhood

rural town

transportation center

the capital city

mill town