



# CITY OF STAMFORD STATE OF THE CITY

July 6, 2020  
Board of Representatives



# STATE OF THE CITY

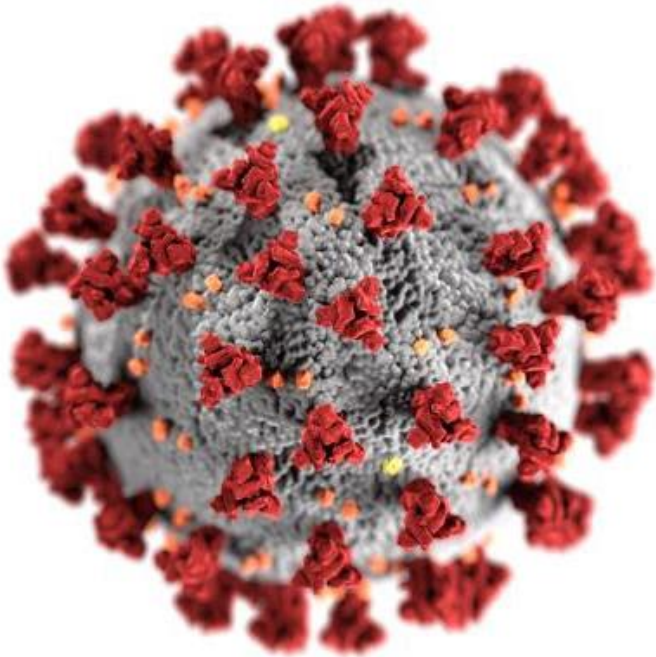
COVID-19 In Stamford

Stamford Pandemic Economy & City Budget

Future Challenges & Priorities



# COVID-19



## *One of the most significant events of our lifetime . . .*

- Global Pandemic
  - Over 535,000 fatalities worldwide, and climbing.
  - Over 132,000 fatalities in the U.S., and climbing.
  - Over 4,300 fatalities in Connecticut.
  - 200 reported fatalities in Stamford.
- Public Health Crisis
  - Highly Contagious.
  - Significant portion of people with COVID-19 have no symptoms but still spread the disease. Significant spread occurred before full awareness of the extent of the disease.
  - No vaccine, no cure.
  - Limited access to Testing & PPE as crisis unfolded.
- Recession
  - Greatest and most rapid increase in unemployment since the Great Depression

# COVID-19 STAMFORD'S BEGINNING

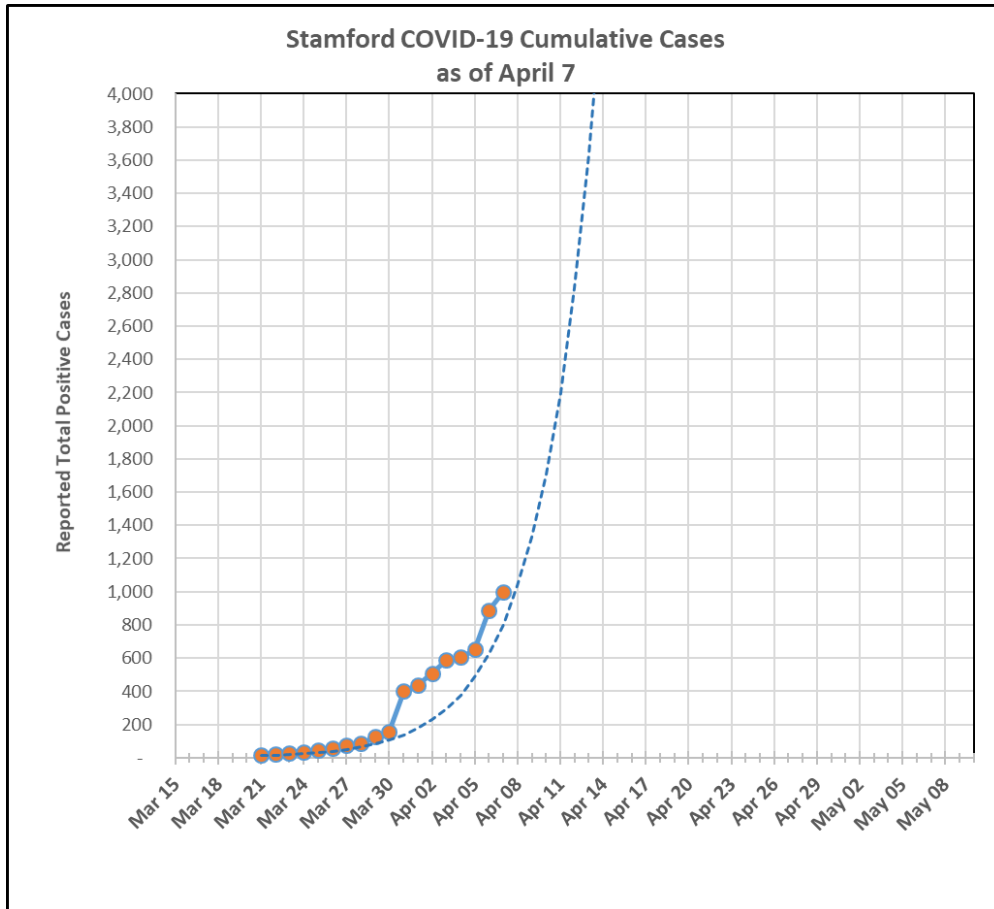


**March 6:** Mayor Martin requires hand sanitizing of everyone entering Government Center and enhanced cleaning protocols.

*“ . . . a storm is coming in the form of COVID-19”*

- **March 7:** Stamford's St. Patrick's Day Parade
- **March 8:** Governor Lamont announced Connecticut's first COVID-19 positive case, a Wilton resident
- **March 9:** Contingency Planning by Stamford's Administration Cabinet
- **March 10:**
  - Lamont declares a public health emergency
  - City announces it is minimizing non-mandatory meetings and out-of-state travel restricted for City employees
  - Senior Center cancels activities
  - Stamford Hospital reports its first symptomatic patient
  - The City presents its budget to the Board of Finance and Board of Representatives
- **March 11:** City Managers meeting focused on COVID-19
- **First case of Stamford resident testing positive on March 11.**
- **First fatality in Stamford was former city Representative Anthony “Tony” Spadaccini who died March 25 at age 54.**

# COVID-19 IN STAMFORD

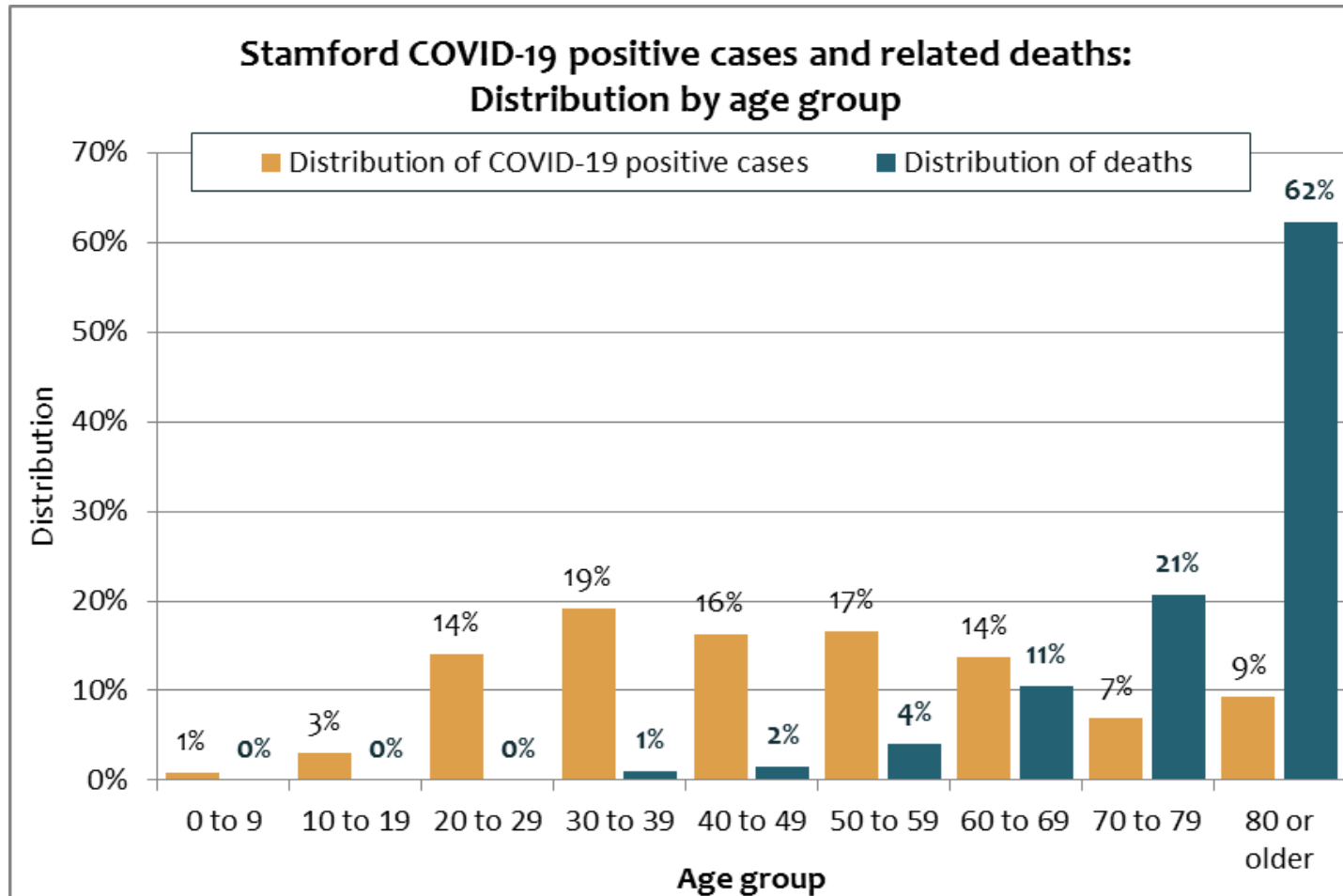


As of April 7 — four weeks after Stamford's first case — ***detected*** COVID-19 cases were growing exponentially

Stamford, perhaps the most vulnerable of any Connecticut city, was hit early and hit hard:

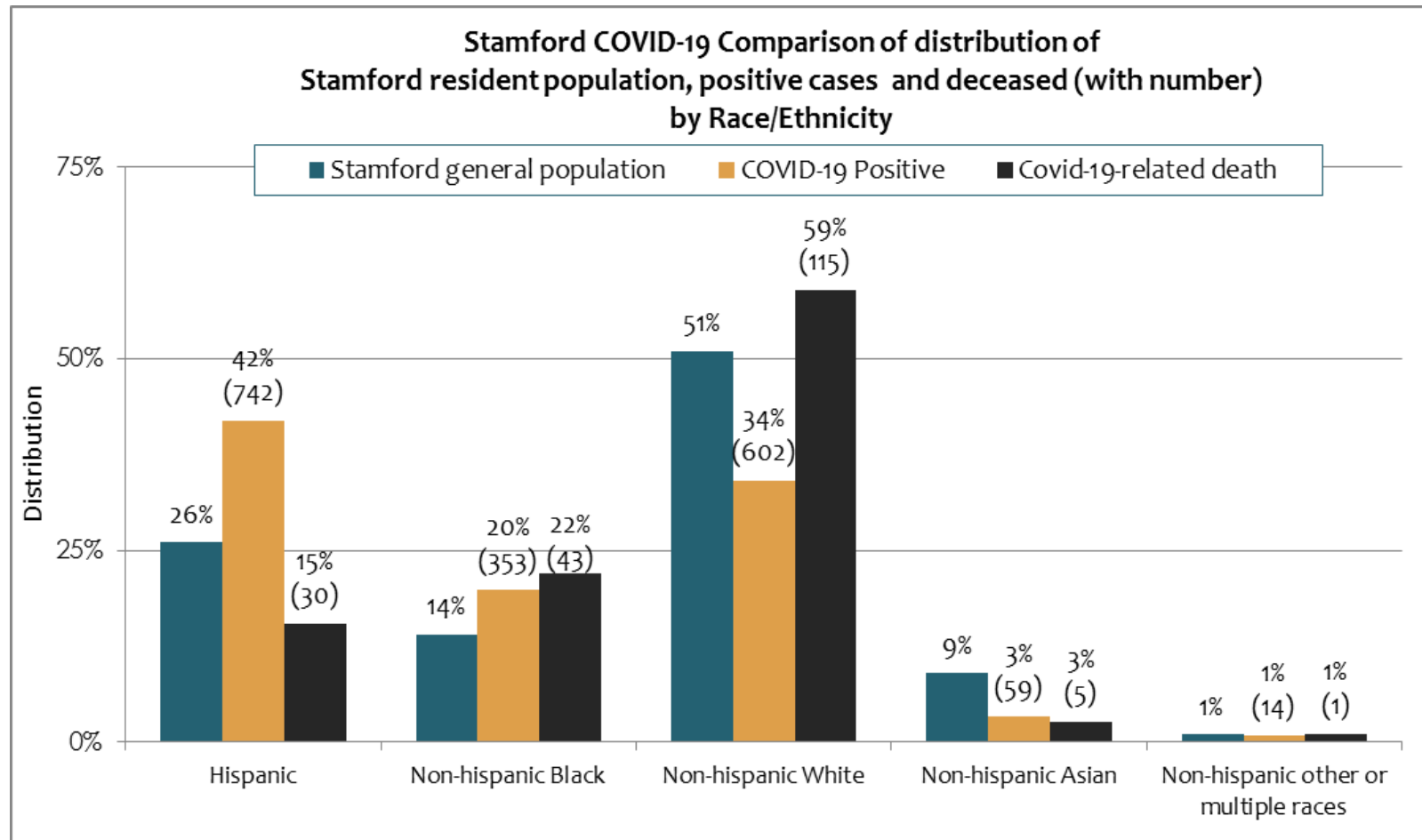
- Near New York City, the regional epicenter of disease
- Diverse population in urban setting
- Many Nursing homes & Senior Care facilities
- Low proportion of population in local colleges

# COVID-19 IN STAMFORD



This disease was particularly lethal to older individuals and those with comorbidities.

# COVID-19 IN STAMFORD



Stamford's Hispanic population had the greatest relative incidence of the disease, but non-Hispanic Blacks and Whites had the highest fatality rate.

# WHAT A RIDE THE LAST 3 MONTHS HAVE BEEN . . .

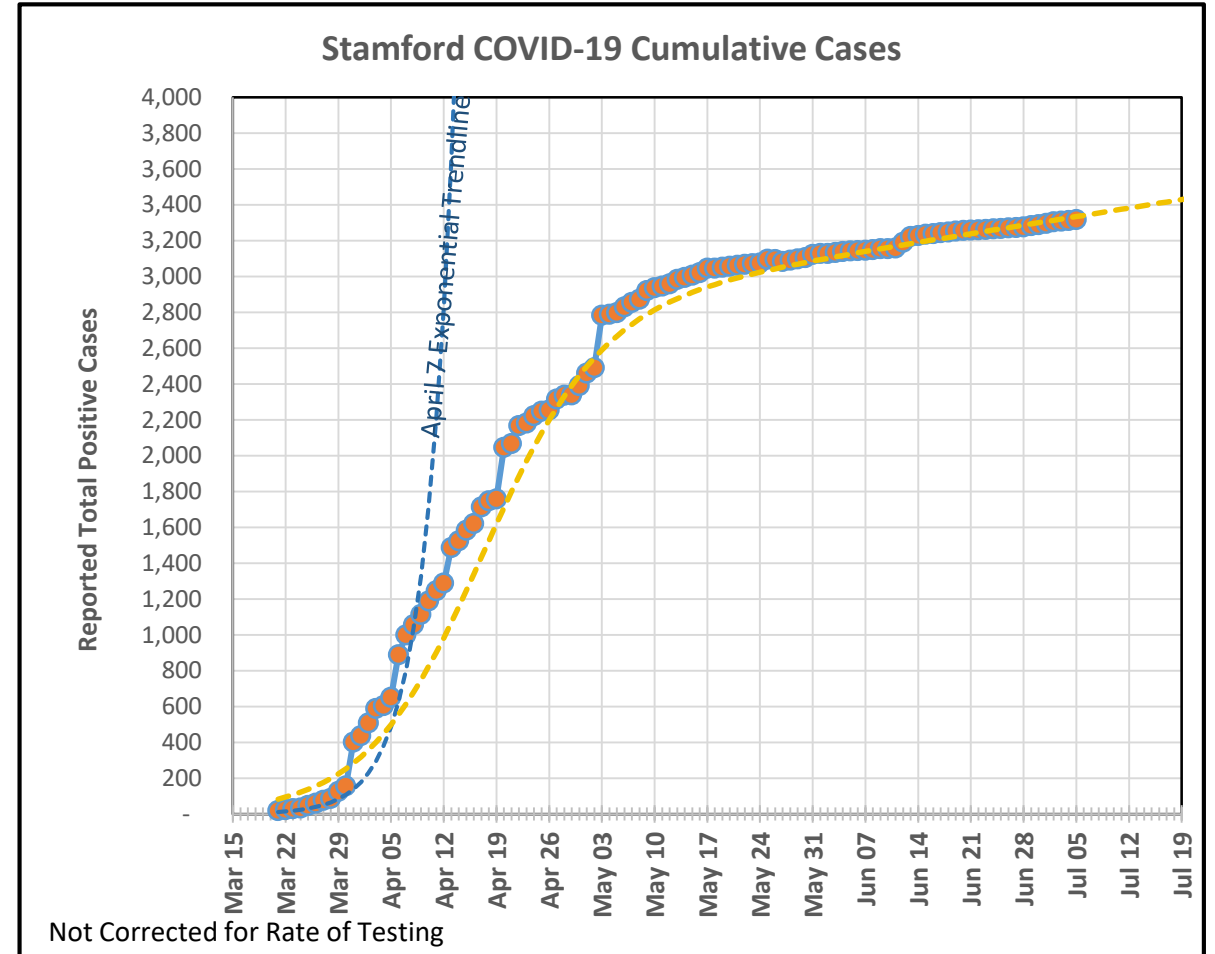
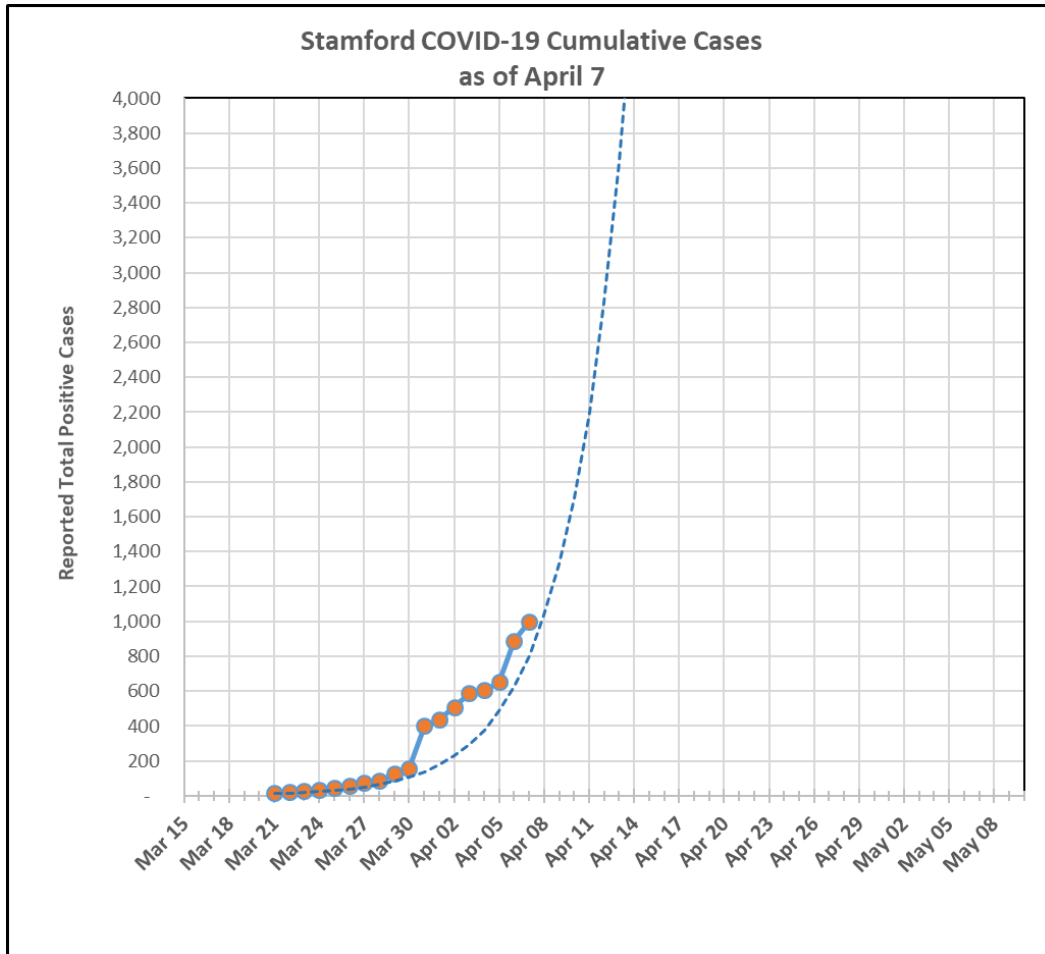


- Public Health Emergency declared by Governor Lamont
- Economy “Shutdown” in Stamford and the State
- Schools closed, implemented “Distance Learning”
- City Launched “Stamford Together”, a Volunteer Program with the Board of Representatives
- City opens UConn dormitories for potential COVID-19 patient isolation demand
- Testing for COVID-19 by City with Partners
  - Frontline Responders
  - Nursing Homes
  - Targeted Testing
  - All City Employee Testing
- Numerous reverse 911 calls – many in Spanish – announcing new restrictions, need for masks & social distancing, and availability of testing.
- Numerous Food Drives organized by nonprofits, organizations, residents.

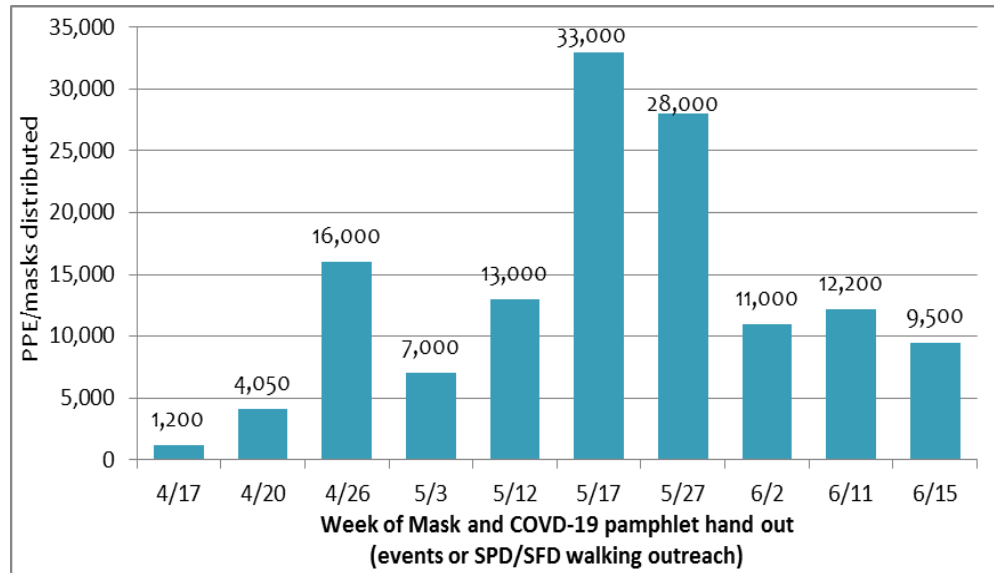


# COVID-19 IN STAMFORD

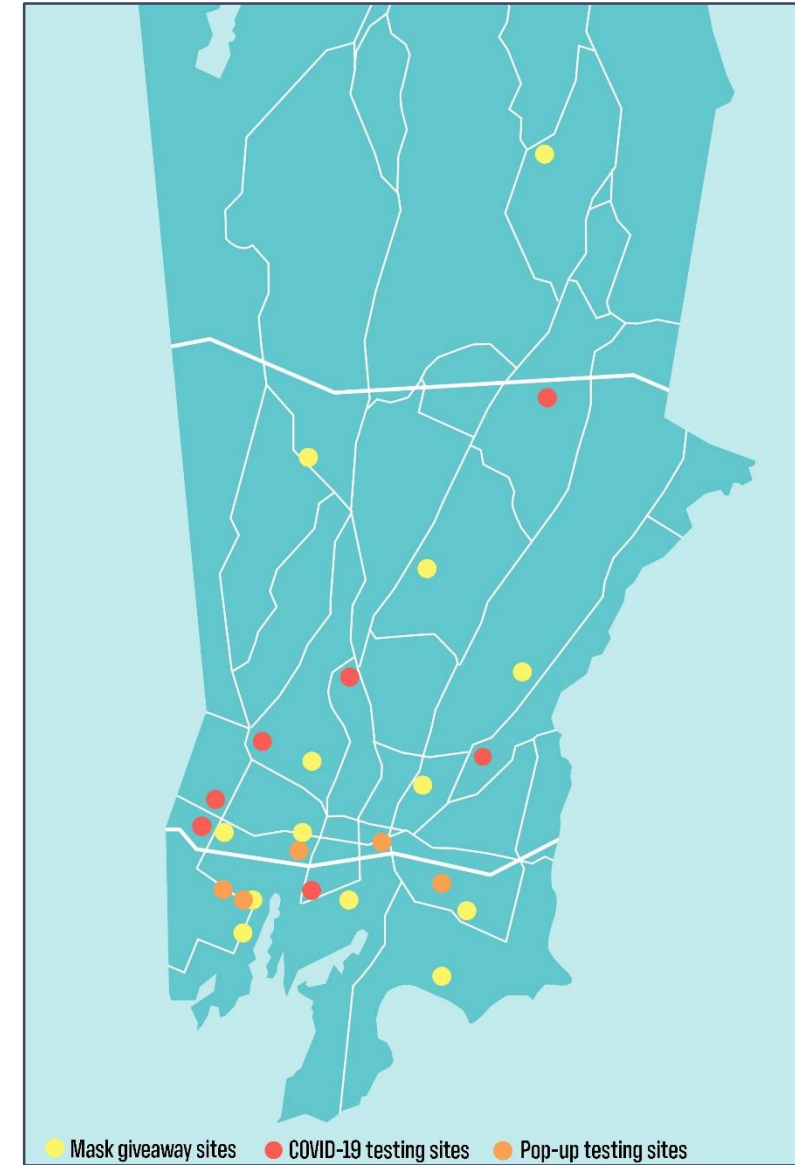
“Flattening the Curve”  
Even as virtually all City services continued



# COVID-19 IN STAMFORD



Free Face-Mask Distribution totals 130,000+



Mask distributions throughout Stamford

# COVID-19 CITY SPONSORED/COORDINATED TESTING

## The City pushed to increase testing capacity in Stamford



Published phone numbers & website for residents to arrange for testing,

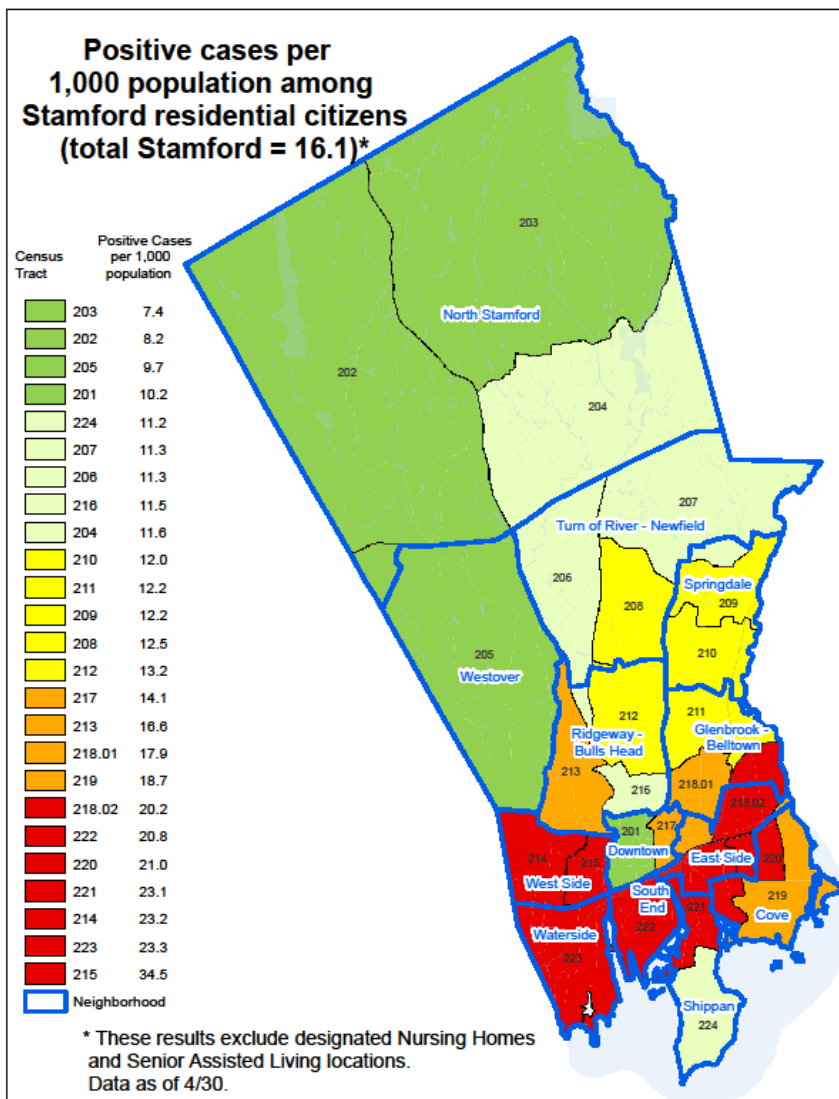
Stamford Social Services & Health Department helped arrange testing for citizens without primary care physicians or insurance.

City began testing of:

- First Responders (Fire, Police, SEMS, nurses, etc.)
- Employees of Nursing Homes & Senior Living Facilities
- All City Employees (with State)

Testing Partner/Provider	Site
Murphy Medical Associates	Cummings Beach
DOCS Urgent Care	2001 W. Main Street
Stamford Health	Stamford Hospital
Stamford Public Health	Westhill High School

# COVID-19 IN STAMFORD



Once confidential HIPPA data was obtained, the City was not only able to identify neighborhoods with greater infection rates – it was able to target specific address locations with high rates of infection.

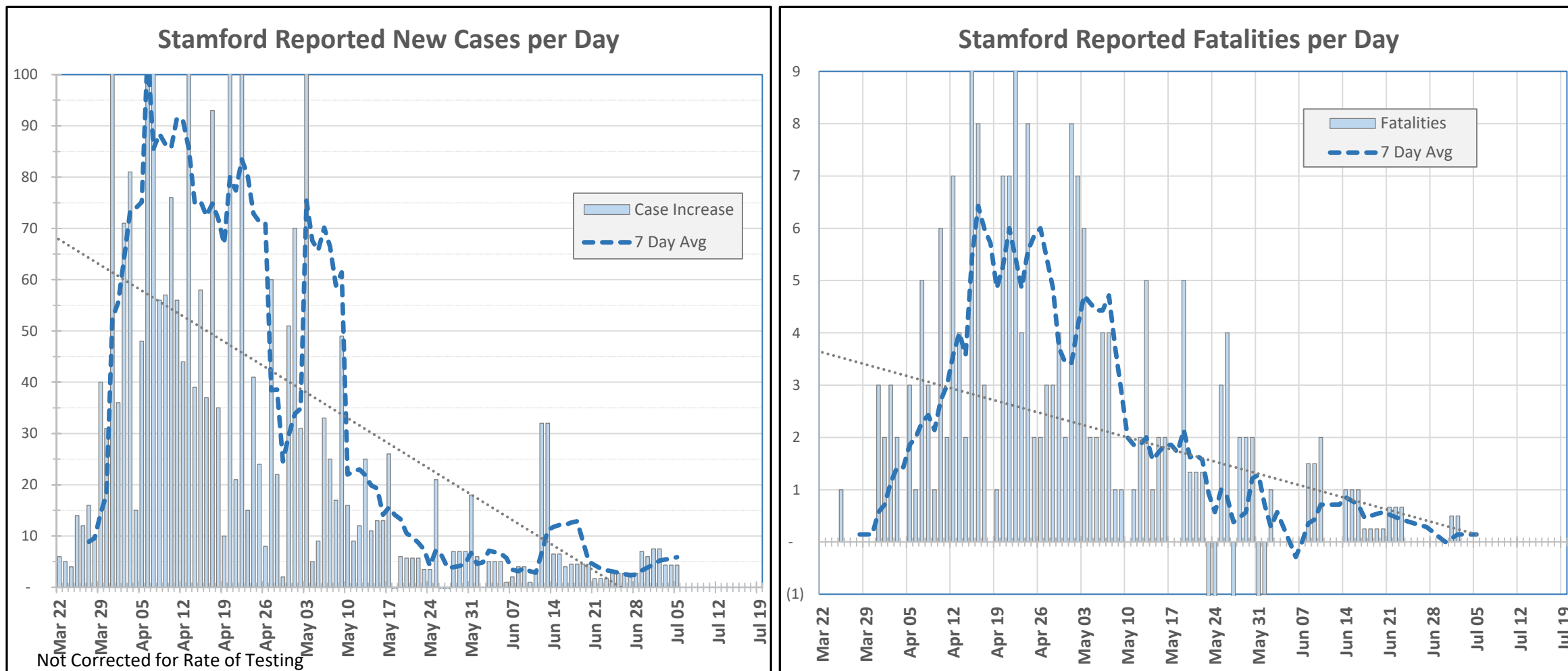
Date	Location and Testing Partner	# Tested
May 2	Bethel AME – New Neighborhoods	180
May 5	Stamford Fire HQ – Multifamily Residential Building(s)	117
May 14	83 Lockwood – Charter Oak, DOMUS, P2P	74
June 5	75 Selleck Street – Building One Community	140
June 8	Downtown Stamford – Charter Oak	106
June 18	Faith Tabernacle (29 Grove Street) - Dr. Fortt, NAACP, Concerned Clergy Coalition and Vita Partnership	75
June 20	Rose of Sharon (652 Glenbrook) - Dr. Fortt, NAACP, Concerned Clergy Coalition and Vita Partnership	85
June 27	Union Baptist Church (805 Newfield Ave) - Dr. Fortt, NAACP, Concerned Clergy Coalition and Vita Partnership	165
July 11	House of Prayer (Stillwater Ave – location and additional church partners TBD) - Dr. Fortt, NAACP, Concerned Clergy Coalition and Vita Partnership	TBD

Note – some targeted testing locations omitted to maintain confidentiality

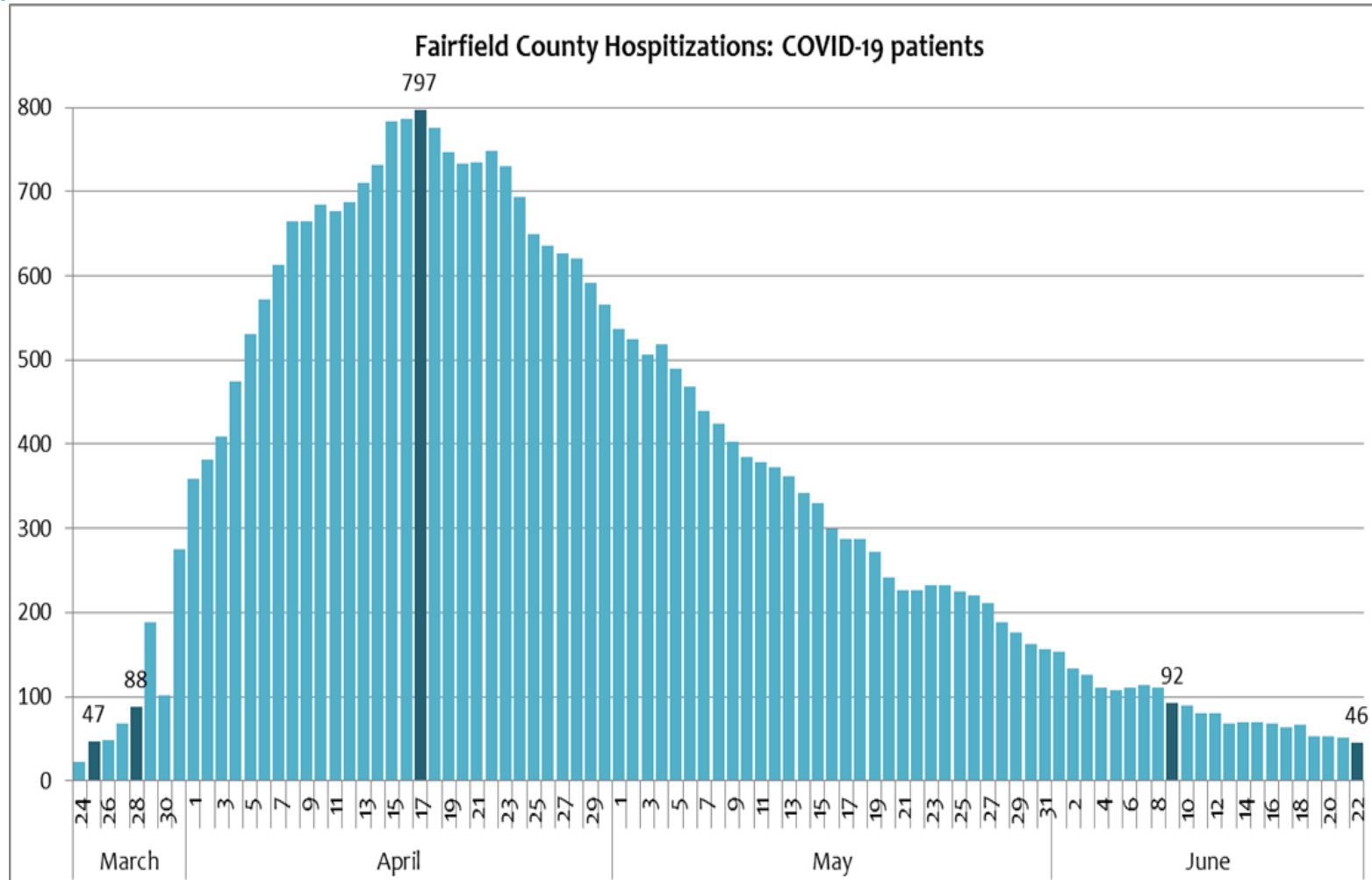


# COVID-19 IN STAMFORD

The number of new cases per day, and fatalities, have sharply declined.



# COVID-19



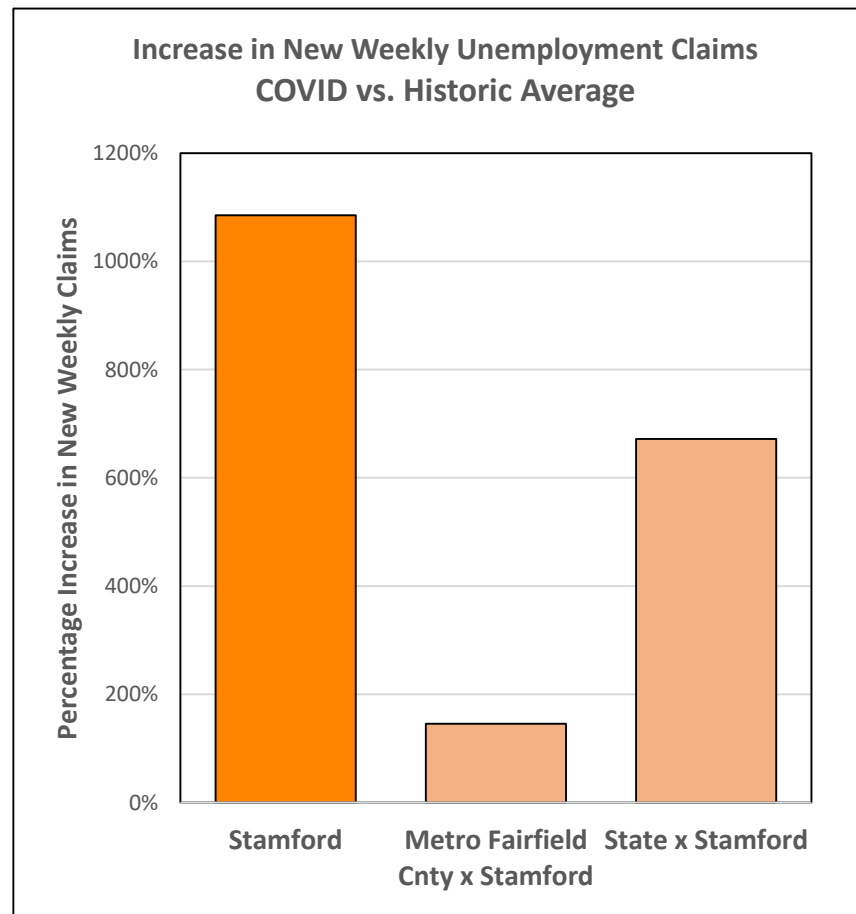
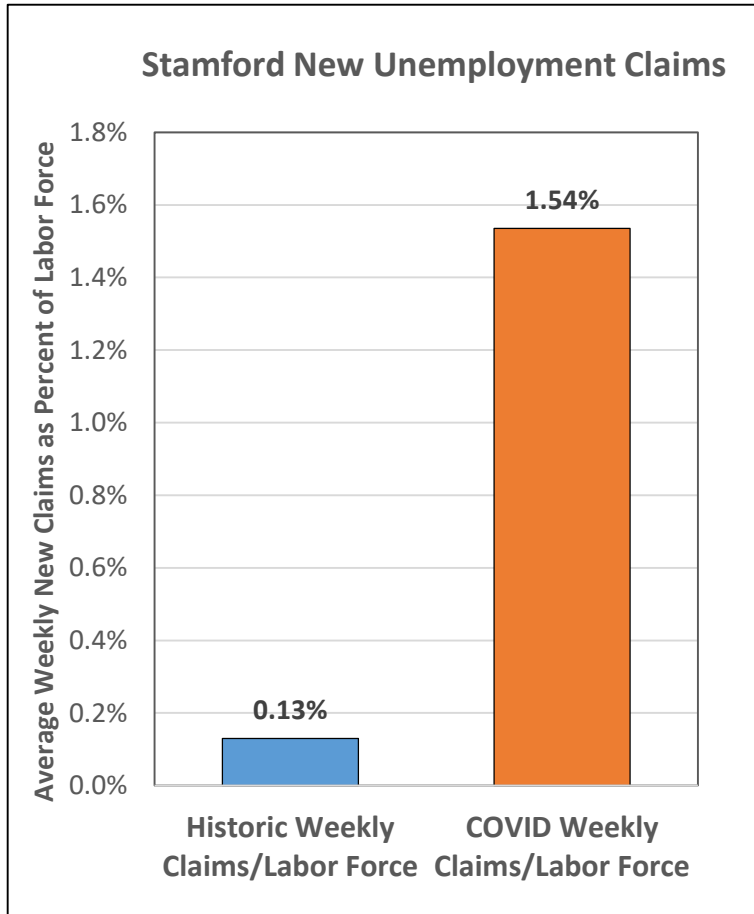
The number of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 has declined in Fairfield County.

Figure shows the number of patients currently hospitalized with COVID-19 in Fairfield County based on data collected by the Connecticut Hospital Association. The location of hospital is used, not patient residence, reporting the number of patients currently hospitalized.

Source: Data from Connecticut Hospital Association, as reported by [CT.gov](https://www.ct.gov) (data downloaded June 24, 2020)

# STAMFORD ECONOMY

COVID-19 and the economic shutdown have hit Stamford particularly hard



In March, weekly unemployment claims rose much faster in Stamford compared to the remainder of Fairfield County and the State

# STAMFORD BUDGET

Expense Budget (\$,000)	FY 19-20 Prior Year	FY 20-21 Submitted	FY 20-21 Final	Final vs. Prior Year	Final over Prior Year	Notes
<b>City Operations</b>	<b>149,032</b>	<b>152,743</b>	<b>143,971</b>	<b>(5,061)</b>	<b>-3.4%</b>	<b>Layoffs or Salary Freeze</b>
Community Grants	12,939	13,755	12,918	(21)	-0.2%	
Financial Obligations	138,024	146,238	140,750	2,726	2.0%	Pension/OPEB increase, Health Benefits reduction
Other Transfers	14,682	1,458	958	(13,725)	-93.5%	
<b>BoEd</b>	<b>283,070</b>	<b>301,540</b>	<b>285,555</b>	<b>2,485</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>Layoffs or Salary Freeze</b>
Ed Support	8,747	5,858	5,483	(3,264)	-37.3%	Savings from Elmcroft/Westover lease
Contingency	5,549	8,400	8,400	2,851	51.4%	
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>612,043</b>	<b>629,991</b>	<b>598,035</b>	<b>(14,008)</b>	<b>-2.3%</b>	
<b>Key Revenue Elements (\$,000)</b>						
Auto	13,080	13,183	9,111	(3,969)	-30.3%	
Intergovernmental Revenue	16,830	17,211	14,903	(1,927)	-11.5%	
Departmental Revenue	19,159	19,226	13,792	(5,366)	-28.0%	
Uncollected Real Estate Taxes	(5,645)	(5,973)	(34,986)	(29,341)	519.7%	Reduced tax collection Rate
(Net Reserves)	(16,002)	(15,438)	(15,315)	687	-4.3%	
Mill Rate	26.11	27.19	26.11	-	0.0%	Flat Mill Rate
Grand List Growth		8,842	8,490	8,490		Grand List Growth
Gross Tax Levy (x Growth)	565,050	588,485	565,050	-	0.0%	

FY 20-21 is a significant challenge:

- City Operations budget is below prior year
- BoEd budget is only 0.9% above prior year
- Deferred tax collection is ~\$30 million



# STAMFORD BUDGET

Actions required to meet two distinct budget issues:

1. Operating budget cuts in both the City and BoEd . . . require agreements with Unions to freeze wages or layoffs
  - In April, my cabinet and other pay plan staff (32 total employees) took a voluntary pay reduction to salary rates paid in 2018 and agreed to forgo their annual raise
  - Two major City unions – UAW and MAA - have recently agreed to a wage freeze for FY19-20 and a reopener for FY20-21 in exchange for no layoffs
  - Other City unions are in negotiations (Police, Fire, Nurses, IUOE, Custodians, etc.)
  - First round of Layoff notices were sent today
2. Deferred Taxes . . . Short-term borrowing or use of undesignated Fund Balance/Rainy Day fund to offset lower tax collection rate (with anticipation taxes will be collected in future year(s))



# STAMFORD BUDGET

## Other Factors That Can Impact the City's Financial Outlook and Operations

### Financial Uncertainties

- State, Regional, and National Economic Recovery
- Local Businesses Recovery
- City Overall Tax Collection
- Municipal Funding Payments from the State
- Federal Aid Received
- Commercial Development
- Residential Housing Demand

### Health Outlook

- Potential for a Second Wave of Infections

# STAMFORD BUDGET

## Dealing With Smaller Budgets

### Will Focus On:

- Finding Ways To Make Staff More Efficient And Productive
- Prioritizing the Most Important Work
- Eliminate Work That's Not Critical Or Rarely Used/Requested
- Reorganize Work / Restructure Services
- Departments Need To Look At New Ways To Deliver Services

But some Service Reductions are almost certain



# FUTURE CHALLENGES & PRIORITIES

## REOPEN STAMFORD & RECOVERY STAMFORD



### Phase 1: May 20

- Museums, Offices, Restaurants, and Retail
- Provided guidelines to businesses

### Phase 2: June 17

- 90% of businesses reopened
  - Personal services
  - Gym and Athletic facilities (@ 25% of capacity)
  - Libraries
  - Outdoor events

### Phase 3: Mid-July (suspended today)

- Indoor private gathering limit raised from 25 to 50
- Outdoor private gatherings raised to 100 to 250
- Outdoor event venues raised from 25% to 50% of capacity
- Bars to remain closed



# POLICE CHIEF TIM SHAW



Police Chief Tim Shaw sworn-in on April 9, 2020

- Started career at Stamford PD in 1988
- Rose from Officer to Assistant Chief by 2015
- Police Chief of Easton, CT since 2015

Police Chief priorities:

- State and Federal accreditation of department
- Expanded community policing
- New technology and systems
- Reform in response to protests...

Stamford Continues as the Safest City in New England

# FUTURE CHALLENGES & PRIORITIES

## MODERNIZING COMMUNICATION SERVICES

The COVID-19 Pandemic has accelerated the need for modernizing our services and practices

Remote Government Meetings

Livestreaming videos and conferencing

- Extension of Stamford's video archive of meetings

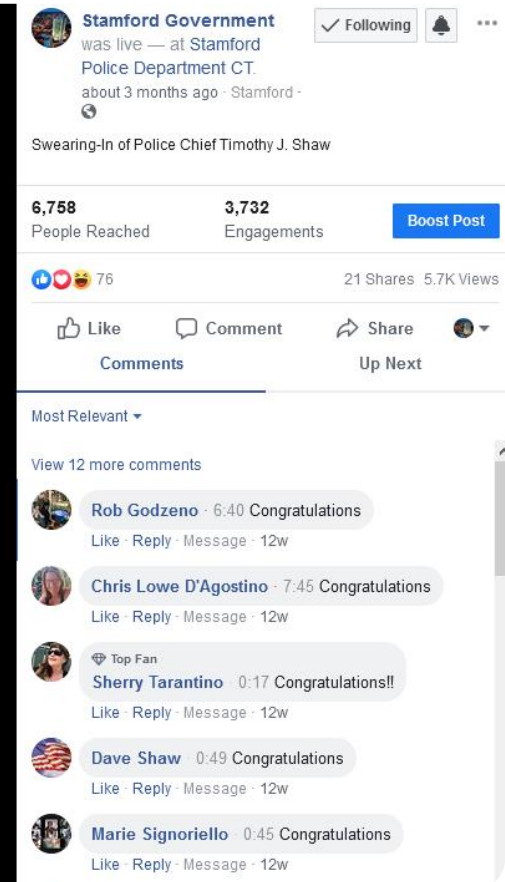
Stamford's COVID-19 Situation Daily Newsletter read by thousands of residents

- Daily updates shared on Channel 79

All major Connecticut cities have recognized communications personnel including Danbury, Norwalk, Hartford, New Haven, and Bridgeport



Police Chief Swearing-in was Live Streamed



# FUTURE CHALLENGES & PRIORITIES: POLICE REFORM

First protest in Stamford on Sunday, May 31

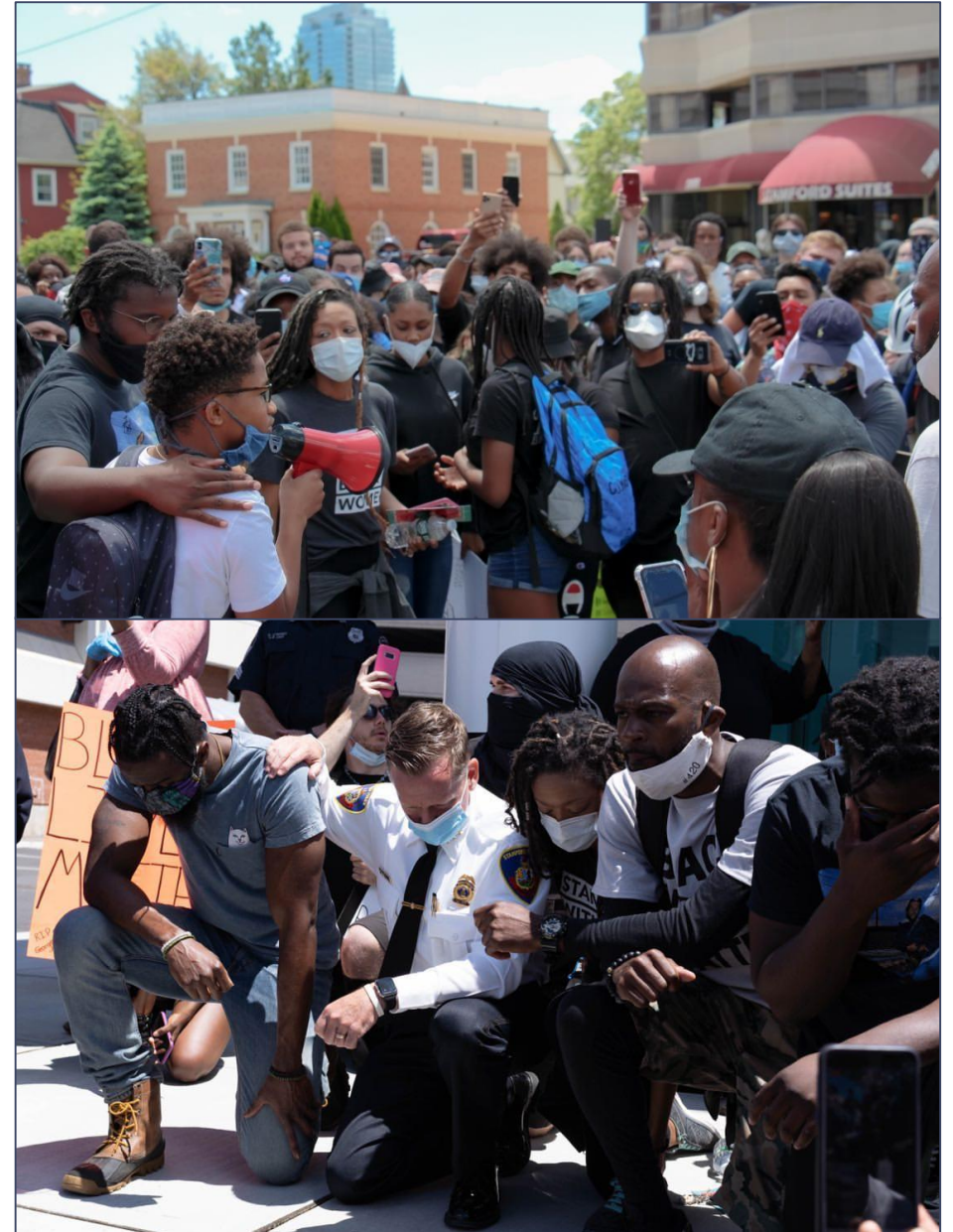
- 8-minute kneel with attendees & Chief Shaw to commemorate the death of George Floyd.

Mayor's Office has met with NAACP, Justice for Brunch, and other local activists about potential reform

Updating police policies – consistent with previous goal of getting Stamford Police accredited.

- Implement duty for officers to intervene when observing excessive force.
- Warning before shooting, no shooting at vehicles
- Require de-escalation
- Etc.

Police Commission to take a more active role in reviewing Police complaints and interacting with community.



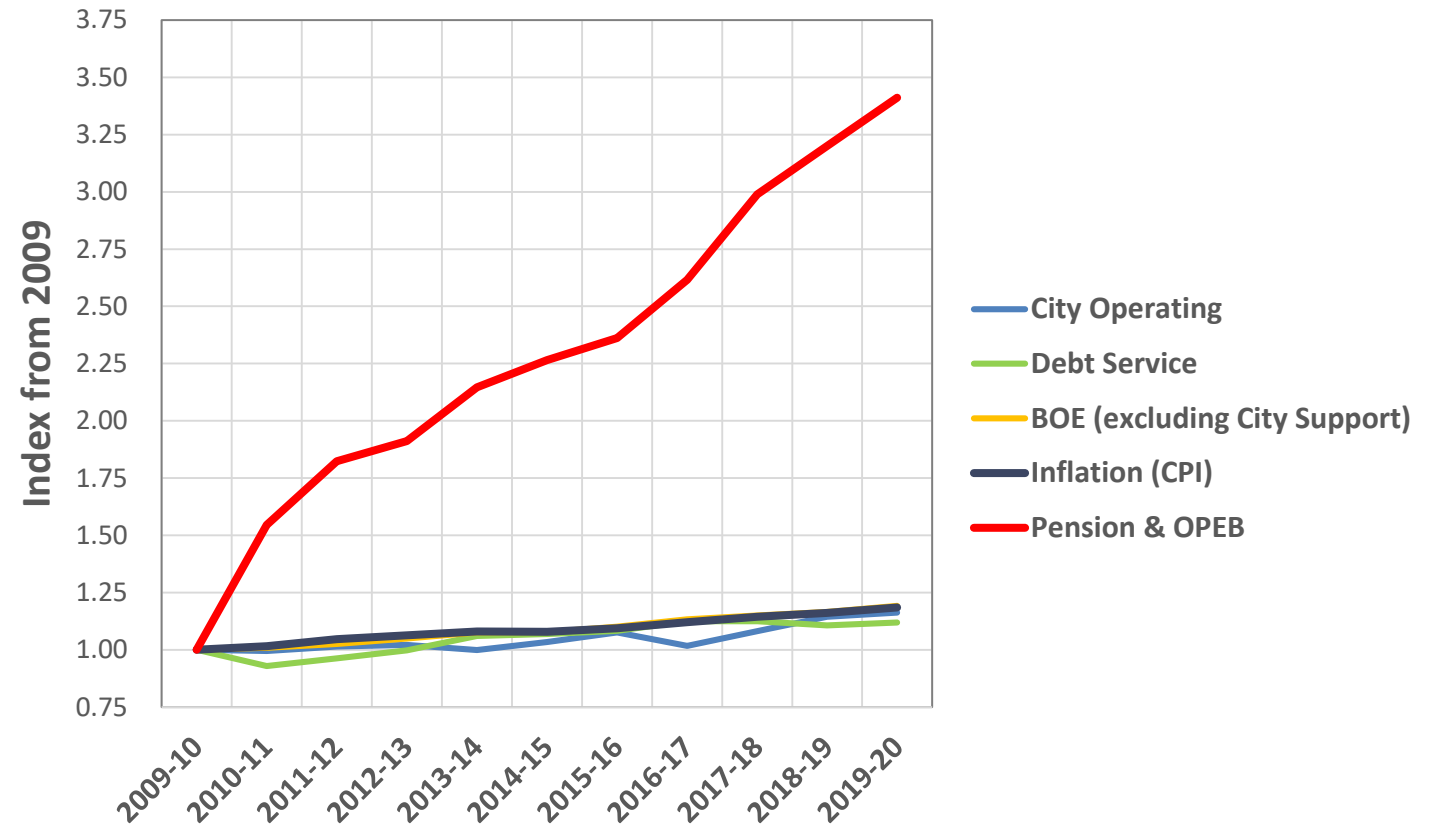
# FUTURE CHALLENGES & PRIORITIES

## UNFUNDED PENSIONS & OPEB

Funding past pension & OPEB obligations continues to be the major budget challenge.

City & BoEd Operating budgets and Debt service per capita are increasing at a rate less than inflation

Trend in Budgets per Capita  
Indexed from 2009





# FUTURE CHALLENGES & PRIORITIES

## MODERNIZING SCHOOL FACILITIES

Mold Task Force has become Stamford Asset Management Group

- Identified major repairs now in progress
- Identified building maintenance as point of concern for longevity of school buildings

Stamford's elementary, middle, and high school student bodies continue to grow:

- Absorbing the increase of students from closure of Trailblazers, Stamford Academy, and Trinity Catholic

Long-Term School Facilities plan is needed





# FUTURE CHALLENGES & PRIORITIES: STAMFORD'S MALL

Owners of Stamford Town Center listed the property for sale in 2019

- Discounted rates offered to stores that move to Norwalk's SoNo Collection
- Stamford's retail market is strong outside of the mall (pre-COVID)
  - 80% occupancy in downtown store fronts



National trend: Malls are going out of business across the country

- Opportunity to realign Stamford's downtown with resident preferences

Opportunity to realign Stamford's downtown

# FUTURE CHALLENGES & PRIORITIES INFRASTRUCTURE



Paving – Stamford needs to invest \$6+ million per year for 10 years to catch-up:

- From 2007 to 2017 only spent \$2.95 million a year.
- Since 2018, averaging more than \$7.5 million per year

Storm Basins/Manholes

Transportation & Traffic:

- Boxer Square
- Oaklawn Avenue
- West Main & West Avenue
- Summer Street Pedestrian Bump Outs
- Washington & Pulaski widening
- Greenwich Avenue & Davenport Roundabout
- Resynchronized Traffic Lights & Upgraded Fiber Optics
- Etc.

Heavy Equipment (Garbage trucks, etc.)

Must continue to invest in infrastructure during economic recovery to ensure Stamford's long term success.

# STAMFORD MANAGERIAL LEADERSHIP



Traffic Engineer Garrett Bolella awarded by the Fairfield Business Council for contributions to Transportation



Bureau Chief Jim Travers was awarded Herbert S. Levinson Transportation Leadership Award from the Connecticut Chapter of the Institute of Transportation Engineers



# FUTURE CHALLENGES & PRIORITIES

## MODERNIZING IT INFRASTRUCTURE

Remote work, and in-person work, requires reliable technology

City of Stamford software is generally out-of-date

- HR systems, Accounting Systems, and Payroll Systems
- Often unable to quickly and reliably obtain reports from existing data systems



```
HT135MPI                                City of Stamford                                8/05/19
                                           Purchasing/Receiving Menu                            11:18:42

Select one of the following:
  1. Requisition entry
  2. Requisition approval
  4. Requisition buyer processing
  5. Inventory reorder processing
  6. Purchase order entry/change
  7. Print purchase orders
  8. Print manual purchase orders
  9. Vendor order entry/change
 10. Receipts processing
 11. Invoice processing
 12. Receipts - vendor orders
 13. Requisition inquiry
 14. Purchase order inquiry
 15. Blanket order inquiry
 16. Inventory reorder report
 17. Orders/receipts activity rpt
 18. Daily p.o. activity report
 19. Purchase order report
 20. Vendor delivery report
 21. Requisition purge
 22. Requisition buyer assignment
 90. Sign off

Selection
== > 2__

                                           Version: 9.1.18.3.0
                                           Date installed: 12/08/2018
F3=Exit   F5=Refresh   F6=Display messages   F9=Command line
F14=Work with submitted jobs   F15=Calendar   F24=More keys
```

HTE “Green Screen” Technology

Stamford is 1 of 4 cities in the United States still using this outdated HTE financial system.

# FUTURE CHALLENGES & PRIORITIES

## MODERNIZING IT INFRASTRUCTURE

Department	Original Application	Process Improvement	Software Transition
Payroll Department	~1980 Ceridian	Redesign payroll processing model	Updating to cloud-based Ceridian
ERP	~1980 HTE	Initial needs assessment underway	Vendor to be selected
Building Department	2013 Viewpoint Permit	Implemented a more efficient Customer approval and routing process	View Point Cloud 2020
Health Department	Manual Process & Access Database	Allow online permitting, renewals, and payments	View Point Cloud 2020
Land Use & Zoning	Manual	Comprehensive permitting system communicating with Health, Engineering, & Building Department	View Point Cloud 2020
School Facilities	Maintenance Direct	Improved Work Order System and Asset & Mechanical Systems Inventory & PM schedule	Asset Essentials
Vehicle Maintenance	Chevon (no longer supported)	Can't get PM history and parts inventory without crashing software	Agile Fleet – adding module
Citizen Services (Fix it Stamford)	2011 GovQA	Adding performance metrics & work orders	VEOCI
Parking Violation System	2014 MCS	Implemented a consolidated enforcement and permitting data base	Implementing 2019 Passport



# FUTURE CHALLENGES & PRIORITIES: OMNIBUS ZONING TEXT CHANGE



Stamford's Zoning Board working to update our zoning regulations

Already approved:

- Sustainability Scorecard: Grading buildings for energy efficiency and other metrics
- Publicly Accessible Amenity Spaces: Design guidelines for amenity spaces for the public
- Residential-High Density: Stricter requirements for new apartments or condominiums

Upcoming:

- Expanding Below Market Rate housing program
- Electric vehicle incentives
- Pedestrian-orientated sidewalk redesigns and street trees
- Parking for bicycles
- Tools for Historic Preservation

# PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

- Improving capacity and quality of our schools
- Improving our Infrastructure (road, intersections, facilities, etc.)
- Modernizing our Systems (Finance, Payroll, Citizen Service, Permitting, etc.)
- Improving our Parks:
  - Veterans Park
  - Soundwaters at Boccuzzi Park
  - Mill River Greenway from the Sound to New Canaan
- Addressing our enormous long-term structural costs and liabilities (Pensions/OPEB)
- Expanding/Enhancing UConn
- Improving Stamford Transportation Center





# STAMFORD STRONG

