

YEAR ONE REPORT



**CITY OF
STAMFORD**

Letter From the Mayor

Dear Stamford Residents,

One year ago, I had the privilege of being sworn in as the Mayor of Stamford. On my first day, I outlined a vision to continue to build a city that is equitable, inclusive, innovative, and a place where everyone can thrive.

From day one, my administration was committed to bringing a fresh perspective to Stamford's pressing challenges, addressing our infrastructure challenges, advancing economic prosperity, enhancing education, making Stamford more affordable, and improving government responsiveness and constituent services.

Together, we have made significant progress towards these goals. Below is a snapshot of what we have accomplished thus far:

- **Secured over \$200 million in state funding reimbursement** for rebuilding Westhill High School & **tripled the state reimbursement rate to 60%** for future school construction projects for the next 25 years.
- Launched the **Pave Stamford initiative, paving 75 roads and seven sidewalks around schools**, a two-fold increase in paving compared to last year.
- **Passed a city ordinance expanding the Senior Citizen Property Tax Credit** for the first time since 2015.
- **Hosted four constituent service hubs** in the South End, West Side, East Side, and North Stamford with a fifth hub scheduled for Saturday, December 3rd at the Ferguson Library Main Branch.
- **Provided \$75,000 in beautification grants to nonprofits and neighborhood organizations** through the Community Micro-Grant Program.

As I reflect on the tremendous work and effort from our first year in office, I again thank you for trusting me to lead our City. I invite you to contact me with any questions or concerns you have. You can reach me at mayoroffice@stamfordct.gov.

I cannot wait to see what we accomplish together in the next three years.

Sincerely,



Caroline Simmons

Mayor

Simmons Administration

Cabinet

Caroline Simmons, Mayor
Bridget Fox, Chief of Staff
Doug Dalena, Director of Legal Affairs
Sandra Dennies, Director of Administration
Carmen Hughes, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer
Louis DeRubeis, Director of Public Safety
Loren Nadres, Director of Economic Development
Matt Quinones, Director of Operations
Izzy Sobkowski, Chief Information Officer

Mayor's Office

Val Pankosky, Senior Executive Assistant
Ngan Nguyen, Executive Secretary
Kathy Ruther, Executive Secretary, Public Safety, Health and Welfare
Janeene Freeman, Special Assistant to the Mayor for Community Partnerships and Engagement
Lauren Meyer, Special Assistant to the Mayor & Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs
Leah Kagan, Special Assistant to the Mayor for Economic Development
Aaron Miller, Special Assistant to the Mayor for Communications & Stamford Arts and Culture
Commission Program Manager
Rachel Alonso-Mendoza, Special Assistant to the Mayor for Communications

Making Stamford More Affordable

- ✓ **Passed a city ordinance expanding the Senior Citizen Property Tax Credit** for the first time since 2015 to provide property tax relief for over 1,000 seniors by expanding eligibility and increasing the credit amount to keep pace with inflation.
- ✓ **Delivered a \$626 million budget** with minimal tax increases.
- ✓ **Re-affirmed Stamford's AAA bond rating** – the only city in Connecticut with over 100,000 residents to have this bond rating, ultimately saving taxpayers on interest payments.
- ✓ **Achieved the highest score** of any Fairfield County municipality on Fairfield County's Center for Housing Opportunity (FCCHO) Affordable Housing Plan scorecards.

Advancing Economic Prosperity

- ✓ **Launched the "Global Stamford" initiative** to attract international businesses to Stamford.
- ✓ **Created a small business resiliency grant program** to ensure our small business community has support recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✓ **Successfully attracted over a dozen new businesses to Stamford.**
- ✓ **Launched a Mayor's Business Advisory Council.**

Enhancing Support for Education

- ✓ **Secured over \$200 million in state funding reimbursement** for rebuilding Westhill High School.
- ✓ **Tripled the state reimbursement rate** to 60% for future school construction projects for the next 25 years.
- ✓ **Continued support for the Mayor's Youth Employment Program**, with 48 Stamford students completing 140 hours of work, with 50% of participants working in City Departments.
- ✓ **Secured \$513,000 Workforce Development Grant** from the U.S. Department of Labor for pre-apprenticeship programs and to support job training for students.

Investing in our Roads, Bridges, and Sidewalks

- ✓ **Launched the **Pave Stamford initiative****, paving 75 roads and seven sidewalks around schools, doubling the number of roads paved compared to last year.
- ✓ **Secured \$17 million** in federal and state grants for Stamford infrastructure and community projects, including a **\$2.1 million federal RAISE grant for the West Side**, **\$2 million for school sidewalks**, and **\$1.8 million for Boccuzzi Park**.

Creating a More Sustainable and Resilient City

- ✓ **Created the Director of Facilities & Sustainability position** to provide city-wide leadership and department cohesion for sustainability related projects and initiatives.
- ✓ **Launched City's first solar RFP** to solarize municipal buildings and reduce the City's carbon footprint.

- ✓ Implemented a school safety plan, including a **\$400,000 allocation of city funds for school security upgrades.**
- ✓ **Invested in resiliency projects** in the FY2022-2023 capital budget, including **\$2,000,000** for storm drain upgrades and **\$500,000** for the first city-wide drainage study.
- ✓ Launched a community and government operations **Green House Gas Inventory initiative.**
- ✓ Launched the dredging of the channel at Cove Island Park & Marina.
- ✓ **Created the first Mayor's Climate Council.**

Strengthening Citizen Services

- ✓ **Hosted four constituent service hubs** in the South End, West Side, East Side, and North Stamford to hear from residents.
- ✓ **Launched Phase 1 of the Operations Department's plan to implement a permit reform program** aimed at creating a more efficient, transparent, and customer-driven permit-approval process for residential and commercial construction.
- ✓ **Merged the operations of Parks & Recreation into one department** for more efficient coordination of park and leisure services.

Public Health & Safety

- ✓ Created a **Mental Health Resource Guide** to provide more information on the City's available resources and services.
- ✓ **Created a Public Safety Community Liaison position.**
- ✓ Allocated City capital funding for the design and construction of a new Animal Care & Control Center.
- ✓ Resolved longstanding dispute over firefighter promotions, resulting in **the promotion of nine firefighters.**
- ✓ **Enhanced school safety by investing \$400,000 in school security infrastructure upgrades.**

Community Connection

- ✓ **Supported the reopening of the Chester Addison Community Center**, which includes a **new library branch** and the **Police Activities League.**
- ✓ **Provided \$75,000 in beautification grants to nonprofits and neighborhood organizations** through the Community Micro-Grant Program.
- ✓ **Built a new playground** on Courtland Avenue.
- ✓ **Nominated and received approval from the Board of Reps for over 35 people to serve on City Boards and Commissions, the overwhelming majority of whom are women and people of color.**
- ✓ **Hired the City's first Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer, who has begun DEI trainings with the City's Boards & Commissions.**
- ✓ Allocated City capital funding to launch a **city-wide parks strategic plan.**

- ✓ Allocated City capital funding for the design and construction of a **new Animal Care & Control Center.**
- ✓ **Made our website more ADA compliant and accessible in over 70 languages.**
- ✓ **Worked with the state delegation to secure state bonding for City projects:**
 - \$950,000 for balcony seating renovations and updates at the Palace Theatre
 - \$1,000,000 for renovations and improvements at Terry Connors Ice Rink
 - \$3,000,000 for renovations and upgrades at the Stamford High athletic fields
 - \$70,000 for security fencing at the Boys and Girls Club at the Yerwood Center