

CHARTER OAK COMMUNITIES  
STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSED HOUSING POSITIONS

Stamford has grown to become the second most populous city in Connecticut as well as the fastest growing city in the State. Stamford is located in one of the most expensive housing markets in the nation and recent rapid growth in housing costs has exacerbated the struggle many citizens encounter when seeking to purchase or rent a home.

In response to growing concerns regarding housing availability and affordability, the City, with extensive public input, conducted an in-depth housing needs analysis which led to the development of the Stamford Housing Affordability Plan. The many market rate developments of recent years have increased the size of the City's Below Market Rate (BMR) program, increasing the administrative responsibilities associated with that program. The City has also created an Affordable Housing Trust Fund, which requires administration and coordination.

These are all positive responses to the increasing public concern regarding housing availability and affordability, and each requires attention from City staff to ensure appropriate coordination among various City departments, land use boards and elected officials, as well as consistency with City policies and priorities for development activity and targeting of assistance.

The proposed housing-focused staff positions are a response to the growing demands on City staff to address the very real housing problems faced by many Stamford residents. Many different groups and individuals face these challenges in Stamford - the problem is not limited to very low-income households seeking affordable rentals. Many of those with higher incomes have trouble affording the rents that are prevalent in Stamford, as do those seeking to purchase their first home. Middle class professionals essential to the City's well being are often priced out, forcing many essential workers to endure long commutes to work here.

We appreciate the efforts Stamford is making to address the housing issues identified in the housing study. Charter Oak Communities will continue to do its part to provide high quality affordable and mixed-income housing. Having City staff dedicated to maximize the impact and efficient operation of the BMR program and the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, implement the Stamford Affordability Plan, and support and coordinate the many various areas in which the City and others are involved with housing issues is an important investment in Stamford's future.

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