

YEAR TWO REPORT



**CITY OF
STAMFORD**

Letter From the Mayor

Dear Stamford Residents,

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

Today, I am happy to report that the City of Stamford continues on a path of vibrant growth, sound fiscal footing, and remains one of the safest cities in New England. My administration's commitment to investing in our city's infrastructure, advancing economic prosperity, enhancing education, making Stamford more affordable, and improving government responsiveness and constituent services, has guided our work over the past two years.

Together, we have made substantial progress toward addressing these issues, including by:

- Signing the first Affordable Housing Executive Order, with the goal of creating or renovating 1,000 affordable housing units by 2025.
- Creating the COVID-19 Small Business Resiliency Grant and distributed grants to 176 businesses, including to 120 minority or women-owned businesses and 34 Hispanic-owned businesses.
- Signing the first Executive Order Addressing Climate Change and Sustainability, with a focus on promoting energy efficiency at city buildings and investment in green infrastructure projects.
- Establishing the Veterans Resource Center at Old Town Hall, connecting veterans in our community with resources and services.
- Civilianizing the 911 Emergency Operations Center to ensure efficiency in staffing.

We still have work to do but I am more optimistic than ever about the future of Stamford. I invite you to contact me with any questions or feedback you have about the work we are doing. You can reach me at mayorsoffice@stamfordct.gov.

Thank you for the opportunity to lead our city and I cannot wait to see what else we accomplish in the next two years.

Sincerely,



Caroline Simmons
Mayor

Simmons Administration

Cabinet

Caroline Simmons, Mayor

Benjamin Barnes, Director of Administration

Thomas Cassone, Director of Legal Affairs

Louis DeRubeis, Director of Public Safety, Health, and Welfare

Bridget Fox, Chief of Staff

Carmen Hughes, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer

Leah Kagan, Director of Economic Development

Matt Quinones, Director of Operations

Mayor's Office

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 for Legislative Affairs

Geraldine Uribe, 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

- ✓ **Signed the city's first Affordable Housing Executive Order**, with the goal of creating or renovating 1,000 affordable housing units by 2025.
- ✓ **Supported the creation and implementation of Stamford's Housing Affordability Plan (currently the highest scoring plan in the state)**, focused on improving existing programs, scaling up investments, and using land more effectively to create new housing.
- ✓ **Committed \$15 million to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund** to support new affordable housing projects.
- ✓ **Expanded the city's affordable housing stock:** 148 affordable units have been created; 237 affordable units are currently under construction; and 250 affordable units are in the pipeline (approved for development).
- ✓ **Dedicated over \$960,000** to 12 affordable housing renovation and preservation projects.
- ✓ **Dedicated \$1.25 million in the FY23/24 city capital budget for the redevelopment of Oak Park**, 166 affordable housing units on the East Side.

Advancing Economic Prosperity

- ✓ **Created the COVID-19 Small Business Resiliency Grant and distributed grants to 176 businesses**, including to 120 minority or women-owned businesses and 34 Hispanic-owned businesses.
- ✓ **Launched the Small Business Resource Center on the city's website**, sharing numerous tools and resources to help support Stamford's small business community and convening in-person community groups and small business resources for access to capital workshops.
- ✓ **Created the Shop Local Holiday Campaign**, to encourage residents to support small businesses during the holiday season.
- ✓ **Expanded the Mayor's Business Advisory Council to over 75 companies** with the goal of sharing insights on workforce attraction and business retention.
- ✓ **Welcomed over 50 new businesses** to Stamford in partnership with the Stamford Chamber of Commerce.

Enhancing Support for Education

- ✓ **Secured \$2.7 million in state funding** from the HVAC Indoor Air Quality Grants Program to improve air quality systems in Stamford Public Schools.
- ✓ **Advocated to the state for legislative authorization** for the construction of the new Roxbury Elementary School.
- ✓ **Submitted application to the state for legislative authorization** for the construction of the new South School.
- ✓ **Launched design process** for the new Westhill High School.

- ✓ **Launched the Mayor's Literacy Initiative** aimed at promoting literacy and providing resources for parents to encourage their children to read.
- ✓ **Began construction on new Stamford High Athletic fields**, including upgrades and renovations to the multi-purpose fields.
- ✓ **FY23/24 city budget increased bonding authorization for school facility projects** by about \$28 million and included \$15 million in reserve for schools.
- ✓ Partnered with Superintendent Dr. Lucero to **dedicate \$300,000 in funding to install 200 A/C units in Stamford Public Schools.**

Investing in our Infrastructure

- ✓ Working in partnership with the Connecticut Department of Transportation and city Transportation Officials to **advance the Stamford Train Station Master Plan.**
- ✓ **Paved over 130 roads in continuation of the Pave Stamford Initiative**, which aims to pave over 200 roads by 2025.
- ✓ **Secured \$4.5 million in state funding for infrastructure projects**, including the Latham Park Area Infrastructure Project, the Belltown Neighborhood Connectivity and Safety Project, and the West Side Pedestrian Safety and Connectivity Project.
- ✓ **Allocated \$1 million in American Rescue Plan funding** for bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements.
- ✓ **Launched design process** for new Animal Control Center.

Creating a More Sustainable and Resilient City

- ✓ **Signed the city's first Executive Order Addressing Climate Change and Sustainability**, with a focus on promoting energy efficiency at city buildings and investment in green infrastructure projects.
- ✓ **Completed the city's first Greenhouse Gas Inventory**, which supports efforts to reduce municipal greenhouse gas emissions.
- ✓ **Secured \$559,367 from the Connecticut Department of Transportation to install 20 electric vehicle charging stations** at the Government Center.
- ✓ **Completed Phase 1 of dredging at Cove Island Park Marina**, which protects the environment, removes debris, and helps support boating activities.
- ✓ **Secured \$26.4 million from the Connecticut Department of Transportation** for the purchase of 20 new electric buses and transit station upgrades.
- ✓ **Implemented virtual net metering to reduce city energy costs** and advance statewide goals of reducing carbon emissions and increasing renewable energy sources.
- ✓ **Secured \$1.29 million from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Climate Resilience Fund** for developing plans to evaluate flooding impacts and enhance the city's climate resilience.

Strengthening Citizen Services

- ✓ **Launched the city's Walk-In Permitting Center** to improve and streamline the permitting process for residents.
- ✓ **Held Citizen Service Hubs in Waterside, Cove, and Hubbard Heights neighborhoods**, to hear directly from residents about the issues that matter most to them.
- ✓ **Reduced resolution time of Fix It Stamford requests by 15-20%** on most popular complaint issues (ex: illegal dumping, street tree inspections, missed garbage, curb repair).
- ✓ **Held a listening tour of senior housing facilities**, to hear directly from seniors about the issues that matter most to them.

Public Health & Safety

- ✓ **Reached contract agreements** with the Stamford Police Association and the Stamford Professional Firefighters' Association.
- ✓ **Launched the Stamford Youth Mental Health Alliance**, in partnership with the city's Department of Health, Stamford Public Schools, and over a dozen nonprofit and community providers, to implement a community-based strategy to address the youth mental health crisis.
- ✓ **Signed an Executive Order Establishing the Vision Zero Initiative**, the citywide commitment to eliminate fatal and serious traffic crashes in Stamford by 2032.
- ✓ **FY23/24 budget authorized funding for two school nurses at Strawberry Hill School and Rogers International School**, to add more mental health resources available on school campuses.
- ✓ **Civilianized the 911 Emergency Operations Center**, which enables the city to hire state certified telecommunicators and enhance response times with the best trained personnel.

Community Connection

- ✓ **Created the Veterans Resource Center at Old Town Hall**, connecting approximately 100 veterans in our community with resources and services.
- ✓ **Completed a city-wide Parks Strategic Plan**, which will be the roadmap for enhancing city parks over the next decade.
- ✓ **Provided \$75,000 in beautification grants** to nonprofits and neighborhood organizations through the Community Micro-Grant Program.
- ✓ **Established the Mayor's Senior Advisory Council**, which advocates for issues important to Stamford's senior population.
- ✓ **Secured \$270,400 from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection** for the planning and design of a 2.6-mile multi-use path through the Waterside neighborhood and Old Greenwich.

- ✓ **Secured a \$400,000 state grant to launch a Youth Service Corps program in partnership with DOMUS**, employing youth to support area beautification projects throughout the city.
- ✓ **Completed two playgrounds** at Stillmeadow Elementary School and Sleepy Hollow Park.