



The City of Stamford, Connecticut

Fiscal Year 2008

A Report to Our Citizens



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Stamford The City That Works

The purpose of this report is to provide an annual summary of City activities and to give citizens an update on City projects and goals.

Did You Know?

- 80% of City traffic signals have been changed to LED lights which are four times more energy efficient than traditional bulbs.
- Stamford has over thirteen acres of green roofs, which are up to 50 degrees cooler than traditional roofs on a hot summer day.
- The transformation of the Mill River into a central park and greenway has been a goal of the City for over a century. In 2009, the project will begin with the removal of the Mill River dam and the restoration of the river.
- Over 32% of the families in Stamford speak a language other than English in their homes.

Message From the Mayor

Looking back on FY 2008-09, I reflect on the measures the City has taken to address what is a very difficult downturn in our economy. Thanks to extensive cooperation by City employees to make necessary reductions in their budgets while maintaining exemplary services, we have accomplished some great things this year. I remain optimistic as we look ahead for a strong and successful 2009-10.

Mayor Dannel Malloy

How the City is Organized

The City of Stamford operates under a Charter adopted in 1949 and most recently revised in November 2004.

The chief executive officer of the City is the Mayor, elected for a four-year term of office. A six-member, elected Board of Finance establishes fiscal policy and must also approve all expenditures of funds. The legislative function is performed by a forty-member Board of Representatives, two from each of twenty districts. The Board of Representatives adopts ordinances and resolutions and must approve all expenditures of funds.

The Mayor, subject to the approval of the Board of Representatives, appoints four directors to his cabinet: the Director of Administration; Director of Operations; Director of Legal Affairs; and Director of Public Safety, Health and Welfare.

Demographics Information	2008
Population	120,038
Unemployment Rate (Dec 2008)	5.6%
Per Capita Income (2007)	\$47,196
Total School Enrollment	14,995

"Stamford is a national model for transformation of an older industrial city into a successful place with a strong, diversified economy. Creative planning has led the way for this transformation."

Bob Yaro, President, Regional Plan Association and Professor of Practice, University of Pennsylvania

Stamford, first settled in 1641, is Connecticut's fourth largest city by population. Stamford has a high concentration of international corporate headquarters, and it is the major retail trade center of Fairfield County, yet it maintains its suburban character and residential neighborhoods. Through sound urban planning, the City has strengthened its retail core, increased its housing and cultural facilities, and attracted major office development.

Renovation of the Old Town Hall is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2009.



OLD TOWN HALL

PHOTO/KAREN ROSENFELD



Additional information is available at the City website, www.cityofstamford.org

How We Have Progressed

Progress in Fiscal Year 2008

Significant Accomplishments

Parks & Recreation

- The success of the skatepark in Scalzi Park is attributable to a planning process that included advocacy, input, and design ideas from skateboarders and inline skaters.



SKATEPARK AT SCALZI PARK

PHOTO/BILL HELENE

- Artificial turf fields were installed at Westhill High School and West Beach. (Lione Park field is currently under construction.) These new, low maintenance fields can withstand continual soccer, field hockey, football, lacrosse, and cricket play.

Economic Development

- Vacancy and rental rates for commercial office space have remained relatively stable throughout 2008, with vacancy at an average of 18%. Retention of local firms included *GenRe*, who announced that they would move their 800 employees to Long Ridge Road, thanks in part to a City economic development package.
- City approval of major financing to underwrite the \$145 million reconstruction of the South End infrastructure has been instrumental in jump-starting this development.
- Construction on Metro Green, situated across the street from the Transportation Center, began in 2008. It is mixed-use and "Transit-Oriented," designed to meet high environmental standards. The 50 units of affordable housing exceed City requirements.

Public Safety

- The Police Department sent a delegation to Israel for Homeland Security and Counter-Terrorism training. Some of the best-trained professionals in the world worked with our officers on the techniques and procedures for securing Stamford against terrorist attack.

- The Public Safety team developed, installed, and converted to a state-of-the-art, 2-way radio communications system. This new encrypted, digital system provides for the first time 100% outdoor coverage throughout Stamford and excellent building penetration.

Health

- The Health Department Dental Hygiene Program offers screenings, cleanings, fluoride treatments, and restorative care to students, 7,500 to date, through our school-based dental clinics.

Public Services

- Using new vehicle maintenance software, the Fleet Management Department improved the reliability of City vehicles and equipment, reduced maintenance costs, and generated over \$550,000 in revenue by selling surplus equipment and vehicles using an online auction service.
- Solid Waste and recycling collection have been modernized to reduce costs and improve services. New garbage containers are reducing litter, and recycling rates are rising as new materials are accepted curbside or at the City's two recycling centers.

Stamford Public Schools

- With the generous support of General Electric, Stamford teachers received intensive math education training, and as a result, public school students increased their math scores. Students in grades 4 and 7 achieved the greatest gains, most notably among black, Hispanic, economically disadvantaged and special education students.
- The new Inter-District Environmental Magnet School (pre-K through 8th grade) in the Cove will open this fall. The school will meet LEED Silver certification and will include a green roof, solar photovoltaic panels, a wind turbine, and water saving technologies.

Young Citizens Advocate for Playground

In 2000, KT Murphy 3rd graders worked on a planning project that concluded with an appeal to the Planning Board for additional play

space. Last summer, the students returned as high school students to attend the ribbon cutting ceremony of a new playground at KT Murphy.



KT MURPHY SCHOOL

PHOTO/SYLVA STEIN

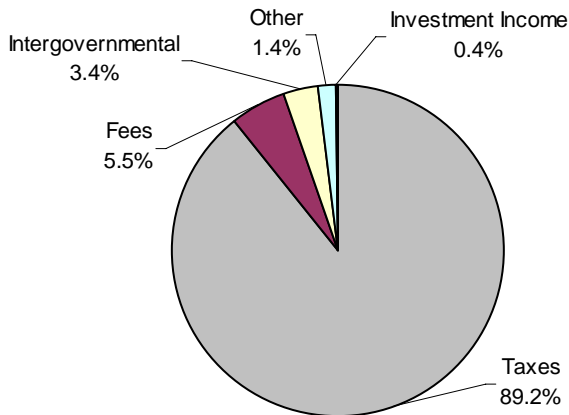


The City's Finances

Revenues and Actual Expenses

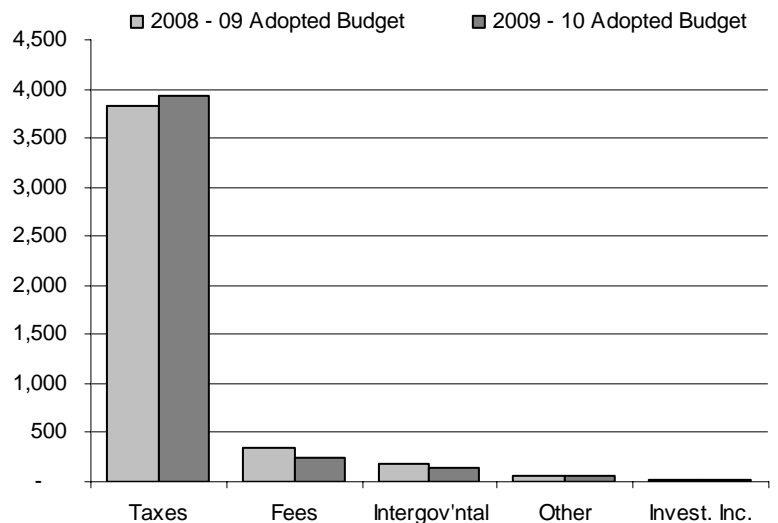
Primary Government Sources of Revenue

General Fund FY 2009-10 Revenues by Source



REVENUES by Source	2008 - 09 Adopted Budget	2009 - 10 Adopted Budget
Taxes	\$382,576,464	\$392,548,784
Fees	35,355,684	24,271,062
Intergovernmental	17,986,970	15,062,950
Other	5,563,503	6,326,093
Investment Income	2,450,000	1,700,000
Total Revenues	\$443,932,621	\$439,908,889

General Fund Revenues by Source (in 100,000s)



Revenues

Taxes - Real estate, personal property, and motor vehicle taxes and the collection of delinquent taxes from the previous year.

Fees - Building permits, conveyance taxes (imposed on the transfer of real estate), and all other fees and fines related to municipal operations.

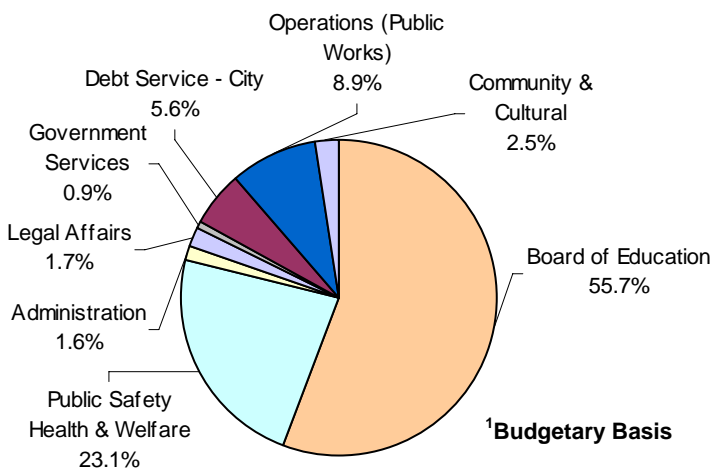
Intergovernmental - Primarily from the State, and consisting largely of education and "Payment in Lieu of Taxes" reimbursements.

Investment Income - Return on investments the City has made, which fluctuate with interest rates.

Overall, there are reductions in the non tax revenues. Building permits, conveyance taxes, and interest income, which in particular have decreased, are strong barometers of the state of the economy. Strong financial management and our AAA credit rating, however, have somewhat protected us from more severe budgeting difficulties affecting other communities.

Primary Government Functional Expenses

General Fund FY 2009-10 Expenditures¹ by Function



EXPENDITURE DRIVERS by Function	2008 - 09 Adopted Budget	2009 - 10 Adopted Budget
Board of Education ²	\$245,525,803	\$245,242,664
Public Safety Health & Welfare	104,081,074	101,582,135
Administration	7,025,738	6,851,606
Legal Affairs ³	4,704,286	7,509,945
Government Services	4,072,813	3,955,082
Debt Service - City	26,338,146	24,744,631
Operations (Public Works)	41,391,873	39,121,243
Community & Cultural (Library, Community Centers, etc.)	10,792,888	10,901,583
Total Expenditures	\$443,932,621	\$439,908,889

²Includes BOE Debt Service and services provided by City departments in support of Education.

³Includes pension contributions.



What's Next?

Future Challenges and Economic Outlook

Transportation

The Transportation Center, as a mass transit hub, is one of the keys to Stamford's economic future. Both rail and bus riderships should grow significantly in the future with the opening of the RBS corporate facility, Metro Green, Harbor Point development and planned downtown projects. Unfortunately, the Transportation Center is

deficient in parking, congested, lacking in basic amenities and is ill-equipped to meet these future demands. To prepare for these critical challenges, the City is about to commission a comprehensive study, and along with the State DOT, will actively seek federal transportation funding for the upgrade of this vital facility.



TRANSPORTATION CENTER

PHOTO/JOSH LECAR

Economy

This region is heavily reliant on the financial services sector, and monitoring the fate of the large international financial operations based in Stamford will be critical over the next twelve months. The general impact of the recession on jobs, housing, and commercial development is the primary challenge for City managers, who are actively pursuing federal stimulus funding.



RECYCLING

PHOTO/ERIN MCKENNA

Budget

The City of Stamford is learning how to do more with less. In this time of economic uncertainty, the City of Stamford has taken steps to reduce operations responsibly so that the taxpayer is not required to bear the full burden of increasing costs of municipal operations.

Due to reduced revenues from declining interest income, building permit fees, and conveyance taxes, Mayor Malloy worked with departments in 08/09 to have them give back over 3% of the funds appropriated by the fiscal boards to conduct operations. Overtime was identified as a major driver of expenditures. Police and Fire have taken positive steps to reduce overtime, while maintaining Stamford as one of the safest cities in the United States, and the Operations Department has made significant reductions as well. FY 09/10 will again provide a challenge to Stamford's provision of services due to further reductions in the operating budget.

Recycling

The Solid Waste Department is working hard to increase recycling rates by accepting a wider variety of items, including fluorescent bulbs, and is conducting school tours of their facilities. Each percent of total refuse diverted from our solid waste stream and recycled means approximately \$70,000 in savings. 10%, a very obtainable goal, would save taxpayers \$700,000 a year.

Recreation

The Recreation Services Division, a department that runs over 300 programs annually, is looking into establishing a full-service recreation center, bringing the Recreation, Senior and Youth Services departments together to provide Stamford residents with a comprehensive slate of recreational and therapeutic services.

We want your input! Do you like this report?
What additional information would you like to see included?
Please email: Stamfordcitizenreport@ci.stamford.ct.us