2024 State of the Town

Presented by Mayor Shari G. Cantor March 18, 2024





2024 MAYOR'S STATE OF THE TOWN ADDRESS

PRESENTED BY



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Shari Cantor West Hartford Mayor

CATERING



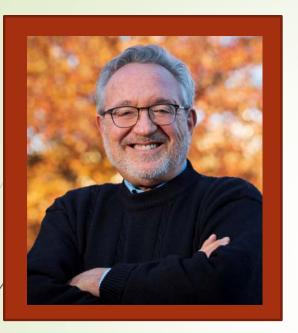




West Hartford Chamber of Commerce, President & Chief Executive Officer

CHRIS CONWAY

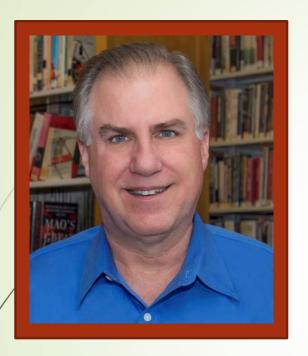




Mandell JCC
President & CEO

DAVID JACODS





West Hartford Chamber of Commerce, Chairperson

CHIP JANISZEWSKI





TD Bank, Market President

STEVE MORONEY



America's Most Convenient Bank®

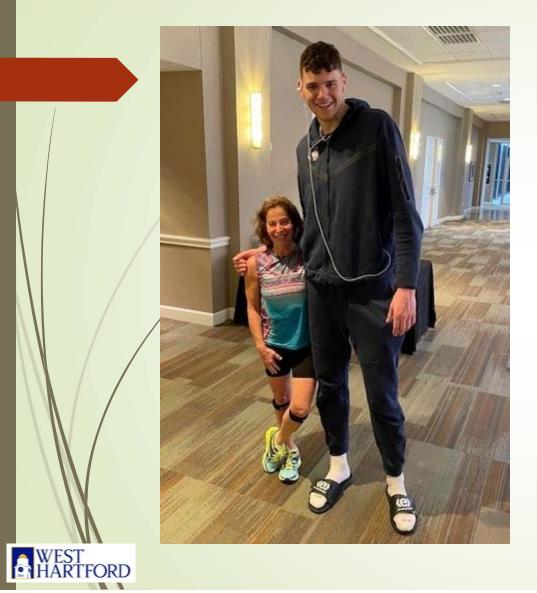


2024 State of the Town

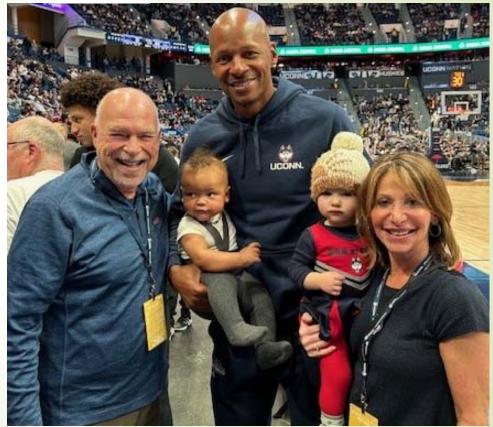
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March 18, 2024









The state of West Hartford is great!

Best Place to Live

- o TIME/Money
- New York Times
- o Livability.com
- Niche
- StudyFind
- WalletHub

Great Place to Retire

Connecticut Magazine

Best Place to Raise a Family

- o Kiplinger's Personal Finance
- o Family Circle magazine

Best Public High Schools

- o College Board Gold
- o U.S. News & World Report
- Washington Post



How do we achieve excellence?

- Always asking: How can we do it better?
- Qualities: Planning, Leadership, and
- Culture: Strategic, Competitive, and Diligent

What is the #1 challenge facing all municipalities nationwide?

- Crime?
- Poverty?
- Jobs?
- Home values?
- Graduation rates?
- Budget?



What is the #1 challenge facing all municipalities nationwide?

- Crime?
- Poverty?
- Jobs?
- ► Home values?
- Graduation rates?
- Budget

No!



What is the #1 challenge facing municipalities nationwide?

HOUSING!

Availability and Affordability



Available & Affordable Housing

- Connecticut is experiencing remarkable population growth
- Downside: "Too many people who cannot find a place to live"
- Connecticut's biennial budget will double its investment in housing



Available & Affordable Housing

- Empty-nest Boomers own 30% of large homes in the U.S.
- Boomers have little incentive to sell, nowhere to go
- Housing is undersupplied
- Median home sale prices: Biggest jump since 2022
- Hispanic, Black, and Asian American homeowners grew over the past decade



West Hartford's Investment in Affordable Housing

- ▶ 2020-2030 Plan of Conservation and Development goal: Increase diversity of housing types and costs
- ▶ 72 new affordable housing units completed in 2023
- ▶ 181 new affordable housing units under construction/approved
- \$6 million Affordable Housing Development Program
- Affordable Housing Plan slated for review and adoption



West Hartford's hot housing market

Demand for homes continues to outpace supply:

- West Hartford 5th most search town on Zillow in the country
- 2023 Median Sale Price: \$451,000, up 28% from 2022
- Qualifying income for starter home rose to \$96,000





Workforce Dynamic



Where & How people work affects where they live

- Hybrid work is here to stay
- Employees & Employers seek locations near amenities
- West Hartford succeeds while others struggle



Workforce Dynamic

Retirements are on the rise:

- 80% increase from six months ago
- The pandemic fundamentally altered the labor force
- Higher stock market returns play a role
- No better time to retire than now!



Source: Axios, 2/19/2024



High Occupancy and Low Vacancies

7-8% vacancy rates represent a very good market

- West Hartford vacancy rates:
 - **■** Office 5.5%
 - ► Multi-family 7.5%
 - ■Industrial 1.4%
 - Retail 7.7%



HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES & NEW DEVELOPMENT



Multi-Family and Rental Properties

Low-maintenance and high-level of amenities of apartment living is very attractive to:

- Empty Nesters
- Senior Citizens
- Young Professionals
- Young families



Under Construction

- The Byline
- 950 Trout Brook Drive
- The Camelot
- West Hartford Fellowship Housing



The Byline

- 48 total units of luxury apartments
- 2 affordable housing units
- 10,000SF commercial space
- Approx. \$15 million investment

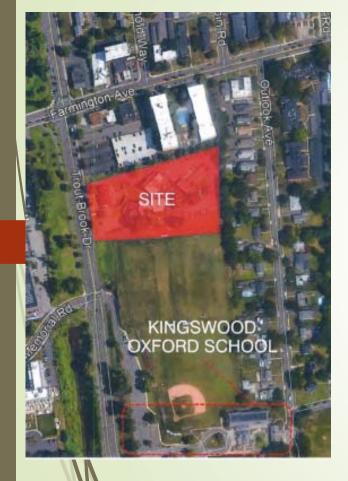




920/924 Farmington Ave.



950 Trout Brook





- 172 total units
- 7 affordable housing units
- Approximately \$800,000 in new tax revenue

The Camelot



- 100% affordable housing
- Estimated \$26 million investment
- \$998,000 Brownfield Remediation Grant





900 Farmington Ave.



Fellowship Housing

10-50 Starkel Road

Phase 1

Buildings 30, 32, 34









WEST HARTFORD FELLOWSHIP HOUSING

- Total units will increase from 213 to 308
- 100% affordable housing for seniors and persons with disabilities
- \$26.5M investment



Approved Projects

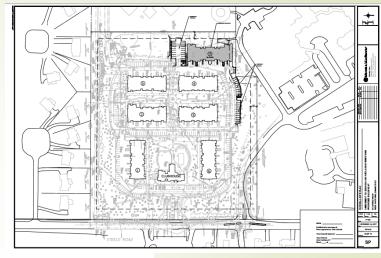
- The Residences at Steele Road
- The Elle at North Main (Agudas Achim Synagogue)
- Central Park Place & 75 LaSalle Road
- **■** Elmwood Lofts



The Residences at Steele Road

30 new apartments; 190 total units

- 6 larger two-bedroom units with two baths
- 4 smaller two-bedroom units
- 20 one-bedroom units







The Elle at North Main St.



Agudas Achim Synagogue, 1244 North Main Street



Central Park Place

83 total units

- 25 apartment units
 4 affordable housing
- 3,500SF commercial space
- 58 condominium units

Estimated \$50 million investment









Proposed Projects

- The Residences at Heritage Park
- The Jayden, 579 New Park



The Residences at Heritage Park

1700 Asylum Ave.

Approved

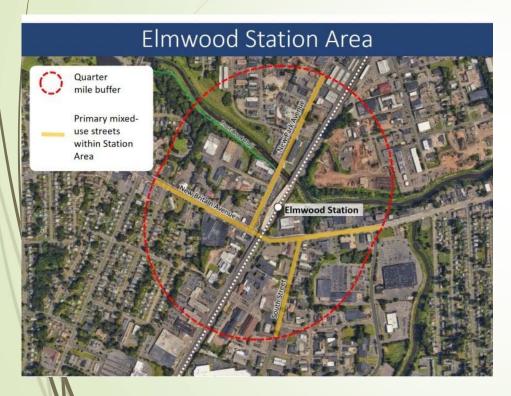
1800 Asylum Ave.

► Resubmit Plans



TRANSPORTATION & COMMERCIAL **CENTERS**

Transit-Oriented Development







The Jayden

579 New Park Ave.

- ▶ 70 units, 14 affordable
- Mixed-use development







Elmwood Lofts

1051 & 1061 New Britain Ave.





- Transit-Oriented Development
- 117 total units (15% affordable housing units)
- \$1 million Brownfield Remediation Grant was awarded



West Hartford's economy is thriving

Commercial Development

Every business district: Corbin's Corner, Westfarms Mall, Park Road,
 The Center, Blue Back Square, Bishops Corner

Residential Development

- Apartments
- Condominiums/Apartments
- Investment Sales

New Park Avenue Corridor

Transit-Oriented Development



West Hartford's 2023 Grand List

- ▶ \$7.2 billion Net Value: ↑ 0.08%
- ► Real Property ↑ 0.3%
 - Kitchen and bath updates, additions, and other home improvements
 - Includes only a fraction of the full values from new developments because of their incomplete state
- ► Motor Vehicle **4** -4%
- Supplemental Motor Vehicle ↑ 9.8%
- ► Personal Property ↑ 6%



Building Permits



Building Permits





Enclosed malls must evolve to succeed

Success is driven by experiential interests rather than shopping for merchandise.

Westfarms Mall is one of three top-tiered enclosed malls in Connecticut











Photos: Westfarms Instagram and Patch

Banks choose West Hartford for expansions and regional headquarters

Why West Hartford?

- Popular downtown with office space
- Restaurants and Small Shops nearby
- Great Chamber of Commerce
- A lot of foot traffic
- Vibrant, strong community
- Geographically the town is well located



West Hartford Center















On-street Outdoor Dining is back

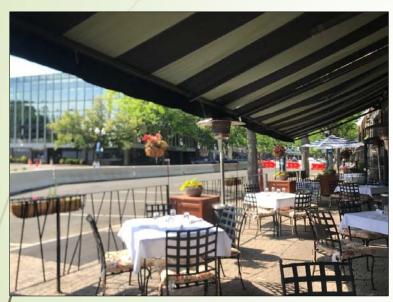


Photo Credit: We-Ha.com





Blue Back Square





















A new home for Conny the Whale's tail



Corbin's Corner











Elmwood & Design District













Triumph Thermal Development Center





Bishops Corner







Park Road











One Park

- 295 total units
- 30 affordable housing units (10% of project)
- Historic preservation & adaptive reuse
- Approximately \$66 million investment



Photos by Ronni Newton



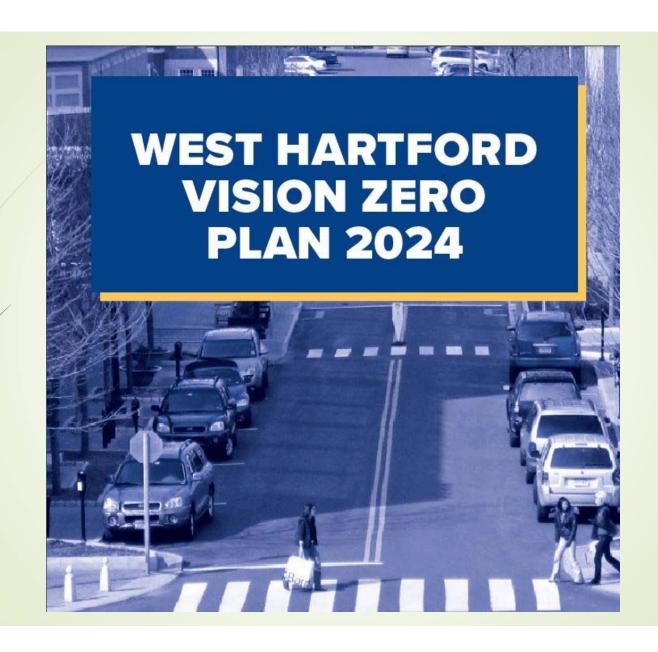




VISION ZERO ACTION PLAN Safe Streets for All Users

Challenge #2







PARK ROAD ROAD SAFETY AUDIT

PROSPECT AVENUE TO QUAKER LANE









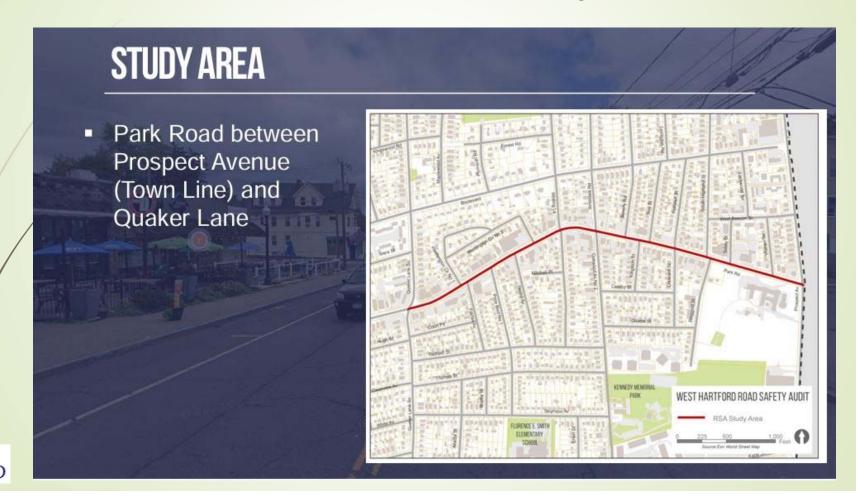




OCTOBER 2023



Park Road Rehabilitation Project

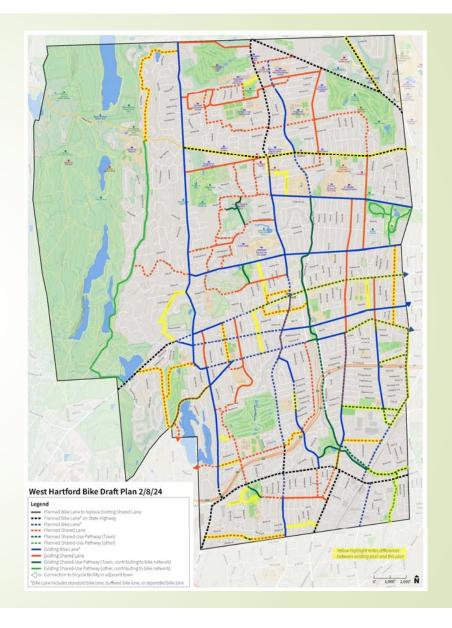


Bishops Corner Pedestrian Mobility Improvements

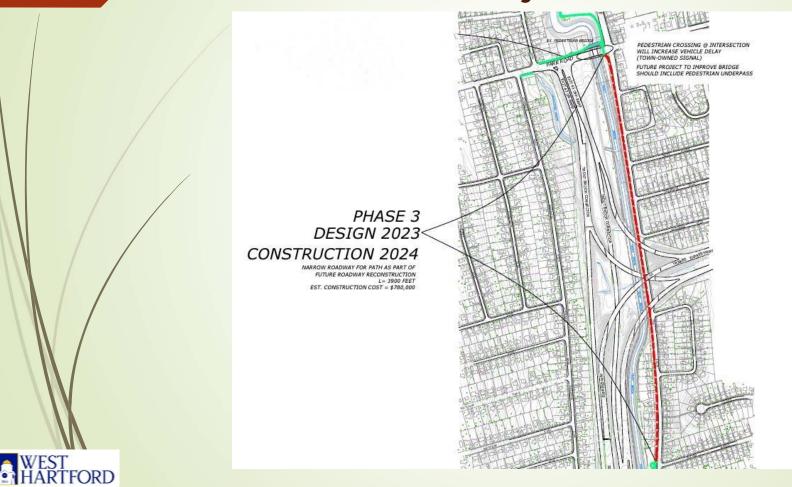


Bicycle Facilities Plan



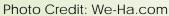


Trout Brook Trail Project



New Park Avenue Complete Streets Project













Our Town, Our Planet, Our Future









connecticut League of Conservation voters Climate, Community, and Conversation

3:30-5:00pm Thursday, September 14th Conard High School

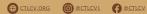
110 Beechwood Rd, West Hartford 06107







Featuring State Representatives Kate Farrar, Jillian Gilchrest, Bobby Gibson, and Senator Derek Slap





Outreach & Engagement



@SustainableWeHa



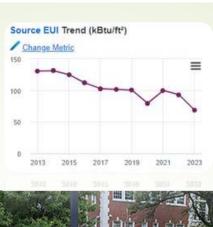
RSVP at t.ly/earthday





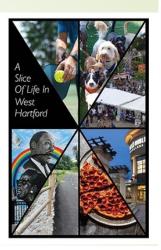


Public Meeting #2









The Wonder of West Hartford

Daren Eddy - A Slice of Life in West Hartford

Brought to the community by
West Hartford Public Library and Municipal Parking





Q WEST HARTFORD, CT

West Hartford Tree Project 2024

Help us continue our work to preserve and restore the urban forest canopy of West Hartford!

\$8,241

Project Closed

* Matching Grant: Sustainable CT



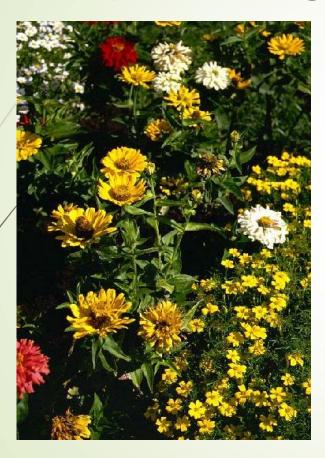
Westmoor Park's Arboretum Certification







New pollinator gardens



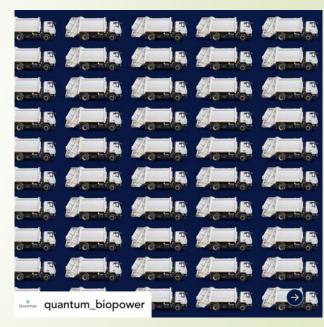
WEST HARTFORD



Solid Waste Disposal Crisis









Waste Reduction Pilot Program



ASYLUMAV

ASYLUMAV

ASYLUMAV

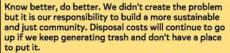
ASYLUMAV

ASYLUMAV

ASYLUMAV

FERN ST

West Hartford is doing its part to address Connecticut's very real waste crisis

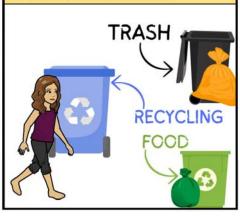








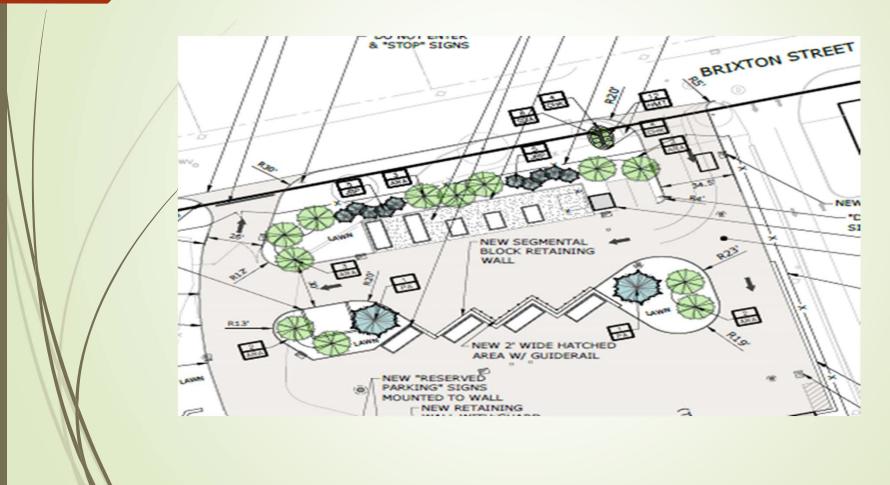
Re-think, Reduce, Repurpose, Repair, Redeem, Recycle AND THEN Separate, Divert and Track.





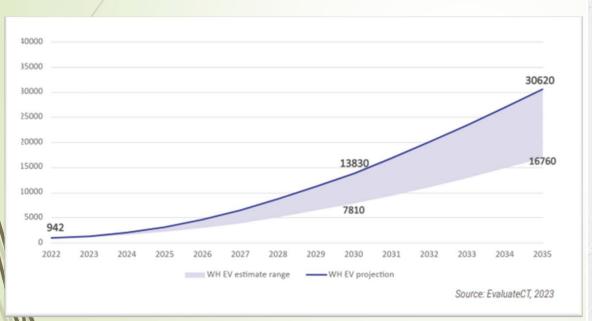


Materials Solution Center Modernization



Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan

Focus on parking lots and garages in commercial areas of town



By 2030, it is projected that 19-34% of vehicles registered in West Hartford will be EVs





2024 Capital Projects

- ▶ New Park Avenue Complete Street Improvement
- ► Park Road Neighborhood Street Rehabilitation
- ► Flood Mitigation Infrastructure Improvements
- Eisenhower Park pool, bathhouse and basketball courts
- Wolcott School Security Improvements
- Webster Hill Elementary School Air Quality Project



2024 Capital Projects

- Design Services: New Elmwood Community Center, Senior Center, Teen Center & Library
- West Hartford Center Infrastructure Improvements
- ► Materials Solution Center Modernization
- Animal Shelter replacement
- Replacement vehicles for Town operations
- Renovations to the Fire & Police building
- ► Radio upgrade for Fire Department



Elmwood Community & Cultural Center

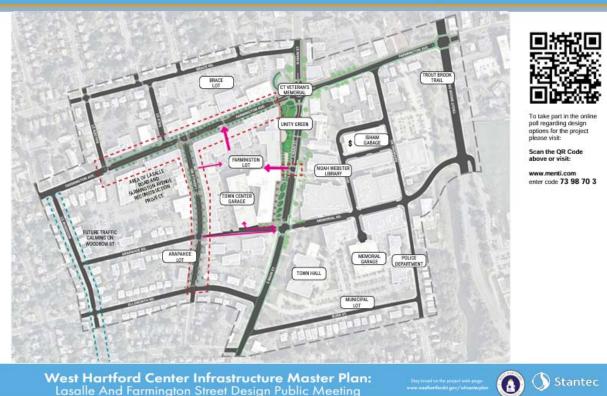






West Hartford Center Infrastructure Master Plan

---INFRASTRUCTURE MASTER PLAN - Study Area

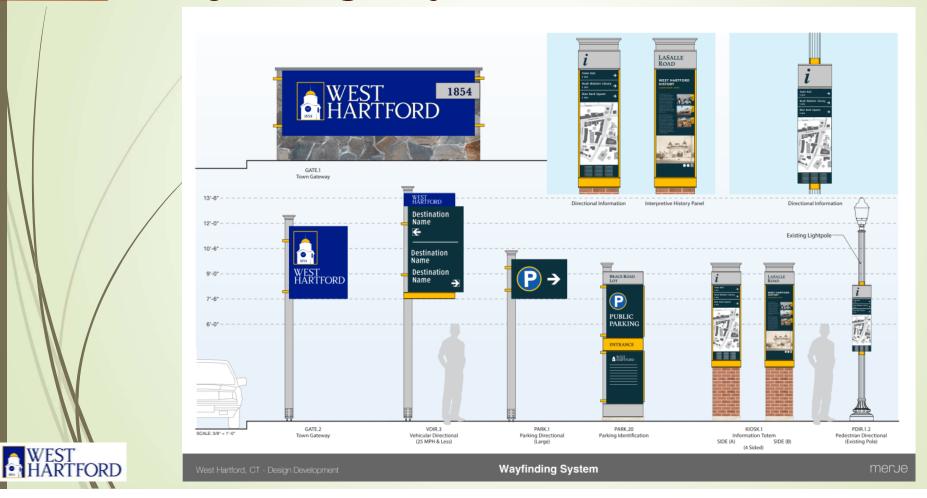


West Hartford Center Infrastructure Master Plan: Lasalle And Farmington Street Design Public Meeting



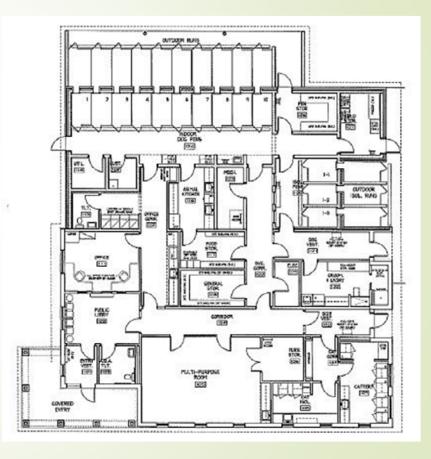


Wayfinding Project



Animal Control Facility





Rockledge Golf Club



Trackman Technology





Rockledge celebrates 100 YEARS!



Eisenhower Pool & Bathhouse



Photo by Ronni Newton

CELEBRATING OUR SCHOOLS & TOWN SERVICES



West Hartford Public Schools

- ▶ Best School Districts in CT (#13)
- ▶ Best High Schools in CT (#10 & 11)
- ▶ 27% non-English, 72 languages
- ▶ 28% qualify for free or reduced meals
- ▶ 98th per pupil spending
- ▶ 17% of in-district K-12 students receive special education

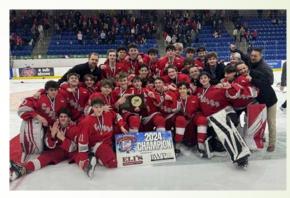


West Hartford Public Schools Our Amazing Sports Teams!











Photos by Jason Siegal, WHPS & We-Ha.com



West Hartford Public Schools' Performing Arts



Hall High School Jazz Combo



Conard High School Les Misérables



Circle of Community

- ► CERT: 242 residents trained, 173 active members
- ► Social Services: 257 volunteers, up 42%
- ► Friendly Visitors and Transportation
- ► PTOs and Sports league coaches
- Donations to Town That Cares & Food Panty
- ▶ Town Council & Board of Education
- ▶ Boards & Commissions
- ► Special Events & Projects



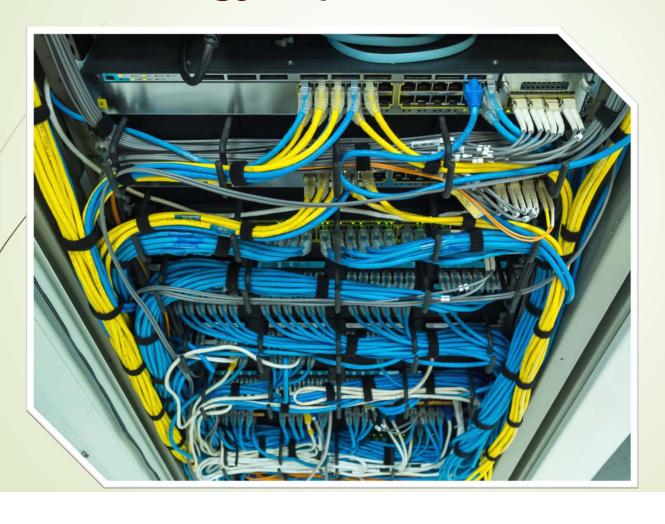
Technology Improvements



Free public access wireless for all outdoor parks/pools



Technology Improvements



Network Infrastructure Investment

Fire Department













Host Community Reception Drill











Fire Academy









Police Department

Flock Camera System

56 "FLOCK Successes" in 2023

- 40 stolen vehicles recovered
- 47 cleared with an arrest
- Persons or vehicles sought for serious crimes





Police Department

▶ West Hartford Intelligence Center



► VirTra Training Simulator





Mobile Command Vehicle



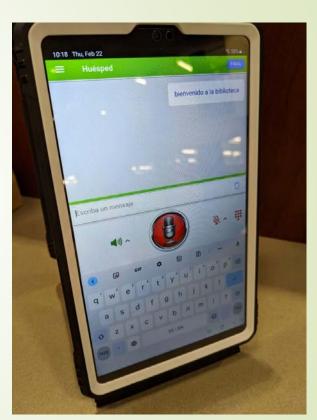




Library







Instant Language Assistants

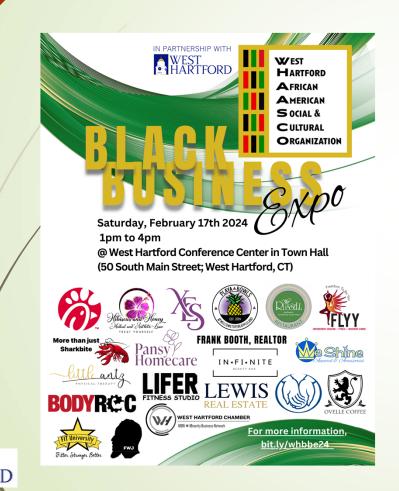
Social Services



Meet our Social Services Team

- Case management services, up 47%
- Social Worker Police Liaison referrals, up 55%
- Juvenile Review Board/Truancy, down 12%
- Community Court referrals, up 21%
- Financial support (Town That Cares), up 19%
- CT Renter's Rebate, up 4%
- Dial-A-Ride members, up 27%, rides up 17%
- Bags/boxes of food distributed, up 12%
- Households receiving food assistance, up 8%
- Donations to Town That Cares, down 14%
- Volunteers engaged, up 42%
- Housing Rehabilitation projects, up 83%

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

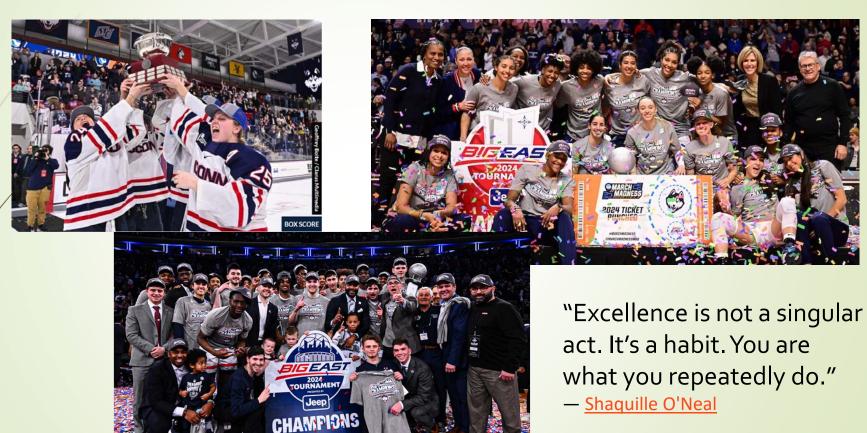




Early Voting



Excellence



Photos by Box Score

act. It's a habit. You are what you repeatedly do."



