

JUSTIFICATION FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNER POSITION

Prior to 1997, transportation planning was the responsibility of the Traffic and Parking Department with a staff of five, consisting of a Director, Transportation Planner and three traffic technicians. As a result of Charter Revision, the Dept. of Traffic and Parking was eliminated and the position Transportation Planner was established within the Land Use Bureau, with shared responsibility to the City Traffic Engineer and Land Use Bureau. In 2010, the Transportation Planner position was eliminated and for the past four years, during a period of intense development activity and initiation of major planning studies, the responsibilities of Transportation Planning and Traffic Engineering have fallen on the shoulders of a single individual, the City Traffic Engineer.

One individual cannot perform the duties of traffic engineering and transportation planning for the entire city, given the city's rate of development and the complexity of designing, planning and managing the orderly improvement of critical traffic, transit, parking and pedestrian systems. As a result of this staffing deficiency, existing plans and improvement programs such as the citywide traffic calming plan are stalled, necessary technical support to land use boards is severely limited, and ongoing planning studies are being conducted without adequate transportation planning support.

Major projects needing transportation planning staff support include the following:

2010 Transportation Center Master Plan. Coordination with Conn. DOT and implementation of recommended improvement program.

State Transit Oriented Development Plan at the Transportation Center. Design Review and Coordination of the joint review by Conn. DOT and Stamford Land Use Bureau to enhance transit operations, traffic, parking, commuter shuttles and pedestrian/bike access.

Glenbrook/Springdale Transit Oriented Feasibility Study. Guidance and support to the consultants performing this study; coordinate the implementation of final recommendations.

Shuttle Bus Study, Southwestern Regional Planning Agency. Staff support and coordination for this new study of shuttle bus operations at the Transportation Center.

✓ Long Ridge/High Ridge Road Corridor Study. Follow through implementation of study recommendations.

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Stamford Traffic Calming Program. Follow through on the design and implementation portion of this program, including community outreach.

Master Plan Update 2014. Participation in the review of traffic/transit/mobility policies and Action Plan recommendations; initiate final design studies and follow through to implement the Action Plan.

West Side Transportation Study. Provide guidance and support to the consultants performing this new study; coordinate the implementation of final recommendations.

Major Project Reviews. Team with Land Use Bureau staff in the review of major development projects to coordinate required traffic and streetscape improvements and encourage traffic reduction strategies to increase transit utilization, reduce parking demand and decrease congestion.

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LAND USE INSPECTOR POSITION
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- Five years ago, the Zoning Department had 3 land use/zoning inspectors, one of which was shared half time with EPB. Effectively, 2 ½ staff.
- Currently, we have only 2 land use/zoning inspectors, one of which is shared half time with EPB. Effectively 1 ½ staff.
- 1 ½ staff is an inadequate staffing level to protect the quality of life and property values of a the City of Stamford with:
 - 125,000 people
 - 37 square miles of land area
 - 16,800 business firms
 - 49,413 housing units
- In Master Plan meetings with neighborhoods, residents have consistently identified the lack of adequate zoning enforcement as a priority concern.
- Most of staff time is currently spent processing permit applications, returning phone calls and emails and performing follow up inspections of completed projects.
- Current office work load: 4,800 people seen per year; currently 35 to 38 people/day; with wait times more than one hour.
- As time permits, inspectors work to investigate and resolve zoning complaints.
- There is currently a backlog of approximately 300 zoning complaints waiting to be investigated and resolved.
- A single zoning enforcement case can take weeks of staff time, particularly if it goes to court.