

City of Stamford

Mill River Park Collaborative

FY 2019-20

BOR Fiscal Committee

Budget Presentation





Introduction

Mission: To run a world class urban park in the heart of Stamford that serves as both an oasis in city life and a vibrant, diverse, green-space that inspires sound environmental practices and learning.



Programs	Services Provided
Critical & Mandated	
Landscaping and Maintenance	Planting, mowing, tree care, snow removal, cleaning, maintenance of hardscape and fixtures
Public Programming	Free fitness programs, movies nights, arts & entertainment
Capital Development	Capital expansion of the Mill River Park & Greenway in accordance with the Mill River Park Master Plan
Other	
Brownstein Selkowitz Carousel Pavilion	Operate year round pavilion with carousel, snack bar and restrooms. Provide free public programs including Sunday story times year-round, drop in arts & crafts and arts performances. Provide birthday parties and event space.
Steven & Alexandra Cohen Skating Center and Fountain	Manage co-located seasonal ice skating rink and display fountain. Ice Skating rink is the only ice rink open 7 days a week in season dedicated to recreational skating in lower Fairfield County.



Department Management

Key Program/Department Challenges

- Include factors that drive program / department costs:
 - Size and length/distribution of the park.
 - Intensive plantings and sensitive ecological/habitat areas within the park boundaries
 - Need to continue construction and capital development to realize Master Plan vision

- Include factors that might impact productivity
 - Securing the financial resources on an annual basis to adequately maintain and operate the park.
 - Hiring the appropriate number of staff to maintain an intensively planted park

Budget Scenarios


- What budget line items can you control
 - Park Maintenance
 - Safety
 - Personnel
 - Programming
- If additional funding could be realized how would department services be expanded or enriched?
 - Additional free programming could be offered to the public
 - Additional investment in specialized horticultural staff
 - Expanded Park Ambassador Program
- In the event of significant budget reductions describe the impact the reduction would have?
 - Decrease in the level of park maintenance
 - Reduction in the number and variety of free programs offered
 - Elimination of Ambassador program
 - Slowed pace of park improvement and expansion



This is what is coming

Major changes planned for the department

- Include new or improved services (or processes) the department will provide to citizens or to other City departments or personnel
 - Full season of fountain shows
 - Upgraded comfort stations and new concession stand on the east side of the Park
 - More services for elementary age children (i.e. vacation camp, afterschool)
 - Full season of ice rink
 - New and improved playground facilities and comfort stations on west side of park
 - Adding 5+ additional acres to park including new horseshoe pits
 - New temporary dog run

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- Describe what management is doing or could do to reduce department costs or reduce/eliminate services that are no longer critical
 - We have increased outsourcing of particular maintenance items that we used to use full time staff for.
 - Revised planting list to reduce maintenance while maintaining ecological integrity
 - What investments, increased spending, or other changes could you make this year that would have a long term positive impact?
 - Begin construction from Tresser Blvd. to Richmond Hill Ave. in May 2019
 - Begin construction of new playground including a splashpad and comfort stations in summer 2019
 - Begin construction of Whittingham Discovery Center in Fall 2019