

STAMFORD MUSEUM & NATURE CENTER
MISSION, GOALS & INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH
City of Stamford 2022.23 Operating Funding Request
Board of Representatives & Board of Finance
2023-28 Capital Request Reference



Mission Statement

The Stamford Museum & Nature Center is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of art and popular culture, the natural and agricultural sciences, and history. The Museum is a vital cultural and educational resource for the community, and a focal point for family activity and interaction. We seek to inspire creativity, foster self-discovery, steward environmental sustainability, and nurture an appreciation for lifelong learning through exhibits, educational programs, and special events that enhance the visitor's experience of our unique site.

SM&NC 2022.23 Operating Budget Request \$1,325,000 [no increase]

Our Key Community Impact & Results

Since 1936, the Stamford Museum & Nature Center, a 501 (c) (3) private, non-profit, has served as **Stamford's museum** and by 1955, **as Stamford's nature Center**, one of the largest nature-based educational institutions in Connecticut and the largest in the City of Stamford. The City of Stamford has been an historic funding partner since 1939.

- From our annual Audited Financials, 78% of our operating budget goes directly to support the delivery of constituent programs and services to Stamford and our shoulder communities. This is a source of great pride.
- Annually, we must raise 66-68% of our \$3.9 million operating income through other earned and contributed sources in a highly competitive non-profit field.
- The largest negative COVID impact is shown most notably in our SM&NC Aligned-With-Our-Schools and camp programs **which are down 57%** since pre-pandemic service more than 40,000 school children.

In these years like no others, our 118 acre campus is open. Our Members and visiting public are connected here and deeply grateful. We are developing our public and school programming with creativity and care. The **Knobloch Family Farmhouse** complex has been a significant stage for our public programs and remote learning.

As a High-Performance organization, we regularly collect data and benchmark programming to assist with forecasts and inform our year-over-year program budget development and financial performance.

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Stamford Museum & Nature Center	2020-2021 Participants	2019-2020 Participants	Difference	FY18-19 "Pre-Covid"
General Admission	117,927	76,788	54%	106,980
Regional Camp Visits	-	3,788	-100%	3,492
SM&NC Camp Programs	2,590	5,458	-53%	5,009
Pre-School Programs	6,386	8,515	-25%	13,360
SM&NC-in-Schools & Onsite	12,142	24,974	-51%	42,270
Facility Rentals	2,787	3,610	-23%	3,878
Community Events	13,928	6,537	113%	8,375
Fund-Raising Events/Adult Programs	3,834	889	331%	998
Volunteer Support	1,002	1,201	-17%	4,100
Total Visitors/Community Served	160,596	131,760	22%	188,462

Our Current FY 2021.22 Covid Pandemic Impacts & Challenges:

Our approach to 2021.22 Budget development was extremely conservative given the uncertainty of Covid-19 and associated restrictions.

- Clearly shown in the chart above for 2020.21, our renowned **SM&NC Aligned-With-Our-Schools on-site and off-site public-school program**, area camp visits, and our summer camp program **were down 57%** severely impacted by restrictions.
- However, we diligently **reimagined** earned income public programs and events that rallied the community and are now more successful models going forward.
 - Nostalgic drive-in movie series in our new Knobloch Family Farmhouse
 - A Lobster Clambake on the Farmhouse Plaza replaced our indoor Farm-To-Table Supper
 - Picnic on the Farmhouse Plaza with a Comedy Night
 - Replacing Festival Weekends with pre-registered 3-4 enhanced FamFest Sundays (from 10-2) for a better visitor experience.
 - Outdoor concert in the Farmhouse parking lot
 - Stamford Symphony concert on the Farmhouse Plaza in partnership with the Symphony
 - Major **85th Anniversary *Sharing the gift of wonder*** membership celebration/campaign.

Looking ahead to FY 2022.23

- For the 2022.23 Budget year, we truly hope the Covid 19 pandemic, with all of its uncertainty and imbalance, will be manageable.
- With over 7% inflation and increased utilities costs, **we do anticipate pressure on insurance, utilities, and maintenance.**
- Over the last two years, we have been transitioning out of City of Stamford historic technology systems support for internet, computer server, and phone system. We are absorbing those technology operating costs moving forward.
- We have reimagined programming models with more certainty of execution and return. We will continue to be of valued service to our constituencies throughout Stamford, far, and wide.
- We are presenting a balanced budget for FY 2022.23 reflecting strong creative work on our recovery with the City's historic support.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we respectfully request the City of Stamford's continued investment of \$1,325,000 in Operating Support to the Stamford Museum & Nature Center.



Stamford Museum & Nature Center

City of Stamford FY2022/2023 Operating Budget- Fiscal Committee Presentation

	FY 2021-22 Budget Forecast	Draft FY 2022-23 Budget	Change
PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE			
City of Stamford	1,325,000	1,325,000	-
Contributions	325,000	390,000	65,000
Annual Appeal	60,000	75,000	15,000
Fundraising	180,000	180,000	-
Membership	310,000	320,000	10,000
Adult Programs	75,000	75,000	-
Facility Use	164,800	174,800	10,000
Classes:			-
Pre-School	520,000	535,000	15,000
Camp	145,000	150,000	5,000
Education Programs	60,000	65,000	5,000
Groups	100,000	105,000	5,000
Admission	300,000	300,000	-
Festival Events	100,000	100,000	-
Retail Sales	60,100	73,000	12,900
Other Income	10,100	10,200	100
TOTAL PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE	3,735,000	3,878,000	143,000
			4%
EXPENSES			
Compensation	2,130,000	2,140,000	10,000
Payroll Taxes	193,000	188,000	(5,000)
Benefits	207,000	230,000	23,000
Professional Fees & Services	52,300	125,000	72,700
Supplies & Program Expense	160,500	165,000	4,500
Equipment Supplies & Expense	106,500	120,000	13,500
Exhibitions	70,000	75,000	5,000
Property Repairs & Maintenance	265,000	250,000	(15,000)
Farm & Animal Care	100,000	105,000	5,000
Utilities	118,500	140,000	21,500
Print Publications	43,000	45,000	2,000
Postage	10,000	10,000	-
Marketing & Advertising	37,000	37,000	-
Meetings/Dues/Subscriptions	10,700	11,000	300
Insurance	118,000	122,000	4,000
Cost of Sales- Merchandise	25,500	30,500	5,000
Bank Fees	50,000	50,000	-
Capex & Other Misc. Expense	25,000	30,000	5,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	3,722,000	3,873,500	151,500
			4%
NET INCOME (LOSS) FROM OPERATIONS	13,000	4,500	(8,500)

Confidential

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Capital Request 2023-2028

On behalf of our Board of Directors and SM&NC Science Advisory Council, we have respectfully requested an **investment of \$2 million from the City of Stamford, matching Governor Lamont's \$2 million DECD state bond funding**, to move forward on the **Planetarium & Astronomy Center**.

City of Stamford Capital Support Criteria

- ✓ **Major construction projects will only be funded when proper preliminary and/or feasibility studies have been completed.**
- ✓ **Projects that will be completed in one year.**
- ✓ **Projects with a useful life equal to or exceeding the bond repayment period.**
- ✓ **Projects that provide the greatest value to City taxpayers.**

- Our 2010 Master Plan and Phase II Capital Campaign vision has been to replace our deteriorated 1965 Observatory and site a new building in its place.
- Our Observatory has been condemned and CLOSED since October 2018.
- The new Planetarium & Astronomy Center will bring our astronomy and STEAM programming together in one building for the first time in our 86-year history.
- This revitalizes and restores a key science education pillar of the SM&NC Mission and will be a significant cultural tourism asset for the City of Stamford and the State of Connecticut.
- Our Mission drives our signature destination features – art and culture, a working New England farm, natural world immersion, and astronomy. Nowhere else in the Mid-Atlantic corridor is there an attraction with the features that the Stamford Museum & Nature Center offers.



Exterior



Non-ADA Compliant Facility



Classroom



Stairwell to Telescope



Path to Observatory



Bathroom Doorway: No Handicap Accessibility



Observation Deck

We plan to replace our dilapidated Observatory from 1965 and site a new building in its place.

Our Observatory has been condemned and CLOSED since October 2018.

WHAT'S NEW & NEXT?



Stamford **Museum**
& **Nature Center**

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Chief Executive Officer

Melissa H. Mulrooney*

*Executive Committee

Let's reach for the stars together.

Our cover for this winter edition of *NEXT Quarterly Magazine* shows you the new Planetarium & Astronomy Center Phase II vision for what lies ahead. We joyously delivered upon Phase I, on time and on budget, by bringing you the magnificent Knobloch Family Farmhouse complex in November 2018.



- For so many of you, there is a very personal connection to the Stamford Museum & Nature Center. You recognize the value of our unique and differentiated educational programming and on-site riches that we share with all who enter here.
- The Phase II Planetarium & Astronomy Center will revitalize and restore a core pillar of our Mission, and bring our Astronomy programs together under the same roof for the first time in our history.
- Our enhanced STEAM curriculum will support state education standards and solidify our position as the premier destination for astronomy and science education. Please **advocate** in our community for this extraordinary science facility.
- While our historic Gregory-Maksutov telescope will safely move to The Astronomical Lyceum in Magdalena, New Mexico, we will still own it and enjoy real-time access and "dark sky" images through the magic of technology. Our new Observatory will have contemporary lunar and solar telescopes for sky viewing.
- The new Planetarium & Astronomy Center will benefit our schools, public programs, adult enrichment, and community events. What a resource to have this science education programming in our backyards.

We seek support from all who stand behind our community's leading projects. Our success depends on private and corporate donations, funding from the City of Stamford and State of Connecticut, and the advocacy of friends like you who recognize the lasting cultural impact this Center will have for all time.

Sending every good wish to you and yours,

Harry Day
President, Board of Directors

Melissa H. Mulrooney
Chief Executive Officer



Stamford Museum & Nature Center Planetarium & Astronomy Center

Timeline: We will be shovel-ready in 2022.

- March 2022 – Architectural firm Tai Soo Kim Studio engaged on final design of Center and features.
- June 2022 – Our telescope is moved to The Astronomical Lyceum, Magdalena, New Mexico.
- Fall 2022 – The Observatory is demolished and site repair and preparation begins.
- March 2023 – Final architectural design complete, RFP process complete, construction begins.
- **Spring 2024 – Grand Opening Celebration**



- The **Planetarium & Astronomy Center** is the second phase of our Capital Campaign, which will bring our Planetarium and Astronomy programs together under one roof for the first time in our 86-year history.
- Our enhanced science curriculum will support state education standards and solidify our position as the premier destination for astronomy and science education, **a signature of our Mission**.
- Dedicated classroom spaces will further emphasize physical science through the STEAM curriculum (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts/Astronomy and Math), supporting the State of Connecticut Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards.
- The Planetarium will have theater-style, articulated seating for 100 with additional space to function as an auditorium for community use and collaborative events. An outdoor observation deck; large, flexible classroom spaces and leading technology will expand our science offerings. This will benefit our schools, public programs, adult enrichment, and community events.
- The addition of the Planetarium & Astronomy Center will be a profound **cultural tourism asset** for Stamford and the State of Connecticut. Nowhere else in the Mid-Atlantic Corridor is there an attraction with features that the Stamford Museum & Nature Center offers. Our visitors will look at the sky through real solar and night-sky telescopes.
- We will become the largest nature and science-based resource in the region for communities that long to have this educational programming in their own backyards. Students from all over the region will pull into our Farmhouse parking lot at 151 Scofieldtown Road and engage in scores of astronomy and science programming.



Overall view of the Farmhouse and Astronomy Center







