

# CITY OF STAMFORD LAND USE BUREAU

Ralph Blessing  
phone: (203) 977-4714  
email: [rblessing@stamfordct.gov](mailto:rblessing@stamfordct.gov)


March 28, 2023





# *Department Introduction & Brief History*

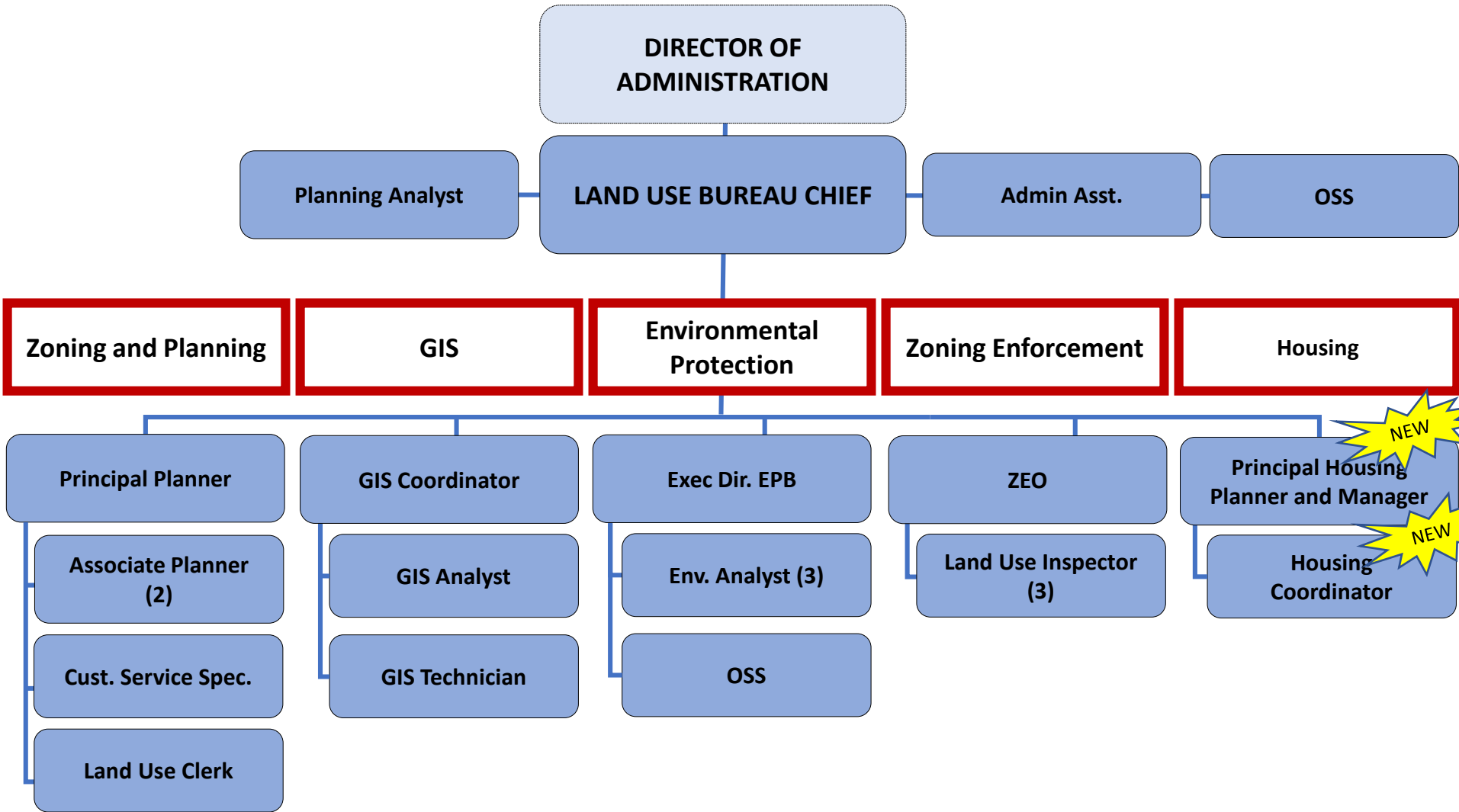
## **The Land Use Bureau' mission is to:**

- **Plan for the future** of Stamford through the Master, other plans and the Capital Budget;
- **Provide support** to and liaise with the City's Land Use Boards;
- **Regulate land use** and building form through Zoning and enforce the City's Zoning Regulations;
- **Regulate the City's wetlands and flood prone** areas
- **Manage the City's Below Market Rate Housing Program** 
- **Provide** maps and **mapping services** to City agencies and the general public; and
- **Provide information** that allows the public to participate in the planning for the City.

## **The Land Use Bureau's Strategic Initiatives for FY2023-2024 are:**

- Streamline the City's Below Market Rate Housing Program
- **Improve permitting and enforcement**
- Start the 2025 **Master Plan** process
- Improve the City's **sustainability** and **resiliency**
- Support the production of more **affordable housing**
- **Streamline** the City's land use **regulations**
- Identify areas for **growth and preservation**

# Land Use Bureau Organization





# Major organizational changes

- New **Housing Manager** and **Housing Coordinator** will improve oversight of City's Below Market Rate Housing Program and will provide improved access for residents to the program.
- Upgrade from Zoning to Land Use Inspector and Land Use Clerk positions will create efficiencies in zoning enforcement and permitting (in conjunction with ongoing efforts to fully digitize permit application review and enforcement)



## ***Accomplishments FY2021-22***



- Completed first Housing Affordability Plan which was selected best in Fairfield County
- Rezoned area south of the train station to allow for residential and office development
- Received more than \$ 3 million in grant funding for reconstruction of marinas and resiliency projects
- Improved customer service by transitioning to electronic permit review / working on implementing new permitting system



# FY 2023-2024 Goals

## Land Use Bureau goals and plans for FY 2023-2024

Goal	Tool	Obstacle	Metrics	Budget Impact
1. Improve the Administration of the City's Below Market Rate Housing Program	Hire 2 staff to improve a. Program oversight b. Streamline program administration c. Provide assistance to residents	Funding for new staff	Comprehensive compliance report and metrics in connection with applications	\$223,869 increase in operating budget, to be partially offset by fee increases
2. Improve permitting and enforcement for Zoning Permit and Zoning Violations	Upgrade Land Use Clerk and Zoning Inspector position, in conjunction with new software deployment	Funding for new staff, roll-out of new software	Metrics in VPC and successor system	\$16,262 in operation budget increase, to be partially offset by fee increases.
3. Start the 2025 Master Plan process	Issue RFP for hiring a consultant	Funding	Timely completion of the new Master Plan Will be part of the contract negotiations	\$100,000 capital Budget (CP0042) – will need more in future years
4. Improve City's sustainability and resiliency	a. Commence Resiliency study b. Issue RFP for tree inventory	Funding	Timely completion of studies and metrics defined in the contract	\$250,000 capital budget for tree inventory (001292) \$50,000 for resiliency study (CP1457)

The other Bureau initiatives (production of more affordable, streamlining of the City's land use regulations and Identification of areas for growth and preservation are not expected to have budget impacts



# *FY 2023-2024 Proposed Revenue Increases*

In March, 2023, the Land Use Bureau submitted to the Board of Representatives a draft ordinance to amend the Bureau's fee schedule.

The estimated fiscal impact of the proposal is as follows:

Fee increases, existing fees ( $\approx 10\%$ )	\$ 75,000.00	last FY Dept. Revenue was 748,719
BMR filing fee	\$ 110,000.00	$\approx 1,100$ BMR units in the City
New fees	\$ 50,000.00	
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED</b>	<b>\$ 235,000.00</b>	