



Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens

**Board of Representatives
Fiscal Committee
2025-2026
Budget Request Presentation**



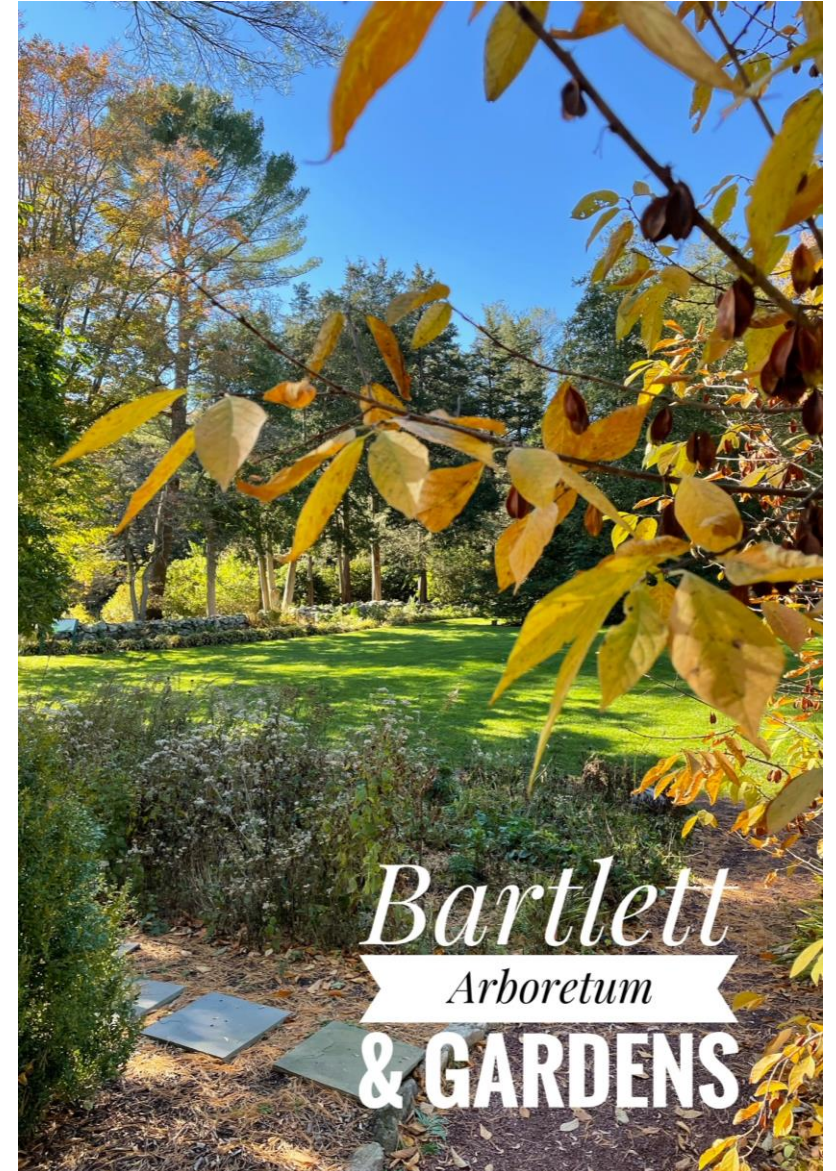
Bartlett 
Arboretum
& Gardens
Stamford

Agency Overview The Bartlett Arboretum Association, through a lease agreement with the City of Stamford, maintains a city-owned park open to the public, free of charge, 365 days per year (366 days this year!). The property annually serves over **100,000 visitors** and features

- 93 acres of irreplaceable open space
- magnificent award-winning Champion trees
- 13 charming gardens
- wildflower meadows & red maple wetlands
- 2.5 miles of woodland walking trails
- varied wildlife and native habitats.

A wonderful getaway from the hustle and bustle of daily life, the Arboretum serves as a leading recreational and educational resource for area residents and visitors of all ages. *In fact, the **Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens** was recently selected as the best public green space in Connecticut by HGTV in their feature on the Best Green Spaces in all 50 States. Other notable spaces on the list included Vermont's Shelburne Farms, Colorado's Betty Ford Alpine Gardens, Illinois' Millennium Park, and New York's Adirondack Park.*

(It should be noted that Arboretum also maintains Potter's Field, used by the City for over 100 years to bury nearly 400 of its poor or unclaimed dead).



The mission of the Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens is to cultivate and develop a diverse collection of trees, gardens, and plants for all to explore, enjoy and study; and to provide through education and stewardship, a greener, healthier, more beautiful environment. We accomplish this by

- Linking visitors from our surrounding communities to the natural world, through our grounds, exhibits and programming.
- Building a community that welcomes and respects the diversity of all visitors, staff, volunteers, donors, and advocates creating an inclusive environment.
- Providing comprehensive environmental, horticulture and plant science educational programs for children and adults of all ages and abilities.
- Preserving the historical significance of the Bartlett Arboretum for current and future generations.
- Creating opportunities for inspiration, recreation, enjoyment, and exploration of the natural world for all who visit.
- Maintaining plant collections that celebrate biodiversity and reflect the ecology and character of our region.
- Promoting conservation and principles of sustainable landscape management.

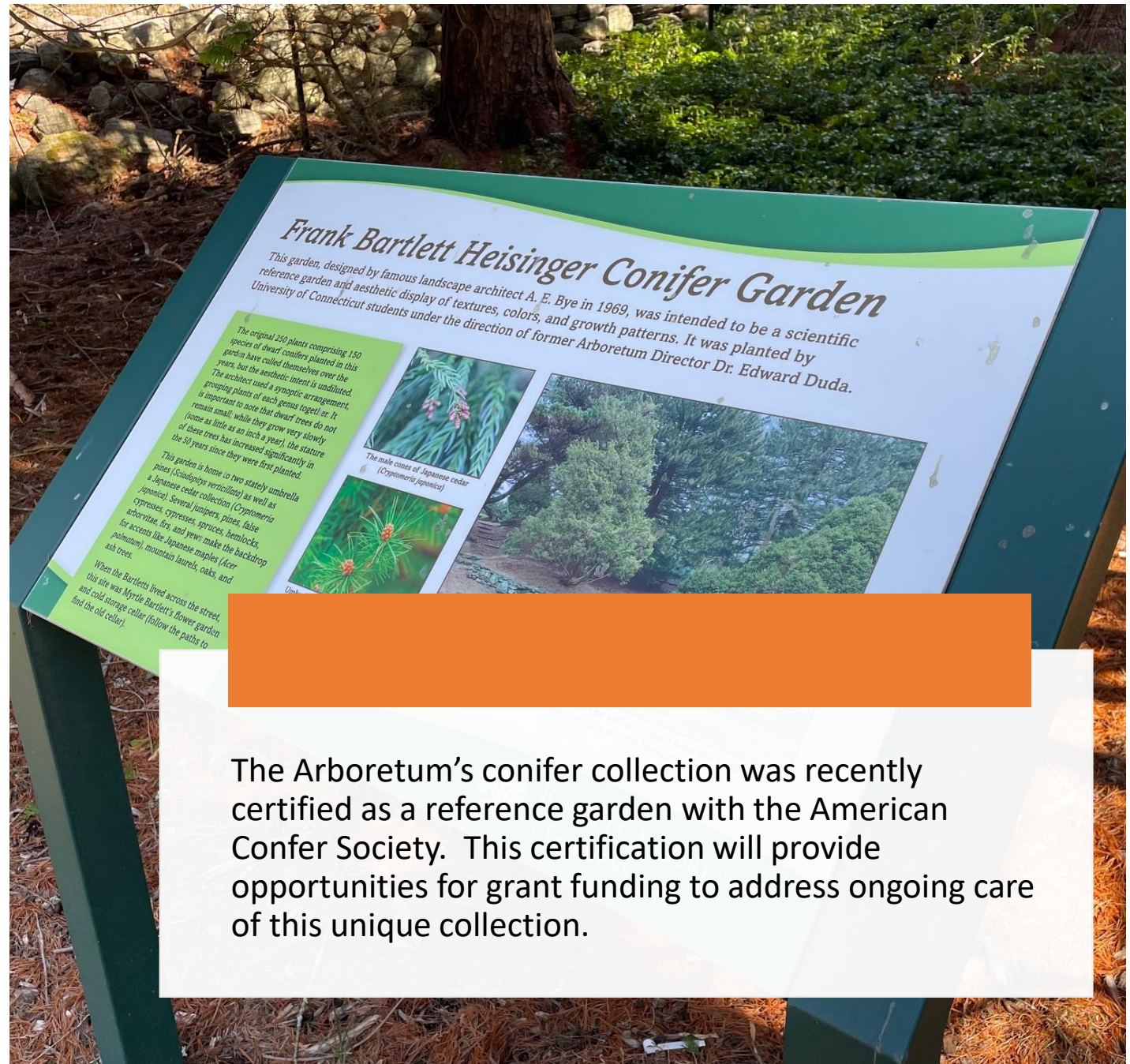
Vision: To be a nationally recognized center of living collection expertise, education, stewardship, exhibition and horticultural best practices.





Highlights, Efficiencies & Service Improvements Over the Past Year

- Conducted on and off-site in-person programming and workshops for community partners including Inspirica, CLC, Building One Community, Beyond Limits, and several Stamford senior centers
- Hosted over 100,000 visitors (over 15% from out-of-state)
- Provided virtual and on-site programming (4 different Plant Life Cycle Modules) to every Stamford Schools second grade classes (1,500 students)
- Held our annual Plant Sale raising more than \$25,000 to support Arboretum operations
- Provided 8 week-long summer camp sessions for 280 campers (15% were supported by scholarships)
- Hosted a successful summer outdoor concert series attended by over 1,500 people of all ages
- Hosted two major **free** community events – The Annual Arbor Earth Day and Honey Harvest Festivals
- Graduated 30 new Master Gardeners in cooperation with the UConn Extension Master Gardener program
- Engaged over 100 local high school students in free education programs, internships and volunteer work
- Began construction of an auxiliary greenhouse to provide an on-site facility for the Arboretum's Tropical plant collection during construction of the new Horticulture Complex.



The Arboretum's conifer collection was recently certified as a reference garden with the American Conifer Society. This certification will provide opportunities for grant funding to address ongoing care of this unique collection.

New or Expanded Services or Programs in 2025-26

- In association with the City schools and other non-profit organizations, the Arboretum plans to continue expansion of its **workforce development** programs in the areas of arboriculture, horticulture, and landscape design.
- Working with partner organizations, including the Downtown Special Services District and Mill River Collaborative, the Arboretum to build on existing efforts to enhance the City's **Urban Forestry and Landscaping initiatives**.
- Through increased fundraising efforts, the Arboretum seeks to provide additional scholarship support for those in need of financial assistance to attend the programs and access the services provided by the Arboretum, including Camp Bart, its popular summer program experience for K-6 graders.



Summary of Significant Changes

With reduced support from the City in FY2024/25 we were forced to eliminate one part-time position. The Arboretum's current staff now includes 7 full-time, 3 part-time, and 10 seasonal (camp staff) employees. As a result, we relied more heavily on the support of the Arboretum's 200+ volunteers, many of whom are graduates of the UConn Extension Master Gardener program hosted by the Arboretum.

Key Agency Challenges or Changes expected in 2025-26

Key Challenges:

1. **Capital Costs:** Construction of the Arboretum's Horticulture Complex has been delayed due to the need to have land leased from the City, consolidated from three (3) separate land parcels into one. In addition to creating an unanticipated \$10K expense for producing the maps and documentation required for the consolidation process, the delay has resulted in escalated project costs. We are working tirelessly to raise funds to get the project back on schedule and avoid any further increased costs.
2. **Operating Costs:** There is growing concern over the impact changes at the federal level may have on potential grant revenue and individual giving, not to mention proposals pending to tax nonprofit earned income.



The Arboretum's Capital Requests

- \$300,000 for the Arboretum's Greenhouse project (CP0120)
- \$50,000 for the Arboretum's new Pavilion (CP2700)
- \$50,000 for Maintenance Building Upgrades



Capital Project Request FY 2026-2032

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360 CP0120 BARTLETT ARBORETUM - GREENHOUSE

Agency: 0695 Non City Agencies: Bartlett Arboretum
Contact: Tracy Kay - (203) 883-4052 - tkay@bartlettarboretum.org
Location: 151 Brookdale Rd, Stamford, CT 06903
Neighborhood: North Stamford **Voting District:** 20

Dept Priority	1	Tier	1
Oracle Date	2025-02-16	YTD Balance	1,120,000.00
Encumbered	0.00	Amount Available	0.00
Advanced		Unfunded	1,120,000.00

Project Description - The project involves removal of our existing greenhouse and replacing it with a new code-compliant, energy- efficient greenhouse & conservatory.

Detailed Project Cost		Justification for Inclusion in Capital Plan	Expenditures by Year			
Design Development	\$0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cost Savings	Fiscal Year	Authorization	Encumbered	Expenditure
Construction Related	\$300,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Life Safety	2024	620,000.00	0.00	0.00
Equipment Acquisition	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> Continues On-Going Project	< 2021	500,000.00	0.00	0.00
Miscellaneous Costs	\$0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leverages Other Funds	Total Expenditures	\$1,120,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Professional Services	\$0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure	Method Used in Estimating Cost:			
Land Acquisition	\$0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality of Life	Estimated change in annual operating cost:			
Art Work	\$0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plan Related	\$0			
FY 25/26 Total	\$300,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Safety Health				
		<input type="checkbox"/> Mandated Legal				
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive Revenue Impact				
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive Operational Impact/Efficiency				
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainability/ Other				

Request		FY 25/26					Capital Forecasts						
Funding Source	Term	Dept	Planning	Mayor	BOF	Adopted	FY 26/27	FY 27/28	FY 28/29	FY 29/30	FY 30/31	FY 31/32	Total
Bond (City)	20	300,000	300,000	300,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	300,000
		300,000	300,000	300,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	300,000

Comments - The existing greenhouse is a converted sewer cap that was moved to the Arboretum in the 1970's. Its systems are outdated and energy inefficient. The condition of the greenhouse glass poses a liability that has resulted in its closure to the public. Not having a fully functioning greenhouse limits our ability to care for our plant collections, meet other program needs, and carry out our mission. The Greenhouse 100% Design Development Estimate received on 8/13/24 indicated its cost had escalated by \$600K. The Arboretum is requesting an additional \$300K from the City to be matched by the Arboretum's private fundraising efforts.

Capital Project Request FY 2026-2032

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1353 001353 BARTLETT ARBORETUM - MAINTENANCE BUILDING UPGRADES

Agency: 0695 Non City Agencies: Bartlett Arboretum
Contact: Tracy Kay - (203) 883-4052 - tkay@bartlettarboretum.org
Location: 151 Brookdale Rd, Stamford, CT 06903
Neighborhood: North Stamford **Voting District:** 20

Dept Priority	3	Tier	0
Oracle Date		YTD Balance	
Encumbered		Amount Available	
Advanced		Unfunded	

Project Description - Schematic and design development to replace the maintenance building roof, gutters and siding; install insulation, HVAC and water; and upgrade power service to run the HVAC.

Detailed Project Cost		Justification for Inclusion in Capital Plan
Design Development	\$0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cost Savings
Construction Related	\$50,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Life Safety
Equipment Acquisition	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> Continues On-Going Project
Miscellaneous Costs	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> Leverages Other Funds
Professional Services	\$0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure
Land Acquisition	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> Quality of Life
Art Work	\$0	<input type="checkbox"/> Plan Related
FY 25/26 Total	\$50,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety Health
		<input type="checkbox"/> Mandated Legal
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive Revenue Impact
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive Operational Impact/Efficiency
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainability/ Other

Method Used in Estimating Cost:	Estimated change in annual operating cost:
	\$0

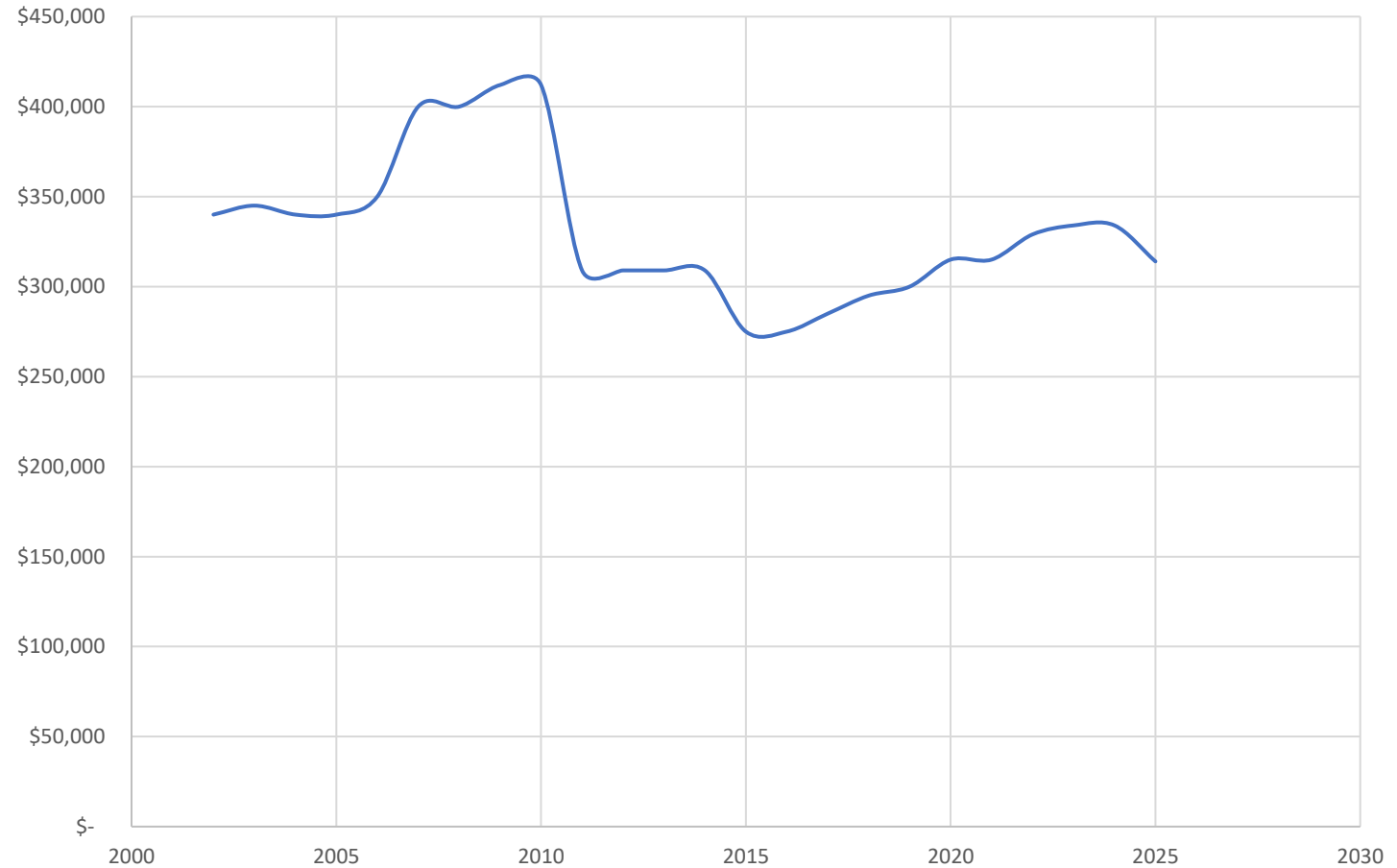
Request		FY 25/26					Capital Forecasts						
Funding Source	Term	Dept	Planning	Mayor	BOF	Adopted	FY 26/27	FY 27/28	FY 28/29	FY 29/30	FY 30/31	FY 31/32	Total
Bond (City)	20	50,000	0	0	0	0	550,000	100,000	50,000	0	0	0	750,000
		50,000	0	0	0	0	550,000	100,000	50,000	0	0	0	750,000

History		FY 24/25					Capital Forecasts						
Funding Source	Term	Dept	Planning	Mayor	BOF	Adopted	FY 25/26	FY 26/27	FY 27/28	FY 28/29	FY 29/30	FY 30/31	Total
Bond (City)	20	300,000	0	0	0	0	50,000	50,000	0	0	0	0	400,000
		300,000	0	0	0	0	50,000	50,000	0	0	0	0	400,000



The Arboretum's projected FY25/26 operating budget is \$1,570,664. The Mayor's proposed budget recommends operating support in the amount of \$345K.

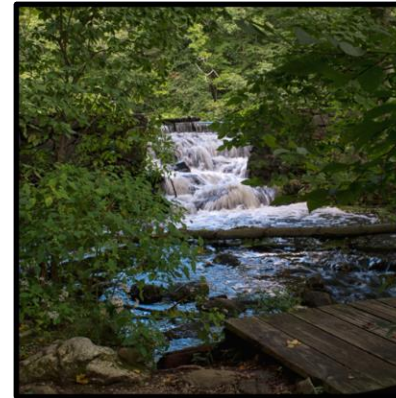
City of Stamford Operating Support 2002 -2025





**Abandoned or Curtailed Services
or Programs in 2025-2026:**

Hopefully, none



We respectfully ask that the Board of Representatives Fiscal Committee support the Mayor's recommendations for capital and operational funds for the Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens as proposed in the 2025-2026 budget.

Thank you!