

TOWN OF

# Windsor

C O N N E C T I C U T

2004 Annual Report



## from the mayor



Each year presents new challenges to government in serving its citizens, and 2004 was certainly true to form.

While certain issues such as the landfill and the town budget may be the first topics to come to mind, I view the past year in a much broader scope. As a community leader I am deeply encouraged by the participation of residents, no matter what their personal opinion may have been, on a variety of topics including taxes, quality of schools, diversity and housing issues. Citizen involvement is an integral part of a healthy and strong local government.

Throughout this annual report is a sampling of the feedback we have received from a wide variety of residents: old, young, parents with school-aged children, some without, newcomers and long-time residents. We hope this annual report has captured the essence of those comments and provided the reader with a greater insight into the issues that are on the minds of our neighbors. At the same time, we hope we have provided information that goes into further detail on how your local government and schools are striving to meet the needs of our community, and are a good value for those who live here.

The Town Council's goal in the coming year is to keep quality services for residents while holding the line on taxes. Your participation in the decision-making processes of how these services are delivered is the key to a healthy community.

Donald S. Trinks  
Mayor

# schools

*“I have Kindergarten children and am confident that they will receive a good elementary education, however I am not familiar with the middle and high school settings and would like to learn more.”*

Our challenge is to give everyone of our 4,432 students the very best education we can. Windsor’s 355 teachers are 357 support staff are dedicated and well equipped to do that. Our teachers have an average of 12.4 years of experience and almost 72% of them have a Master’s degree or more.

The school administration and the Board of Education are well aware that the cost of our school system is more than \$50 million annually or about 67% of the town’s annual budget. On a per capita basis, that is \$1,777 for every Windsor Resident. While that amount might seem high, 10 of the 29 towns in Greater Hartford spend more per capita on their school systems than Windsor does.

Our facilities at both Sage Park Middle School and Windsor High School are among the best in the region. Sage Park, built in 1968, and having undergone a major renovation in 1992, has more than 184,337 sq. ft. of space for its 1,023 students.

Windsor High School, which shares a beautiful 35-acre campus with Sage Park, is newly renovated and now has facilities that are second to none in the region. The bonds that financed that renovation were refinanced between 2001 through 2004 to take advantage of lowered interest rates and further reduce the overall cost.

Students of both Sage Park and Windsor High School receive a quality education. Windsor High is a comprehensive high school with a broad range of courses to meet every ability and ambition. The program of studies includes 15 Advanced Placement courses as well as a Seminar (gifted/talented) Program. Only one other high school in Connecticut offers a gifted/talented program such as ours.

In the 2004 graduating class, 78% of Windsor High School’s students took the SAT, 71% of graduates moved on to attend a two or four year college and 28% entered the workforce or the military. The Windsor High Jazz Band 1 took first place in the Berklee School of Music Jazz Festival. WHS students were part of the Loomis Chaffee Robotics Team Paragon that was named champion in the New England Robotics competition.

Sage Park Middle School has is strong academically as well. In addition to the core program offered to all grade 6-8 students, Sage Park offers rich music and art programs, a strong Challenge program for gifted and talented students, and a substantive unified arts program. Four Sage Park students scored above 75% of college bound seniors on the SATs and three scored above the 50% of college bound seniors on the SATs. These students were recognized by Johns Hopkins University.

As just about every parent knows, when a large number of youngsters are together, conflicts do arise. In both Sage Park and Windsor High School, conflict resolution is taught in classrooms. As a result of a partnership with the Town and the Windsor Police Department a team of six professionals – three Windsor Police officers, a social worker, and two teachers – work daily in our schools to prevent conflicts from escalating. Sage Park and Windsor High School each has a full time school resource officer who teaches classes, conducts mediation, and works with the administration to create a safe and orderly environment. An officer also works with our five elementary schools to provide prevention programs to students, e.g., anti-bullying.





Like any good school, Sage Park and Windsor High School are also places that enable students to pursue interests beyond the program of studies. At Sage Park, 180 students participated in 7 inter-scholastic athletic programs, and 300+ students participated in one of 17 Enrichment Clusters. Sage Park also has intramural sports and more than 10 other clubs. At Windsor High School, approximately 900 students took advantage of the school's 24 varsity and junior varsity sports programs, and 700+ students were involved in 30 extra curricular clubs and programs.

*“As Windsor residents, we all pay the same amount for taxes, however the area where I reside, I have to pay for garbage collection, while other Windsor residents have their garbage picked up and don't have to pay an additional fee. Why is this so?”*

The Town of Windsor does not provide trash collection service. However, both the Windsor Fire District and the Wilson Fire District provide trash collection in their districts. This is paid by an additional tax of 2.3 mills in Windsor District and 1.75 mills in Wilson District.

Another option is to contract with a private trash collection vendor, as a number of residents do.

Residents may purchase an annual landfill sticker for \$75.00, or pay by the load each time they visit the landfill.

Recyclables are collected free of charge to every Windsor resident on their regular trash collection day. The cost for this service to the town is \$285,510 and is funded through the general services portion of the town's operating budget.



## maintaining our town



*“I see roads in town being done over but the street that I live on and those that I use often have never been redone.”*

With almost 140 miles of roads, Windsor has the 5th largest road network in the Capitol Area. We use a computerized pavement management program to determine the relative condition of town owned roadways. A roadway with deteriorated pavement condition, but having adequate base material may qualify for bituminous overlay. Roadways with deteriorated or inadequate base material qualify for reclamation or reconstruction.

Road maintenance is costly and must be planned carefully. In the past five years, Windsor has applied overlay to almost 11 miles of road at a cost of \$112,000 per mile; reclaimed one mile at \$350,000 per mile and reconstructed 2.8 miles at \$545,000 per mile.

Windsor also has a great deal of public land and a number of buildings to maintain and again in 2004, the town continued its belief that maintenance and improvement are critical to the health of the town. Consequently, the town's Public Works forces worked throughout the year on many time consuming projects such as upgrading street signs with larger reflective ones, installing long-lasting epoxy pavement markings, installing brighter, more efficient traffic lights and even building sand & salt storage structure that will protect the surrounding area from damaging salt water runoff.

All of these activities were conducted during a year that saw a record snowfall that required extra effort in plowing, filling potholes and cleaning catch basins.

*“...Route 218 in the Columbia Road area is a very dangerous interchange. It would be very nice to have an (access) lane and light at the intersection of Rt. 218 and Columbia road...”*



A new signal was installed at this location in December, 2004.

*“...with all the business on Day Hill Road why is our mill rate so high?”*

Windsor now has 17,500 jobs in town, ranking us 9th in terms of employment among all of the 29 towns in the Capitol Region. Businesses in Windsor pay more than \$24.8 million in taxes and that represents 39% of the town's annual budget, so business is very important in maintaining an affordable mil rate.

*“I STRONGLY think that something should be put in the empty Kmart building. Also, there is plenty of room there to add a restaurant and other stores. I think that would be GREAT for the town.”*

Everyone would like to see more shopping and dining opportunities in Windsor. However, the town doesn't own the vacant properties such as the K-Mart site and can only promote their availability and work with interested developers while providing a streamlined permit approval process.

Windsor has a proactive economic development program that has been very successful over the years in promoting our town as a corporate location for businesses across the country and around the world. The Town carefully tracks available land and vacant properties and promotes their development and use at every opportunity.

*“The police must (do) more to stop speeding especially during school bus hours, late morning and between the hours of 4 and 8 pm. Also during when citizens are returning from work. It's totally out of control on weekends.”*

Windsor has a highly trained police department of 52 sworn officers. Traffic patrols are conducted throughout the town with particular emphasis on locations with high traffic or where residents have shown particular concern.

In 2004, the Windsor Police Department made 13,546 traffic stops. This resulted in the issuance of 556 summonses, 3,567 written warnings and 6,633 verbal warnings. The Windsor Police also made 161 arrests for driving while under the influence and investigated more than 1,000 traffic accidents.



# neighborhoods

*“...the most important reason I moved to Windsor was the village like atmosphere of the community...”*

In 2004, the town created the *No Resident Left Behind* program through which approximately 400 new residents were welcomed with packets detailing town, school and Chamber of Commerce programs and services. While many of these packets were mailed, town employees volunteered to deliver a number of them personally.



Windsor also began two unique ways to welcome and involve citizens. A Citizen's Academy was held and 12 Windsor residents were invited to participate in eight evening meetings to see and understand how individual town departments operate. That academy is expected continue in the future.



Windsor is one of the few towns in New England that operates an adult day health center. Called *The Caring Connection*, this unique facility is self-supporting through grants and fees, with grants totaling more than \$60,000 in 2004-05. The Caring Connection provided high quality community-based programs as an alternative to institutional care for an average of 40 clients per day.

Windsor's unique Housing Rehabilitation Program helped 17 homeowners improve their homes during the past year. The town's Community Development unit ran a series of five very popular free home improvement workshops and helped for the third year to organize a Farmer's Market in the Wilson neighborhood.



## recreation, learning and fun...



*“...The amount and quality of the programs for toddlers are wonderful. My husband and I have both enjoyed these services very much as well as the playscape at Northwest park...”*

Throughout the year, residents took advantage of 675 recreation activities and more than 2,000 elementary school youngsters registered for after school and vacation programs. Northwest Park, Windsor’s 473-acre multi-recreation facility and nature center, hosted a record 4,500 visitors to its numerous community events.

Residents of all ages continued the New England tradition of gathering on Windsor’s Town Green for the summer concert series and the annual Holiday Sing. These two events alone drew more than 5,000 people.

Windsor’s Recreation and Leisure Services again offered a broad array of activities for residents throughout the year at its three major facilities: the L. P. Wilson Community Center, the Community Center at 330 Windsor Avenue and Northwest Park. The new Summer Fun Playground Program – a program that included children with special needs – averaged 25 participants per day during the summer. Windsor Playland, an indoor playscape and climbing wall, opened at the 330 Windsor Avenue facility to the delight of hundreds of Windsor kids. Windsor’s 5 community parks continue to be very popular for residents of all ages.



# Windsor at a glance

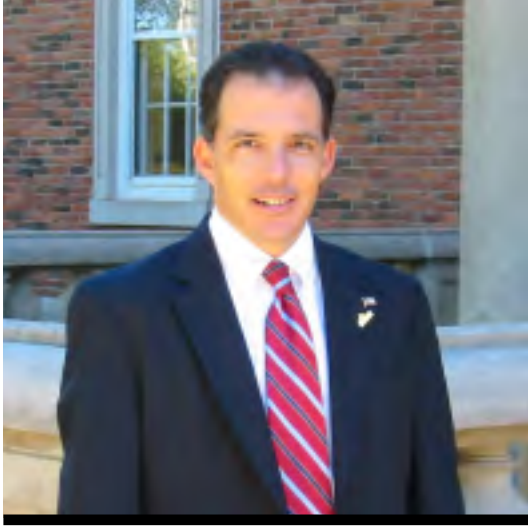
## Windsor: Managing Its Finances for the Future

- 2002 Population: 28,519
- 2003 Full Valuation: \$3.1 billion
- Full Valuation per capita: \$108,987
- Windsor's median family income is 18% above the average for the state
- Windsor's per capita income is 96% of the per capita income for the state
- Debt outstanding is \$47.1 million or 1.52% of full valuation
- Windsor will retire 72.5% of outstanding debt principal in just 10 years
- Windsor's 2003 General Fund Balance is \$6.9 million, which is 9.1% of General Fund revenues.

## 2004 Annual Budget General Fund Expenditures by Department

	FY 2004 Budget	FY 2004 Actual
General Government	1,017,650	863,689
Safety Services	6,337,223	6,341,979
Public Works	4,146,935	3,995,792
Health & Social Services	825,730	758,564
Family & Leisure Svs	1,455,217	1,453,018
Education	48,904,600	48,657,043
Town Support for Educ	4,837,390	4,803,207
Library Services	1,111,823	1,106,238
Development Services	1,302,258	1,288,387
Information Services	383,700	378,332
Administrative Services	1,509,314	1,508,258
Community Development	25,000	26,975
General Services	5,787,590	5,531,405
Transfers Out Fund Balance	1,126,810	1,126,810
<b>Total</b>	<b>78,771,240</b>	<b>77,839,697</b>

# town manager letter



Over the past several years, Town Council goals and business strategies as implemented by town employees have set the course for Windsor's near future. Along the way, we have seen organizational changes, careful planning and cost-saving initiatives developed to meet the needs of our community.

In concert with those strategies, we have asked residents for the past five years what they think of the services provided by their municipal government in a Citizens Perception Survey. The Town of Windsor provides dozens of services you use everyday including roads, safety services, libraries, and recreational facilities. Your feedback on these services, will continue to play a significant role in the development of future strategies and business plans.

Whether it comes in the form of a community survey, public comment at a meeting, a phone call, a neighborhood meeting or good old fashioned mail, communication is a cornerstone in building the future of our town. What you, our citizens, have to say is important to me and to our elected officials. With that thought, I am optimistic about the opportunities for the coming year and I look forward to our continued open communication and the positive things that can bring.

Peter Souza  
Town Manager



