



NORWALK PLANNING COMMISSION
125 East Avenue
Norwalk, Connecticut

March 5, 2021

The Honorable Harry W. Rilling
Mayor of Norwalk
125 East Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06851

Honorable Mayor Rilling:

Attached is the Planning Commission's recommendation for the Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2021 -22. While the Planning Commission concurs with many of the recommendations made by Mr. Henry Dachowitz, Director of Finance, there were certain areas that the Commission felt should be revised. The result is a total recommended Capital Budget of \$31,441,822 for Fiscal Year 2021-22, which is \$2,849,850 more than Mr. Dachowitz's recommended amount.

Police Department

Concur with Finance Director recommendations.

Fire Department

Concur with Finance Director recommendations.

Department of Public Works

Concur with Finance Director recommendations except for the following areas:

C-1 Engineering

Item #4 Pavement Management Program - The Planning Commission recommends \$5,000,000; decreasing the Department's request by \$1,000,000. This reduction does not erode the integrity of the pavement management program and allows for some flexibility to fund other priority projects.

Item #10 Storm Water Management Plan – The Planning Commission recommends \$500,000 for this program. This is a continuation of a five-year plan to comply with the State of Connecticut mandated MS4 program. Reducing pollutants in stormwater runoff before it enters storm sewer systems important aspect for a City that enjoys many miles of shoreline.

C-4 Buildings

Item #5 Nathan Ely, Various Repairs – The Planning Commission recommends fully funding the request of \$275,000. Nathan Ely houses one of the largest pre-schools in Norwalk. Major concern is the upgrade of the HVAC system.

Department of Economic and Community Development

Concur with Finance Director recommendations except for the following areas:

E-2 Transportation Mobility and Parking

Item #7 Rowayton Avenue Sidewalks – The Planning Commission recommends \$100,000 to continue required upgrades to maintain the safety of pedestrians.

Item #10 Norwalk River Valley Trail – The Planning Commission recommends \$50,000 to fully fund this request. This is an important resource for the City to maintain and augment.

Item #14 Transportation Master Plan Implementation – The Planning Commission recommends \$90,000 to fully fund this request. With increased traffic challenges, it is imperative that the City be well poised with a comprehensive plan.

E-4 Business Development and Tourism

Item #2 Entrepreneurship Microgrant Program – The Planning Commission recommends \$75,000 for this program. While a worthwhile endeavor, it can be augmented by other resources at the City, State and Federal level to support entrepreneurship.

Department of Community Services

The Planning Commission concurs with the Finance Director's recommendations except for the following areas:

F-2 Human Relations and Fair Rent

Item #1 ADA Compliance – The Planning Commission recommends \$80,000 to fully fund this request. It is imperative that the City supports and provides appropriate accommodations to those with mobility impairments.

F-3 Library

Item #1 Norwalk Newspaper Digitization – The Planning Commission recommends \$38,000 to fully fund this request. This has been an on-going program for many years and this funding will allow for completion of this unassuming but important and worthwhile project.

Board of Education

The Planning Commission concurs with the Finance Director's recommendations, except for the following areas:

Item #2 Curriculum Materials and Textbooks - The Planning Commission recommends \$363,500. This represents 50% of the Department’s request providing not full but sustainable support.

Item #3 Instructional Technology – The Planning Commission recommends \$728,350. This represents 50% of the Department’s request providing not full but sustainable support.

Item #6 Bathroom Renovations – The Planning Commission recommends \$1, 000,000 to upgrade bathrooms in two schools in one year. No excuses can be made as to the lack of attention in this area. This funding is recommended to upgrade the bathrooms in the two schools that need it the most within this fiscal year 2021-2022. Many parents spoke at the public hearing regarding the deplorable conditions that these bathrooms are in. Parents voiced many health concerns that need immediate attention. These below standards, non-hygienic conditions, especially in a pandemic year, are appalling.

Item #13 Silvermine Driveway – The Planning Commission recommends \$1,000,000 to fully fund this project and move it forward. Even though the Study piece is behind schedule, after hearing the many safety concerns expressed by parents at the public hearing, it was felt that withholding funds at this juncture would jeopardize the entire project.

DEPARTMENT SUMMARY	DEPARTMENT REQUEST (GROSS)	FINANCE RECOMMEND (GROSS)	PLANNING RECOMMEND (GROSS)
POLICE DEPARTMENT	\$969,852	\$699,852	\$699,852
FIRE DEPARTMENT	\$1,184,550	\$229,550	\$229,550
PUBLIC WORKS	\$29,790,800	\$20,236,800	\$19,961,800
WPCA	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	\$3,606,000	\$2,665,000	\$2,830,000
COMMUNITY SERVICES	\$193,000	\$0	\$118,000
BOARD OF EDUCATION	\$15,332,815	\$1,740,000	\$4,582,590
REDEVELOPMENT	\$800,000	\$375,000	\$375,000
IT	\$645,030	\$645,030	\$645,030
GRAND TOTAL	\$54,522,047	\$28,591,972	\$31,441,822

**Whereas the Planning Commission held meetings on January 19, 2021; January 26, 2021; and January 27, 2021 to review the capital budget requests*

**Whereas the Planning Commission held a Capital Budget public hearing on February 3, 2021*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Norwalk Planning Commission that the Capital Budget be **APPROVED**, as modified with an amount of \$31,441,822 for fiscal year 2021-2022; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this action be forwarded to Mayor Rilling; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that notice of this action be forwarded to the Common Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Di Meglio

Frances Di Meglio, Chair
Planning Commission