

# 2025

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# Annual REPORT



**Fairfield  
Community  
Services**

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🌐 [www.fairfieldrecreation.com](http://www.fairfieldrecreation.com)



## Message from the Chief of Community Services



2025 was a year defined by momentum, collaboration, and meaningful progress across Fairfield Community Services. Throughout the year, our focus remained on strengthening the foundation of our community while planning thoughtfully for the future. From investing in infrastructure and modernizing operations to expanding inclusive services for residents of all ages, our team worked every day to ensure Fairfield continues to be a place where people can thrive.

One of our most significant milestones was the completion of the Age-Friendly Fairfield Action Plan, a community-driven roadmap that will guide how we support residents as they age, remain active, and stay connected. This plan reflects Fairfield's commitment to accessibility, inclusion, and long-term livability for all generations.

We also took important steps to modernize our waterfront operations with the rollout of Dockwa, a new marina management platform that improves efficiency, transparency, and customer experience for our boating community. This upgrade represents our broader effort to use smart technology to better serve residents and visitors alike.

We are especially proud that the Bigelow Center for Senior Activities was named a 2026–2028 Community Focal Point by the Southwestern Connecticut Agency on Aging and Independent Living. This designation recognizes Bigelow's leadership as a trusted hub for information, connection, and support for older adults and their families across the region.

In 2025, our team also completed 15 renovation and capital improvement projects, including playground replacements, tennis court reconstructions, and continued design work for the new Adaptive Recreation Center. These investments, along with ongoing improvements to parks, beaches, marinas, and facilities town-wide, reflect our commitment to safe, welcoming, and high-quality public spaces.

None of this progress happens without an incredible team. I am deeply grateful to our staff, partners, volunteers, and community members whose dedication, feedback, and support continue to shape the work we do.

As you explore this annual report, I hope you see not only what we accomplished in 2025, but also our shared vision for Fairfield's future. We remain committed to thoughtful growth, inclusive services, and continued investment in the spaces and programs that bring our community together.

Thank you for your continued trust and support.

Sincerely,

*Anthony Calabrese*

Anthony R. Calabrese, MS, CPRP  
Chief of Community Services  
Town of Fairfield



## Department Core Values

### Commitment to Service

Utilize a responsive, customer-centric, resident-driven professional approach to all areas of service delivery including transparency, strong communication and public outreach.

### Commitment to Partnership

Develop strong internal and external partners and sponsors to ensure the changing recreation, leisure and community service needs of a diverse community are being met.

### Commitment to Diversity, Inclusion and Social Equity

Ensure every resident feels welcome and has access to high-quality community services regardless of age, ability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.

### Commitment to Stewardship and Conservation

Manage Town parks and open space to preserve natural resources and park assets for future generations.

### Commitment to Fiscal Stewardship

Engage in strong financial leadership across every level of the organization to ensure all areas of service are administered in a fiscally responsible way.

### Commitment to Innovation

Commit to being at the forefront of solution-based problem solving and creativity to address current and future challenges facing the Town of Fairfield

## Department Mission

Dedicated to enriching the lives of all residents by providing inclusive programs, vital support services, and welcoming spaces that promote well-being, independence, and a strong sense of community at every age and stage of life.



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Services**

## Professional Staff

### COMMUNITY SERVICES TEAM

Chief of Community Services.....Anthony Calabrese, MS, CPRP

Manager of Waterfront Operations..... Justin Cathcart  
 Parks Supervisor..... Victor Gabriel  
 Financial Accounting Specialist..... Linda Hilliker

Director of Human & Social Services..... Julie DeMarco, LMSW  
 Golf Course Superintendent..... Peter Kearney  
 Customer Support..... Elise Grubb

#### RECREATION TEAM

Recreation/Youth Services Coordinator. Gianna Salce, CTRS  
 Recreation/Special Events Coordinator. Ian Sacci  
 Office Manager..... Kelly Brown  
 Clerical Support..... Ellen Kelly

#### BIGELOW CENTER TEAM

Senior Center Coordinator..... Brenda Steele  
 Community Services Coordinator..... Gaylen Brown, CPRP  
 Community Services Clerk..... Frances Geraci  
 Receptionist..... Nora Cooper

#### PARKS TEAM

Parks Maintenance..... Joseph Czarnecki  
 Parks Maintenance..... Alan Kaczegowicz  
 Parks Maintenance..... William Limiero  
 Parks Maintenance..... Patrick Masloski  
 Parks Maintenance..... Thomas McNamara  
 Parks Maintenance..... Antonio Sardinha  
 Parks Maintenance..... Aurelio Sardinha  
 Project Manager..... George Kaczegowicz

#### SOCIAL SERVICES TEAM

Social Services Coordinator..... Alison Witherbee, LMSW  
 Youth Services Social Worker..... Emily Larkin, LMSW  
 Social Worker..... Felicity Eles, BSW  
 Social Worker..... Eileen Fickes  
 Social Worker..... Eileen Gombos, LCSW  
 Social Worker..... Amy Luciano  
 Social Worker..... Beth Paris  
 Department Secretary..... Carol Hubbard

#### FACILITIES TEAM

Recreation/Leagues Coordinator..... Jon McNelis  
 Recreation/Aquatic Coordinator..... Mari Sachs  
 Burr Mansion Manager..... Allison Burress  
 Pavilions at Penfield Manager..... Deirdre Price

#### GOLF TEAM

Golf Professional..... Bob Bigonette, PGA  
 H. Smith Richardson Foreman..... TBD  
 H. Smith Richardson Spray Technician.. Edson Deoliveira  
 Carl J. Dickman Foreman..... John Johnson



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## Advisory Boards and Commissions

The work of the Fairfield Community Services Department is supported and guided by multiple Town Boards and Commissions including policy boards of Human Services Commissioners, Parks and Recreation Commissioners, and a policy board of Golf Commissioners. Commissioners are appointed by the Board of Selectmen and serve four and five year terms.

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### Human Services Commission



The Human Services Commission shall oversee social services matters assigned to municipalities by the General Statutes, with a focus on services for individuals with disabilities, older adults, veterans, youth, and underserved populations. The Commission shall ensure that all social services are designed and delivered to promote accessibility, inclusion, and full participation for individuals with disabilities.

#### Commissioners

Martin D. Schwartz - Chair  
Cheryl A. Jones - Secretary  
Sandra D. Berman  
Pertrinea R. Cash

Nina Chanana  
Mary Ellen Gavin  
Bernard F. Lynch  
Gwen J. Palmer

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### Parks and Recreation Commission

The Parks and Recreation Commission consults with the Parks and Recreation Director and makes recommendations to the Town Bodies regarding policies for the planning, development and use of the Town's Parks & Recreation programs and facilities.

#### Commissioners

Brian Nerreau - Chair  
Bridget McBride - Vice Chair  
Dylan O'Connor - Secretary  
James L. Benton  
Christopher McCoy

Bill Llewellyn  
Timothy O'Neill  
Yousef Seyal  
Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, BOE



### Golf Commission

The Golf Commission shall consist of seven members appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The Golf Commission shall be the policy-making body for the Par 3 Golf Course and the H. Smith Richardson Golf Course.

#### Commissioners

Sara F. LaTerza - Chair  
Donald DiMartino - Vice Chair  
Lori A. Mongelluzzo - Secretary  
George M. Herrington

Robert T. Gorman  
Peter Secrist  
William Vogel



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# Core Service Program Areas



## Adaptive

Provide fun and welcoming programs for children and adults with cognitive, physical or developmental disabilities. After-school programs, summer camp and a year-round Saturday program offer participants the opportunity for socializing and engagement in activities including arts & crafts, special events, holiday parties and cultural field trips.



## Aquatics

Aquatic programs include intro, intermediate and advanced swim lessons that promote water safety, exercise, and therapeutic classes to help residents meet their health goals.



## Arts & Culture

Comprehensive, year-round programs, events, and projects bring creativity and entertainment to the Fairfield community.



## Facility Rentals

Facility rentals are available to both residents and non-residents. Whether you are hosting a wedding or looking to reserve a ballfield, Fairfield Community Services has it.



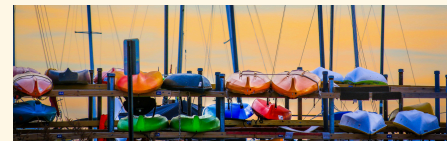
## Golf Courses

The Community Services Department oversees the operation of two public golf courses that are affordable, challenging and beautiful.



## Marinas

Fairfielders are fortunate to have two public marinas in Town - South Benson Marina and historic Ye Yacht Yard, with well over 650 boat slips and 500 boat racks between the two.



## Park Maintenance

Fairfield is home to over 1,100 acres of active and passive recreational areas. Daily park maintenance includes all necessary work to keep areas safe, clean, welcoming and operating efficiently to serve the needs of the community.



## Recreation

Recreation programs are designed to have a wide range of positive impacts on physical, behavioral, emotional, and psychological health.



## Social Services

Provides case management, advocacy, and coordinated access to essential support services that promote economic stability, health, and independence for Fairfield residents.



## Youth Services

The Fairfield Youth Services Bureau is a member of the CT Youth Services Association which is charged with advocating for youth and centrally coordinating the comprehensive delivery of services for youth and their families.



# Leading Fairfield with a Vision for the Future

## A Strategic Roadmap to Meet our Community Needs

Planning for the future is one of the most important responsibilities of the professional staff at Fairfield Community Services. In 2021, the Parks and Recreation Commission adopted the Department's first Town Wide Master Plan in over 30 years. The Master Plan serves as a guide for the future development of parks and recreation properties, as well as a tool to secure funding from various private, Municipal, State, and Federal sources.



### Park & Facility Development

The Fairfield community is dependent on the parks, facilities, and infrastructure managed and operated by the Fairfield Community Services Department. Community Services is committed to excellence in the planning, development and continuous improvement of these facilities through alignment of resources, priorities, and progress monitorization. We strive to ensure that every resident feels welcome and has access to high-quality parks and services.

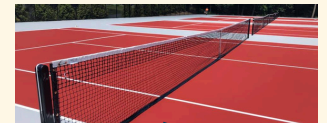


### Financial & Budgetary Development

In order to meet the Community Service needs of Fairfield residents, while maintaining fiscal responsibility, the department will implement transparent and accountable fiduciary processes. Additionally, alternative funding sources will be pursued to augment general funding.

### Parks & Facility Management

Our goal is to ensure our parks, facilities and infrastructure are maintained to the level of excellence that the Fairfield Community expects and deserves. Objectives will define our priorities for maintenance standards and best practices that will improve efficiencies and effectiveness of park and facility management.



### Programs & Services

The department offers a diverse range of high quality programs that meet the physical, emotional and social needs of Fairfield families. Program measures will be implemented to establish benchmarks for success.



### Policies & Practices

In order to achieve best practices, and clear expectations for the staff and public, Community Services needs a strong system of policies, procedures and practices. These systems shall be well-researched, clearly defined and reflective of local, state and national best practices.



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# 2025 Impact by the Numbers



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## Your Dollars at Work

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Financial accountability has long been the standard for the Fairfield Community Services Department. In conjunction with our boards and the Town's financial policies, we have worked proactively in 2025, to contain costs while increasing service offerings, participation and facility use, to meet resident needs. We continue to maintain low user fees in order to ensure all residents have access to high quality programs. Over \$6.4 million in revenues generated, offsets the subsidy level for the department expenditures.

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The Fairfield Community Services Department is responsible for the administration of a variety of general fund, revolving accounts, donation, and grant accounts in order to administer high quality programs, facilities and services for Fairfield residents.

### General Fund

Funds received from taxpayers through the annual Town budget process.

### Donation Account

Funds received from donors and sponsors on a rolling basis.

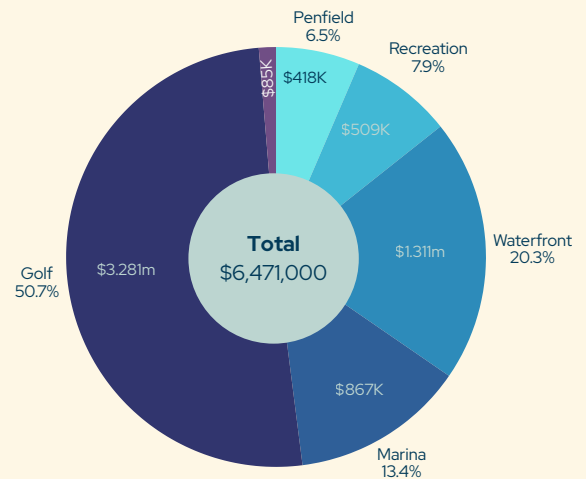
### Grants

Funds received from local, state, or national sources, appropriated at varying times, depending on the grant cycle.

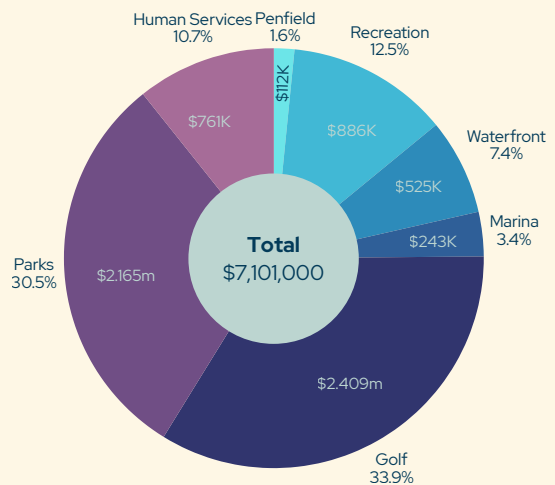
### Revolving Account

Funds received from user fees meant to cover the cost of non-general funded programs. Funds are received and expended on a rolling basis.

### Revenue



### Expenses



The Fairfield Community Services Department remains fiscally strong closing out the fiscal year 2024 - 2025 with an overall deficit of \$630,000. Expenditures were managed well over the year, with all divisions seeing a surplus with exception of the recreation and parks, which houses the entire administrative and maintenance staff salaries. All revenues met or exceeded goal and continued to improve year over year.

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## Parks Projects

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### Building Community through People and Places

Fairfield Community Services oversees the maintenance and care of one of New England's premier park systems. Over 1,100 acres of public parks are available to residents and visitors of the Town of Fairfield. During 2025, Fairfield Community Services completed 15 projects. Ongoing projects include the Playground replacements at Ash Creek and Knapps Park Sq, Lake Mohegan Drainage improvements, the addition of a Shortrange area at the H. Smith Richardson Driving Range, and continual upgrades and improvements at our ball diamonds.

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### Parks Project Portal Interact Today!

In October of 2023, the Fairfield Community Services Department launched an interactive Parks Project Portal to increase transparency and community engagement efforts on projects. The portal provides status reports on all projects happening within the park system, special presentations, and an opportunity for residents to provide comments and feedback on existing projects or recommendations for new projects. Explore our portal today at [www.fairfieldrecreation.com](http://www.fairfieldrecreation.com).



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## Awards and Accomplishments

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### Golf Digest Best Teacher's in CT

Our very own Tom Henderson and Bob Bigonette for winning top spots on the Golf Digest Best Teachers in every state!

These golf teachers were voted the best in each state through a peer-voting process conducted by Golf Digest. More than 3,000 teachers were included in the voting.



### Achieved Tree City USA Recognition

Fairfield achieved Tree City USA recognition for the 37th year by meeting the program's requirements: a tree department, a tree-care ordinance and an Arbor Day observance. Communities must also receive the endorsement for this honor from Connecticut's State Forester. Fairfield is only one of 19 communities in the State to be designated a Tree City USA, and according to the Arbor Day Foundation, is tied with Stamford as the "longest-running active Tree City USA Community."



### Gold Certification from Sustainable CT

Fairfield is proud to be recognized with Gold Certification from Sustainable CT, a voluntary certification program to recognize thriving and resilient Connecticut municipalities. Achieving the highest level of certification is based on extraordinary leadership and innovation in sustainability. The Gold Certification recognizes comprehensive and effective sustainability strategies that serve as models for other municipalities. Learn more about Fairfield's work at [SustainableFairfield.org](https://SustainableFairfield.org)



### the knot "Best of Weddings" Hall of Fame

The Pavilions at Penfield Beach have been selected as a 2025 winner of the knot "Best of Weddings." This accolade represents the top local wedding professionals as reviewed by real couples on the knot, a digital wedding planning authority and one of the largest wedding Vendor Marketplaces in the US. This is the 6th year The Pavilions have been named a winner of the knot "Best of Weddings" awards.



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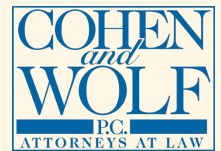
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## Sponsors and Community Partners

Thank you to the many sponsors, donors, and community partners that have played a pivotal role in elevating the work of Fairfield Community Services in 2025.



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PARKS & RECREATION  
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