



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
JONATHAN F. MITCHELL, MAYOR

June 16, 2022

City Council President Ian Abreu, and
Honorable Members of the City Council
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

RE: FY 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Program and Related Bond Authorization Requests

Dear Council President Abreu and Honorable Members of the City Council:

I am submitting for your consideration two loan orders which will constitute this year's round of bond-funded projects for the FY 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Much like previous capital funding rounds, this year's proposed projects reflect two priorities:

- (1) public safety capital/equipment needs (\$3,530,000), and
- (2) additional funds to supplement state aid for road and sidewalk repairs (\$3,000,000).

In this second category, Councillors will notice a proposed increase from last year's level so that, for the first time, locally financed road repairs will rise to \$3 million. This is a significant achievement given that the City did not budget any locally financed road repairs until the Administration, working with the City Council, began to allocate monies for this purpose as part of the CIP process.

As you know, the CIP was initiated in FY 2014 as a roadmap for the City's long-range capital needs, and the City Council has approved rounds of projects included in the plan on an annual basis since then. The CIP has proven invaluable, guiding the City's decision-making in financing much-needed renovations to the City's schools, libraries, public safety facilities, senior centers, City Hall, the Hillman Street complex, Buttonwood Park Zoo, the Zeiterion Theatre and the Art Museum. In addition, the CIP was instrumental in prioritizing limited resources to make the new Taylor and Jacobs schools, development of the South Public Safety Center, and long-needed repairs at several of the City's elementary schools, all possible.

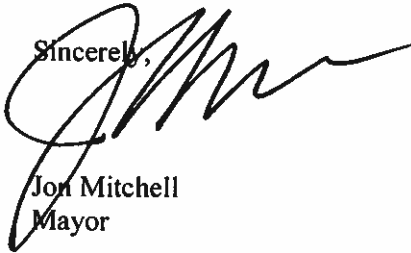
Our utilization of a five-year CIP has also been a key component in our efforts to demonstrate responsible fiscal management to rating agencies and investors, and was cited as a factor in our achieving a AA- bond rating in 2014, as well as the recent rating from Standard & Poor's, which affirmed the City's AA- status. The CFO updates the CIP annually in light of funding opportunities and input from other department heads.

The Capital Improvement Program covers General Fund-supported projects from FY 2022 through 2026, and totals \$122 million. Of this amount, \$20.9 million would be allocated for capital asset preservation projects for public safety, road repairs, public use buildings and other government facilities, and approximately \$12.7 million would be allocated for ongoing replacement of capital vehicles and general fleet replenishment. \$34.5 million would be allocated for major renovations and/or replacements at general government facilities, while \$53.7 million would be allocated for school projects. The CIP will be funded by a combination of general obligation debt and lease purchases. The program is designed to work within the City's existing debt profile as much as possible, thereby minimizing the impact on ongoing debt service requirements.

Please find attached the two aforementioned loan orders intended to finance the City's capital needs for FY 2022. The first order, in the amount of \$11,170,000, increases the annual commitment to roads, and addresses urgent public safety needs, as well as various repairs to municipal facilities. I am submitting a second loan order to bond \$5 million for the New Bedford School Department Central Kitchen Project. Per the Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the School Department, this project's yearly Principal and Interest payments will be paid by the School Department.

Thank you for your consideration of these items.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Mitchell', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Jon Mitchell
Mayor



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

CITY COUNCIL

June 23, 2022

ORDERED, that the City appropriates \$11,170,000 for the purpose of making critically-needed repairs to City-owned buildings including, but not limited to, projects for the repair and renovation of public safety facilities, recreational facilities, general office space, and roads and infrastructure and all costs incidental and related thereto. To meet this appropriation, the Treasurer, with the approval of the Mayor, is authorized to borrow said sum of money, pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 7 (1), 7(7) or any other enabling authority. or any other enabling authority.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Treasurer is authorized to file an application with the appropriate officials of The Commonwealth of Massachusetts ("Commonwealth") to qualify under Chapter 44A of the General Laws any and all bonds of the City authorized by this Order, and to provide such information and execute such documents as such officials of the Commonwealth may require in connection therewith.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That any premium received by the City upon the sale of any bonds or notes hereunder, less any such premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to pay project costs and the amount authorized to be borrowed hereunder shall be reduced by the amount of any such premium so applied; and that the Mayor is authorized to take any other action necessary to carry out these projects.

FY 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Program
City of New Bedford, Massachusetts

Background

The City of New Bedford develops a five-year capital improvement program (CIP) to address its capital needs considering its forecasted financial capacity. The practice of prioritizing the City's capital projects through a multi-year period establishes a roadmap for facility improvement and vehicle replacement, tends to enhance the City's status with rating agencies, and facilitates the City's ability to incorporate capital spending into its fiscal planning. The initial version of the CIP covered the five years from FY 2014 through FY 2018, and the plan has been updated annually as projects have been further refined and updated.

Projects are first identified through the biennial Capital Needs Assessment (CNA), based on the input of operating departments regarding service needs, physical condition and usage requirements that should be considered for funding consideration in the CIP. Potential projects are evaluated in relation to each other to ensure that the highest priority projects receive public funding. The CIP is funded annually through a capital improvement bond authorized by the City Council, and through project-specific authorizations, grants, and lease agreements.

Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan Summary

The Capital Improvement Program covers General Fund-supported projects from FY 2022 through 2026, and totals \$122 million. Of this amount, \$20.9 million would be allocated for capital asset preservation projects for public safety, road repairs, public use buildings and other government facilities, and approximately \$12.7 million would be allocated for ongoing replacement of capital vehicles and general fleet replenishment. \$34.5 million would be allocated for major renovations and/or replacements at general government facilities, while \$53.7 million would be allocated for school projects.

What follows is a summary of the projects proposed to be funded in this year's capital improvement bond and a summary of the projects that would be addressed in the CIP's later years.

Proposed FY 2022 Capital Improvement Bond

The FY 2022 bond, which totals **\$11,170,000** consists of the following projects in the CIP:

- **Continuation of Improvements at the Buttonwood Park Zoo (\$1,700,000)** This project will provide for an upgrade of the Animal Ambassador exhibit and includes the complete renovation of the old domestic barn to improve the experience of guests attending the zoo, new bathrooms, exterior façade, new windows, and an educational space for children.
- **DPI Fleet Maintenance Facility Improvements (\$850,000)** This project would provide for a DPI truck shed on Shawmut Avenue upgrading the current tent that is being used. This structure is necessary to house and repair DPI's fleet, would increase the lifespan of crucial equipment and allow the city mechanics to safely work on vehicles.
- **MIS Communication Equipment (\$700,000):** This project is part of the City's Public Safety Radio System Upgrade and provides for a new self-supporting tower and communications equipment including three antennas at the Kings Highway Salt Shed site to support Fire, Police and EMS radio communications. This tower is critical to providing the coverage needed by our public safety departments.
- **South Public Safety Annex (\$400,000):** This project would fund HVAC improvements and cooling upgrades to the first floor as well as window replacements to the first and second floors, roof and shingle replacements and improved building drainage.
- **Public Safety Management Software Upgrade Police/EMS/Fire (1,500,000):** This project would support the conversion from IMC Records Management Systems and dispatch for the Police, Fire and EMS Departments to the newest technology in public safety records management, Public Safety Suite Pro. The current IMC software is reaching end-of-life and will no longer receive software upgrades.
- **Police Department Public Safety Equipment (\$550,000):** This funding would support the Police Department's replacement of public safety equipment including all tasers and firearms which are critical to our public safety officers.
- **Pleasant Street renovation (\$900,000):** This project provides a build out of working space to accommodate sixteen employees at the (former) Police Station 1 on Pleasant Street including a service counter, conference rooms, bathroom improvements, fire alarm protection, improvements to water infiltration and required ADA access improvements to the front entrance.

- **Wilks Library (\$570,000):** This project replaces the Acushnet Avenue window wall, add an ADA rear entrance ramp and foyer as well as interior electrical service upgrades, exterior doors, alarm improvements, emergency lighting and boiler replacement. This project also addresses drainage issues, repairs to sidewalks and the installation of additional gutters.
- **Emergency Management Offices (\$380,000):** This project provides improvements to (former) Fire Station 6 to allow office and equipment storage for the EMA Division of the Fire Department including roof repairs, hose tower water infiltration, overall envelope improvements, interior office walls and bathrooms, garage door replacement and the installation of data, cable, and communications.
- **Zoo Restrooms (\$380,000):** This project provides for a complete upgrade of the public bathrooms in the Wildlife Education Center to meet ADA standards while providing a facility improvement for the benefit of all zoo guests.
- **Zoo Rainforests, Rivers and Reefs Humidification and HVAC (\$240,000):** This project provides the RRR building with a redesign and replacement of the humidification and air system to properly support the small monkey exhibits and rainforest habitats. As part of this project, HVAC improvements will be made to the Vet Clinic and the animal holding section within this building.
- **Roads & Infrastructure (\$3,000,000):** The Capital Improvement Program includes an ongoing infrastructure program intended to augment State-funded and utility-related improvements to roads and sidewalks. Work is assigned based on conditions as assessed through the City's pavement management program. This program was initiated in FY 2017 and is proposed to continue throughout the five-year planning period. The proposed funding level represents a 20% increase to the annual allocation in comparison with the last several years.

Other FY 2022 Capital Projects

In addition to projects proposed for the capital bond, the Capital Improvement Program includes several projects that will be funded through separate loan orders due to their scale and/or their multiyear funding schedule. Included in this category are the School Department Central Kitchen, Zoo Renovations, Fleet Maintenance Improvements, Sassaquin Pond Improvement Project, Server, and Communications. These projects are discussed individually in the General Government Renovations & Replacements section of this document.

Project Descriptions for the Five-Year CIP

The foregoing projects are proposed to be funded in the Capital Improvement Program. The projects in the entire five-year planning period are summarized in the following pages. The complete CIP may be found at the end of this discussion.

General Government Renovations & Replacements

- **Hillman Street Complex Renovations (FY 2023, \$750,000):** This project continues renovations begun in FY 2014 to the Hillman Street Complex. Activities would include continued renovation of Building 9, including repointing of the exterior walls, and replacement of deteriorated brickwork.
- **Zeiterion Theatre Repairs (FY 2025, \$400,000):** This project serves as a placeholder for the replacement of doors and HVAC control units at the Zeiterion Theatre.
- **Agnes Braz Accessibility Improvements (FY 2024, \$1,350,000):** This project would provide general renovation, including exterior repair, HVAC replacement and accessibility improvements, to the Agnes Braz building located on Coggeshall Street.
- **Zoo Renovations (FY 2022-2026, \$4,892,000):** This project would continue renovations at the Buttonwood Park Zoo, with a focus on renovations to existing exhibits and educational facilities.
- **Sassaquin Pond Remediation (FY 2022-2024, \$1,400,000):** This project funding is for continued improvements to water quality in Sassaquin Pond. The city has a Work Plan for implementing capital improvements, preventive operations, maintenance activities, and programmatic improvements (e.g., public outreach and ordinance updates) which will prioritize the most pressing and cost-effective water quality improvements project in the Sassaquin Pond watershed. The goal of the work plan will be to identify “low hanging fruit” activities that can be implemented in the near term. In addition, the work plan will provide the needed information for the city to apply for grant funding for implementing future projects. This work will be completed in coordination with the Sassaquin Pond Association through a series of reviews and public meetings. With the funding to complete specific projects identified in the Work Plan, the city will be able to improve the water quality at Sassaquin Pond.
- **Buttonwood Pond and Dam Restoration (FY 2023-2024, \$6,800,000):** This project would restore the pond at Buttonwood Park. The pond is created by a dam, originally constructed in 1902, whose repeated failures result in periodic flooding downstream in the park. The state’s Office of Dam Safety has designated this dam as a significant hazard and has urged the city to make structural repairs. The project scope would include reconstruction of the dam, dredging of the pond, and cleanup of the area resulting in enhanced recreational use, permit compliance, and public safety.
- **Server & Communications Equipment (FY 2022-2026, \$1,200,000):** This project is part of the City’s Public Safety Radio System Upgrade and provides for a new self-supporting tower and communications equipment including three antennas at the Kings Highway Salt Shed site to support Fire, Police and EMS radio communications. This tower is critical to providing the coverage needed by our public safety departments. Additionally, a placeholder project is included for the planned replacement of the City’s network server modules, which maintain the City’s business applications and data storage, which will be due within the next several years.

- **North Fire Station (FY 2023-2024, \$11,200,000):** The FY 2021 budget included funding for a feasibility study to determine the appropriate placement and configuration of a replacement fire station to be in the North End. This project is a placeholder for design and construction of the facility once the site has been selected.

School Renovations & Replacements

Projects in this category represent major capital improvement needs for the School Department. The City makes use of construction grants from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), when available. The costs reflected in the CIP represent the amounts to be locally financed.

- **School Central Kitchen Project (\$5,000,000):** This project would pay for the purchase of a new Central Kitchen for the New Bedford Public Schools and pay for needed improvements to the roof, windows, plumbing and electrical systems. The current Central Kitchen is in the basement of the Paul Rodrigues Administration Building on County Street and it inadequate for the Food Service Department's needs.
- **MSBA Accelerated Repair Projects (FY 2022-2026, \$5,885,979):** This project provides the local share for renovations to Campbell School, Hathaway School and Pacheco School.
- **MSBA Core Projects (FY 2022-2026, \$42,840,000):** This project would provide the local share for planning studies and construction of replacements for the Congdon and DeValles Elementary Schools in FY 2024 and 2025, the local share for planning studies and construction of replacements for the Ashley and Swift Elementary Schools in FY 2025 and 2026, local share for a feasibility study for the Rodman and Winslow Elementary Schools in FY 2026 and a full renovation of New Bedford High School in FY 2025 and 2026.

Capital Vehicle Replacements

The CIP includes several projects intended to address ongoing replacement needs for the City's vehicle fleet. Projects included during this period were limited to those that could be financed through a lease purchase arrangement.

- **EMS Vehicles (FY 2022-2026, \$4,757,000):** This project provides for the acquisition and outfitting of ten replacement ambulances and six command vehicles for Emergency Medical Services over the course of the planning period. The city instituted a policy beginning in 2013 of acquiring replacement vehicles through a series of capital leases, which in turn provides sufficient flexibility to finance ongoing replacements. Due to supply shortages in the automotive industry vehicles need on average 18-24 months lead time before expected delivery.

- **Fire Apparatus (FY 2022-2026, \$2,846,120):** This project provides for the ongoing replacement of fire apparatus over the course of the planning period. The Fire Department currently operates ten front-line apparatus, which average about ten years in service. Acquisition of the replacement vehicles will involve a series of capital leases, providing sufficient flexibility to finance ongoing replacements. The city has purchased five replacement pumpers and one aerial ladder since FY 2013, as well as a used Quint to maintain service while the North Fire Station project is underway. The Department ordered and acquired one new ladder truck, and a new Pumper in FY22 and a second ladder truck has also been ordered. Decisions regarding the specific apparatus to be replaced in future years will be determined based on operational needs.
- **Mobile Command Center (FY 2023, \$1,300,000):** This project would replace the City's mobile command center. The existing vehicle, which was initially purchased in 2003, is outdated and contains obsolete aspects in terms of design and technology that have been repeatedly identified in post-incident reviews. Acquisition of the replacement vehicle would be financed by a capital lease.
- **Police Department Vehicles (FY 2022, \$350,000):** This funding would supplement the department's annual vehicle funding in the General Fund and would allow the department to accelerate much needed vehicle replacements.
- **Fleet Replenishment (FY 2022-2026, \$3,500,000):** This project addresses deficiencies identified in the condition of the City's general use fleet, which averages about 15 years old and requires significant investment of maintenance resources to maintain operability. The City Council approved an initial purchase in FY 2016, principally to address replacement and improvement needs for snow removal, followed by subsequent appropriations in FY 2017 through 2021. Future allocations will provide for the continued replacement of 6-8 vehicles per year, to ensure that the general fleets are kept in a state of good repair. Financing will be accomplished through a series of capital leases.

Capital Asset Preservation

The Capital Improvement Program includes ongoing funding to address deferred maintenance issues throughout the City's physical plant. The Capital Needs Assessment Process identified \$453 million in deferred maintenance, infrastructure and facility needs for General Fund agencies, largely resulting from a historic insufficiency of resources allocated for that purpose. As a result, the City's physical assets have continued to depreciate, and the capital requirements needed to bring facilities to proper working order have grown.

The Capital Asset Preservation portion of the CIP is intended to provide resources needed to ensure the continuation of basic operability for the City's facilities. Funding estimates are based on the Asset Depreciation Method, which uses nationally promulgated standards as guidelines for the maintenance of aging facilities. For example, the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers and the International Facility Management Association recommend annual capital asset preservation funding ranges that are equivalent to 1.5%-3.0% of the replacement value for an entity's physical plant. Similarly, the Federal Internal Revenue Service and the Massachusetts

Department of Revenue has established depreciation standards of 2.5% per year on fixed assets. As of FY 2020, the City's outside auditor estimated the City's physical inventory at \$275.6 million.

The Capital Improvement Plan includes \$20.9 million over the five-year planning period for capital asset replacement projects. Funding is assigned according to four functional project categories:

- **Public Safety** – Facilities operated by the Police, Fire & EMS departments.
- **Public Facilities** – Facilities designed principally for public use (parks, community centers, Free Library, Buttonwood Park Zoo).
- **Government Facilities** – Facilities designed to house general government operations (City Hall, City Yard, and other shared use-type facilities).
- **Roads & Infrastructure** – The FY 2022-2026 CIP includes an ongoing infrastructure program intended to augment State-funded and utility-related improvements to roads and sidewalks. Work would be assigned based on conditions as assessed through the City's pavement management program. This year due to increasing costs of supplies and materials used in road and sidewalk improvements, the recommended appropriation is raised from \$2.5 to \$3 million dollars.
- Renovation projects for City schools are included in the **Schools Deferred Maintenance and the MSBA Accelerated Repair Projects** categories.

Projects qualifying for capital asset preservation funding are limited to existing facilities in need of capital-eligible renovation and/or repair. Examples of such projects might include interior and/or exterior renovations, roof replacements, HVAC repairs and measures required to maintain compliance with regulatory and/or licensing requirements, and artificial playing field replacements. The capital asset preservation component constitutes a minimal baseline of funding over the course of the CIP planning period, and specific allocations are determined as part of the annual CIP appropriation.

Project Financing

The CIP will be funded by a combination of general obligation debt for facilities projects and lease purchasing for capital vehicle purchases. The CIP is designed to work within the City's existing debt profile to the greatest extent possible, although the impact of debt issuance for new facilities such as the North End Fire Station, the Public Safety Communications System, the Buttonwood Pond Restoration project, and school renovation projects will contribute to a projected increase in net outstanding debt from \$92.8 million in FY 2022 to \$129 million by FY 2026. Ongoing debt retirement would limit the increase in annual net debt service payments through the end of the five-year planning period, while capital lease payments would increase to support the acquisition of fire apparatus and other public safety vehicles identified in the program.

Projected Operating Costs

The Capital Improvement Program consists of a series of projects intended to rehabilitate and replace existing buildings. While the debt made necessary to fund these projects will result in increased financing costs, there are no additional staffing or operating requirements anticipated as a result. In addition, ongoing savings are projected to result from the consolidation of two fire stations and a police station into the South End Public Safety Center and the construction of the North End Fire Station, as well as the introduction of energy saving modernization activities at several schools, and from the implementation of the City's energy management program.

Affordability Indicators

The City Council adopted an organization-wide debt management policy in November 2013. Included in the policy are a series of indicators intended to determine the appropriateness of assuming additional tax-supported general obligation debt:

- **Outstanding debt as a percentage of per capita income** – The policy target is 6% or less. The projected ratio would increase from 3.7% in FY 2022 to 5.% in FY 2026.
- **Outstanding debt as a percentage of assessed valuation** – The policy target is 3% or less. The projected ratio would increase from 1.3% in FY 2022 to 1.5% in FY 2026.
- **Annual debt service as a percentage of the General Fund operating budget** – The policy target is 10% or less. The projected ratio would decrease from at 2.2% in FY 2022 to 1.9% in FY 2026.

FY 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Program
City of New Bedford, Massachusetts

Description	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2022-2026 Total
General Govt. Renovations & Replacements						
Hillman St. Complex Renovations	\$0	\$750,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$750,000
Zeiterion Theatre Repairs	0	0	0	400,000	0	400,000
Agnes Braz Accessibility Improvements	0	0	1,350,000	0	0	1,350,000
Zoo Renovations	1,700,000	340,000	797,000	1,450,000	605,000	4,892,000
Fleet Maintenance Improvements	850,000	0	0	0	0	850,000
Sassaquin Pond Remediation	400,000	500,000	500,000	0	0	1,400,000
Buttonwood Pond Restoration	0	3,200,000	3,600,000	0	0	6,800,000
Server & Communications Equipment	700,000	0	0	0	500,000	1,200,000
Pleasant Street renovation (former Police Station 1)	900,000	0	0	0	0	900,000
Public Safety Scheduling & Incident Reporting Software	1,500,000	0	0	0	0	1,500,000
Police Department Public Safety Equipment	550,000	0	0	0	0	550,000
North Fire Station	0	700,000	10,500,000	0	0	11,200,000
Public Safety Communications System ²	2,800,000	0	0	0	0	2,800,000
Subtotal:	\$9,400,000	\$5,490,000	\$16,747,000	\$1,850,000	\$1,105,000	\$34,592,000
School Renovations & Replacements						
Central Kitchen Project ³	\$5,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,000,000
MSBA Accelerated Repair Projects ¹	4,625,979	30,000	630,000	600,000	0	5,885,979
MSBA Core Projects ¹	240,000	300,000	13,400,000	10,300,000	18,600,000	42,840,000
Subtotal:	\$9,865,979	\$330,000	\$14,030,000	\$10,900,000	\$18,600,000	\$53,725,979
Capital Vehicle Replacements						
EMS Vehicles	\$875,000	\$857,000	\$1,100,000	\$1,000,000	\$925,000	\$4,757,000
Fire Apparatus	681,120	260,000	865,000	150,000	890,000	2,846,120
Mobile Command Center	0	1,300,000	0	0	0	1,300,000
Police Vehicles	350,000	0	0	0	0	350,000
Fleet Replenishment	700,000	700,000	700,000	700,000	700,000	3,500,000
Subtotal:	\$2,606,120	\$3,117,000	\$2,665,000	\$1,850,000	\$2,515,000	\$12,753,120
Capital Asset Preservation						
Public Safety	\$780,000	\$770,000	\$0	\$360,000	\$0	\$1,910,000
Public Facilities	1,190,000	1,282,000	550,000	0	524,000	3,546,000
Government Facilities	0	500,000	0	0	0	500,000
Roads & Infrastructure	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	15,000,000
Subtotal:	\$4,970,000	\$5,552,000	\$3,550,000	\$3,360,000	\$3,524,000	\$20,956,000
Grand Total:	\$26,842,099	\$14,489,000	\$36,992,000	\$17,960,000	\$25,744,000	\$122,027,099
Funding Sources						
General Obligation Debt	\$24,235,979	\$11,372,000	\$34,327,000	\$16,110,000	\$23,229,000	\$109,273,979
Lease Purchase	2,606,120	3,117,000	2,665,000	1,850,000	2,515,000	12,753,120
Total	\$26,842,099	\$14,489,000	\$36,992,000	\$17,960,000	\$25,744,000	\$122,027,099

¹ Local share only. Does not include anticipated funding from the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

² Total appropriation for the Public Safety Communications project is \$7,662,000, including \$1,662,000 in FY 2019, \$1,600,000 in FY 2020 and \$1,600,000 in FY 2021

³ The School Department will be reimbursing the City for the debt on this project on a yearly basis.