



City of Fitchburg Massachusetts 01420

CITY COUNCIL

Councilors at Large

**Marcus L. DiNatale
Amy L. Green
Michael P. Kushmerek
Samantha M. Squailia
Anthony M. Zarrella**

President

Michael P. Kushmerek

Vice President

Elizabeth R. Walsh

Ward Councilors

**Ward 1 – Bernard J. Schultz, III
Ward 2 – Paul R. Beauchemin
Ward 3 – Andrew J. Couture
Ward 4 – Andrew J. Van Hazinga
Ward 5 – Marisa R. Fleming
Ward 6 – Elizabeth R. Walsh**

Finance Committee

A meeting of the Finance Committee was called to order by Chairman DiNatale on Tuesday, March 10, 2020 at 6:00 PM in the Memorial Middle School Library, 615 Rollstone Street, Fitchburg, MA.

Committee Members present: Councilors Paul Beauchemin, Marcus DiNatale, Michael Kushmerek, and Anthony Zarrella.

Committee Members absent: Councilor Elizabeth Walsh.

The chairman read an announcement regarding the recording of public meetings, noting that FATV was recording and broadcasting the meeting. No other person stated they were recording the meeting.

The chairman opened the meeting for public comment. No one spoke.

059-20 ORDER: that the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of funds from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, Department of Fire Services grant in the approximate amount of \$6,448.94 (SIX THOUSAND, FOUR HUNDRED FORTY-EIGHT AND 94/100 DOLLARS) for the purpose of said grant, which is to purchase Washer-Extractor equipment.

Discussion: Fire Chief Kevin Roy was present. He stated that in 2016 the department bought two washers for the substations. In 2017 through a fundraiser, the department was able to outfit all three stations with new dryer units. The washer at the North Street Station is twenty-one years old and parts are becoming difficult to get, so this washer will be replaced with a new one acquired with the grant funds.

Action: Motion to approve made by Councilor Kushmerek second by Councilor Zarrella.
Approved: 4-0.

060-20 ORDER: that there be and is hereby appropriated the sum of SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$600,000.00) same to be charged against AVAILABLE FUNDS and credited to DPW, CAPITAL EXPENDITURES, ARBOR WAY REPAIR for the purpose of repairing the retaining walls that support Arbor Way.

Discussion: Public Works Commissioner Nicolas Bosonetto was present. The chairman read a letter from Commissioner Bosonetto dated February 27, 2020. A plan showing where the work is to be done was handed out to councilors.

Councilors asked if the catch basin will be fixed first. Commissioner Bosonetto stated that the catch basin may have been located in the wrong place, but it is not the only cause of the problems. The work to be done will also address the catch basin.

Councilors expressed frustration with the Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority which built the road, but is not assisting with the repair costs. They recognized the need to make the repairs now in order to protect two business operations, but also pushed for the FRA to reimburse some of the costs. They also said the situation is unfortunate in that the city has to spend \$600,000 on work that directly affects only two businesses, rather than on projects that benefit all the residents.

Action: Motion to approve made by Councilor Kushmerek second by Councilor Zarrella.
Approved: 4-0.

061-20 ORDER: that there be and hereby is appropriated the sum of ELEVEN THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$11,000.00) same to be charged against AVAILABLE FUNDS and credited to the following COUNCIL ON AGING, EXPENSES accounts:

HEATING FUEL	\$4,000.00
BUILDING & GROUNDS	\$7,000.00

Discussion: Councilors asked about the request for funds for Heating Fuel. City Auditor Calvin Brooks explained that the budget for FY20 was for \$10,000, but that actual expenses for heating fuel in FY19 were just over \$14,000. This line item will be reviewed in the upcoming FY21 budget process. The funds requested for Building & Grounds arose because of unexpected repairs to the building during the year.

Action: Motion to approve made by Councilor Kushmerek second by Councilor Zarrella.
Approved: 4-0.

COMMUNICATION: Year 46 Community Block Grant Application

Discussion: The chairman read a letter from Mayor Stephen L. DiNatale dated February 27, 2020 and summarized the recommendations for funding which total \$1,112,414.

Councilor Beauchemin stated he was not happy with comments made about the Fitchburg School System in the application for the Spartacus Program, saying that the suspension rate numbers were overstated. He was unhappy with the Streetscapes proposal

because of its focus on downtown, while there are many other areas of the city that need work. He also expressed concern with the Abolitionist Park being proposed, because city resources for parks maintenance are already stretched thin. It was noted that the park will be owned by Fitchburg State University and they will be responsible for its maintenance.

Councilor Zarrella addressed the issue of the Streetscapes proposal, by saying that while a lot of areas need work, a scattershot approach will not work. It is better to focus on one area, transform it, and then move on. In reference to the request from Our Father's House, he pointed out that a rise in the homeless population in Fitchburg does not mean that the program is not effective. The problem may be growing as well. In the overall, the funding being requested in Year 46 is consistent with prior years.

Councilor Kushmerek reiterated that most of the programs in this year's application are reauthorizations of prior year spending. The process for Block Grant funding is long and elaborate with public hearings already held. He thought that organizations shouldn't have to sit through a critique of their work by the Finance Committee.

Councilor DiNatale agreed and added that past City Councils have rarely not approved the mayor's recommendations. He noted that the proposals have been vetted through a long process and most are a continuation from prior years.

Councilor Beauchemin stated that while he approves of most of the projects, he would be voting against the proposed motion because of the following three specific projects of which he does not approve: Fitchburg Abolitionist Park Phases I & II (\$5,000), Street Homeless Intervention Program, Our Father's House (\$28,000), and Fitchburg Downtown Coordinator (\$35,000).

Action: Motion to approve made by Councilor Kushmerek second by Councilor Zarrella.

Approved: 3-1 (Councilor Beauchemin in opposition, see above).

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Zarrella, second by Councilor Kushmerek. Approved 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Calvin D. Brooks, Clerk

City of Fitchburg
Available Funds Summary
Fiscal Year 2020

Available Funds Certified as of July 1, 2019			7,750,632
Less Approved Appropriations:			
11/19/19	257-19	Police - Capital - Building Repairs	-262,000
11/19/19	258-19	Treasurer - Expenses - Parking Building Repairs	-20,000
11/19/19	260-19	School - School Expenses	-879,709
11/19/19	261-19	School - School Expenses (E-Rate)	-41,143
11/19/19	262-19	Stabilization Fund	-350,000
11/19/19	263-19	OPEB Trust Fund	-250,000
11/19/19	264-19	Airport Revenue	-84,000
11/19/19	265-19	DPW Admin. Expenses - Stormwater Contracted Services	-300,000
11/19/19	266-19	Fire - Firefighters Equipment (Turnout Gear)	-23,564
11/19/19	267-19	Fire - Fire Building Maintenance - Heating Fuel	-23,800
11/19/19	268-19	Employee Benefits - Workers Compensation (EAP)	-28,000
11/19/19	269-19	Treasurer - Expenses - Parking Building Repairs	-18,000
12/03/19	280-19	Police - Vehicle Replacement	-109,602
12/03/19	281-19	Fire - Shift Commander Vehicle	-61,000
12/03/19	282-19	Library - Building Maintenance	-16,612
01/21/20	009-20	Building - Contracted Services	-35,000
01/21/20	016-20	Airport Capital - Self-Service Fuel Station	-24,000
02/04/20	036-20	Police - Personal Services - Contract	-239,093
02/04/20	037-20	Various - Personal Services - FAMAS Contract	-120,881
02/04/20	039-20	Various - Personal Services - Ordinance Change	-42,292
2/18/2020	053-20	DPW - Equipment	-282,500
2/18/2020	054-20	Library - Building Maintenance	-5,000
2/18/2020	055-20	Building - Department Head	-30,000
Subtotal - Approved Appropriations			-3,246,196
Balance Available			4,504,436
Less Proposed Appropriations:			
3/5/2020	060-20	DPW - Arbor Way Repair	-600,000
3/5/2020	061-20	COA - Heat & Building	-11,000
Subtotal - Proposed Appropriations			-1,389,766
Balance Available if Proposed Appropriations are Approved			3,893,436
Possible Appropriations:			
Snow & Ice			
Stabilization Fund	5% - \$6,500,000	7% - \$9,100,000	Current - \$6,923,149
OPEB Fund			Current - \$1,485,030
Host Fee / Mitigation			
City Hall Move			
Putnam Place Garage Stairwells			
Main Street Garage - Phase 1			
Community Development - Two Way Main Street			
Community Development - Rail Trail			
Legal - Code Enforcement			
Demolition			
Demolition - Laurel Street School			
Police - Accessibility			
Steam Plant Cleanup			
Marketing City			
Cemetery Software			
Cemetery Vehicles			
Cemetery - Expansion engineering			
Parks - Downtown Summer Groundskeeper			
Crocker Field			
DPW - Arbor Way			
DPW - Oak Hill Road Bridge			
DPW - Vehicles			
DPW - Street Paving			
Senior Center Roof			
Library - Asbestos Abatement on windows and HVAC pipes			
Veterans - Cash Benefits			
Schools - South Street School - West Building Façade and Roof and Boiler			



MEMORANDUM

COMMISSIONER

301 Broad Street
978-829-1910
978-345-9687 FAX

STREETS & PARKS

301 Broad Street
978-829-1900
978-345-9687 FAX

WASTEWATER

166 Boulder Drive, Suite 108
978-345-9622
978-345-9623 FAX

SEWER COLLECTION

301 Broad Street
978-829-1900
978-345-9687 FAX

WATER

1200 Rindge Road
978-345-9616
978-345-9555 FAX

ENGINEERING

301 Broad Street
978-829-1917
978-345-9687 FAX

CEMETERIES

115 Mount Elam Road
978-345-9578
978-345-9686 FAX

Date: February 27, 2020.
To: Mayor Stephen L. DiNatale
Subject: DPW Capital- Arbor Way Wall Engineering

The Department of Public Works (DPW) respectfully requests approval of the Mayor and City Council for the appropriation of **\$600,000** from available funds to cover the cost of additional engineering design, permitting, and construction of repairs to the retaining walls that support Arbor Way.

Arbor Way is a 480-foot long dead-end roadway constructed in 1998 as part of the Montachusett Industrial Park Expansion project undertaken by the Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority. The road is supported along both sides by mechanically stabilized earth (MSE) walls with retained earth heights of up to approximately 24 feet. It serves as the only means of vehicular access for two light-industrial businesses located at the end of the roadway.

In 2006, the DPW discovered a failure along an 80-foot section of the eastern retaining wall due to stormwater erosion and loss of backfill behind the wall. The DPW hired an engineering consultant to perform an initial assessment and make recommendations for repair. Due to a lack of funding at the time, the project never advanced to the engineering design phase.

In 2019, the Mayor and City Council appropriated \$35,000 for the engineering design of the repair. During field reconnaissance for the design work, the DPW's engineering consultant discovered two additional failures that were not previously observed, one along a 50-foot section of the eastern retaining wall and the other along a 75-foot section of the western retaining wall. Both of these failures consist of outward sliding of the wall blocks, and present a concern for the overall long-term stability of the retaining walls.

Following the discovery of the additional failures, the DPW directed its consultant to perform an analysis of the various alternatives for repair, with the need to maintain vehicular access for the two businesses located at the end of Arbor Way being the most important consideration.

Results of this analysis indicate the most feasible and cost-sensitive approach will be to stabilize the walls with earthen embankments. This alternative will require an estimated \$51,000 in additional engineering and permitting costs and an estimated \$500,000 in construction costs, and contingency for differing site conditions estimated at \$49,000 for a grand total of \$600,000. Please see the attached alternatives analysis memorandum and engineering and permitting services proposal.

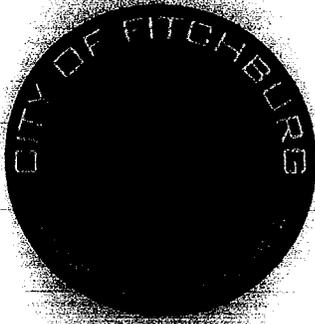
Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Nicolás H. Bosonetto in black ink.

Nicolás H. Bosonetto, PE
Commissioner of Public Works/City Engineer

cc: Calvin Brooks, City Auditor
Mary de Alderete, City Clerk
City Council





The City of Fitchburg
Massachusetts
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

STEPHEN L. DINATALE
MAYOR

166 BOULDER DRIVE
FITCHBURG, MA 01420
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AARON TOURIGNY
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JOAN DAVID
ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE
JDAVID@FITCHBURGMA.GOV

February 27, 2020

The Honorable City Council
Fitchburg Municipal Offices
166 Boulder Drive, Suite 108
Fitchburg, MA 01420

Dear Honorable Councilors,

In consideration of the recommendation of the Planning Board and comments by various citizens regarding the Year 46 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), I hereby submit to the City Council the following year 46 CDBG application for your review. Attached, please find Year 46 Estimated Funding, Year 46 Funding Requested, and Year 46 Funding Recommended.

The Year 46 Consolidated Plan must be submitted to the Department of Housing and Urban Development no later than May 15, 2020 to ensure funds will be available by July 1, 2020. In order to meet the submission deadline for Year 46 CDBG program, comments must be received by the City Council's March 17, 2020 meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen L. DiNatale". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephen L. DiNatale
Mayor of Fitchburg

Cc: Fitchburg City Council
Calvin Brooks, City Auditor
Cindy Dalton, Community Development Coordinator

YEAR 46 ESTIMATED FUNDING

Estimated CDBG funds available for Year 46 (2020-2021) are as follows:

Year 46 Entitlement*	\$996,222
Year 45 Entitlement	\$974,302
Estimated Program Income available from prior years (Misc.)	\$625
Potential Misc. Program Income available in Year 46	\$700
Reprogrammed Funds	\$114,885
<u>CDBG Housing Revolving Loan Funds:</u>	
Anticipated Program Income July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020	\$55,800
Anticipated Fund Balance as of June 30, 2020	\$165,000
Potential Program Income from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021	\$60,000
<u>CDBG Business Revolving Loan Funds:</u>	
Anticipated Program Income July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020	\$17,000
Anticipated Fund Balance as of June 30, 2020	\$40,000
Potential Program Income July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021	\$23,000
<u>HOME Revolving Loan Funds:</u>	
Anticipated Program Income July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020	\$60,960
Anticipated Fund Balance as of June 30, 2020	\$180,000
Potential Program Income July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021	\$65,000

*** This figure may fluctuate pending budget approval by Congress**

ESTIMATED FUNDING AVAILABLE – \$1,112,432

CDBG YEAR 46 FUNDING REQUESTED

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS (10)	\$473,000
PUBLIC SERVICES (6)	\$192,000
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (3)	\$160,000
REHABILITATION AND PRESERVATION (2)	\$119,270
CLEARANCE ACTIVITIES (1)	\$150,000
PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION (1)	\$210,000
TOTAL YEAR 46 FUNDING REQUESTS (23)	\$1,304,270
ESTIMATED FUNDS AVAILABLE:	\$1,100,512

CDBG YEAR 46 FUNDING RECOMMENDED

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS (4)	\$330,900
PUBLIC SERVICES (5)	\$123,000
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (3)	\$180,000
REHABILITATION AND PRESERVATION (2)	\$119,270
CLEARANCE ACTIVITIES (1)	\$160,000
PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION (1)	\$199,244
TOTAL YEAR 46 FUNDING RECOMMENDED (16)	\$1,112,414

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS

PROJECT	SPONSOR	YEAR 46 RECOMMENDATION
Streetscape Improvements	Community Development	\$290,900
<p>Project funds will be used to design, install or replace sidewalks, curb-cuts, fencing, lighting, plantings or other streetscape, infrastructure, or accessibility improvements along City Gateways, North of Main or other strategic locations. Funds will support the large-scale Main Street/Boulder Drive project, as well as the next round of Complete Streets. Other planned work includes sidewalk and wall work at Allen Place, sidewalk work on Clarendon and Middle Street, and sidewalk and crosswalk work on South Street.</p>		
Fitchburg Abolitionist Park Phases I & II	Friends of the Fitchburg Abolitionist Park	\$5,000
<p>Project funds will be used to prepare and develop the site for a park commemorating Fitchburg's participation in the Underground Railroad. This park, though located on land owned by Fitchburg State University, would be open to the public. Site preparation and development includes removal of tree stumps, resetting a granite wall, grading and hydro-seeding the lot, installing a stage, purchase and installation of signage, and landscaping.</p>		
Downtown Mural Project	Community Development	\$25,000
<p>Program funds will be used to install 2-3 murals in the downtown area. The City will conduct an RFP process to solicit artists and designers interested in creating a mural for the downtown, and oversee the installation of said murals.</p>		
Sprinkler System at Horizon House	LUK, Inc.	\$10,000
<p>Project funds will be used to purchase and install a sprinkler system at Horizon House, a group home for youth. This sprinkler system is required to comply with building and safety codes.</p>		

4 PROPOSALS – \$330,900

PUBLIC SERVICES

PROJECT	SPONSOR	YEAR 46 RECOMMENDATION
Street Homeless Intervention Program	Our Father's House	\$28,000
<p>Project funds will be used to pay staff salary for a 20 hour per week Street Outreach Worker solely dedicated to the homeless within the City of Fitchburg. Connections to mental health, addiction, health, and social services will be offered along with food, clothing, blankets, and human contact. Will work with Fitchburg PD and FD. \$8,000 would be used to pay for a chronically homeless persons first month's rent only or one-time payment in order to enable individuals to acquire and live in permanent housing and off the streets.</p>		
Spartacus Program	Montachusett Regional YMCA	\$10,000
<p>Program funds will be used to support staff salary of the Teen Center Spartacus Program, offering services to at-risk youth between the ages of 13 and 18 who live in Fitchburg. Emphasis will be on Youth Development, Healthy Living, and Social Responsibility through physical fitness, team building, life skills training, community service, and outdoor activities. It is estimated that 50 youth will be served between September and June.</p>		

Drug Enforcement Patrol Program	Fitchburg Police Department	\$65,000
<p>Program funds will be used to provide for police overtime expenses related to drug investigation activities in the CDBG Strategy Area and foot/motorcycle/bicycle patrols in targeted CDBG areas. Police activities include narcotics investigations, surveillance, undercover buys, search warrant services, and arrests. CDBG funds will be used by the Drug Suppression Unit to conduct thorough investigations on mid- to high-level dealers in the City of Fitchburg, particularly targeting the heroin and opioid market in designated CDBG areas.</p>		
Family Homeless Shelter	North Star Family Services	\$10,000
<p>Program funds will provide emergency housing for homeless families in North Worcester County, including case management and follow up services. It is estimated NSFS will screen 200-250 referrals during the year, and expects to serve 20 Fitchburg families in the shelter and emergency services. The CDBG funds will be used to partially pay for the NSFS Operations Manager salary costs.</p>		
Fitchburg Homelessness Prevention Project	Community Legal Aid	\$10,000
<p>Program funds will be used to assist low-income and elderly tenants at risk of eviction or loss of housing subsidy, in order to help prevent homelessness. CLA will also take on cases related to housing that is in need of repair; CLA is able to assert legal claims that result in improvement to housing conditions, making the unit more livable for the tenant, and increases the quality of the City's housing stock. In 2018, in the Central Division of the Housing Court, 93.2% of tenants were underrepresented, compared to 33.4% of landlords. Funding will support part of a Staff Attorney and the Senior Supervising Attorney.</p>		

5 PROPOSALS – \$123,000

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PROJECT	SPONSOR	YEAR 46 RECOMMENDATION
Small Business Technical Assistance Program	NewVue Communities	\$25,000
<p>Program funds will provide outreach and technical assistance to businesses, as well as help leverage loans for small businesses. It is estimated that 40 businesses will be served (unduplicated count), 60 jobs will be created/retained, and 3 loans with a value of \$75,000 total will be facilitated. Funds will be used to pay staff salary. NewVue has seen an increase in the need for intensive services for small business, and requests additional funds to meet this need for expanded support.</p>		
Microenterprise Business Development	Community Development	\$120,000
<p>Project funds will be used to support new and expanding microenterprises through loans and grants. Particular focus will be placed on businesses in need of one-time start-up costs, and preference will be given to retail.</p>		
Fitchburg Downtown Coordinator	Fitchburg State University	\$35,000
<p>Program funds will be used to support the salary of the Downtown Coordinator, who will assist in planning and coordinating Main Street projects and special events; assist in the development of a shared brand strategy for Downtown Fitchburg as both a college town and arts and culture destination. This position will spend significant time on supporting microenterprises in the downtown.</p>		

3 Proposals – \$180,000

REHABILITATION AND PRESERVATION

PROJECT	SPONSOR	YEAR 46 RECOMMENDATION
Code Enforcement	Board of Health	\$99,270
<p>Program funds will be used to pay 100% of one existing full-time BOH Inspector positions and 50% of one full-time Clerk position. Through the enforcement of the State's Sanitary and Building Codes, Fitchburg's housing stock will be greatly improved. It is estimated that 200 housing units and 900 dwellings will be inspected in the CDBG strategy area.</p>		
Critical Home Repair	Habitat for Humanity	\$20,000
<p>Program funds will be used to fund 4-6 critical repairs in Fitchburg, serving 10 households. Critical Home Repair is exterior or interior work to alleviate critical health, life, and safety issues or code violations for homeowners in need. Participants must own their own home and have a verifiable need that falls within scope and capabilities. The home must be a primary principal residence, current on mortgage, property taxes and insurance. Repairs must be necessary to function in the home and homeowners must partner with Habitat.</p>		

2 PROPOSALS – \$119,270

CLEARANCE ACTIVITIES

PROJECT	SPONSOR	YEAR 46 RECOMMENDATION
Demolition	Community Development Department	\$160,000
<p>Project funds will be used to remove abandoned structures which pose an imminent threat to public safety and which contribute to slums and blight. The entire City will be served but the principal benefit will accrue to the CDBG Strategy Area in which the proposed activities will take place. It is estimated that 4 buildings containing up to 12 units will be demolished. Consultants will be hired for specific expertise such as environmental assessment or engineering services.</p>		

1 PROPOSAL – \$160,000

PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

PROJECT	SPONSOR	YEAR 46 RECOMMENDATION
CDBG Administration	Community Development Department	\$199,244
<p>Project funds will provide for the necessary administration of CDBG programs and sub-recipient contracts in accordance with federal guidelines, including staffing, technical services, and planning activities. This also includes the cost of various activities such as the Consolidated Plan; Consolidated Annual Performance Report; Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing; and other strategic plans and services. These funds enable the City to apply for, receive, and administer additional federal and state grants.</p>		

1 PROPOSALS – \$199,244