



# Finance Committee Agenda

## City of Newton In City Council

Monday, August 14, 2023

The Finance Committee will hold this meeting as a hybrid meeting on Monday, August 14, 2023, at 7:00 pm in the City Council Chamber. To view this meeting using Zoom use this link: <https://newtonma-gov.zoom.us/j/86290578240> or call 1-646-558-8656 and use the following Meeting ID: 862 9057 8240

### Items scheduled for discussion:

- #256-23**      **Acceptance of \$150,000 from the Massachusetts State Budget**  
HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to accept and expend the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) earmarked in the 2022 State Economic Development Bill for Newton's Bluebikes system.
- #257-23**      **Acceptance of grant funding for the Marty Sender Greenway Phase 2 Restoration Project**  
HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to accept and expend the sum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) from the National Recreation and Park Association's 2023 Danaher Biodiversity Grant Program to the Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture for the Marty Sender Greenway Phase 2 Restoration project.
- #260-23**      **Acceptance of \$1,250,000 from the Massachusetts State Budget**  
HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to accept and expend the sum of one million two hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$1,250,000) earmarked in the 2022 State Economic Development Bill for the Christina Street Bridge and Path Project.
- #258-23**      **Transfer \$200,000 to the Newton Communications Access Center, Inc. (NewTV)**  
HER HONOR THE MAYOR requesting authorization to transfer and expend a sum of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) from the PEG Access and Cable Related Fund to the Newton Communications Access Center, Inc (NewTV) to support public, educational, and governmental access cable television services and this financial strategy.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Walker Grossman, Chair

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The location of this meeting is accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities who require assistance. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance of the meeting: [jfairley@newtonma.gov](mailto:jfairley@newtonma.gov) or (617) 796-1253. The city's TTY/TDD direct line is: 617-796-1089. For the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), please dial 711.



Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor

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City of Newton, Massachusetts

Office of the Mayor  
2023 JUL -3 PM 3: 27

**256-23**

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rfuller@newtonma.gov

CITY CLERK  
NEWTON, MA. 02459

July 3, 2023

Honorable City Council  
Newton City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

Honorable City Councilors:

I respectfully submit this docket item to the Honorable Council requesting the acceptance and expenditure of a \$150,000 earmark in the 2022 state Economic Development Bill for Newton's Bluebikes system.

This earmark, administered through the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, will fund a reimbursement grant for the City's Bluebikes bikeshare system. Bluebikes is coordinated through the City of Newton's Planning and Development Department.

The earmark was submitted by State Senator Cynthia Creem.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Mayor Ruthanne Fuller



Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor

**City of Newton, Massachusetts**

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Office of the Mayor

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CITY CLERK  
NEWTON, MA. 02459

July 3, 2023

Honorable City Council  
Newton City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

Honorable City Councilors:

I respectfully submit this docket item to this Honorable Council requesting the acceptance and expenditure of a \$50,000 grant from the National Recreation & Park Association's 2023 Danaher Biodiversity Grant Program to the Department of Parks, Recreation & Culture. This grant will help supplement the native wetland enhancements that are part of the Marty Sender Greenway Restoration Phase 2 Project in Auburndale.

The City has already received \$360,298 in state MassTrails Program funding for this important project. With the additional \$50,000, the project will have received a total of \$410,298 in grants and donations, which covers in full the direct total costs.

Attached is a memo from Nicole Banks, Commissioner of Parks, Recreation & Culture on the matter.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Mayor Ruthanne Fuller

Newton Parks, Recreation & Culture Department  
246 Dudley Road, Newton, MA 02459  
Office: (617) 796-1500  
[parks@newtonma.gov](mailto:parks@newtonma.gov)  
*Nicole Banks, Commissioner*



June 30, 2023

Re: Request for the acceptance and expenditure of the NRPA 2023 Danaher Biodiversity Grant for the Marty Sender Greenway Restoration Phase 2

Dear Mayor Fuller,

The City of Newton, through its Parks, Recreation and Culture Department is the recipient of the National Recreation & Park Association's 2023 Danaher Biodiversity Grant Program for the total of \$50,000. This grant will help supplement the native wetland enhancements that are part of the Marty Sender Greenway Restoration Phase 2.

As you know, the Department has received the sum of \$360,298 in MassTrails funding and donations. With the additional \$50,000, The project will have received a total of \$410,298 in grants and donations.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nicole Banks".

Nicole Banks  
Commissioner of Parks, Recreation & Culture



Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor

**City of Newton, Massachusetts**

Office of the Mayor  
2023 JUL -3 PM 3:28

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CITY CLERK  
NEWTON, MA. 02450

July 3, 2023

Honorable City Council  
Newton City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

Honorable City Councilors:

I respectfully submit this docket item to this Honorable Council requesting the acceptance and expenditure of \$1,250,000 earmark in the 2022 state Economic Development Bill for the Christina Street Bridge and Path project.

The proposed renovated/new bridge and path will provide a multi-use path crossing of the Charles River between Newton and Needham to create a new bicycle and pedestrian connection for transportation and recreation. The bridge and path will serve the neighborhood in Newton along Needham Street that is seeing additional multifamily and mixed-use development, while the Needham neighborhood is home to new commercial and residential uses. The project will serve residents and the regional workforce, and will provide connections to existing and future trails along the Charles River, as well as to the MBTA Green Line.

The bridge and path will be designed and constructed in close collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, which "owns" the river and the land on the Needham riverbank. The \$1,250,000 earmark will be supplemented by developer and anticipated Needham-side contributions for an estimated total project cost of \$4,300,000. This estimate is preliminary, subject to further design, and is based on a 2021 feasibility study by VHB with cost escalation factors applied to design and construction.

The 2021 Christina Street Rail Bridge Feasibility Study can be found [here](#).

The earmark was submitted by State Representative Ruth Balsler.

Attached is a memo from Josh Ostroff, Director of Transportation Planning on the matter.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Mayor Ruthanne Fuller



Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor

**City of Newton, Massachusetts**  
Department of Planning and Development  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

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Barney S. Heath  
Director

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Mayor Ruthanne Fuller  
From: Josh Ostroff, Director of Transportation Planning  
Date: July 3, 2023  
Re: Christina Street Bridge Earmark  
Cc: Jonathan Yeo; Barney Heath; Jennifer Steel

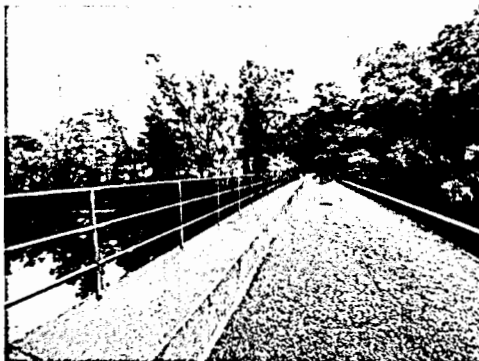
Honorable Mayor Fuller,

Thank you for your consideration of the acceptance of a state earmark to help fund the Christina Street Bridge project.

This earmark is one of several for Newton included in Chapter 268 of the Acts of 2022, An Act related to Economic Growth and relief for the Commonwealth, also known as the 2022 Economic Development Bill, and was included at the request of Representative Balser.

This project will provide a highly beneficial recreational and transportation connection between Newton and Needham to improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity. The Newton side is experiencing redevelopment, while the Needham side has new residential and commercial uses. Improved bicycle and pedestrian connectivity is central to the City's transportation strategy and is complemented by other projects and initiatives, both in the project area and citywide.

The city has worked closely with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) for several years to advance this project, which will fill a critical gap in the Charles River pathway system. The bridge will directly connect to DCR's Charles River Reservation path on the Needham side of the river.



*Existing bridge looking east from Needham*



*Right of way seen from Charles River Reservation path, looking east*



*Needham trail entrance at 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue*

Work to date has included a survey conducted by DCR, a 2021 feasibility study, and community engagement including discussions with nearby property owners, Needham representatives, and the public. Please see this [project page](#) for more information.

With the state earmark and anticipated developer contributions, the City will work with DCR to fund project design and construction. Based on updated preliminary cost estimates, we anticipate a project budget of \$4.3 million, but we expect

this number to be refined as we proceed to update construction cost estimates through the design and engineering process. There is no expectation currently to request City funding.

The Christina Street Bridge is part of an emerging network that will provide enduring benefits. For example, City staff are working on related project elements, including a privately-funded extension of the pathway across Needham Street that will connect with the Upper Charles Greenway (which is the subject of a separate planning effort known as the Community Way).

This earmark is a reimbursement grant, for which the City will submit funding consistent with a defined scope of services. Funding must be expended by December 31, 2026. The Planning and Development Department (Environmental and Transportation) will lead this work, in partnership with other City departments, DCR, and the Town of Needham.

As this exciting project advances, staff will provide updates to the Council and the public.

Thank you for your consideration, and for any questions that we can address.



RUTHANNE FULLER  
MAYOR

## City of Newton, Massachusetts

Office of the Mayor

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July 3, 2023

Honorable City Council  
Newton City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton Centre, MA 02459

Dear Councilors:

I respectfully submit a docket item to your Honorable City Council requesting authorization to appropriate and expend \$200,000 from the Public, Educational and Government (PEG) Access and Cable Related Fund (the "Fund") to the Newton Communications Access Center, Inc. ("NewTV").

The single payment of \$200,000 from the Fund to NewTV will allow the station to balance their FY24 budget with level staffing, cover payments for fixed expenses, maintain a high level of overall service, and provide governmental services including meeting coverage.

The City of Newton derives revenues from franchise fees and capital payments made by Comcast, RCN and Verizon. These are allocated between the City and NewTV pursuant to a grant agreement between the City, acting through its Mayor as cable license Issuing Authority (the "City") and NewTV dated July 23, 2018. NewTV receives eighty percent (80%) of these franchise fee revenues and forty percent (40%) of these capital payments.

On July 11, 2017, the City accepted G.L.c. 44, §53F¾, which established a separate revenue fund known as the PEG Access and Cable Related Fund (the "Fund"). Monies in the Fund are derived solely from the City's portions of franchise fee and capital payments made by the three cable operators in accordance with their franchise agreements. By statute, monies in the Fund shall only be appropriated for cable-related purposes consistent with the franchise agreements, including but not limited to (i) support of public, educational or governmental access cable television services; (ii) monitoring compliance of the cable operators with their franchise agreements; or (iii) preparing for renewal of the franchise agreements.

The Fund currently has a balance of more than \$900,000. The City is in close contact with NewTV as the PEG revenues are diminishing with fewer households using cable. Together we are preparing for a "soft landing" as the revenues decrease. The \$200,000 in this docket item is consistent with the use of PEG Funds to support public, educational, and governmental access cable television services and this financial strategy.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor



**From:** Bob Kelly <bobk@newtv.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 27, 2023 6:28 PM  
**To:** Mayor Ruthanne Fuller  
**Cc:** Maureen Lemieux; Susan Albright; Jonathan Yeo; Perry Rosenfield  
**Subject:** Revised request

[DO NOT OPEN links/attachments unless you are sure the content is safe. ]

Honorable Mayor Fuller,

On behalf of Newton Communications Access Center, Inc. (DBA NewTV), we respectfully request a \$200,000.00 grant/allocation from the PEG Enterprise Fund to replace lost cable related PEG funding to sustain our operation for FY24. The grant request represents the loss of PEG support due to an additional 1,423 cable subscribers jumping to streaming video services.

Below is a worksheet graphic illustrating the negative impact cable television cord cutting has had on NewTV over the past few years and what is projected to occur in FY24. The FY24 anticipated cable subscriber counts, average cable bill per operator and associated PEG revenues earmarked for NewTV are shown in red.

We hope our request for PEG support will be met favorably by you and the City Council as it was last year and the year before.

Respectfully,

Robert S. Kelly  
Executive Director

