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May 31, 2022

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

Councilors:

I respectfully submit a docket item to your Honorable Council requesting the authorization to accept and expend a grant of \$48,000 in grant funding from MassDOT's Shared Streets and Spaces Grant program for installation of four Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs).

The City proposes to use the grant to purchase 4 RRFB's to improve pedestrian safety at three crosswalks on Centre Street (Paul St. near Weeks field in Newton Centre, Cushing-Clark St. and Hyde St., the latter two are in between Newton Centre and Newton Highlands) and one at Watertown and Eddy Streets. Locations are: a) crash hot spots with 27 total crashes from 2018-2020, b) City Disability and DPW priorities and c) proximate to schools, transit, parks and/or village centers. All locations are ranked in the Top 5 on the City's RRFB Prioritization Program, which has rated more than 40 locations for RRFB's based on crash history, roadway character, pedestrian generators and vulnerable users. The City has committed to funding installation of the 4 RRFB's immediately upon purchase of the equipment.

Attached is the project application which the City submitted to MassDOT.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Ruthanne Fuller

Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

NEWTON, MA 02459
CITY CLERK

2022 MAY 31 PM 3:16

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Ruthanne Fuller
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Barney S. Heath
Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 31, 2022
To: Maureen Lemieux, Chief Financial Officer
Jonathan Yeo, Chief of Operations
From: Nicole Freedman, Director of Transportation Planning
Subject: Request to Docket Item to Accept MassDOT Shared Streets Grant for RRFBs

We request approval to accept and expend \$48,000 in grant funding from MassDOT's Shared Streets and Spaces Grant program for the following project:

Project Title
Newton RRFB Intersection Safety Improvements

Below is the project application information.

Project Location (GPS Coordinates): (Required)

- Centre St @ Paul St (42.3265, -71.19787)
- Centre St @ Hyde St (42.32181, -71.2029)
- Center St @ Cushing-Clark St (42.3228, -71.20141)
- Watertown @ Eddy (42.35263, -71.21774)
- (Alternate) Brookline @ Hartman

Locations are a) crash hot spots b) Disability & DPW RRFB Prioritization Program priorities d) proximate to schools, transit, village centers and parks.
Locations have all been reviewed for feasibility by the City's Transportation Engineer. Adjustments may be made in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

Amount Requested
\$48,000

Project Description 2-3 sentences

The City proposes to use the MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces Grant to purchase 4 Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB's) to improve pedestrian safety. Locations are: a) crash hot spots with 27 total crashes from 2018-2020, b) City Disability and DPW priorities and c) proximate to schools, transit, parks and/or village centers. All locations are ranked in the Top 5 on the City's RRFB Prioritization Program, which has rated more than 40 locations

for RRFB's based on crash history, roadway character, pedestrian generators and vulnerable users. The City has committed to funding installation of the 4 RRFB's immediately upon purchase of the equipment.

Describe the project goals and benefits (1-2 sentences): (Required)*

The goal is to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety at four prioritized intersections in Newton. Intersections have seen a total of 27 crashes between 2018 and 2020 and are proximate to schools, transit, village centers and parks.

Is the project intended to address a demonstrated need for Speed Management, according to local information, data, plans, or community concerns related to speed and safety? (Required)* Yes

All locations are ranked in the Top 5 on the City's RRFB Prioritization Program, which has rated more than 40 locations for RRFB's based on crash history, roadway character, pedestrian generators and vulnerable users. The proposed intersections have seen 27 crashes between 20018 and 2020. RRFB's are listed in as a Speed Management intervention on the Shared Streets application.

Is the project intended to provide improvements to infrastructure used by children to get to and from school (within two miles) or other youth destinations? If yes, please list schools or destinations. (Required)* Y N

- Centre St @ Paul Street – Mason Rice Elementary School, Newton South High School, Weeks Field (Newton Youth Soccer), Newton Center Playground, Crystal Lake Beach
- Centre St @ Hyde Street - Countryside Elementary School, Newton South High School, Weeks Field (Newton Youth Soccer), Newton Highlands Playground, Hyde Community Center, Crystal Lake Beach
- Center St @ Cushing-Clark - Countryside Elementary School, Newton South High School, Weeks Field (Newton Youth Soccer), Newton Highlands Playground, Hyde Community Center, Crystal Lake Beach
- Watertown @ Eddy – Horace Mann Elementary, FA Day Middle School, Newton Early Childhood Program, Albemarle Field, Gath Pool, John Barry Boys and Girls Club

Is the proposed project intended to provide improvements to infrastructure used by seniors to reach senior destinations (within one mile)? If yes, please list destinations. (Required)*

Yes

The proposed RRFB at Watertown @ Eddy is proximate to Trader Joe's and Star Market, two major food shopping destinations for seniors. Additionally it is 0.75 miles from the Newton Senior Center, the top destination in the City for seniors, based on NewMo rideshare data, and near the Gath Pool which provides opportunities for senior aquatics.

The Centre Street locations are proximate to Newton Center and Newton Highlands, which allow seniors to do local errands using the City's senior transportation system.

Is the proposed project intended to support safe walking and biking within one mile of a transit stop? If yes, please list the transit stop(s). (Required)*

- Centre St @ Paul Street - Newton Centre T
- Centre St @ Hyde Street - --Newton Highlands T, Newton Centre T
- Center St @ Cushing-Clark - Newton Highlands T, Newton Centre T
- Watertown @ Eddy – Newtonville Commuter Rail, West Newton commuter Rail
- Washington St @ Eddy Bus Stop
- Washington @ Walker Bus Stop

Does the proposed project support safe routes to open space and/or parks? If yes, please list the name of the facilities. (Required)*

In addition to supporting access to the fields that are part of the above-listed schools, the project supports safe routes to the following parks and/or open space:

- Centre St @ Paul Street –Weeks Field (Newton Youth Soccer), Newton Center Playground, Crystal Lake Beach
- Centre St @ Hyde Street - --Weeks Field (Newton Youth Soccer), Newton Highlands Playground, Crystal Lake Beach

- Center St @ Cushing-Clark - Weeks Field (Newton Youth Soccer), Newton Highlands Playground, Crystal Lake Beach
- Watertown @ Eddy – Albemarle Field, Gath Pool

Is the proposed project located in the municipality's Housing Choice designation area, will the project benefit from an Opportunity Zone Fund investment, or has the municipality implemented economic development best practices through the Community Compact program? (Required)* xx

- Housing Choice -Newton is a designated Housing Choice area.
- Community Compact - Newton has implemented best practices through the Community Compact program. The City has a robust Complete Streets Program, which has reviewed more than 100 roadway designs in 3 years, as well as an aggressive Climate Action Plan which is implementing in all areas of the program
- Opportunity Zone - Newton will not benefit from Opportunity Zone Fund Investment.

Will the proposed project be fully implemented by June 30, 2023? (Required)* Yes

Is this project intended to be a temporary or permanent improvement? (Required)*

- Permanent Potentially Permanent Temporary

Description of project implementation including staff roles and key milestones: (Required)*

Planning Department (Nicole Freedman, Director of Transportation Planning) – Project oversight and management. Ensure successful completion of the project within budget and deadline, consistent with Shared Streets requirements. Oversee public process and reporting.

DPW (Jason Sobel, Director of Transportation Operations) – Project implementation. Coordinate with contractor to purchase equipment. Installation, using non-Shared Street funding, will take place immediately after purchase.

Milestones

- Award Notification – Spring, 2022
- Equipment Purchase – Spring, 2022
- Final Public Notification – Summer, 2022

The City has committed to funding installation of the 4 RRFB’s immediately upon purchase of the equipment. Follow-on milestones are as follows:

- Site Design – Spring/Summer, 2022
- Installation (separate project, non-Shared Streets funding) –Summer, 2022

List all materials required to implement the project, and how they will be obtained: (Required)*

The City will use a contractor to install the RRFB’s. No materials are needed.

The Shared Streets and Spaces Program requires municipalities to provide notice or opportunity for public engagement related to the proposed project. Please confirm whether this has occurred. If yes, please list engagement activities. (Required)*

- Yes No To date, the City has engaged the Transportation Advisory Group, Safe Routes to School, Complete Streets Working Group and City Councilors about the proposed locations for RRFB installations, and the selection process (i.e. selecting the top ranked locations based on the City's RRFB Prioritization Program) The City received positive feedback.

The City will make a citywide announcement of the locations upon award, and do a final notification to the above-mentioned groups prior to installation. Demonstration of compliance with safety and accessibility-related regulations (ADA and MAAB): (Required)*

- Yes No

Part C: Site Information

Confirmation of ownership/control of the relevant municipal infrastructure.

Is this project entirely on municipally-owned infrastructure? (Required)*

Yes No

Indicate what, if any, MassDOT-owned infrastructure is integral to the proposed project. If improvements are proposed on MassDOT infrastructure, indicate whether the municipality has applied

Indicate what, if any, infrastructure owned by a state agency other than MassDOT is integral to the proposed project (i.e. the Department of Conservation & Recreation): (Required)*

Demonstrate whether the proposed project is in a Census Block Group identified by the relevant Regional Planning Agency as an Environmental Justice area: (Required)*

Yes No

Would the proposed project divert, detour, or otherwise impede current public transit service, even temporarily? (Required)*

Yes No