



City of Newton, Massachusetts Mayor's Proposed Budget Fiscal Year 2014

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Setti D. Warren, Mayor

16 April 2013

**City of Newton, Massachusetts
Fiscal Year 2014
Municipal Operating Budget**

**Dedicated to the Memory
of
Carleton P. Merrill,
Alderman-at-Large, Ward 1**



September 3, 1924 – January 23, 2013



SETTI D. WARREN
MAYOR

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16 April 2013

To: The Honorable Board of Aldermen
Newton Residents and Taxpayers

On March 12, 2013 the citizens of the City of Newton chose to make a significant investment in their Community. They chose to vote overwhelmingly for an override package that addresses Newton's most pressing needs: growth in student enrollment, outdated, inadequate school buildings, deteriorating streets and sidewalks, antiquated fire stations and increasing traffic and safety concerns. When I decided to run for Mayor I had a vision of a city that would continue to attract old and young, families, seniors and people of all backgrounds and offer a quality of life and ladder of opportunity that is unique in America today. I knew that we had to eliminate our structural deficit, re-establish financial sustainability and develop a plan to sufficiently maintain our buildings, roads and infrastructure. We have worked diligently to do just that – and are now poised to build Newton's future. The people of this great City have put their trust in my administration, and we will not let them down.

To accomplish this vision my Administration defined eight desired outcomes in the preparation of last year's budget which then cascaded throughout the City's functional areas and ultimately to the departmental level.

- Excellence in Education,
- Unparalleled Public Safety,
- Vibrant, Diverse Community Life,
- Improved Infrastructure,
- Robust Economic Development,
- Environmental Sustainability,
- Long-Term Financial Stability, and
- Community Engagement

To achieve this vision, we will continue to build on the strategies and initiatives that my administration has employed since I took office in January of 2010. Zero-basing our budgets, instituting performance management techniques, settling our collective bargaining agreements, assessing and addressing our infrastructure needs, and facilitating economic development where appropriate are the five strategies

we have utilized and from which we will not waiver. As a result of our efforts, as well as the confidence shown by the people of this great City we have been able to develop a budget that addresses many areas that have languished in recent years.

The FY2014 budget provides the financial resources necessary for the Newton Public Schools to continue to provide an excellent educational experience for our schoolchildren with the required operational, financial and capital resources necessary to enable the School Department to accomplish its goal of educating, preparing and inspiring all students to achieve their full potential as lifelong learners, thinkers, and productive contributors to our global society.

Unparalleled public safety requires a holistic approach that incorporates both proactive and reactive measures to ensure a community not only responds quickly to emergencies but prevents them in the first place. That is why the City has made strategic investments in both personnel and initiatives within the Police, Fire, Health, and Inspectional Services departments.

A vibrant, diverse community life is essential to the overall well-being of any community. Social and recreational programs, open space, cultural activities, and recreational amenities all contribute toward this outcome. This budget will focus on improving our physical recreational assets, including; improving natural resources such as Crystal Lake; increasing pedestrian and bicyclist mobility throughout the City; promoting our first-of-its-kind regional Veterans' Center, upgrading the War Memorial at City Hall for increased community utilization, and aggressively restoring the tree inventory to maintain the City's shade canopy.

As you know, my administration has consistently recognized the need to improve the City's capital infrastructure and has developed a long-term strategy to systematically address these needs. While it is tempting to defer non-urgent capital projects during tight fiscal times, communities ultimately pay a higher price when it becomes necessary to replace assets. To that end, this budget will allocate significant resources to investment in the City's infrastructure including; paving eight miles of roads; installing (new or replacement) one mile of sidewalks; improving the operation of traffic signals; implementing lighting and energy efficiency improvements; establishing an annual \$150,000 municipal building improvement fund for projects under \$75,000; implementing a strategic fleet replacement program; shifting from reactive to preventive maintenance; and lining and repairing the City's water and sewer infrastructure.

As we begin the assessment on our last major capital infrastructure component- the storm water system- we will have completed our goal of a comprehensive Citywide infrastructure assessment with its subsequent capital plan, to best address the City's larger capital needs in a prioritized and forward-looking manner. With a number of significant projects such as the F.A. Day, Carr, Angier, Cabot and Zervas schools and Fire Station upgrades on the horizon, the City will redeploy significant financial and personnel resources to the Public Buildings department to ensure projects stay on time and on budget.

A robust economic development effort is vital to the City's long-term health. This budget provides for a revamping of the role of the Economic Development Director, which will enable the City to establish an economic development vision that is comprehensive, holistic and effective. Continuing the quarterly business roundtables and area council meetings will provide opportunities for economic development staff to converse directly with business owners.

The City will continue to advance a number of long-term projects as well, which will provide long-term benefits for Newton, including continued work on the Chestnut Hill Square Project, Austin Street and the transformation of Needham Street. Creating a business-friendly planning environment is also key to a successful economic development strategy. Once again the City is devoting resources to examining, updating, and revising its zoning code and streamlining its permitting process.

Since 2010, the City of Newton has set out to become a leader in environmental sustainability. Within this budget, resources have been redeployed to better coordinate programs and activities across the spectrum of efforts in the City- efforts that reach much farther into the community fabric and result in lowering our carbon footprint and impact on global warming. We will create partnerships to leverage expertise in this area across the utilities, non-profits, committees and commissions to not only save dollars in energy consumption, but work comprehensively to advance a sustainable community in every sense.

And, finally, this budget enables the City to continue to put in place the administrative structure that will enable us to maintain long term financial stability that is evident through maintenance of the City of Newton's Aaa Bond Rating, improved financial reserves, annual unqualified audit opinions, conservative financial forecasting, implementation of comprehensive financial policies, elimination of the "structural deficit", reduction of non-recurring funding sources to balance the annual budget, and appropriate investment in capital infrastructure.

This is truly an exciting time for the City of Newton. The many initiatives contained in this budget will provide the resources to enable all of us to maintain the quality of life that the citizens of Newton expect and deserve, to preserve a community that reflects the reasons people chose to live in Newton, and to enable us to address infrastructure and school enrollment needs without having a negative effect on the education, public safety, public works, recreational and cultural needs of the residents of the City of Newton

And so, in accordance with Chapter 44, Section 32 of the Massachusetts General Laws, and Section 5 of our City Charter, it is my honor and privilege to submit the City of Newton, Massachusetts Fiscal Year 2014 Municipal Operating Budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Setti D. Warren". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and "W".

Setti D. Warren,
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Elected Officials and City Administration

Setti D. Warren, Mayor

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Cheryl Lappin, Vice President
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Greer Tan Swiston
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Vacant

School Committee

Claire Sokoloff, Chairperson
Matt Hills, Vice Chairperson
Geoff Epstein
Diana Fisher-Gomberg
Angela Pitter-Wright
Margie Ross-Decter
Steven Siegel
Jonathan Yeo

Executive Office Staff

Robert Rooney, Chief Operating Officer
Maureen Lemieux, Chief Financial Officer
Aaron Goldman, Citizens' Assistant
Anna Gonzalez, Dir, Community Engagement
Maureen Murphy, Executive Assistant
Robert Symanski, Financial Analyst
Michael Herbert, Dir, Performance Management

Division Directors/Commissioners

David Olson, Clerk of the Board/City Clerk
David Wilkinson, Comptroller
Nicholas Read, Chief Procurement Officer
Elizabeth Dromey, Chairman, Board of Assessors
James Reardon, Treasurer
Donnalyn Lynch-Kahn, City Solicitor
Dolores Hamilton, Dir, Human Resources
Joseph Mulvey, Int. Dir, Information Technology
Candace Havens, Dir, Planning Department
Joshua Morse, Int Comm, Public Buildings Dept
Ann Cornaro, Mgr Fin'l Information Systems
Howard Mintz, Chief, Newton Police
Bruce Proia, Chief, Newton Fire Dept
John Lojek, Dir, Inspectional Services
David Turocy, Commissioner, Public Works
Dori Zaleznik, Comm, Health & Human Services
John MacGillvray, Dir, Veterans' Services
Jayne Colino, Dir, Senior Services
Philip McNulty, Dir, Newton Free Library
Robert DeRubeis, Comm, Parks & Recreation
Linda Plaut, Dir, Cultural Affairs
Cynthia Stone, Dir, Historic Newton

School Administration

Dr. David Fleishman, Superintendent
Sandra Guryan, Deputy Superintendent/C.A.O.

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