

## Mayor Warren's Capital Improvement Plan Address

October 21, 2013

When I stood before you last year at this time, I docketed a proposal to increase the tax levy by way of both general operating and debt exclusion overrides that would provide funding for capital improvements and renovation for Angier, Cabot and Zervas elementary schools to alleviate district wide overcrowding and poor learning conditions. I docketed a proposal for operational funds to address the poor condition of our streets and sidewalks, enrollment increase in our schools, funding for Fire HQ, the wires division, and Station 3 in Newton Centre - the hub of our fire department- as well as funding for additional patrol officers to keep our streets and neighborhoods safe.

And thanks to the efforts of you the honorable Board, the School committee, city and school staff and great citizen leadership our city spoke loud and clear and voted to support that proposal in March of this year. We are grateful to the residents of our city who supported our override package to invest to build Newton's future. As a result we are currently doing unprecedented work on our infrastructure that include thousands of feet of road repaving and sidewalk repair that will create complete streets to make our villages more bikable, walkable, accessible and safer. We are also meeting milestones and financial targets as planned for each of our school and city capital projects. We have added 50 new teachers to the classroom this year and will meet our goal of having added four new police officers on our streets by this spring.

Because of the collaborative work we have done with the honorable board and residents we have expanded our tax base through targeted development opportunities. The Chestnut Hill Square project and the recently approved Riverside project will generate millions dollars of new revenue. Both projects attract new business and housing into Newton as well as make vast infrastructure improvements.

For the first time, this year's capital plan integrates technology infrastructure into our long term vision of building a 21<sup>st</sup> century city hall so that we can achieve greater efficiency to better serve our citizens.

In addition, we have dramatically improved the maintenance of one of the most treasured asset ; our trees. For the first time in Newton's history our community has a long term sustainable plan to plant new trees and maintain them to ensure Newton remains the garden city for generations to come.

Finally – for the first time, this year's CIP includes a traffic and signalization plan to modernize our traffic lights and incorporate smart technology that will improve traffic flow throughout our city streets.

The work of this year's capital plan really demonstrates 4 years of great collaborative work with you the honorable board, School Committee, our city employees, Newton Public schools staff and our residents in building a livable, sustainable model city in for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Together we've made extraordinary progress in rebuilding Newton's capital and infrastructure as well as putting our financial house in order for the long term. We've made it to this point not just because of solid policies and ideas- we've made it to this point because this administration along with all many of you worked to change the tone and tenor of politics in our city. Let's make sure we continue our work towards that end. Let's be willing to take on the most difficult issues of the day and to move our city forward by lifting our dialogue up, not down. Let's continue what we've started and demonstrate to the rest of the Commonwealth why last year Money magazine and CNN rank Newton one of the best places to live in the Nation by working together, 13 villages, one community.