



Eileen Donoghue  
City Manager

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor Leahy and Members of the City Council

**FROM:** Eileen Donoghue, City Manager *EMD*

**DATE:** January 31, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Public Safety Infrastructure Funding (**Motion by C. Elliot on 1/21/2020** - Req. City Council Vote To Request Statehouse Delegation Work With Administration To Fund 4 Million Dollar Earmark In Bond Bill - H4549 - "Act Providing For Capital Repairs And Improvements" - For The Study, Design And Make Capital Improvements For A Public Safety Facility With Fire And Police Services In The City Of Lowell.)

---

On January 21, 2020, the City Council voted to request the support of Lowell's state delegation in securing the release of \$4 million for the study, design and improvement of public safety facilities in the City previously authorized in a 2018 bond bill. Mayor Leahy and I have submitted letters to the delegation communicating this request. Additionally, we have submitted a letter to Governor Baker intended to make him aware of the condition of our fire facilities and conveying the urgent need for these funds to be released. Copies of both letters are attached.

As the City works to identify potential funding sources to address the known maintenance needs of our fire stations, I will continue to remain in touch with members of the delegation and the administration about this matter.

Eileen M. Donoghue  
City Manager

John J. Leahy  
Mayor

January 28, 2020

Governor Charlie Baker  
State House, Room 360  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Baker,

On behalf of the City of Lowell, we respectfully request that your administration consider the release of \$4 million authorized through the 2018 capital assets bond bill (*An Act providing for capital facility repairs and improvements for the Commonwealth*) for the study, design and improvement of public safety infrastructure in Lowell. This funding would be particularly valuable in enabling the City to address the longstanding maintenance needs of our fire facilities.

Lowell is served by a total of eight fire stations located throughout the City. Lowell Fire Department staff and operations, including its fire prevention office and training center, occupy two additional former fire stations, making Lowell's network of municipal fire facilities among the most extensive in the Commonwealth. Among these ten structures, several were built as early as the nineteenth century. Each building is in deteriorating condition, with critical structural components nearing the end of their remaining useful life.

In 2018, the City of Lowell received facility condition assessment reports on several fire stations which revealed the extent of the maintenance required to preserve their safety and structural integrity. Deficiencies identified in these reports include crumbling concrete slabs that support fire vehicles, failing roofs, poor electrical work, outdated heating and plumbing systems, and alarmingly, the presence of asbestos. According to the assessment, the capital needs of Lowell's Branch Street Fire Station alone total an estimated \$1.3 million, illustrating the scale of the investment needed to address current conditions.

Given the constraints of our municipal budget, the ability of the City of Lowell to respond to the known maintenance needs of our public safety facilities with the urgency that their conditions demands will require supplemental financial assistance. The previously authorized

funding that we are seeking will be put to effective use in mitigating the most critical areas of need across the City's fire facilities and implementing enhancements that will equip the Lowell Fire Department to meet evolving fire safety standards.

We appreciate your consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact the Office of the City Manager should you require any additional information about this matter.

Sincerely,



Eileen M. Donoghue  
City Manager



John J. Leahy  
Mayor

Eileen M. Donoghue  
City Manager

John J. Leahy  
Mayor

January 28, 2020

Senator Edward J. Kennedy  
State House, Room 70  
Boston, MA 02133

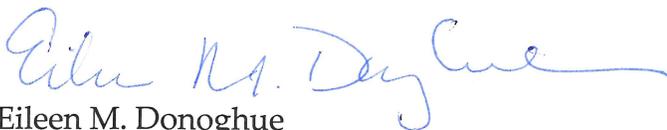
Dear Senator Kennedy,

As you are aware, the Commonwealth's 2018 capital assets bond bill, *An Act providing for capital facility repairs and improvements for the Commonwealth*, authorized \$4 million for the study, design and improvement of public safety infrastructure in the City of Lowell. This earmark was included in the bill as a result of the advocacy of Lowell's state delegation.

With much of the City's vast public safety infrastructure in deteriorating condition, this funding remains much needed. Recent assessments of the conditions of Lowell's fire facilities have identified significant deficiencies including crumbling concrete slabs that support fire vehicles, failing roofs, poor electrical work, outdated heating and plumbing systems, and alarmingly, the presence of asbestos. Attending to these known maintenance needs will require a substantial financial investment. To date, however, the previously authorized funding has not been released by the administration.

On behalf of the City of Lowell and the City Council, we are writing to request your support in advocating for the disbursement of these critical funds. For your reference, a copy of a letter that we have submitted to Governor Baker on this matter is enclosed. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require any additional information.

Sincerely,



Eileen M. Donoghue  
City Manager



John J. Leahy  
Mayor