

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

CITY OF LOWELL

In City Council

VOTE

Authorizing the City Manager to accept and expend a Municipal Vulnerability Program Planning Grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) to fund mitigating potential climate change and environmental problems before they occur.

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The grant will fund the hiring of a certified MVP consulting group that will help guide the City through the MVP process; and

The City of Lowell received a grant in the amount of \$77,550.00 to implement the MVP Program; and

Additionally, the City applied for and received extra grant funding to be used to develop a Hazard Mitigation Plan which the City is required to produce every five years; and the City is due to reproduce a new version this year.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT VOTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOWELL:

That the City Manager be and is hereby authorized to accept and expend a Municipal Vulnerability Program Planning Grant in the amount of \$77,550.00 from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) to fund mitigating potential climate change and environmental problems before they occur.



Eileen Donoghue  
City Manager

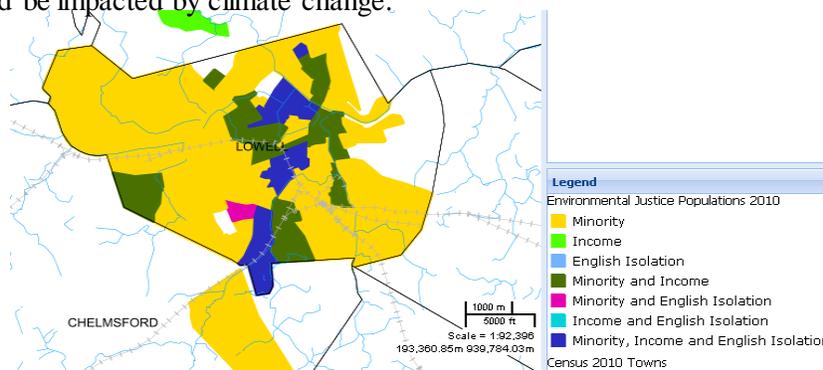
Kara Keefe Mullin  
Assistant City Manager

Alex Magee  
Assistant to the City Manager

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Samaras and Members of the City Council  
FROM: Eileen Donoghue, City Manager *ED*  
DATE: October 24, 2019  
SUBJECT: Municipal Vulnerability Program Application

The City has been preparing an application package for the Municipal Vulnerability Program (“MVP”) which was recently extended with another round of funding by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA). The program is designed to be implemented in two phases – the first phase a “planning” phase and the second an “action” phase, with each phase requiring a separate application, review, and potential funding award. In addition to the standard planning phase, extra funding is available for communities who need to either create as new, or update their expiring official Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). The City’s HMP, created in coordination with NMCOG in 2016, expires in 2020 and is required to be renewed. We will be applying for an expanded MVP funding award to get the HMP plan renewed and certified as a part of this planning phase. Another means for receiving expanded funding are the identification and targeted remediation of issues in Environmental Justice Communities, which are communities that are typically most impacted by environmental harms or risks, and are recognized due to a large proportion of minorities, low-income residents, English-language isolation areas, or some combination of those factors. The City of Lowell has many Environmental Communities and thus would likely be eligible for expanded grant funding to explore how these communities specifically could be impacted by climate change.



**Environmental  
Justice  
Communities**

It is important for the City to understand how climate change in general, and extreme weather events specifically could impact the City of Lowell. I have directed staff from my office to make this project a priority since the new round of funding was announced in early October. Applications are not due until late January 2020; however, applications will be accepted on a rolling basis, with application reviews set to begin in mid-November. As such, I have asked my staff to ensure this application is submitted ahead of the first round of application reviews.

As a requirement of participating in this program, the municipality must appoint a “core-team” (essentially a steering committee) to oversee the planning work involved with the grant. Community involvement must also be considered during this planning phase, with community organization and resident input throughout the process. The core team of City staff has been appointed and consists of members from the City Manager’s office, Planning and Development, Fire Department, Police Department, Water/Wastewater, and Engineering. This team represents a group who is knowledgeable of the various vulnerabilities the City will aim to study if a planning grant is received.

During an initial brainstorming session with the core-team, some of the intended areas of study include flooding issues in Pawtucketville and Centralville, flooding on Beaver Brook and Clay Pit Brook, surface flooding in Downtown, bridge and culvert conditions, catch basin issues, water/sewer infrastructure issues, emergency power needs, heat-islands in the downtown, rain gardens around the City, and more. These issues will all be explored in much more detail during the planning process.

I will keep the City Council up to date on the progress of this grant opportunity, including when the grant application is submitted and once we have any information on a potential award, as information comes available.

As always, please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions you may have.



Eileen Donoghue  
*City Manager*

Kara Keefe Mullin  
*Assistant City Manager*

Alex Magee  
*Assistant to the City Manager*

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Leahy and Members of the City Council  
FROM: Eileen Donoghue, City Manager  
DATE: February 20, 2020  
SUBJECT: Municipal Vulnerability Program – Grant Award

I am pleased to publicly announce the City of Lowell has received a Municipal Vulnerability Program planning grant in the amount of \$77,550. We are further excited to receive the largest award in the Commonwealth for this year's round of applications. With the many challenges facing Lowell related to climate change and the environment, this funding will go towards mitigating potential problems before they occur.

This grant will fund the hiring of a certified MVP consulting group who will help guide the City through the MVP process, producing a final report on vulnerabilities and solutions to help mitigate them. Additionally, we applied for and received extra grant funding to be used to develop a Hazard Mitigation Plan which we are required to produce every five years; our current plan was developed in 2016 and we are due to reproduce a new version this year.

I have attached a more detailed memorandum from October 2019 which gives greater detail into the MVP program and our application. I will update the City Council with progress on this process as necessary.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any further questions.