



Conor Baldwin  
Assistant City Manager/ CFO

Austin Ball  
Deputy CFO

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Thomas A. Golden, Jr., City Manager   
**FROM:** Conor Baldwin, Assistant City Manager for Fiscal Affairs   
**DATE:** January 27, 2026

**SUBJECT:** **MOTION RESPONSE – 1/20/26 - M. Gitschier** - Req. City Mgr. send letter to the State requesting immediate action to safeguard the railings on the Richard P. Howe, Sr. Bridge.

**MOTION RESPONSE – 1/20/26 – C. Nuon** - Req. City Mgr. work with appropriate department to install iron railings on the University Avenue Bridge

**MOTION RESPONSE - 1/20/26 - C. Chau** - Req. City Mgr. work in coordination with the Department of Public Works, the Lowell Police Department, the MassDOT, and any other relevant state or regional authorities to evaluate and pursue the installation of suicide-prevention measures, including but not limited to physical barriers, safety netting, or other proven deterrent infrastructure, on bridges within the City of Lowell where such incidents have occurred or present a demonstrated public safety concern.

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Attached please find a draft letter addressed to Interim Secretary of Transportation Phil Eng at the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. The letter requests a meeting to discuss urgent safety concerns on Lowell's Merrimack River bridges and outlines the City's intent to convene a working group with state partners and UMass Lowell. It also incorporates the City Council's directive to evaluate and pursue suicide-prevention measures, including physical barriers and other proven deterrents, and emphasizes collaboration on funding opportunities to support these efforts.

Please review the attached draft for approval and consideration by the City Council. Once approved, we will proceed with transmitting the letter to MassDOT and begin coordinating next steps to advance this critical public safety initiative.



Thomas A. Golden, Jr.  
*City Manager*

January 27, 2026

Secretary Phillip Eng  
Interim Secretary of Transportation  
Massachusetts Department of Transportation  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 3170  
Boston, MA 02116

**Subject: Urgent Request for Meeting Regarding Bridge Safety in Lowell**

Dear Secretary Eng,

On behalf of the City of Lowell, I am writing to express our deep concern regarding pedestrian safety on the bridges that span the Merrimack River within our community, including the Rourke Bridge, O'Donnell Bridge, Richard P. Howe Bridge, Ouellette Memorial Bridge, John E. Cox Memorial Bridge, and Hunts Falls Bridge.

In recent years, Lowell has experienced multiple tragedies on these crossings—most recently in January 2026, and another just a year prior. These heartbreaking incidents have left families and our entire community grieving. We believe that no family should have to endure such senseless loss, and we must act urgently to prevent future tragedies.

The Lowell City Council and my Administration are committed to convening a working group that includes partners from the Commonwealth, UMass Lowell, and other stakeholders. Our goal is to collaboratively identify and implement solutions that are both cost-effective and aesthetically appropriate, while prioritizing the safety and well-being of pedestrians.

In addition, the Lowell City Council has directed us to work in coordination with the Department of Public Works, the Lowell Police Department, MassDOT, and any other relevant state or regional authorities to evaluate and pursue the installation of suicide-prevention measures. These measures may include, but are not limited to, physical barriers, safety netting, or other proven deterrent infrastructure on bridges within the City of Lowell where such incidents have occurred or present a demonstrated public safety concern.

We also recognize that implementing these measures will require significant resources. To that end, we are eager to explore funding opportunities and grant programs—both at the state and federal level—that can support this critical work. We believe that by collaborating on funding strategies, we can accelerate the timeline for these improvements and ensure that cost does not become a barrier to saving lives.



Thomas A. Golden, Jr.  
*City Manager*

We respectfully request a meeting with you and your team at the earliest possible opportunity to discuss these concerns and begin planning next steps. Together, we can develop strategies that will make these critical crossings safer and restore peace of mind for residents and visitors alike. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and for your continued commitment to public safety.

Please let us know your availability so we can move forward without delay.  
Sincerely,

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Golden, Jr.  
City Manager

CC: Mayor Erik R. Gitschier and Members of the Lowell City Council  
Conor Baldwin, Assistant City Manager/ CFO