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**CITY OF NEW BEDFORD**  
**Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor**

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Mayor Mitchell Proposes City Capital Projects With Focus on Roads and Facility Repairs**

**New Bedford, Massachusetts** – Mayor Jon Mitchell has requested City Council approval of a \$7,850,000 loan authorization which would fund capital projects consistent with the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP), a rolling five-year plan that sets priorities for capital repairs and improvements across the City.

"The City's use of a five-year CIP has been a key component in our efforts to demonstrate responsible fiscal management to rating agencies and investors and has been cited as a factor in the City achieving and maintaining a stable AA- bond rating since 2014," said Mayor Jon Mitchell.

Each year, the Administration proposes to the City Council a new set of projects for incorporation into the CIP. This year's CIP funding request [itemized below] emphasizes repairs to local roads and key facilities, and takes into account rising construction costs due to inflation:

#### **Roads & Infrastructure (\$3,000,000)**

The Capital Improvement Program includes an ongoing infrastructure program intended to augment State-funded and utility-related improvements to roads and sidewalks. Work is assigned based on conditions as assessed through the City's pavement management program. This program was initiated in FY 2017 and is proposed to continue throughout the five-year planning period.

**City Yard Campus (\$2,300,000)**

This allocation provides additional funding for the previously approved City Yard Campus capital project. Being that this project was initially planned and priced several years ago, the costs and needs have increased while the project has not progressed on the original timeline.

**Zeiterion Theater Renovation (\$750,000)**

This funding will contribute to upgrades needed to comply with updated state building codes.

**Zoo Renovations (\$690,000)**

This funding supports two capital projects consisting of repairs to the Zoo's maintenance shop including exterior wall repairs, interior wall removal, new insulation, and interior wall, electrical, lighting, improved utilities, and a two-car garage/shed (\$440,000), as well as funding for ongoing zoo deferred maintenance projects (\$250,000) including HVAC, roof repairs, window replacements, generators, restroom upgrades, etc.

**City Hall Deferred Maintenance (\$350,000)**

This allocation provides additional funding for the previously approved City Hall bathroom renovations and upgrade which is required to maintain the full operation of City Hall.

**City Hall Elevator (\$250,000)**

This allocation provides additional funding for this previously approved project which is required to make improvements to the existing historic elevator in City Hall to ensure continued access for all beyond the first floor. As the existing elevator was constructed in 1906, and is well beyond its service life, it requires frequent, costly repairs. The plans for this project will help reduce the need for those costly and difficult repairs for many years.

**Hillman Street Complex Renovations (\$215,000)**

This project is a continuation of the plan that began in FY2014 to work on the Hillman Street Complex in segments each year. The activities included in this year would include more annex office space renovations, including interior and exterior work, and an additional ADA ramp for building access.

**South Public Safety Center Annex (\$170,000)**

This funding would support the previously approved project, including HVAC improvements and cooling upgrades to the first floor, window replacements, roof, and shingle replacements, and improved building drainage.

**Mobile Command Center (\$125,000)**

This project would provide for the updating of existing technology, radio, and video equipment including computers and workstations in the City's Mobile Command Center which was recently donated by the County.

**BACKGROUND ON THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

The Mitchell Administration established the Capital Improvement Program in 2014 to manage the City's long-term capital needs. Prior to the creation of the CIP, the City lacked a permanent framework for prioritizing repairs and improvements across the City. The CIP has since proven invaluable in guiding bond-funded investments in municipal buildings, roads, the City's vehicle fleet, and other infrastructure.

The CIP also helps ensure that debt service costs are held to a reasonable level in the City's Operating Budget. Each year the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) updates the CIP. Available funding sources are considered, and input is solicited from department heads across city government. The CFO staff then works with the City's Treasurer/Collector to model and manage the associated debt.

The current CIP covers projects from Fiscal Years 2023 through 2027, totaling \$166.3 million. Of this amount, \$28.9 million is allocated for capital asset preservation projects for public safety, road repairs, public use buildings, and other government facilities; \$10.1 million is allocated for the ongoing replacement of capital vehicles and general fleet replenishment; \$37.4 million is allocated for major renovations and/or replacements at general government facilities; and \$90 million is allocated for school projects.

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