

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR



Memorandum

To: City Council
From: Richard E. Raiche, Director of Infrastructure & Asset Management, and Chad Whiting,
Director of Water & Sewer
Subject: April 2021 Water & Sewer Capital Investment Plan (CIP) Project List
Date: April 16, 2021

This memo accompanies the Water & Sewer Capital Investment Plan (CIP) project list submitted to the City Council April 16, 2021. The April 2021 CIP project list informs the FY22 Water & Sewer rate recommendations submitted April 16, 2021 for discussion at the April 20, 2021 Finance Committee.

Compared to the March 2019 CIP project list, the April 2021 CIP project list contains several new projects which are detailed below.

Water: New Projects

- **Spring Hill Sewer Separation Water Line Improvements - Project Area 1, Highland Avenue, and Project Area 2B:** The design phase for the Spring Hill Sewer Separation has identified the need to relocate several water mains to accommodate the new drainage infrastructure. Additionally, the Water System Improvement Plan identified several water mains requiring replacement or rehabilitation in the Spring Hill area that would be much more cost effective to complete under the sewer separation projects than as stand-alone projects following sewer separation. As was done previously for the Somerville Avenue Utility & Streetscape (SAUSI) project, funding for Spring Hill is now being represented on the Water, Sewer, and General Fund CIPs to accurately represent the respective improvements.
- **Yard 3:** Given the volume and pace of capital construction projected in both the W&S and General Fund CIPs, the City will require an increased amount of construction laydown and equipment storage space. However, given the lack of capacity at the existing DPW yards and density of development, the City will need to lease construction laydown and storage space at a new site to accommodate critical construction needs.



Moreover, both DPW and Water & Sewer are currently using ArtFarm for materials storage and operations; a practice that must be relocated. This project has annual pay go funding at \$200,000 from the sewer enterprise, \$100,000 from the water enterprise, and \$100,000 from the General Fund.

Sewer: New Projects

- **Sewer Separation Projects 4 and 5:** IAM Engineering is continuing the important work of developing a Citywide Drainage and Water Quality Improvement plan, which will prescribe a series of projects to reduce flooding, address Combined Sewer Overflow regulatory requirements, and provide the inflow and infiltration (I/I) offsets needed to support the commercial and residential development defined in SomerVision. Meanwhile, the ongoing sewer system evaluation survey (SSES) is gathering data and documenting deficiencies of our aging sewer system. Results from these assessments will provide essential information on which locations are the highest priority and better inform our Sewer CIP cost estimates. Given preliminary results from the citywide plan and SSES, as well as known regulatory requirements, this version of the Sewer CIP project list therefore includes placeholder funding amounts for five major sewer separation projects with the expectation that these projects will be defined through planning efforts in FY2021 and FY2022.
- **Spring Hill Sewer Separation - Highland Avenue and Project Area 2B:** The Spring Hill Sewer Separation project is one in a series of efforts to mitigate flooding, reduce waterway pollution, and upgrade infrastructure throughout Somerville. This project is necessary to fully optimize the Poplar Pump Station. The March 2019 W&S CIP included only project area 1. IAM Engineering's scoping and design efforts have since evolved to identify the sewer needs for Highland Avenue and project area 2B, which start in FY22 and FY25 respectively.
- **Boynton Yards – Infrastructure and Pump Station:** Sewer separation, pipe rehabilitation, and a stormwater pump station are all required the Boynton Yards to provide capacity for critical economic development in that area, to address deteriorating infrastructure, to reduce Combined Sewer Overflows and to address legacy flooding issues. The City is negotiating developer contributions for this project and expects those contributions to cover 25% of the costs.
- **Clarendon Hill:** Existing sewer and drainage infrastructure along Powder House Boulevard between North Street and Alewife Brook Parkway is undersized and some of it runs through the Clarendon Hill property. To facilitate the Clarendon Hill redevelopment plan, this infrastructure must be rerouted and resized. This work is funded through a MassWorks grant and will be followed by streetscape improvements to create safer roadway conditions for all users at the intersection of Powder House Boulevard and Alewife Brook Parkway.
- **New Washington Street Sewer Realignment:** New Washington Street will be realigned as part of the Public Safety Building project at 90 Washington Street. The realignment



will enhance emergency vehicle access to and from the site, as well as improve roadway safety for all users. The street realignment requires realigning subsurface utilities, including sewer. This project will begin as soon as possible.

- **Yard 3:** See description above.

Finally, all spend schedules for projects included in the March 2019 project list have been updated to reflect our current best projection of when those projects will take place.



Appendix: Project category definitions

When the CIP project list was first introduced in its current form in November 2016, each project was assigned to a category. Definitions of each of these categories are provided below for reference.

USQ DIF (formerly Critical) projects are those included in or related to the Union Square District Improvement Financing (DIF) development program. These projects are a prerequisite for attracting outside investments in the transformative district in part because they unlock future revenue that would otherwise go untapped. For Water & Sewer, this category includes (but is not limited to) the Somerville Ave. Utility & Streetscape Improvements project as well as Poplar St. Stormwater Pump Station, which involves the construction of a pump station and associated infrastructure to connect to the GLX stormwater drain.

Recurring projects are investments the City has made and will continue making to maintain existing assets. These are considered recurring because they are invested in on a regular basis, and in any modelled projection the City Council will be asked to make these appropriations so that the City can continue to provide core services.

Underway projects are currently ongoing but not yet completed. These projects have been authorized in full or in part by the City Council or have received funding from other sources. Note that USQ DIF projects can also be Underway.

Recommended projects are those identified by the Administration as important projects to undertake in the coming years because they respond to a community need, address a public health or safety issue, or advance Underway or USQ DIF projects.

Unscheduled projects are community priorities and identified needs or liabilities that currently have no assigned timetable. These projects have been put forth by the community, the City Council, or the Administration.

new in 2021 **Boynton Yards DIF projects** are those included in or related to the Boynton Yards District Improvement Financing (DIF) development program. These projects are a prerequisite for attracting outside investments in the transformative district in part because they unlock future revenue that would otherwise go untapped. For Water & Sewer, this category includes (but is not limited to) a pump house and sewer infrastructure.

