



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

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## MEMORANDUM

To: City Council Equity, Gender, Seniors, Families & Vulnerable Populations Committee  
From: Richard Raiche, Director of Infrastructure & Asset Management  
CC: Brian Postlewaite, Melissa Woods  
Date: 28 February 2023  
RE: Response to Council Order

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**Order ID # 23-2120 – That the Director of the Office of Racial and Social Justice, the Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management and the Executive Director of the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development document compliance with Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) 521, Sections 3.3 and 3.5.**

The core mission of the Department of Infrastructure & Asset Management, inclusive of its Capital Projects and Engineering Divisions, is the improvement of all City-owned infrastructure, including buildings, roadways, and water, sewer and stormwater systems. Those improvements seek to correct not only the deteriorated condition of that infrastructure caused by the effects of time, but also the configuration of that infrastructure, much of which fails to fulfill modern needs. IAM's projects are designed to achieve myriad goals, including: reducing greenhouse gas emissions, mitigating water quality and flooding impacts, supporting programmatic needs of enhanced city services, and improving mobility for persons with all physical abilities and economic means. Logistical constraints often require compromises among those goals; however, the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) enumerated in 521 CMR 1.00 through 47.00 are paramount in any design and construction.

521 CMR 3.3 establishes the project cost thresholds for application of the regulations for public buildings projects, and 521 CMR 3.5 establishes 3-year aggregation period for those thresholds. IAM is well aware of those thresholds, and the other specific requirements of the MAAB. At the very early planning phase of any building improvement project conducted by IAM or for which IAM is consulted, the implications of those thresholds, including those aggregated over 3 years, are evaluated. In general, given the valuation of most of our buildings and magnitude of projects managed by IAM, those thresholds are triggered and full accessibility becomes an essential component of our building improvement projects. Given that fact and



other factors, IAM has produced a strategic building Master Plan, the details of which can be found here: <https://www.somervillema.gov/buildingmasterplan>. In some instances, ideas for building improvements, particularly energy efficiency projects, are proposed that would trigger the thresholds, in which cases those individual projects are eliminated from consideration as stand-alone projects, and the goals of those projects will be integrated into future Building Master Plan projects.

Compliance with the Code of Massachusetts Regulations Title 521 is integrated into project and process of the Department of Infrastructure & Asset Management.

