



Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

MEETING DATE	SPONSORED BY
March 18, 2025	Isaac Bears, Council President

AGENDA ITEM

25-039 - Resolution Regarding Schedule of Annual Budget Process for FY2026

FULL TEXT AND DESCRIPTION

Be it Resolved by the Medford City Council that the Council President requests City Councilors submit individual budget recommendations to the City Clerk by Thursday, March 13, 2025 for consideration in a Committee of the Whole meeting on Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 6PM.

Be it Further Resolved that, based on Budget Ordinance and discussions with the administration, the City Council and City Administration will follow the following budget schedule for the FY2026 City Budget:

- By March 13, 2025 - City Councilors Submit Individual Budget Recommendations for Consideration in Committee of the Whole
- March 18, 2025 at 6PM - City Council Committee of the Whole Meeting to Discuss Council Budget Recommendations
- March 19, 2025 at 6PM - Joint Meeting of the City Council and School Committee to Receive a Financial Update and Discuss the FY26 Budget Process
- Tuesday, March 25, 2025 - City Council Regular Meeting to Submit Collective Budget Recommendation to the Mayor
- From April 15th, 2025 to May 21st, 2025 - City Council Holds Preliminary Budget Meetings with Department Heads
- By Friday, May 31st, 2025 - Mayor Submits Comprehensive Budget Proposal to the City Council

Be it Further Resolved that the Draft Schedule of Preliminary Budget Meetings in Committee of the Whole is as follows:

- Tuesday, April 15th, 2025 at 6:00 P.M.
- Tuesday, April 29th, 2025 at 6:00 P.M.
- Wednesday, April 30th, 2025 at 7:00 P.M.
- Tuesday, May 13th, 2025 at 6:00 P.M.

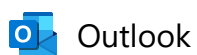
- Tuesday, May 20th, 2025 at 6:00 P.M.
- Wednesday, May 21st, 2025 at 6:00 P.M.

RECOMMENDATION

FISCAL IMPACT

ATTACHMENTS

1. 3_13_25 FY26 Leming Budget Recommendations
2. 3_13_25 FY26 Tseng Budget Recommendations
3. 3_13_25 FY26 Lazzaro Budget Recommendations
4. 3_13_25 FY26 Callahan Budget Recommendations
5. 3_13_25 FY26 Collins Budget Recommendations



Budget asks for COW

From Matt Leming <mleming@medford-ma.gov>

Date Thu 3/13/2025 3:19 PM

To Isaac 'Zac' Bears <ibears@medford-ma.gov>

Cc Adam Hurtubise <ahurtubise@medford-ma.gov>

Therapeutic recreation specialist and office manager for Medford rec.



JUSTIN TSENG
City Councilor

City of Medford

OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

City Hall
85 George P. Hassett Drive
Medford, Massachusetts 02155

Residence
65 College Ave.
Medford, MA 02155

Contact
781-866-2572
jtseng@medford-ma.gov

To: City Clerk Adam Hurtubise
From: Councilor Justin Tseng
Re: **Preliminary Budget Requests for FY2026**

Dear Clerk Hurtubise,

I am submitting a list of preliminary budget recommendations.

First, I am grateful to our residents for voting Yes to invest in Medford's school, streets, and sidewalks last fall. This stabilization is crucial to retain critical school resources that so many Medford families rely on, improve education access and opportunity, and fix our streets and sidewalks. At the same time, our city government and our residents now face new challenges on the horizon arising from rising costs and the federal government.

The prospect of diminished freedoms and opportunities haunts Medford residents. To not only protect our residents but also continue building a Medford that is more inclusive and accessible, the City Council has been working hard to empower our residents by creating more seats at the table. Over the last year, the Council has been working with city staff and community members on reforming the Human Rights Commission and creating a Youth Commission. These two projects have been in the works for years. Through detailed discussions, we've determined that we should budget around **\$15,000 for the Human Rights Commission** (including stipends for members, research, and community events). We've also determined that we should spend about **\$20,000 on the Youth Commission** (including stipends for members, a stipend for a lead organizer/secretary, and funds for a youth summit). Community discourse has shed light on how crucial stipends are for ensuring a balanced representation on these bodies. Without them, we may not attract enough candidates to fill these seats.

We also cannot talk about youth and inclusion without drawing attention to increasing accessibility. That means listening to Medford parents who say we need **a therapeutic recreation specialist and the office manager for Medford Recreation** to improve our offerings.

Finding small dollar ways to improve our standard of living and safety, I would also recommend **increasing line-item spending for road signage/markings**. Lack of

funds for the necessary signage, marking, and striping to comply with our Safe Streets Policy often means that we cannot pave streets in a timely fashion. Even a modest investment would help us repave streets faster and ensure that these streets are safer for multi-modal transport. Recent tragic incidents on Medford roads also make clear that it is past time to **take action on the Bicycle Advisory Commission's priorities for safety improvements.**

We must also preserve funding for important programs that have and will drastically improve quality of life and the responsiveness of government here in Medford. Such examples include **maintaining our investments in our public schools, the Community Liaisons Program** (and seeking additional funding for an AAPI community liaison, be it from grants or the general fund), **translation services, rodent prevention, and the Affordable Housing Trust.**

Budget time is also a time for the City Council to raise attention to needed long-term finances. We should ask for concrete plans to **improve childcare access, update our city's financial software, increase financial and assessing staff** in light of potential tax reforms, **ensure Human Resources can complete their work in a more timely manner** (a matter which affects staff), and **raise the salaries of vacant positions to meet regional pay standards.** I thank the Council and the Administration for their consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justin Tseng', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Justin Tseng, Medford City Councilor

To: Clerk Adam Hurtubise
From: City Councilor Emily Lazzaro
Re: Budget Requests Fiscal Year 2026

Dear Clerk Hurtubise,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the City's annual budget by proposing some items that I believe will increase safety in Medford for its residents. These priorities are critical at a time when our community faces uncertainty at the national level and craves the security of a City that listens and protects its residents.

Medford has seen an increase in pedestrian deaths from traffic crashes. One concrete way to protect our residents is to take measurable steps to increase safety on our roads.

Please fulfill the requests made by the Medford Bicycle Advisory Commission, all very reasonable and attainable goals:

- **Retain two traffic engineers on staff, including one whose focus is on walking, biking, and transit**
- **Retain sufficient in-house DPW staff to do small things like restripe faded markings, adjust signal timing, and patch potholes**
- **Fund the DPW enough for them to shrink our sidewalk and roadway repair backlog each year**
- **Apply for state and federal funds for bicycle and pedestrian projects yearly**
- **Budget for purchase, installation, and maintenance of bike-related equipment such as bike racks and flex posts**

My second priority is to invest in the required equipment and training to allow the Medford Fire Department to have a dive team.

In my capacity as the Chair of the Public Health and Community Safety Committee, I have met with the new Fire Department Chief Todd Evans a number of times. I have found him to be a dedicated, intelligent, and hard-working individual who has the potential to bring together and modernize the Medford Fire Department with the goal of improving morale and efficiency simultaneously.

In 2019, Apurea Devkota, an 18-year-old young man and recent graduate of Medford High School, drowned in the Upper Mystic Lake and our Medford Firefighters were on the scene right away, but since we do not have a dive team, they could not search for him. They had to wait for dive teams from neighboring cities and towns.

Following that incident, ten of our Medford Firefighters took it upon themselves to begin the process of getting certified to do underwater search and rescue. We now need the budget to get a full dive team of twelve firefighters, plus the equipment. **The estimate is that the training and equipment will cost a total of \$122,933.**

Thank you to the Council and the Administration for considering these priorities in the FY2026 budget.

Sincerely,

Emily Lazzaro
Medford City Council



Outlook

Fw: My budget requests

From Kit Collins <kcollins@medford-ma.gov>

Date Thu 3/13/2025 5:24 PM

To Adam Hurtubise <ahurtubise@medford-ma.gov>

Cc Isaac 'Zac' Bears <ibears@medford-ma.gov>; Anna Callahan <acallahan@medford-ma.gov>

Hi Adam,

Budget requests from Councillor Callahan for 3/18.

Kit Collins

she/her

Medford City Council Vice President

781-816-7676

Please note: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts considers most electronic communications to and from public employees to be public records and disclosable under the Massachusetts Public Records Law and its regulations.

From: Anna Callahan <acallahan@medford-ma.gov>

Sent: Thursday, March 13, 2025 4:39 PM

To: Zac Bears <isaacbears@gmail.com>; Kit Collins <kcollins@medford-ma.gov>

Subject: My budget requests

- Half time DPW staff volunteer coordinator for the volunteer tree planting program
- Half time Housing person to run the Home Sharing program



KIT COLLINS
Vice President

City of Medford

OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

City Hall
85 George P. Hassett Drive
Medford, Massachusetts 02155

Residence

11 Strathmore Rd. #2
Medford, MA 02155

Contact

781-816-7676
kcollins@medford-ma.gov

March 13, 2025

Mr. Clerk,

I am submitting my preliminary FY26 budget requests, roughly in order of priority, ahead of our Committee of the Whole to discuss City Councilors' budget recommendations on Tuesday, March 18.

I am grateful to the voters for approving Questions 7 and 8 in the November 2024 election. These critical investments will help us protect capacity for the Medford Public Schools and the DPW in the midst of escalating inflation and escalating non-negotiable costs that burden residents and City budgets alike.

I am also grateful for past funding decisions that are enabling the City Council to execute a comprehensive zoning update this year. I believe that in the future, the City will see a large return on this investment – not only in unquantifiables, such as resident quality of life and making strides to combat housing scarcity, but in new growth, revenue from permitting fees, and incentives-driven contributions to local climate-resiliency infrastructure.

In the meantime, especially in this moment of great national insecurity, as the federal government aggressively rolls back many important supports and programs that Medford residents (and people all around the nation) rely upon, it is crucial that we refuse to stall or backslide when it comes to supporting our residents; making life better, easier, and safer for members of our community; and making Medford an ever-more resilient, inclusive, and vibrant place to live and work.

These convictions guide my priorities for our FY26 operating budget and amendments to our Capital Improvements Plan.

1. Meet School Committee budgetary request for **Medford Public Schools**.
1. Meet **Library Department** budgetary request and maintain at least level service and hours of operation.
2. Fund **two additional traffic engineers** (estimated budget impact: \$192,000.00) within the Department of Traffic and Transportation to focus on walking, biking, transit, and the implementation of **Vision Zero** and **Complete Streets** policies, including:
 - a. applying for state and federal grants for transformative road redesign and bicycle and pedestrian safety projects;

- b. driver and cyclist education on rules of the road, how to lawfully and safely share the road with cyclists, and newer traffic laws; and
 - c. assisting with routine pothole maintenance and restriping.
3. Fund a **therapeutic recreation specialist** and **full-time office manager for Medford Recreation** to increase fully-accessible recreation options for youth with disabilities and begin building the capacity towards an Accessibility Master Plan for Medford. (Estimated budget impact: \$125,000.00)
4. Increase budgeted amount for **City Solicitor** salary to maintain competitiveness with neighboring municipalities. (Estimated budget impact: \$36,000.00)
5. **Maintain grant-funded personnel** in Health Department, Office of Outreach and Prevention, and Office of Planning, Development and Sustainability.
6. Increase **capital spending earmark** for expansion of Medford's network of separated, protected bike lanes, completion of Medford's Bike Master Plan, and design studies for Vision Zero and Complete Streets policies.
7. Fund installation and maintenance of **road safety equipment and interventions** within DPW budget, including:
 - a. bike racks and flex posts along all squares, corridors and along key access points to bike lane network;
 - b. increased road signage especially at known high-speed or otherwise dangerous intersections and crossings;
 - c. implementation of planned new crosswalks and crosswalk improvements, especially at known high-speed or otherwise dangerous intersections and crossings.

In addition, I will repeat my requests from FY24, regarding programs that I ask and recommend the Administration continue to plan for and study:

- Implementing Massachusetts Paid Family & Medical Leave program for all City employees
 - Increase City's competitiveness with private employers and other municipalities
 - Along with implementation of Compensation & Classification Study findings, help attract and retain competitive candidates in City positions to achieve fuller staffing and increase capacity across departments
 - Provide a positive and needed benefit for municipal workers
- Review Finance Department software upgrade options and develop of implementation scenarios
 - Look into software and financial tools that would increase capacity and effectiveness of Finance Department and reduce workflow bottlenecks, especially as it relates to payroll and retro pay processing; reporting; analysis; expanding capacity for long-term and capital planning
 - Research budgetary impact of potential upgrades and how to implement these investments

Respectfully,

Kit Collins
Medford City Council Vice President