



**TOWN OF BOXFORD**  
**Office of the Town Administrator**  
7A Spofford Road  
Boxford, MA 01921

**DATE:** February 9, 2024  
**TO:** Boxford Select Board  
**FROM:** Matt Coogan, Town Administrator  
**RE:** **Town of Boxford's Legislative and Funding Priorities FY2025**

The Boxford Select Board will be meeting with our legislative delegation, including Senator Bruce Tarr, Representative Tram Nguyen, and Representative Adrienne Ramos, as part of the February 26<sup>th</sup> Select Board meeting. The Board has been holding this meeting annually for the last few years to discuss the Town's legislative priorities and fiscal priorities for the state FY2025 budget process. Below is a draft of the Town's priorities. The Board can discuss and finalize at Monday night's February 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. I can provide a final memo on behalf of the Select Board to the legislative delegation ahead of the February 26<sup>th</sup> discussion.

**Legislative Priorities:**

- **Municipal Empowerment Act:** [Governor Healey's bill](#) would streamline, modernize, and reform several aspects of municipal government that would benefit the Town of Boxford, including new procurement rules that raise thresholds for competitive bids, removing onerous publishing requirements, updating borrowing rules for schools projects, and establishing enforcement mechanisms for double pole prohibitions, among others.
  
- **Municipal and School Aid**  
The Town of Boxford requests:
  - Municipal aid funding for fiscal 2025 grow by at least the same rate as the growth in state tax collections, and be distributed without earmarks, conditions, or restrictions.
  - For Chapter 70 state aid in fiscal 2025, municipalities receive a minimum increase of \$100 per student.
  - The Governor and Legislature amend charter school finance law to bring transparency and accountability to the law by limiting charter school tuition assessments placed on local government.
  - Full funding of the Commonwealth's commitments to the Special Education Circuit Breaker Program, as provided by state law and adhering to the funding timeline outlined in the Student Opportunity Act.
  - Full funding of the Commonwealth's obligations to reimburse the costs of regional school transportation, regular school transportation, and out-of-district vocational transportation in the fiscal 2025 budget.

- The Governor and the Legislature fund supplement education and transportation initiatives through the voter-approved surtax, including at least \$100 million in aid supporting the construction and maintenance of municipal roadways.

- **Capital Budgeting**

The Town of Boxford requests:

- The Governor and the Legislature work together early in 2024 to ensure enactment of a multi-year transportation bond bill that provides at least \$350 million annually for Chapter 90 local road projects, indexed to grow to match construction inflation, with a notice of allocations for fiscal 2025 by March 1, 2024, with separate authorizations for the Municipal Pavement Program, Municipal Small Bridge Program, Complete Streets Program.
- The Governor and the Legislature support programs in the fiscal 2025 state budget and capital plan to help towns assess and respond to challenges related to climate change, including the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program, Green Communities Program, Green School Works and others.
- The Governor and the Legislature work with towns to identify the scope of investment needed to ensure that municipal information technology systems are modernized and resilient from cyberattacks, and enact a state funding mechanism and program to provide the resources needed to implement these investments across the state.
- The Governor and the Legislature work with towns to identify the scope of investment needed to ensure that municipal buildings critical to the delivery of essential public services are safe and modern, and enact a state funding mechanism and program to provide the resources needed to implement these improvements across the state

**Funding Requests:**

As far as funding requests, there are items in the next few years of the Town's draft 5-year Capital Improvement Program for which state support would be beneficial to the Town:

- IT – Replacement of Wireless Network \$35,000
- Digitize Building Department files \$25,000
- Design and permitting of Balmoral Rd Drainage System \$50,000
- Assessment and design of Main Street retaining wall \$20,000
- Lincoln Hall exterior repairs \$30,000
- Lincoln Hall interior repairs \$30,000
- Backup Police and Fire radio repeaters \$65,000
- Fire Mutual Aid network radio \$20,000
- Fire Dept. SCBA Compressor \$55,000
- Fire Department vehicle stabilizers \$21,000
- Fire Department Thermal Imaging Camera \$10,000

Finally, the Town will be actively pursuing outside funding sources to finance major projects, including state funds. Some of the larger projects include:

- New DPW Facility: \$1,500,000 design + \$15M construction

- Culverts: \$1.4M for 4 culverts in need of critical repair
- Endicott Street Bridge: \$1.5M repairs of a bridge that spans over the border with the Town of Topsfield.
- Spofford Pond School HVAC Electrification Project
- Cole School Electrification Project
- Vehicles/ Apparatus
  - Fire Rescue Vehicle: \$500,000
  - Mini Excavator with Brush Side Mower Attachment: \$150,000
  - One Ton Dump Truck \$100,000
  - Tractor \$75,000

Our Legislative Delegation has been successful over the last few years in providing the Town with over \$200,000 in state budget earmarks, as well as supporting the Town's successful efforts in receiving state grants that total nearly \$600,000. We thank them for their support.