



City of New Bedford
Office of the Mayor
Contact: Holly Huntoon
(508) 989-4407
Holly.Huntoon@newbedford-ma.gov

CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

Date: Thursday, November 2, 2023
For Immediate Release

PRESS RELEASE

City Receives \$11.4 to Replace Lead Service Lines, Upgrade Wastewater System

New Bedford, MA – The City of New Bedford received \$11.4 million in loan forgiveness funds from the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust, in partnership with the State Treasurer and Receiver General, for the City's lead service replacement program and wastewater collection system improvements. The funding comes from the American Rescue Plan Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

The Massachusetts Clean Water Trust, established in 1989, is a state agency providing support for water quality throughout the Commonwealth by providing low-interest loans to municipalities and other eligible entities. The Trust, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), helps municipalities build or replace water infrastructure that enhances ground and surface water resources, ensures drinking water safety, protects public health, and bolsters resilience. The Trust provides loan forgiveness each year to "disadvantaged communities" based on an annual affordability calculation that ranks municipalities into "affordability tiers." The Trust provides a fixed percentage of loan forgiveness based on the affordability tiers and the specific State Revolving Fund program.

The program relieved the City of 59.8% of its debt for lead service line replacement and 19.9% of its debt for wastewater collection system improvements.

"The replacement of lead service lines and the modernization of our wastewater system have been top priorities for my Administration," said Mayor Jon Mitchell. "This additional support from our federal and state partners will make our improvements more affordable to ratepayers."

"Replacing lead water lines and improving wastewater collection is so much more than just an infrastructure upgrade - their replacement is a vital step in safeguarding public health for generations to come," said Congressman Bill Keating. "In passing the Bipartisan Infrastructure

Law, President Biden promised to create jobs and modernize our infrastructure, and this Massachusetts Clean Water Trust loan forgiveness is doing just that. I commend the City of New Bedford for moving forward on financing these important projects through the Clean Water Trust, and I am proud to see that the loans have been forgiven using federal funds from BIL and ARPA.”

“We appreciate the working relationship with the local delegation and MassDEP to help the City fund and implement critical infrastructure projects,” said the Director of the Department of Public Infrastructure, Jamie Ponte. “Through the hard work and dedication of the DPI team, we continue to make improvements for the benefit of the citizens of the City and the environment. Grants such as these go a long way to helping the City continue to implement much-needed improvements to our water and wastewater systems.”

“The City Council has long supported projects to upgrade our City’s aging wastewater system and the replacement of lead service lines throughout our City to provide clean, safe drinking water for our residents,” said City Council President Linda Morad. “These critical projects are very costly and have been financed with loans that ultimately will be repaid through increases to our water and sewer ratepayers. The forgiveness of these loans by the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust is critical in controlling the burden these projects place on our City residents.”