

MAYOR'S UPDATE
September 11, 2023
Mayor Sean R. Reardon

Remembering 9/11:

I want to thank everyone for attending the Field of Honor Ceremony at the Bartlet Mall put on by the Exchange Club of Newburyport. Myself, Representative Shand, State Senator Tarr and Congressman Moulton were among the elected officials who spoke. The keynote speaker was Jennifer Lowrey who was at Ground Zero with the Red Cross 22 years ago, and her remarks were very powerful. It is always important to pause and remember the events of this tragic day in our nation's history. Today I remember NHS Class of 1988 grad Thomas Pecorrelì who was on American Flight 11. Tom loved the movies and being behind the camera. I remember him on the camera for many sporting events during his time at NHS. He turned that passion into a career working with Fox Sports and the E Channel. I am thinking about his loved ones he left behind today. I also thank our veterans, fire fighters, police officers, first responders and health care workers who continue to answer the call and run towards the danger to save lives.

Market Landing Park and Bulkhead Project Updates and Parking:

City Hall has received fewer questions about parking these last few weeks which is a good thing. Thank you to our Planning Office for working with the contractor to add more parking these last two weeks. The fenced off area has increased again, but we believe we will be better positioned to meet the parking demand as we exit the summer season. The Bulkhead Renovation project is mobilizing this week, and Market Landing Park work is continuing. The City continues to work with NED on maximizing potential parking possibilities downtown. The City Solicitor (MHTL) is currently reviewing a lease agreement for the small parking lot next to the garage on Titcomb Street.

Brown School:

The city received four responses to the Request for Information that closed on September 8th regarding possible redevelopment options for the Brown School. The City will assess the proposals for responsiveness and share the results with the Council in a memo that details our takeaways from the process. The hope is for the city to start a Request for Proposals process this fall using the information gained through the RFI responses.

Bartlet Mall:

DEP, MEPA, the Conservation Commission, Army Corps, Massachusetts Accessibility Board, NCOD, Parks Commission, and Planning Board have all signed off on the Bartlet Mall Restoration project. We received no initial bids for the project due mainly to the aggressive timeline in the bid documents. The City will send this back out to bid with an adjusted timeline and then bring back the results to the Council. The project team answered many questions at the September 5th Community Services meeting and continues to work with the Council to make sure all questions are answered so we can continue to move this project forward. We look forward to receiving final approval from Council once we have bid information. Work will begin this week on the Bartlet Mall playground with the removing of the old equipment,

followed by the grading work and installation of the new equipment that will be happening in the coming weeks, dependent on weather and receipt of the new equipment on time.

Recreation and Youth Services at 59 Low St:

We will also be submitting paperwork at the next September meeting to make the Recreation and Youth Services Department an official city department. I look forward to the conversation about what this department does for the Newburyport community.

Route One Traffic Circle Project:

The MassDOT project has begun and the traffic circle is still open during construction. The work is broken out into four phases. Traffic will only be interrupted for one weekend in November during the construction of the reconfigured rotary. The City has posted a project update page under the Mayor's Office section of the website which we will use to share more information. We will also be working with the Newburyport Chamber of Commerce to make sure information is getting out to local businesses regarding the construction. The final project will greatly improve bicycle and pedestrian access at the Traffic Circle and improve the traffic flow as well.

Solid Waste Contract

We received bids last week for our Solid Waste Hauling contract, and are reviewing the responses now. We have a committee with City Council, Board of Health, and community representation that will help review our scores of the responses and assist in determining next steps. We will also send out a community survey for more feedback on trash hauling options.

Back to School:

The City had a great first two days of school last week. It was Pre-K's turn today. Lots of smiles and nervous excitement on the way to school this morning. The City is still looking for Crossing guards to help out for a half hour in the morning and then again in the afternoons. I am opening this up to the Senior/Veteran Tax Work Off Plan as well. It is a great way to earn some money and make a difference.

Mayor Sean Reardon