



Montague Capital Improvements Committee

May 2026 Annual Town Meeting Report

Approved by the CIC 4/1/2026

I. Background

The Capital Improvements Committee (CIC) received requests and began meeting with Montague department heads beginning in December 2025 to evaluate capital needs as outlined in their Special Article Requests. The Special Article Request forms that were adopted and implemented in 2017 continue to serve as the framework for presenting the capital needs of each department.

In this report of the CIC's FY2027 recommendations, we summarize the committee's findings based on several months of meetings, research, and deliberation. The grading system, shown in Section II, is consistent with that used in past years.

This year the CIC initially received twenty (20) capital article requests. Over the course of four months, the proposers were brought in for presentation and discussion of their requests. Through these discussions and review of additional information, some requests were reformulated, combined, disaggregated, withdrawn, or otherwise modified. This report presents the final slate of eighteen (18) capital requests and the CIC's recommendations following its investigation into said requests.

Important note on CIC's process:

--The unanimous votes you will see on these capital articles reflect the committee's thoroughness and persistence in investigating each article. This includes pursuing information on every possible alternative to each proposed expenditure, and demanding convincing evidence regarding the needs, legal requirements, timing, and impact to the Town's residents and employees of each proposed Article.

II. Approach to Evaluation of Requested Articles

Defined Criteria/Rationale Used in Assessing Special Article Requests

Public Safety: Does the capital improvement rectify a safety concern or otherwise prevent a potential public safety issue?

Cost Avoidance: Will the capital improvement serve the Town financially?

Service Interruption: Does the capital improvement prevent an interruption in services?

Other: Any other reason identified as relevant by the CIC.

Grading System

Recommend: Given appropriate budget space, the committee believes that the capital improvement should be funded. The CIC evaluation does not formally consider the question of financial capacity, which is left to the Finance Committee and Selectboard.

Recommend with Reservations: The committee would generally recommend the capital improvement but may find that elements of the project scope are unclear or incomplete, that it lacks a convincing professional cost estimate, or doesn't address or account for some long-term needs and concerns of the town.

Does not Recommend: The committee does not recommend moving forward with the capital improvement as presented. This may be due to the nature or timing of the project, the apparent need for the project, the unavailability of scope or cost information, or other reasons.

III. Recommendations on Requested Articles

1. Summary Table of Fiscal Year 2027 Submissions and Recommendations

The table below offers a summary view of special article requests and CIC recommendations for FY27 capital project spending. Overall, spending associated with recommended articles, excluding the proposed library project, equals \$2,103,385. These recommendations are further explained in section II.

Summary of Final Motions/Recommendations

Request	Amount	Approved	Vote
Airport- Industrial Blvd Multi-Use Path and Passenger Terminal Upgrade	\$ 142,500	Yes	4-0
Airport- Up-fit and repair Heavy Duty Pickup Truck	\$ 26,000	Yes	4-0
Clean Water Facility- Secondary Clarifier Mechanism Replacement (x2)	\$ 966,000	Yes	4-0
Clean Water Facility- Heavy Duty Truck with Plow and Lights	\$ 85,000	Yes	4-0
Clean Water Facility- Wastewater Facility Planning Study	\$ 125,000	Yes	4-0
Libraries- Construct New Main Branch Library at 38 Avenue A	\$ 23,704,053	Yes	4-0
Public Works- Replace 2013 Wacker Neuson RD 12 -A Roller	\$ 35,000	Yes	4-0
Public Works- Replace 2013 F-350 4WD Pickup	\$ 80,000	Yes	4-0
Public Works- Purchase Large Excavator	\$ 150,000	Yes	4-0
Public Works- Replace 2014 2032R Tractor	\$ 65,000	Yes	5-0
Public Works- Transfer Station Automatic Security Gate	\$ 30,000	Yes	5-0
Public Works- Equipment and Major Repairs (Discretionary)	\$ 30,785	Yes	5-0
Public Works- Alley and Other Rights of Way Paving	\$ 30,000	Yes	5-0

Public Works- Sidewalk Replacement and Repair	\$ 15,000	Yes	5-0
Police- Replace Two Police Vehicles (K9 and Patrol)	\$ 161,000	Yes	5-0
Police- Police Station HVAC Controls Rehabilitation	\$ 37,100	Yes	5-0
Selectboard- Colle Building Interior Flooring & Mechanical Systems Improvements	\$ 25,000	Yes	5-0
Shea Theater- Facility and Theatrical System Upgrades	\$ 100,000	Yes	5-0

2. FY27 Articles Recommended for Consideration by Annual Town Meeting

Airport- Industrial Blvd Multi-Use Path and Passenger Terminal Upgrade (\$142,500)

This project would construct 4,800' of multi-use pathway along Industrial Blvd, starting at the intersection of Millers Falls Road and Industrial Blvd, and terminating at the Franklin County Technical School main entrance. In addition, this project will also fund the upgrades to the Pioneer Aviation restrooms and passenger waiting area to meet ADA regulation, with a special focus on family-oriented gathering space in the passenger terminal.

In December 2025, the airport applied for funding totaling \$2,850,000 from the FAA's Airport Terminal Program, a funding pool of no less than \$1 billion annually (2021-2026) that can be used specifically for terminal repairs, replacement, and surrounding services including ground transportation and last mile infrastructure installation. The intended plan is to install a pedestrian/bicycle pathway to transition them from using the roadway to a much safer pathway.

Inside of the Pioneer Aviation hangar the intended work would include removing 3 undersized restrooms and installing a single large ADA compliant unisex restroom and shower room. In addition, work would also include renovating an existing space to accommodate additional passenger/crew waiting space as well as a meeting room and family waiting area. Work would be expected to begin over the summer of 2026 with planning and engineering.

Cost Avoidance: This appropriation will create cost-savings by allowing the Town to pursue a long-discussed project while leveraging a substantial grant opportunity that substantially reduces the local investment required.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

Airport- Up-fit and repair Heavy Duty Pickup Truck (\$26,000)

In 2023 the airport purchased a 1994 Ford F-450 pickup truck from a municipal auction website for use around the airport, including snow removal, spill response, and building maintenance. While over 30 years old, the vehicle is in remarkable condition with no rust and has less than 19,000 miles. The purchase was made out of the airport operating budget funds, and in 2025 the airport equipped the vehicle with a new 10' snowplow and running gear totaling \$10,850. Also in 2025 the airport had the vehicle repaired totaling \$7,845, which included full replacement of the brakes, oil seals, tires, and suspension system. Upon completion of this work the expected remaining life of the vehicle is 15+ years.

Currently the vehicle has a large utility box style body with a water pump and storage tank, and while somewhat useful, limits the overall function of the vehicle. We were aware of this when the vehicle was purchased and the intended plan was to upgrade the vehicle over the course of 2-4 years. Our intentions in FY27 would be to remove the existing body and install a 10' aluminum flatbed body OR a 8' standard vehicle bed body (depending on time of purchase cost). In addition, install 4 aluminum locking tool boxes with lighting and backup camera system. Estimated costs are as follows:

- Purchase bed- \$13,000
- Purchase boxes (4)- \$4,000
- Purchase Lighting- \$2,000
- Install items & paint- \$6,000
- Misc Costs- \$1,000

This project will allow the airport to continue to use already existing equipment in a more efficient manner without having to purchase a new vehicle with an overall cost exceeding \$70,000. While this request is to spend money on an existing asset, the condition and total investment to this point justifies the continued investment to keep the asset in operation for at least another 15 years.

While this can be deferred a year or more, we have seen the cost of upfitting in both labor and materials continue to increase year to year with no real indication that waiting may see a price decrease. In addition, as the airport daily duties and overall traffic have increased, we are seeing the demand increase on all equipment, so preparing a vehicle to meet our needs now will help us keep our safety and operation standards to the highest level.

Cost Avoidance: This purchase will allow the Airport to continue utilizing a versatile fleet vehicle at a lower cost than having it replaced.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

Clean Water Facility- Secondary Clarifier Mechanism Replacement (x2) (\$966,000)

The CWF utilizes two (2) 176,000-gallon capacity Secondary Clarifiers as an essential part of the separation of solids from liquids in the wastewater treatment process. The mechanisms in the clarifier tanks have not been replaced since initial installation occurred in 1980 and are in dire

need of an upgrade. The original clarifier mechanisms were also designed with paper mill waste in mind, which is a thicker coarser material than the current waste experienced at the facility.

Over the last 45 years, there have been technological advancements in clarifier mechanisms, and the facility is looking to upgrade the current “draft tube” style mechanisms over to a more efficient “spiral blade” mechanism. Fortunately, this upgraded costs less than replacing in-kind with the “draft tube” style. The facility would also prefer to install the stainless-steel option, which will drastically increase the life of the mechanisms and reduce burdensome maintenance and treatment costs.

It is important to replace the mechanisms before they experience catastrophic failure. Many of the mechanism parts have been completely overhauled multiple times over the years and have exceeded their useful life. The current mechanisms also make it difficult for staff to manage the separation of solids from liquids adequately, which may have contributed to the facility’s struggle with solids “escaping” into other areas of treatment, which cause permit violations.

Along with the mechanism upgrade, the facility would also like to perform concrete tank rehab, coating the tank with a liner to aid in extending the life of the concrete that is in constant contact with corrosive wastewater.

Staff will be performing the general contractor work, much as we have for the last several projects, to save on the enormous costs of hiring out for a general contractor, which would likely push a project like this into the \$2+ million range.

Project Budget

Secondary Mechanisms x2.....	\$760,000
Concrete Modifications.....	\$20,000
Crane (Demo and Install ~10 days)	\$20,000
Electrical Contractor.....	\$50,000
Concrete Tank Rehab/Lining Contractor.....	\$50,000
Demo/Removal of Old Equipment.....	\$20,000
Contingency 5%.....	\$46,000
Total.....	\$966,000

The CWF staff will manage procurement, execution of the project, and construction oversight. No engineering services required, equipment only installation.

Public Safety: With the current clarifier mechanisms reaching the end of their useful life, upgrades are needed to keep the facility functioning, preventing unsanitary and costly backups and discharges of untreated sewage.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

Clean Water Facility- Heavy Duty Truck with Plow and Lights (\$85,000)

The CWF currently has a small fleet of 2 (two) vehicles: a 2016 Ford Super Duty Utility Truck and a 2023 Ford E-Transit Cargo Van. This fleet size has not been updated since the early 1980s, even though the facility has seen an increase in staff and regulatory requirements. The facility would like to increase its fleet size, adding an additional Ford Super Duty Work Truck, which will primarily be used by the CWF Foreman.

The Utility Van is typically in use throughout the week for the off-site eight (8) pump stations and four (4) grinder pumps we are required to perform inspections on daily. Oftentimes, while the van is in use, the current Ford Truck is used by other staff during routine maintenance, parts runs, emergency repairs, and travel.

The CWF Foreman is responsible for overseeing the work done in the field by staff, and has been utilizing his own personal vehicle to inspect site to site, attend meetings, and for call-ins. It is especially unsanitary to have work clothes covered in wastewater coming into contact with staff member's personal vehicles. Staff personal vehicles are also not properly equipped in the event tools/PPE are needed in responding to sites.

The new work truck will also provide additional seating space for carpooling to trainings/meetings, as both the Van and the Truck only have a two (2) seat capacity.

As the CWF staff are responsible for ground maintenance of the facility and the remote pump stations, the Truck would also need to be equipped with a plow and appropriate hazard lighting.

Service Interruption: This purchase will prevent situations from arising where a vehicle is unavailable for CWF staff to respond to an emergency, or to perform basic facility needs and job duties.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

Clean Water Facility- Wastewater Facility Planning Study (\$125,000)

The CWF is looking to begin the process of a major facility upgrade, with much of the focus surrounding upgrading the Preliminary and Primary Treatment half of the facility. This section of the facility is original from 1962, with minor improvements occurring in the 1980s.

Unfortunately, during the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) upgrade in the early 2000s, many of the upgrades planned for Preliminary/Primary Treatment were cut due to budget constraints.

This section of the facility currently houses various critical treatment processes and equipment such as: screening, grit removal, chemical addition, dewatering, staff workshop, pump and pipe galleys, solids holding tanks, settling tanks and associated mechanisms, scum/fats/oils/grease separators, etc.

To start the process, a Facilities Plan is required and involves a comprehensive evaluation to assess aging structures and systems, to facilitate the replacement of outdated equipment and to ensure reliable treatment for years to come.

The plan will provide recommendations for improvements to buildings, structures and architectural features, electrical, plumbing, and heating ventilation and conditioning (HVAC.)

The Preliminary/Primary Treatment section of the facility has been plagued with issues, from rotted out and falling cast iron piping that has injured multiple staff members, to an irreparable HVAC system that struggles to adequately provide fresh air and heat to the building. Equipment inside the building experiences severe corrosion issues and constantly struggles to keep up with the 24/7 treatment demands. Many pipes within the building and under the ground are original to 1962, with their visible conditions already quite concerning, and fear for their state underground where their conditions are presumed to be worse.

This Facility Plan is an important first step in upgrading the Preliminary/Primary Treatment half of the facility. As this process will take many years, it is important to start the process as soon as possible.

Public Safety: Outdated and deteriorating components of the wastewater treatment process pose a threat to CWF staff, the ecological health of the Connecticut River, and the community's overall wellbeing. This planning process will carefully examine the Town's most advantageous and cost-effective paths forward to pursue badly-needed improvements in the older section of the facility.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

Libraries- Construct New Main Branch Library at 38 Avenue A (\$23,704,053)

This article requests funding for the planning, design, permitting, construction, furnishing, and equipping of a new main library facility at 38 Avenue A in Turners Falls. The total estimated project cost is \$23,704,053. The Town has been awarded an \$11.3 million grant through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) Public Library Construction Program, which would offset approximately 47.6% of the total project cost.

The existing Carnegie Library, which currently serves as the Town's main library, has several documented deficiencies, including lack of ADA accessibility, limited space for collections and programming, inadequate parking, and aging, inefficient building systems. These issues were

identified through the Montague Public Libraries Strategic Plan (2023–2028) and subsequent public outreach efforts, which indicated strong community interest in improved library facilities.

Beginning in 2023, the Town initiated the MBLC grant process to evaluate options for addressing these deficiencies. Alternatives considered included renovation and expansion of the existing Carnegie Library and construction of a new facility. Through feasibility analysis, site evaluation, and community engagement conducted in 2024 and 2025, new construction at 38 Avenue A was selected as the preferred option due to its ability to better accommodate accessibility requirements, program space needs, and site constraints.

The proposed project consists of a two-story building of approximately 20,000 square feet. The design incorporates several cost containment measures, including elimination of a basement, reduced building height, and selection of cost-effective structural and mechanical systems. The project also includes energy-efficient features such as all-electric systems, high-performance windows, and solar readiness, and is expected to qualify for additional state incentives related to energy performance.

The Town's share of the project is proposed to be financed through a debt exclusion under Proposition 2½, which would result in a temporary increase in property taxes for the duration of the debt service. Acceptance of the MBLC grant is contingent upon local approval of the project.

The Montague Public Libraries system currently provides substantial community services, including over 24,000 annual visits, more than 114,000 items circulated, and hundreds of programs attended by nearly 9,400 people annually. The proposed project is intended to address existing facility limitations while maintaining and expanding service capacity.

Cost Avoidance: The MBLC grant represents a significant external funding opportunity that reduces the Town's share of project costs. Project design decisions, including selection of new construction over renovation, are also expected to reduce long-term maintenance and operational costs compared to continued use or expansion of the existing facility.

Service Interruption: The current facility's limitations constrain the library's ability to provide services and programming. Investment in a new facility is intended to ensure continued and expanded delivery of library services without disruption due to space, accessibility, or system limitations.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

Public Works- Replace 2013 Wacker Neuson RD 12 -A Roller (\$35,000)

At 13 years old, the current roller has reached the end of its useful life. The roller is used by the department to compact materials including asphalt and aggregates. It is a vital piece of equipment for all projects involving asphalt replacement, including patch work and trench work.

Service Interruption: This purchase will replace an aging piece of equipment, helping the Town avoid unpredictable repair costs, service interruptions, and difficulty finding parts for outdated equipment.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

Public Works- Replace 2013 F-350 4WD Pickup (\$80,000)

This vehicle will replace a 2013 F-350 4WD Pickup that is used for plowing and treating on a routine route during winter weather, as well as by building maintenance staff year-round. The bed of the truck was previously replaced, but it is preferred to replace the entire vehicle before a motor replacement becomes necessary.

Service Interruption: Purchase will replace an aging vehicle that has reached the end of its useful life. This replacement request follows the Town’s Capital Improvement Plan general guidelines, which recommend a 12-year replacement cycle for light-duty trucks to help the Town avoid unpredictable repair costs, service interruptions, and difficulty finding parts for outdated vehicles.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

Public Works- Purchase Large Excavator (\$150,000)

The purchase of a used large excavator, with an approximate operating weight of 30,000 lb., will improve the DPW’s in-house project capabilities and promote savings on equipment rental costs. This purchase will allow more efficient and cost-effective execution of projects by DPW staff, including the 2024 culvert replacement on South Ferry Road, and the upcoming culvert repairs on South Street.

Cost Avoidance: A used excavator is expected to be much more cost-effective, as a new one would be at least double the cost at well over \$300,000. This purchase would also give the Town the distinct advantage of having a small excavator (CWF), medium excavator (Airport), and large excavator (DPW) in its fleet, with vehicles shared between departments as necessary to accomplish jobs with different equipment needs, thus reducing rental or contracting costs.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

Public Works- Replace 2014 2032R Tractor (\$65,000)

This purchase would replace a 2014 2032R Tractor used by the DPW primarily for winter sidewalk plowing and maintaining the grounds of the Parks & Recreation department. Snowblower, bucket, and rotator attachments used with the current tractor will be transferrable to the replacement.

Service Interruption: The current tractor has reached the end of its useful life. This purchase will help the Town avoid unpredictable repair costs, service interruptions, and difficulty finding parts for outdated equipment.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

Public Works- Transfer Station Automatic Security Gate (\$30,000)

This purchase is necessary to improve the safety and security at the transfer station. It will reduce illegal dumping and unauthorized access to the site. The gate at the transfer station is often left open during the day to allow access for trucks, equipment and vendors. Unfortunately, this also increases the risk and liability to the Town. Vendors are frequently collecting refuse and waste on their own schedules without securing the lock behind them. Some unauthorized visitors have been able to dispose of items without paying.

Work will consist of installing a new gate with secure access including new footings and electrical work.

- Aluminum cantilever slide gate (approximately 6 feet high by 32 feet wide)
- Galvanized steel counterbalance support posts (approximately 4-inch diameter, heavy-wall)
- Galvanized steel catch post (approximately 4-inch diameter, heavy-wall)
- Gate and support posts set in concrete footings (structural installation base)
- 1 Heavy-duty sliding gate operator (motorized unit that opens and closes the gate)
- 1 Wireless safety edge monitoring system (main control kit)
- 2 Wireless transmitters for safety edges (mounted on gate edges)
- 1 Wireless receiver (communicates with gate operator and transmitters)
- 1 Photoelectric safety sensor (infrared beam system to detect obstructions)
- 1 Underground vehicle detection loop wire with sealant (installed in pavement)
- 1 Loop detector (processes signals from the vehicle detection loop)
- 1 Programmable annual timer (controls gate operation schedule)
- 1 Stand-alone digital access keypad (for user code entry)
- 1 Gooseneck pedestal post (mounting stand for keypad)
- 1 Concrete equipment pad and cylindrical footing (foundation for gate operator and post)

Cost Avoidance: This purchase is expected to greatly reduce illegal dumping at the transfer station, which poses a financial burden to the Town. The Franklin County Solid Waste Management District (FCSWMD) has specifically recommended the Town improve security at the facility for this reason.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

DPW Vehicles and Equipment Fund (\$30,785)

This fund provides accessible funding for the DPW superintendent to fund purchases of and/or major repairs to DPW vehicles and equipment that are needed unexpectedly between Town Meetings. Expenditures from this fund are governed by a longtime policy that was revised and adopted formally in 2022. This policy requires Selectboard approval for any expenditure exceeding \$25,000.

The policy also indicates that the fund should be replenished at Annual Town Meeting to an amount not to exceed \$100,000, based on the amount in the fund as of March 1. Due to reduced need for this fund as a result of better protection and longevity for vehicles and equipment in the new Public Works facility, the Selectboard voted to recommend that the fund be replenished to the reduced level of \$75,000.

Based on a balance of \$44,215 in this account as of March 1, this appropriation is expected to return the total DPW discretionary fund balance to approximately \$75,000 at the end of the current fiscal year.

The DPW vehicle/equipment inventory is current and in good condition. No large unexpected expenses are predicted, but they may still occur.

Service Interruption: Should a vehicle or large piece of equipment fail (without this appropriation) it is quite possible that said equipment could remain out of service, potentially hindering snow removal or disrupting time-sensitive construction projects while the Town identifies a method to appropriate funding to repair or replace.

Capital Improvements Committee grade: Recommend

Public Works- Alley and Other Rights of Way Paving (\$30,000)

The condition of most of the Town's alleyways is poor to fair. Alleys have been traditionally under-maintained because they are not eligible for state Chapter 90 funds (traditionally the source for funding street and road paving repairs). The alleys are important for public safety and sanitation.

The DPW intends to conduct the paving "in-house" using DPW equipment and labor.

The Long-Range Capital Plan projects the same annual allocation for the next five fiscal years, going section-by-section through the Town's alleyways. These projections will be updated yearly, based on pavement conditions and project costs.

Public Safety: The alleys in the densely developed downtown are important for public safety and sanitation.

Capital Improvements Committee grade: Recommend

Public Works- Sidewalk Replacement and Repair (\$15,000)

Funding is needed to support replacing and repairing sidewalks throughout the Town.

Masonic Ave's sidewalks were replaced in the past year, with more work planned in that same neighborhood for the upcoming construction season. Improvements are needed here in order to improve safety for pedestrians accessing the Canalside Rail Trail.

As with the Town's alleyways, the Capital Plan predicts a \$15,000 annual allotment for sidewalks, subject to annual review of needs and costs.

Public Safety: Unmaintained sidewalks pose a hazard to pedestrians, inhibit accessibility for individuals with mobility impairments, and create liability for the Town. Ensuring that sidewalks are repaired and repaved as needed before significant deterioration occurs is a priority of the DPW.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

Police- Replace Two Police Vehicles (K9 and Patrol) (\$161,000)

This request is driven by documented vehicle age, mileage, escalating maintenance costs, and operational reliability concerns.

1.) K9 Cruiser Replacement

The current K9 cruiser is a 2017 Ford Explorer with 150,212 miles (as of 2/10/26). The department averages approximately 16,000–18,000 miles per year per cruiser. The three-year average annual repair cost for this vehicle is \$4,164.61.

Police vehicles operate under severe duty conditions, including extended idling, emergency response driving, and 24-hour deployment. The widely accepted service life for a 24-hour police cruiser is approximately 100,000 miles. This vehicle is now 50,000 miles beyond that benchmark and continues to experience increasing repair costs and downtime.

Because this is a K9 vehicle, reliability is even more critical. Breakdowns not only impact response capability but also create potential safety risks for both the handler and the K9.

2.) Patrol Cruiser (#5) Replacement

Cruiser #5, also a 2017 Ford Explorer, had 147,563 miles when it became inoperable approximately five (5) months ago. The vehicle is beyond repair and has been removed from service.

The loss of this cruiser has already reduced fleet capacity. Operating with fewer frontline vehicles increases wear and mileage on the remaining cruisers and accelerates the need for additional replacements.

Public Safety: With Cruiser #5 being completely inoperable and the K9 vehicle experiencing increasingly frequent, expensive, and unpredictable repair costs, the capacity of the department to respond to calls is diminished. There are potentially dire consequences if a cruiser breaks down while in route to a call. Additionally, demand on remaining fleet vehicles become strained when one or more cruisers are taken off the road for maintenance or repairs.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

Police- Police Station HVAC Controls Rehabilitation (\$37,100)

This project addresses system reliability, officer and prisoner safety, and operational continuity within a 24-hour police facility.

1.) The Current System Is Outdated and No Longer Supported

The building is currently operating on an Andover Controls Continuum platform that is no longer supported by the manufacturer and is two generations old.

Unsupported systems present several risks:

- Inability to obtain replacement parts
- Limited technical support
- Increased vulnerability to full system failure
- Potential compatibility and software issues

If the system fails, the police station could experience prolonged HVAC outages with no immediate repair solution.

2.) Gas Detection Sensors Are Beyond Service Life

The CO sensor in the Sally Port and CO₂ sensors associated with RTU 2 have exceeded their expected service life of 5–7 years

Aging gas detection sensors can become unreliable and may:

- Fail to detect elevated carbon monoxide levels from vehicles in the sally port
- Trigger false alarms
- Fail to respond appropriately to unsafe air conditions

Given that the sally port is used for prisoner transport and vehicle intake, functioning CO detection is a critical life-safety component for officers, prisoners, and staff.

3.) Failing Controller Indicates Imminent System Breakdown

The controller serving Auxiliary Heating Unity 4 is reporting sensor failures and stalled programs, indicating imminent failure.

A controller failure could result in:

- Loss of heating or cooling to portions of the building
- Improper ventilation
- Inability to properly regulate temperature in critical areas

The new controls are also expected to significantly resolve complaints about uneven temperatures that have been difficult to adjust over the past several years.

Public Safety: As a 24-hour public safety facility, the police station cannot tolerate prolonged HVAC outages. Sensor failures especially create a risk of dangerous environmental conditions going undetected.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

Selectboard- Colle Building Interior Flooring & Mechanical Systems Improvements

The Colle Building is a municipally owned property leased by the Town to a local nonprofit organization (Center for Responsive Schools). The building serves a crucial economic development function in downtown. The Town is responsible for capital repairs and the following needs have been identified to maintain a safe, efficient, and professional work environment. The expense is funded entirely through the lease revenue.

- 1) Interior Flooring Replacement -The existing flooring in the common areas, including hallways and stairwells, has reached the end of its useful life. Wear and deterioration, including cracks, uneven surfaces, and outdated materials present both aesthetic and safety concerns. Replacing the flooring will enhance the overall appearance of the building, improve accessibility and safety for all occupants, and reduce ongoing maintenance costs.
- 2) Mechanical Systems Upgrades -The mechanical systems that serve the common areas, such as heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC), have become inefficient due to age and evolving building standards.

Public Safety: Worn-out floor tile in common areas of the building creates tripping hazards and liability for the Town.

Cost Avoidance: Mechanical systems upgrades are necessary to ensure proper climate control, energy efficiency, and occupant comfort. Modernizing these systems will also support sustainability goals and help reduce operational costs over time.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

Shea Theater- Facility and Theatrical System Upgrades (\$100,000)

The Shea Theater Arts Center, Inc. (“STAC”) recently entered into a new 10 year lease for the historic Shea Theater. Over its first ten years of operation, STAC invested nearly \$1 million in capital improvements and operational upgrades that stabilized the facility and strengthened its role as a regional cultural anchor.

As STAC begins its second decade, it faces a critical need to address aging systems and infrastructure that are reaching the end of their useful lives. Many of these systems are central to the safety, accessibility, and artistic quality of performances. Timely investment is essential to maintaining the theater’s vibrancy, expanding its production capacity, and ensuring safe, inclusive access for artists and audiences.

STAC has brought nationally-known performers and productions to the Shea Theater in recent years with great success. These improvements will expand the number and variety of productions at that level able to appear at the Shea.

This grant request will support the following priority improvements:

- Replacement and upgrade of failing sound and lighting systems, originally installed in 2016 using a mix of new and used components, with a modern, fully integrated system that meets current performance standards and interfaces with fire and emergency systems.
- Partial replacement of the theater’s 100+-year-old hemp fly system, addressing safety concerns while expanding production capabilities and improving audience experience.
- Upgrades to the exterior façade and interior lobby, including refreshed paint, new carpet, and lighting improvements to create a more welcoming environment.
- Installation of an accessible lift to the stage, ensuring access for mobility-impaired performers and advancing STAC’s commitment to equity and inclusion.

Together, these improvements will modernize essential systems, enhance safety and accessibility, and position the Shea Theater to serve its community for the next decade and beyond.

Cost Avoidance: This investment will afford STAC the opportunity to implement permanent improvements to a facility that has been a crucial component of the community’s economic and cultural identity at a significantly lower cost due to the leveraging of grant funds from the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

*Capital Improvements Committee grade: **Recommend***

3. FY28 Preview

The CIC discussed several projects in great detail that are not included in the FY27 slate of capital requests. These articles were not ready for the CIC to recommend to tonight’s Annual

Town Meeting, but the CIC expects to receive and review updated requests for upcoming Town Meetings.

- GMRSD New elementary school feasibility study (match for leveraging MSBA grant)
- GMRSD Sheffield Admin parking lot repaving
- GMRSD Hillcrest parking lot and sidewalk repairs
- GMRSD High School track and tennis court replacements
- Unity Park Fieldhouse furnace replacement
- Montague Center Blacksmith Shop renovation
- DPW Avenue A traffic signal replacements engineering
- Police radio system update
- Police station building security system update

4. 6 Year Capital Plan

The updated 6-Year Capital Plan is in the process of being developed. The CIC is currently taking inventory from all existing studies of capital assets (facilities, utilities, roads, vehicles, etc.) to develop a central, prioritized capital plan with a 6-year planning horizon.

Respectfully,

Gregory Garrison, Chair

Jason Burbank

Ariel Elan

Chris Menegoni

Lynn Reynolds