



City known as the Town of  
**GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS**



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**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

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**Mayor**

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**MAYOR'S FY 2015 BUDGET MESSAGE**

April 17, 2014

“Carpe diem”  
Horace, 23 BC

“The way that you wander is the way that you choose. The day that you tarry is the day that you lose.”  
Jeremiah Johnson, 1972

To the City Council and Residents of Greenfield:

For your consideration, I present the Fiscal Year 2015 balanced Operating Budget for the City of Greenfield.

This spending plan is the result of a coordinated effort of the budget review team consisting of the Finance Director Lane Kelly, Accountant Elizabeth Braccia and Treasurer Kelly Varner. This team reviewed submissions from department leaders and discussed the resources required to meet their mission, analyzed revenue sources on both a historical and actual basis, and finally, determined the prospect of producing a budget that is compatible with City goals and initiatives.

Factors that impact the decision-making process are the opinions and advice from the committees for Capital Improvement, Public Schools and Public Safety. Most importantly, however, is a quest to provide the monetary resources and competent personnel that produce the services and programs expected by the residents of Greenfield.

We believe this has been accomplished.

As Mayor, it is vital to provide direction and emphasis to budget priorities that are aligned with existing conditions and that prepare the City for future opportunities. Over the past five years we have improved process; sought innovation; invested over \$250 million in budgets for better schools, roads, infrastructure and walkways; increased reserves; curtailed wasteful actions; reduced our carbon footprint; created a safer environment; become less reliant on external factors while becoming resilient from within; improved recreational and cultural assets; increased governmental transparency and contributed to a stable community while meeting our obligation as the center of Franklin County.

There are, however, economic realities that must be recognized. We need a better effort on expanding the tax base for both jobs and tax revenue. Currently, the burden for City revenue is primarily laid upon the real estate tax; it is the nature of tax in Massachusetts. But we can lessen the tax stress locally through economic development by increasing the valuations of property and creating new properties to share this burden. We have had some degree of success with

this plan, but as we provide better infrastructure (land opportunity, fiber-optics) our opportunities for jobs and increased valuations will be enhanced.

This brings us to the poet Horace. We cannot predict nor expect what the future will bring; we can only use the opportunity of the day to prepare for tomorrow. In simple terms, the actions taken by our community at this time will influence and impact our future. It is not by accident that so many organizations and institutions have noted their 75-, 100- and 125-year celebrations in Greenfield in the past couple of years. Those who came before us took action in their day. Now, it is our day ...and we must act to preserve our quality and way of life.

That is why our focus to invest in community infrastructure, schools, public safety, library, agriculture, together with our commitment to Greenfield's seniors, youth, the environment and a vital downtown will result in the future that we want to see -- and not a future that is the result of happenstance.

Our path is not defined. "The way that we wander is the way that we choose," says Jeremiah Johnson. I believe that our community is fully supportive of its government's actions and initiatives. I believe that this support and overwhelming consensus is responsible for the success enjoyed by all. We have, together, chosen this path to "wander" and a wise decision it has been. Coupled with this community support is opportunity. There exists many opportunities today, from a renewed focus on "local" food and farming to fiber-optic bandwidth to preserving our heritage of a century ago.

Perhaps the most influential and opportunistic factor for continued success and our determined future is our people. We are concerned and committed, active and involved. This population is special, skilled and entrepreneurial. We are compassionate, proud, rugged and driven at times. And yet, we must not "tarry" and lose the momentum we have created.

You will note in this budget package additional detail in the areas of law enforcement, energy and sustainability, technology and parking. These efforts, along with the many accomplishments by staff, are highlighted for your review. A reference as to how this budget meets the guidelines of the Master Plan Implementation strategies is also offered to demonstrate an immediate action to meet the goals of the Master Plan.

I will be available with all of our municipal leaders during the Council's review of the 2015 Budget and look forward to maximizing our opportunities for the residents of Greenfield.

This is another step that we take together.

Respectfully submitted,

William Martin  
Mayor