

Offered by Councilors Kenzie Bok, Brian Worrell, Gabriela Coletta, Arroyo, Breadon, Flaherty, Fernandes Anderson, Lara, Louijeune, Mejia and Flynn



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING ENHANCING BOSTON'S COVID RECOVERY VIA COMPETITIVE FEDERAL GRANTS PROVIDED BY THE B.I.L. AND I.R.A

WHEREAS: The Biden-Harris Administration's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) provides over \$50 billion in federal infrastructure funding through competitive grants for local governments to recover from the pandemic by investing in programs regarding transportation, climate change mitigation, and cyber resilience; *and*

WHEREAS: The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA) devotes \$369 billion nationwide towards climate action, over half of which is funding for clean energy infrastructure, but which includes competitive opportunities to support urban forestry, conversion of municipal fleet to electric vehicles, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in disadvantaged communities; *and*

WHEREAS: The competitive grants within the BIL and the IRA include many opportunities for the City of Boston to receive millions of dollars in federal funding that would complement the investments in the American Rescue Plan; *and*

WHEREAS: The City of Boston has already applied to a number of these grants, including requesting \$100 million from the National Infrastructure Project Assistance (MEGA) for Allston, a \$2 million initial planning grant from the Reconnecting Communities program for Chinatown, \$11.2 million citywide from the Safe Streets & Roads for All (SS4A) program, \$32.7 million for a resilient Moakley Park via the Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities (BRIC) program, \$9.3 million from the Clean School Bus Program, and \$35 million from the Rebuilding American Infrastructure Sustainably & Equitably (RAISE) program, the last of which was successfully awarded for projects in Roxbury/Mattapan; *and*

WHEREAS: Such funding would enable the City to make considerable investments towards achieving the goals set forth in the Boston Complete Streets initiative, Recharge Boston: Boston's Zero Emission Vehicle Program, the Vision Zero Boston Action Plan, the Imagine Boston 2030 Plan, and several other citywide initiatives; *and*

WHEREAS: Due to the short-term and competitive manner of these federal funding opportunities, the City's administrative bodies will need to continue to act with urgency in order to evaluate which grants are most relevant to the City's needs and apply for them in a timely manner; *and*

- WHEREAS:* Several deadlines for funding opportunities through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act have already passed, and a number of additional deadlines will occur in the coming months; *and*
- WHEREAS:* The process of applying for these competitive federal grants requires extensive cooperation and coordination between municipal agencies, including but not limited to Administration & Finance, Boston Water and Sewer, the Environment Department, the Public Works Department, Boston Transportation Department, and the Boston Planning & Development Agency, along with numerous state agencies and entities such as the Metropolitan Area Planning Council; *and*
- WHEREAS:* The goals of the Boston Complete Streets initiative include embracing innovative designs and technologies to address climate change and promote active and healthy communities by building and maintaining more sustainable transportation networks; *and*
- WHEREAS:* The goals of Recharge Boston: Boston's Zero Emission Vehicle Program include supporting the widespread adoption of electrification, ensuring affordable and convenient access to charging infrastructure for all residents, and electrifying all municipal vehicles; *and*
- WHEREAS:* The goal of the Vision Zero Boston Action Plan is to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious accidents in Boston through innovative changes in street designs and municipal policies; *and*
- WHEREAS:* The goals of the Imagine Boston 2030 Plan include making significant infrastructure investments in transformative technologies to reduce Boston's carbon emissions, improve neighborhood walkability, facilitate a shift in the City's modes of transit, reduce social inequity and economic inequality, and improve the health and safety of all Bostonians; *and*
- WHEREAS:* The combination of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to advance and execute on the City's plans in all these areas, as part of Boston's holistic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic; *NOW THEREFORE BE IT*
- ORDERED:* That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss enhancing Boston's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic through the competitive federal infrastructure funding opportunities included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, and that representatives of the City of Boston, including from Administration & Finance, the Boston Water & Sewer Commission, the Environment Department, the Streets Cabinet, and the Boston Planning & Development Agency, along with local experts, community advocates, and the public, be invited to testify.

Filed on: January 9, 2023