

City of Malden
215 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148
c: 781-704-6342

From: Karen Colón Hayes <kcolonhayes@CITYOFMALDEN.ORG>
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2026 5:54 PM
To: Gary J. Christenson <gchristenson@CITYOFMALDEN.ORG>
Cc: Alex Pratt <apratt@CITYOFMALDEN.ORG>; Carey McDonald <cmcdonald@CITYOFMALDEN.ORG>
Subject: Re: Funding for the River Works project

Hello Gary,

Thank you for your response although it doesn't answer the question I asked- "Could you let me know whether any of this funding could be used to complete Roosevelt Park? I also understand that some elements of the project were cut because of funding constraints. It would be valuable to restore those components—such as the educational garden for students—if possible."

I am quite clear on everything else you stated, no confusion here. Can you respond to the question above?

KCH

Karen Colón Hayes
Councillor At Large
City of Malden
215 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148
c: 781-704-6342

From: Gary J. Christenson <gchristenson@CITYOFMALDEN.ORG>
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2026 4:14 PM
To: Karen Colón Hayes <kcolonhayes@CITYOFMALDEN.ORG>
Cc: Alex Pratt <apratt@CITYOFMALDEN.ORG>; Carey McDonald <cmcdonald@CITYOFMALDEN.ORG>
Subject: RE: Funding for the River Works project

Councillor,

There seems to be some confusion on your part that I'm hoping to clarify.

First, the ongoing remediation project at Roosevelt Park is continuing as planned. We remain committed to completing that work and restoring full access to the park.

Second, the funding currently under discussion relates to the park improvement project that was canceled approximately two and a half years ago. When that project was discontinued, the memo I sent to the City Council made several things clear:

- The project and all its proposed improvements would not proceed.
- Any future improvements to Roosevelt Park would require a new community planning, engagement, and design process, along with someone to lead it. We anticipated that community leaders like yourself, who so aggressively opposed the original proposal, would help organize an alternative vision.
- In the meantime, the City committed to the immediate remediation of the fenced in/imminent hazard area to restore full access, with a restoration of the field after that to its prior condition.

Since my memo, there's been no substantive proposal developed to advance additional improvements at Roosevelt. As a result, the bond funds originally allocated for the canceled project have remained unused for more than two years. As discussed by our Treasurer, allowing those funds to remain dormant carries some financial risks, including potential arbitrage-related penalties.

Given those circumstances, and with the River Works project facing a funding gap as it moves into its final phase, we concluded that repurposing these unused funds was the most practical and fiscally responsible course of action.

Again, this decision does not affect the ongoing remediation work at Roosevelt Park, nor does it permanently close the door on future park improvements. Should a new Roosevelt Park proposal be developed through an appropriate planning and community engagement process, it can be evaluated on its own merits at that time.

I hope this helps clarify the distinction between the remediation project, which is actively moving forward, and the canceled improvement project.

Gary

From: Karen Colón Hayes <kcolonhayes@CITYOFMALDEN.ORG>
Sent: Thursday, 24 September 2026 14:14:22
To: Gary J. Christenson <gchristenson@CITYOFMALDEN.ORG>; Alex Pratt <apratt@CITYOFMALDEN.ORG>
Cc: Carey McDonald <cmcdonald@CITYOFMALDEN.ORG>
Subject: Funding for the River Works project

Hello Gary and Alex,

I just sent this note to Rebekah in response to her update on the meeting which took place on Monday. Can you provide some answers to my questions?

Thank you,
KCH

Thank you for compiling these notes. The timing is perfect, as I was just sitting down to write you an email with my thoughts on this funding. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the meeting. In retrospect, I regret that decision, but I was overbooked. I have several questions about this funding.

I appreciate the points you raised in your email, and my question is intended for the Mayor and Alex who I will email separately but wanted everyone on this email to be aware. Both projects deserve funding, and I understand the concerns about the urgency of the Riverworks project. However, I believe the need at Roosevelt Park is especially urgent and timely.

Based on what I'm learning, the Roosevelt Park project has been delayed for several reasons. I may be mistaken, but I understand that additional contaminated soil may have been discovered, and that it has been difficult to find a facility willing to accept it. This park serves as the play area for students at Salemwood School, and I believe we should use available funding, if possible, to complete the project and ensure the space is safe for our children.

Could you let me know whether any of this funding could be used to complete Roosevelt Park? I also understand that some elements of the project were cut because of funding constraints. It

would be valuable to restore those components—such as the educational garden for students—if possible.

I am extremely uncomfortable and hesitant to reallocate all of these funds unless there is absolutely no way they can be used for Roosevelt Park. I am not yet sure how I will vote on this matter until I hear some answer. I want to be fully transparent. In case folks aren't on social media, there has been public outcry over this and I have been fielding calls all day from community members, teachers and parents from the Salemwood School.

Thank you.

KCH

Karen Colón Hayes

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