

# CITY OF NORTHAMPTON NEWSLETTER

## Mayor Sciarra and Team Represent at “Connect 351” Annual Meeting

Friday, January 24th, and Saturday, January 25th, Mayor Sciarra and several members of her team attended the Massachusetts Municipal Association’s (MMA) Annual Meeting, “Connect 351.” This event brought together more than 1,000 local leaders from across the Commonwealth to engage in important municipal conversations. On Friday, Governor Maura Healey and Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll kicked off the event just two days after filing their state budget plan for fiscal year 2026. Mayor Sciarra attended the Women Elected Municipal Officials (WEMO) luncheon, where she serves as a Director. The luncheon featured remarks from Secretary Kate Walsh of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, who discussed initiatives aimed at strengthening community health resources. The afternoon was filled with networking opportunities and workshops focusing on fiscal and economic challenges, navigating politically sensitive legal matters, and understanding the rising costs of public education. On Saturday, Mayor Sciarra met with Lt. Governor Driscoll and had a productive conversation with Senator Ed Markey. At the MMA Annual Business Meeting, in her role as a member of the MMA Public Works, Transportation, and Public Utilities (PWTU) Advisory Committee, she voted to approve an important resolution—*Resolution Supporting a Local-State-Federal Partnership towards a Robust Multimodal Transportation System across the Commonwealth that Supports Thriving Communities in the Age of Climate Change*. Mayor Sciarra continues to seek opportunities to advocate for our city to be in the best position to thrive economically, address key challenges, and ensure a high quality of life for all residents.



See page 2 for info. about Northampton's 375th Anniversary Planning Committee



**Mayor's Office**  
 210 Main Street, Northampton  
 (413) 587 1249  
 mayor@northamptonma.gov

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## Northampton to Celebrate 375th Anniversary in 2029: Join the Planning Committee!

In 2029, the City of Northampton will proudly celebrate its 375th anniversary—a milestone that showcases our community’s rich history, vibrant culture, and bright future. To ensure this momentous occasion is one for the history books, Mayor Sciarra is excited to announce the formation of the Northampton 375th Anniversary Committee.

This committee will play a vital role in spearheading the celebration, including brainstorming event ideas, planning activities, fundraising, and bringing the community together for this once-in-a-generation opportunity.

Are you a Northampton resident passionate about our city’s past, present, and future? Do you have skills in event planning, fundraising, or community engagement—or simply a desire to get involved? The Mayor is calling on enthusiastic individuals to help make this celebration a success. Your involvement will be crucial in honoring 375 years of Northampton.

If you are interested in participating, in any capacity, please tell us about yourself by completing a brief application, [linked here](#).



## Mayor Sciarra Featured in *Icarus Complex Magazine*

We’re proud to share that Mayor Sciarra has been featured in the latest edition of *Icarus Complete Magazine*! Alongside three other mayors from across the country, she participated in a thoughtful discussion on the critical role cities play in combating climate

change. Highlighting innovative local efforts and the importance of national collaboration, Mayor Sciarra continues to lead the charge for a sustainable future. To read the full article to see how Northampton is contributing to meaningful change, [click here](#).

## Winter Exquisite: Zine & Diorama Fair

Forbes Library’s resident Zine Club is hosting a Winter-themed/inspired Zine and Diorama Festival. The event is free and open to the public, taking place from 11am to 4pm on Saturday, February 8th, in the Reading Room on the main floor of the library. The event will accommodate 20 artist vendors, 12 dioramas, and Western Mass Electronics will host an

electronic music open mic from 12pm to 3pm, all in an immersive Winter-scape.

[Read more!](#)



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## "POP... Pardon Our Progress" Updates

The POP communication system is live. Text "PROGRESS" to 99411 to receive updates, alerts, & essential information leading up to and during the Picture Main Street project. For more info, visit the Picture Main Street webpage [linked here](#).




### Want to join a city Board or Committee?

Have you ever wanted to get involved in your local municipal government but didn't know how? Check the latest vacancies and fill out the application form on the city website at [northamptonma.gov/192/Boards-Committees](http://northamptonma.gov/192/Boards-Committees) or stop by the Mayor's Office for a paper application.

## Picture Main Street: Economic Vibrancy

The fourth core pillar of the Picture Main Street project is economic vibrancy. To reach that goal for downtown, we must go through a process that will certainly present challenges for both businesses and residents. But the data is clear: when we build it, people will come. By redesigning Main Street with a focus on people, we're creating a vibrant downtown experience that will attract both locals and visitors, helping our brick-and-mortar businesses compete in an increasingly digital world. The rise of online shopping, food delivery,



and streaming services poses a serious threat to downtowns everywhere, and the status quo isn't enough to get people out of their homes. Expanding sidewalk space will open up opportunities for dining, entertainment, art, and socializing—things that simply can't happen when everyone's stuck on the couch scrolling through their phones. This project isn't just about beautifying the area; it's an investment in the long-term success of our local businesses, from restaurants and shops to galleries and entertainment venues. It's also laying the foundation to attract new businesses in the future. More Picture Main Street info., [here](#).

## Newsletter Sign-Up

Would you like to receive the City of Northampton's newsletter as soon as it's available? Simply fill out a quick sign-up form, and each issue will be sent straight to your inbox once it's published! Complete the sign-up form, [linked here](#).

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## Central Services Director Pat McCarthy to Retire After a 10-year Municipal Career with Northampton

The City of Northampton's Central Services Director, Patrick McCarthy, has announced his retirement after serving the city with distinction for nearly a decade. Mr. McCarthy's last day will be July 11, 2025. "The City of Northampton owes an incredible debt of gratitude to Pat McCarthy for his leadership and unwavering dedication to our community," shared Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra. "Pat's vast expertise and meticulous management have been pivotal in maintaining and improving our critical infrastructure. His

thoughtful stewardship of city facilities and energy initiatives and his kind approach to all who he encountered have set a standard of excellence that will benefit Northampton for years to come. It has been a great privilege to work with Pat."



[Read more!](#)

## Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan

The City of Northampton is developing its 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan to guide how Community CDBG funds will be used to support affordable housing, homelessness services, public infrastructure, and economic opportunities for low- and moderate-income residents over the next five years. Your input is essential!

We are hosting three focus groups—two in person and one remote—to discuss these priorities and the Citizen Participation Plan, which outlines how residents can engage in the process. All meetings are open to the public.

### Upcoming Meetings:

- Economic Development & Public Infrastructure    Tue. 2/11, 1pm (Lilly Library, Florence)
- Housing & Homelessness    Wed. 2/12, 1pm (Senior Center, Northampton)
- Remote Focus Group    Mon. 2/24, 6pm (Zoom)

Join via Zoom: [Click here](#) | Meeting ID: 257 704 6101 | Passcode: 125956

Can't make any of these meetings? No problem! Complete the Community Needs Survey no later than Friday, February 28th at 2pm by [clicking here](#).

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## ARPA Updates

The cancellation of in-person events and shows due to COVID-19 closures had a negative impact on the arts and artists in our community. In this issue, we are featuring the Academy of Music, which provides arts, entertainment, and cultural activities for the Northampton area, as well as opportunities for local performers, and draws visitors to town to experience the many wonderful shops and restaurants that Northampton has to offer.

We are happy to share information about ARPA funding for the Academy of Music's efforts to revitalize the arts and entertainment scene in Northampton during the first couple of years following COVID closures. The Academy used this funding to bring thoughtful shows and performances to Northampton in order to provide more opportunities for our community to engage with the arts, as well as expand opportunities for local performers.

Thank you to the Academy for their continued focus on the arts and for their part in ensuring that Northampton remains an arts and entertainment destination.



## Annual Street Lists

The City Clerk's Office will be mailing out Annual Street Lists beginning February 15, 2025. Please respond by March 1, 2025. A self addressed envelope will be included. However, you can return postage free by emailing your response to [cclerk@northamptonma.gov](mailto:cclerk@northamptonma.gov) or bringing it to the City Clerk's Office, 210 Main Street, Room 4. There is also a drop off box right in front of City Hall that will be accessible through March 15th.



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## DivCare Announcement Summary

The City of Northampton's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has received a \$595,998 grant from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. This funding is part of the state's Diversion to Care (DivCare) initiative which aims to reduce criminal justice involvement by supporting individuals with substance use disorders. DHHS Director of Prevention, Taylor McAndrew, stated "We have also been shifting our lens to look closely at who is being disproportionately impacted and facing unjust barriers. DivCare will provide partners the platform and guidance to do just that." The DivCare initiative will be led by DHHS's multidisciplinary coalition, Hampshire HOPE. Hampshire HOPE is a multi-sector coalition addressing the rise in prescription opioid misuse, heroin use, addiction, and overdose death in the Hampshire County region, through policy, practice, and systems change. Public health professionals will also work with local law enforcement, public safety representatives, behavioral health, harm reduction, and medical providers, and housing agencies to further the mission of this grant.



## Welcome Message from Lauren Kelly, Hampshire HOPE's New Coordinator



"I am grateful to begin this next chapter in my journey as the Hampshire HOPE Coordinator within Northampton's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). I bring over a decade of experience working in violence prevention, health promotion, and harm reduction roles in community and educational settings, informed by public health and trauma-informed practices. As a Northampton resident for over five years, I have been familiar with the critical work of Hampshire HOPE and have seen the firsthand benefits through partnership opportunities in my most recent role as the former Associate Director of Health & Wellbeing at Amherst College. Like many in our communities and this field, this work is personal to me. I lost a sibling to the opioid epidemic after a long

battle with addiction, and that experience continues to motivate me in this work. I am humbled to support and uplift the wide range of community-based recovery, overdose prevention, and harm reduction efforts across Hampshire County and western Massachusetts. In the early stages of my role, I am focused on building relationships with long-standing and emerging community partners, working closely with colleagues across DHHS - especially within the Division of Substance Use Prevention, and dedicating my attention towards the implementation of efforts around Strategic Intercept Mapping, opioid settlement funds, and other community-informed initiatives. I can be reached at [lkelly@northamptonma.gov](mailto:lkelly@northamptonma.gov) for any questions or opportunities to connect."

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## Honoring World War II Veterans: Help Us Find Local Heroes

Central Hampshire Veterans Services in Northampton is working on a special in-person event to honor the remaining World War II veterans in our western Massachusetts communities. Tentatively scheduled for May 2025, this event will celebrate the incredible men and women who sacrificed so much to protect freedom and democracy.

However, locating these veterans has become a challenge. Many live with family, are in long-term care facilities, or have quietly stepped away from the public eye. Despite our best efforts, it can be difficult to identify those still with us, and all too often, we don't learn about them until it's too late.

This is where we need your help. We're asking you to share this message with your community—whether through a news story, a community announcement, or simply word of mouth—to help us connect with veterans (or their families/caregivers) who deserve to be part of this occasion.



If you know a living WWII veteran in western Massachusetts, please contact Dan Nye at Central Hampshire Veterans Services. He can be reached at [vetadmin@northamptonma.gov](mailto:vetadmin@northamptonma.gov) or 413-587-1299.

Your support in spreading the word can make all the difference in ensuring these veterans receive the recognition they deserve. Thank you for your continued dedication to our community—we look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,  
Central Hampshire Veterans Services

## Keep Sidewalks Clear and Safe This Winter

With winter in full swing, please remember to clear your sidewalks within 24 hours of a storm. This helps keep our community safe and ensures sidewalks remain accessible for everyone. For more information, review [City Ordinance §285-17: Removal of Snow and Ice from Sidewalks](#). Thank you for doing your part to keep our city safe and accessible this winter!



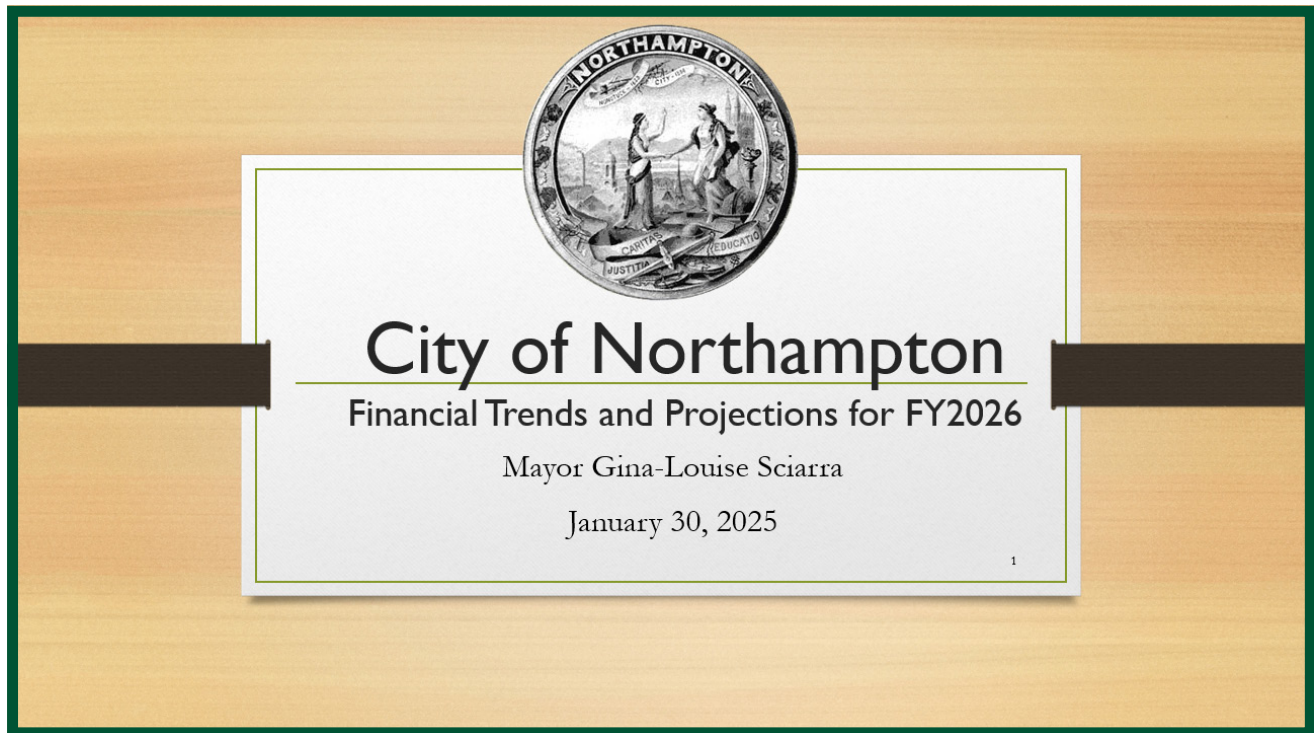
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## Q&A with Mayor Sciarra

**Q: Where can I find Mayor Sciarra's presentation on Northampton's FY2026 Financial Trends and Projections for the FY2026 Budget Process?**



**A:** Mayor Sciarra kicked off the FY2026 Budget Year process with a presentation on the financial trends, revenue and expense projections, an update on the FY2025 budget, and forecasts for FY2026. The Mayor delivered this presentation at the Joint Meeting of the City Council, Northampton School Committee, and the Trustees of Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School on January 30th. The recording of the presentation can be found [HERE](#) and a PDF of the presentation can be found [HERE](#).



### Want to submit a question?

To submit your question for the Q&A with Mayor Sciarra, please fill out the submission form, [linked here](#). *Submitting a question does not guarantee it will be selected for publication.*

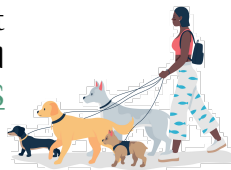
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## Calendar Updates

### Upcoming Events and Notices

#### VINS Dog Show

Volunteers in Northampton Schools (VINS) is hosting its 17th Annual Dog Show on Saturday, March 1st from 12pm to 3pm at Northampton High School. Registration is required for dogs. Vie for the coveted title of "Best Fetcher", "Best Hair", "Best Smile", and more! For more info. and contact information, visit the [VINS website](#).



#### Pioneer Valley Regional Agriculture Conference



Tomorrow, Saturday, February 1st from 9am to 12pm, in the Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School's Library, 80 Locust St., Building A, is the Pioneer Valley Regional Agriculture Conference. Doors open at 8:30am. [Read more!](#)

#### Veteran's Benefits Event

Join local providers on Wednesday, February 26th from 4pm to 6pm at the Northampton Senior Center to learn about benefits and services for veterans and their spouses/survivors. Connect with people and organizations ready to help. Registration is required. To register or learn more, call 587-1299 or email [vetadmin@northamptonma.gov](mailto:vetadmin@northamptonma.gov).

#### Kindergarten Registration Day

Caregivers and families are invited to register their child for fall kindergarten programs starting Sat. 2/1 at JFK Middle School, 100 Bridge Rd., Florence. [Read more!](#)

#### Silver Chord Bowl

In its 41st year, the Silver Chord Bowl is the oldest and most respected collegiate a cappella showcase in the region, hosted in John M. Greene Hall on the Smith College campus. This year's event will begin with a performance by Northampton High School's very own Northamptones, followed by six groups from colleges and universities around the Northeast.

- **When:** Sunday, February 9th – 2pm Showtime. Doors Open at 1:30pm
- **Where:** John M. Greene Hall is located on the Smith College campus, 60 Elm Street, Northampton.

[Read more!](#)

