

# Haverhill Legislators: State Budget Targets \$1 Million for Projects Such as Historic NE, New YMCA

By Tim Coco | July 30, 2024



*Design concept of Historic New England's Haverhill Center by Brandon Haw Architecture.*

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Haverhill's legislative delegation say they teamed up to bring \$250,000 each to Historic New England's planned downtown project and a mobile health unit, \$75,000 for Winnekenni Park and more in the \$58.8 billion state budget that took effect this week.

This is the second year in a row, lawmakers set aside a quarter million for Historic New England’s proposed mixed-use downtown district, possibly featuring a hotel, retail and artist live-work space and anchored by a new Center for Preservation and Collections.

State Reps. Andy X. Vargas and Ryan M. Hamilton and Sens. Barry R. Finegold and Pavel M. Payano cited more than \$1 million in earmarks for these projects as well as a family entertainment venture, Vietnam Veterans Memorial improvements and new Haverhill YMCA building.

“I’m particularly excited about the funding we were able to secure to support (Haverhill Public Schools) efforts on updated literacy curriculum and interventions. Notably, this budget permanently funds universal school meals for every school child across the commonwealth, saving parents up to \$1,200 a year per child,” Vargas said in a statement.

Haverhill is set to receive \$88 million in state school aid, an increase of \$5.3 million from last year. The city will also receive \$12.1 million in unrestricted local aid, an increase of \$352,000 over last year.

Vargas carve-outs in the budget also pay \$100,000 for Haverhill Public Schools to transform its reading curriculum to an evidence-based one, \$50,000 for Haverhill Promise for efforts to ensure grade-level reading, \$50,000 for EforAll and Team Haverhill for a pitch contest to award either a new youth/family entertainment venture or help an existing, \$30,000 for Greater Haverhill Chamber of Commerce, \$50,000 for the Haverhill Parks and Recreation for shovel-ready projects, \$10,000 for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, \$15,000 for the Haverhill YMCA and \$10,000 for the Downtown Boxing Club.

Hamilton earmarks include the money for Historic New England, \$30,000 for the Haverhill Inner City Boxing Club and \$20,000 more for Cogswell ArtSpace.

Payano secured \$50,000 each for Somebody Cares New England and Community Action’s MakeIT Haverhill and \$250,000 for Greater Lawrence Family Health Center’s Mobile Health Program to serve homeless and underserved people in Lawrence, Haverhill, Methuen and surrounding areas.

Finegold’s earmarks include \$75,000 for the Winnekenni park conservation area and \$40,000 for signs at Ward Hill Business Park.

Finegold called the budget and set-asides for Haverhill “reflective of our state’s good values of balancing fiscal responsibility with thoughtful investment.”

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