



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
MASSACHUSETTS SENATE

**SENATOR EDWARD J. KENNEDY**

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*Vice Chair*

JOINT COMMITTEE ON  
MUNICIPALITIES AND  
REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

December 14, 2023

Jay Paget, Program Director  
Cultural Facilities Fund, Mass Cultural Council  
10 St James Ave # 302  
Boston, MA 02116

**Re: Middlesex Canal Association Cultural Facilities Fund Grant Application**

Dear Mr. Paget,

I am writing in support of the Cultural Facilities Fund Grant Application recently submitted by the Middlesex Canal Association. The Middlesex Canal Association is a historic preservation group dedicated to the preservation of the historic Middlesex Canal. The Association currently operates the Middlesex Canal Museum and Visitor Center at 71 Faulkner Street in Billerica, Massachusetts. They are planning to move the Museum and Visitors Center to 2 Old Elm Street in Billerica sometime next year. The Middlesex Canal Association owns the property at 2 Old Elm Street.

The Middlesex Canal was a barge canal that connected the Merrimack River in Lowell to the port of Boston. The 27-mile-long canal operated from its completion in 1803 until 1851 when it was replaced by the railroad as a way to transport bulk goods. The Middlesex Canal was one of the first civil engineering projects of its type in the United States and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Remnants of the canal still exist, and it has also been designated as a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark by the American Society of Civil Engineers.

The estimated cost to renovate and rehabilitate the property at 2 Old Elm Street is approximately three million dollars. To date, the Middlesex Canal Association has raised more than two million dollars through private donations and public funding from the federal, state, and local level. A Cultural Facilities Fund Grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council would help the Middlesex Canal Association complete the necessary renovations and allow them to move the Middlesex Canal Museum and Visitor Center to a new and better location.

If you have any questions, please contact my office at (617) 722-1630.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ed Kennedy".

Edward J. Kennedy  
State Senator  
First Middlesex District