

**Massachusetts House of Representatives
Bill Summary**

Bill #: H.4205

Title: An Act authorizing the city of Watertown to lease property at 124 Watertown Street, Watertown (former Parker school).

Sponsor: Rep. Steven Owens and Rep. John J. Lawn, Jr.

Committee: Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government

Hearing Date: June 24, 2025

Current Law:

Chapter 30B is the Uniform Procurement Act. It requires municipalities to engage in a competitive, public bidding process if a contract valued above \$50,000 is being sold.

Sections 44 to 58 of Chapter 7C pertains to municipalities obtaining the highest quality design services for public projects and applies guidelines on how design services should be solicited by local entities.

Sections 44A to 44F of Chapter 149 further discusses the procurement process for all forms of public contracts and details the process by which municipalities should award them. Specifically, it states that all contracts pertaining to “construction, reconstruction, installation, demolition, maintenance or repair of any building by a public agency” should be awarded to the lowest “responsible and eligible” bidder.

Sections 26 to 27H of Chapter 149 is a series of regulations that govern how construction projects for public buildings should be carried out, including preferences to local residents and veterans, wages for employees, and penalties for violations of employment law.

Section 39M of Chapter 30 further deals with the procurement of construction and material contracts of all values and includes details about the bid deposit requirements.

Section 3 of Chapter 40 empowers municipalities to lease property under its ownership for no greater than thirty years.

Sections (a), (b), and (g) of Section 16 of Chapter 30B requires municipalities to appraise the value of any property under consideration for leasing prior to soliciting proposals.

Exec. Summary:

H.4205 allows the city of Watertown to lease the property at 124 Watertown Street for no longer than 30 years and exempts the city from the competitive bidding process typically required for contracts of this valuation.

Summary:

Section 1 empowers the city of Watertown to lease the property at 124 Watertown Street for no longer than thirty years in accordance with sound business practices and principles of fair dealing. Additionally, it exempts the city from certain regulations pertaining to the design and construction of projects performed by a lessee, which are Sections 44 to 58, inclusive of Chapter 7C; Sections 44A to 44F, inclusive of Chapter 149; and Section 39M of Chapter 30. Section 26 to 27H, inclusive, of Chapter 149 will still apply.

Section 2 reaffirms the authority of Section 3 of Chapter 40 and Sections (a), (b), and (g) of Section 16 of Chapter 30B and restates the requirement for a vote of the city council to lease property.

Section 3 states that this act shall take effect immediately upon passage.

Notes:

Approved unanimously 9-0 as Resolution # 33 by vote of the Watertown City Council during the meeting dated May 13, 2025.

According to the Watertown City Manager's office, the city acquired the building with existing tenants and wishes to forgo the public bidding process for the sake of efficiency.