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### **Prioritizing Challenges Posed to a City by New Dam Safety Regulations**

In 2002, the Massachusetts legislature enacted revisions of the Dam Safety Statute, MGL Chapter 253 44-55, that significantly changed the responsibilities of dam owners to register, inspect, and maintain dams in the Commonwealth. Amendments made to the dam safety regulations contained in 302 CMR 10.00 – 10.16, which reflect the statutory changes, became effective on November 4, 2005. Additional guidelines clarifying the amendments to 302 CMR 10.00 were last updated September 12, 2008. The guidelines provide the minimum requirements for report format, inspection checklist, and inspections as well as provide an objective basis for rating the condition of the dam. Consequently, a dam inspected after the issue of the 2008 guidelines may have a lower overall rating than was previously identified even if conditions remain generally the same. This poses a major challenge to cities that own multiple dams that may be affected by the changes in regulations and guidelines. The city of Worcester is listed as the owner of 29 dams, 25 of which are classified as high or significant hazard. CDM began providing dam engineering services for the city of Worcester in 2005 and performed visual inspections in 2006 and 2009 in accordance with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' regulations from the Office of Dam Safety. The inspections have identified a number of dam safety deficiencies that need to be addressed at the dams. The city engaged CDM to develop a dam summary report for all the dams and develop a prioritization plan for addressing the dam safety deficiencies over a 5-year period to be included in the city's Capital Improvement Plan. CDM is currently performing Phase 2 investigations at selected dams that were rated as being in poor condition. In addition, CDM will be evaluating the feasibility of potential decommissioning some of the poor-condition dams and will be providing dam-safety training to city staff. This paper will describe the inspection and subsequent prioritization process that CDM utilized which provided a streamlined approach to meeting the new regulatory standards.