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Massachusetts*

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# Press Release

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## Weymouth awarded \$183,375 Dam and Seawall Grant for Lane Beach

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Weymouth, MA – Mayor Robert Hedlund announced today that the Town of Weymouth has received a \$183,375 Dam and Seawall Grant for Lane Beach from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA). Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito and EEA Secretary Beth Card made the announcement Thursday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at the Somerset Water Department.

"We have seen firsthand the impact of storms and flooding in our coastal neighborhoods. These funds are important to helping us continue our efforts to rebuild our seawalls and protect residents from the extreme weather events we expect will continue," **said Mayor Robert Hedlund**. "I thank the Baker-Polito Administration for making this investment a priority, and enabling Weymouth to take another step towards greater resilience and greater safety."

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' Dam and Seawall Program builds upon the Baker-Polito Administration's commitment to strengthen the resilience of communities throughout Massachusetts by coordinating assistance to cities and towns as they prepare for the impacts of climate change. This year, grants were given to 26 communities, totaling \$19 million.

Weymouth's grant will be used for design and permitting for Lane Beach/River Street Coastal Infrastructure improvements to address flooding issues on the beach, Street and bathhouse. The seawall is accessible via River Street and George Lane Beach. Currently, one opening exists in the concrete seawall that allows pedestrian access to George Lane

Beach. The public can also access the site by walking along the beach from either the east or west.

There are several issues with the structure's condition as well as existing deficiencies in the structure's design. The seawall system does not fully protect River Street and Weymouth Neck during storm events. The seawall is not elevated above the flood elevation and are frequently inundated during storm events. The Project Area is exposed to significant wave action. During past major storm events, breaking waves have resulted in extensive damage in the area.

The current seawall height is approximately 10 feet high (NAVD-88) and FEMA recommends a height of at least 12 feet based on various factors including climate change data, weather events, and rising sea levels. Increasing the height and stability of the seawall and raising the elevation of River Street and the parking area will increase emergency access to the Weymouth Neck neighborhood during storm events. In addition to limited to no access to Weymouth Neck, the Town intends to incorporate green infrastructure practices that can provide both a resilient solution and environmentally friendly approach, rather than just traditional coastal hardening.

Communities across the South Shore provide regional support during hazard events, through their harbormasters, emergency management personnel, public safety personnel, and the Coast Guard. Weymouth's investment in infrastructure improvements in this location will create a more resilient and safer area during storm events, resulting in a reduced use of regional resources and an overall regional benefit.

The Dam and Seawall Repair or Removal Fund was established in 2013 by the state legislature to assist communities and groups across Massachusetts in addressing deteriorating dams and refurbishing critical coastal infrastructure. As a State Senator, Mayor Hedlund played a lead role in the fund's creation.

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