

***Town of Weymouth
Massachusetts***

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Press Release

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Weymouth is Awarded a \$1 million Grant from the Seaport Economic Council for Wessagusset Walk

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Weymouth, MA-The Town of Weymouth has been awarded a \$1 million grant from the Seaport Economic Council to assist in funding construction of the Wessagusset Walk/Coastal Embankment Restoration Project. Lane and Wessagusset beaches are separated by approximately 2,000 linear feet of rocky coastline that is inaccessible to pedestrians at high tide and remains largely inaccessible at low tide due to the boulders, cobbles, and concrete construction debris located in the intertidal zone. The proposed pre-cast concrete walkway is 8 feet wide and about 1,000 feet in length. The coastline abuts a steep, heavily vegetated bank that ranges in height from 20 feet to as much as 50 feet, thereby affording no safe pedestrian access. The public beaches are frequently visited by residents, however, economic opportunity for a thriving coastal economy has been lacking due to lack of a more pronounced coastal destination. All that is about to change as Weymouth moves forward with the "Wessagusset Walk" using the recently awarded grant and \$5.5M allocated in Town funds to complete the estimated \$6.5M project.

This project was first identified by the Town and Weymouth Waterfront Committee as a priority in the 1980's. Upon taking office in 2016, Mayor Hedlund charged the Committee with identifying a priority waterfront project and the Beach Connection project was affirmed.

In 2017, plans and environmental permitting were completed through a previous grant of \$184,000 secured by Mayor Hedlund from the Seaport

Economic Council, a contribution from the Town and a contribution from DAI Property Management. DAI is responsible for the Seascape condominium property. DAI recognized the importance of recreational amenities driving economic development and housing in the area. DAI has made a commitment to contribute funds to the construction portion of the project as well.

The Town intends to leverage its existing coastal resources and Route 3A corridor in order to drive new recreation, new tourism, and new business and development. People across the state want access to natural open space and recreational areas. The Wessagusset Walk will provide residents with enhanced access to the Town's waterfront and beaches.

Other improvements include re-armoring the existing revetment for coastal resiliency, implementing storm water and drainage systems, installing new public stairs from the public parking area on "the shelf" to the walkway, and constructing a "drop off" area adjacent to Wessagusset Beach.

The final work includes beach nourishment, erosion control, removal of invasive species, and replanting along approximately 1,000 feet of coastal bank. This piece of the project will address coastal resiliency concerns while incorporating goals of the Town's Open Space & Recreation Plan, Waterfront Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Plan.

The Town wishes to thank Senator Patrick O'Connor, Representative James Murphy and Representative Ronald Mariano for their support in applying for this grant. Director of Planning Robert Luongo and Program Manager Leilani Dalpe wrote and presented the project to the Seaport Economic Council during their meeting at Massachusetts Maritime Academy and personally thanked Lt. Governor Karyn Polito, chair of the Seaport Economic Council as well as members of the Seaport Economic Council for the award on behalf of Mayor Hedlund and the Town of Weymouth.

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