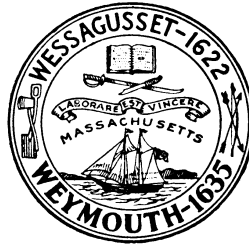


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# Press Release

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## **Weymouth awarded \$397K Coastal Resilience Grant for flood mitigation and ecological resilience at Puritan Road**

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Weymouth, MA – Mayor Robert Hedlund announced today that the Town of Weymouth has been awarded \$397,500 through the Office of Coastal Zone Management’s (CZM) Coastal Resilience Grant Program to replace a persistently collapsing culvert at Puritan Road, immediately adjacent to Weymouth’s Great Esker Park. The crumbling infrastructure will be replaced with a combination open-bottom tunnel and open-air channel to restore more natural flow conditions in the Back River’s Spring Brook. These improvements will increase the stream’s capacity to carry floodwaters away from residential homes and will further enhance flushing of an inland salt marsh to improve water quality and habitat conditions.

“The Puritan Road project is a win-win for our community: protecting residential homes and public access to a local park, while restoring and enhancing one of Weymouth’s most critical environmental resources in a way that prepares us for changing climate conditions,” **said Mayor Robert Hedlund.** “This project is a great example of how communities like ours are tackling their climate vulnerabilities head on and are relying on greener, more adaptive engineering solutions to do so. I thank CZM and the Baker-Polito Administration for making community resilience a priority in Massachusetts.”

CZM’s Coastal Resilience Grant Program provides financial and technical support for innovative local efforts to increase awareness and understanding of climate impacts, plan for changing conditions, redesign vulnerable community facilities and infrastructure, and implement non-structural measures to increase natural storm damage protection, flood

and erosion control, and community resilience. Grants may be used for planning, public outreach, feasibility assessments, and analysis of shoreline vulnerability, as well as for design, permitting, construction, and monitoring of projects that enhance or create natural resources to provide increased shoreline stabilization and flood control.

Fifty-one resilience projects have been completed under the Baker-Polito Administration with an investment of over \$6.8 million through the Coastal Resilience Grant Program. In the most recent grant round, \$2.2 million was awarded to 16 coastal communities from Cape Cod to the North Shore and the South Coast.

"The Commonwealth's coastal communities are leading by example to proactively integrate climate change projections in planning, infrastructure improvements, and the stabilization of natural coastal buffers like salt marsh and barrier beaches," **said Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Matthew Beaton in statement.** "Through these grants, we are helping to enable communities to become more resilient to coastal storms and sea level rise over time."

Weymouth has previously applied for and received two Coastal Resilience Grants in the last three fiscal years to study, design, and permit a solution for the culvert-induced flooding and water quality issues at Puritan Road. The existing culvert is a corrugated metal pipe running beneath the roadway, which carries tidal and storm flows to and from the Back River and an inland salt marsh. Deterioration of the structure has resulted in sink holes continually appearing in the roadway above, endangering access to and from Great Esker Park. The structure has further restricted natural water exchange between the Back River and salt marsh, effectively choking tidal and storm flows to cause both increased flooding for nearby homes and degraded water quality for the Back River's fish, vegetation, and wildlife.

Plans to retrofit the existing culvert include partially replacing the structure with a pre-cast, opened-bottom tunnel, also known as a three-sided box culvert. The new tunnel, with a natural bottom substrate, will better match natural stream conditions and significantly increase flow capacity in the Spring Brook. To further improve conditions, the remaining section of the culvert will be replaced by a 150-foot open-air channel, and an additional 110-feet of stream bed will be dredged upstream to create an additional 375-square feet of salt marsh. These improvements will significantly reduce the duration of flooding in the area, while also enhancing water exchange to restore the natural habitat of the inland salt marsh and to prepare the waterway for changing climate conditions.

CZM's FY18 Coastal Resilience Grant awards were announced by EEA Secretary Matthew Beaton and CZM Director Bruce Carlisle in a ceremony at the Aquacultural Research Corporation in Dennis on August 9th. Weymouth's Administrative Services Coordinator Nicholas Bulens and Project Engineer Braydon Marot were present to represent Mayor Hedlund.

This funding continues the commitment of the Baker-Polito Administration to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, safeguard residents, municipalities, and businesses from the impacts of climate change, and build a more resilient Commonwealth. Earlier this year,

the Administration award over \$1 million in Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Grants to 71 towns and cities across the Commonwealth to provide communities with technical support, climate change data, and planning tools to identify hazards and develop strategies to improve resilience. The Town of Weymouth was among those communities that applied for and received MVP funding.

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