

*Town of Weymouth
Massachusetts*

Robert L. Hedlund
Mayor

75 Middle Street
Weymouth, MA 02189



Office: 781.340.5012
Fax: 781.335.8184

TTY: 781.331.5124

Press Release

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Weymouth begins planning for climate change with help from state program

Contact(s): Robert Luongo, Director of Planning and Community Development
rluongo@weymouth.ma.us, 781-340-5015

Weymouth, MA – Mayor Robert Hedlund announced today that Town of Weymouth staff and partners will begin the process of planning for climate change and increasing community resilience to climate-related hazards. The Town will complete a comprehensive vulnerability assessment with funding through the Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program. Communities that complete the MVP program are eligible for follow-up grant funding and other opportunities through the Commonwealth.

“Weymouth has a lot to lose from climate change, both environmentally and economically,” **said Mayor Robert Hedlund.** “We need new tools and resources to prepare for, and recover from, the extreme weather patterns in our future. The MVP Program is our chance to start planning and building resilience, while also enhancing our competitiveness under future grant programs.”

The MVP Program provides assistance to cities and towns to complete vulnerability assessments and develop action-oriented resiliency plans. Funding is used by municipalities to hire a MVP-certified provider, who completes the assessment and resiliency plan using the [Community Resilience Building Framework](#), as well as newly compiled climate change data from the Northeast Climate Science Center at UMass-Amherst. Results of the program will be used to update and inform Weymouth’s local planning documents, public works resiliency projects, and future grant applications.

The Town's MVP process will be coordinated by Planning Department and Conservation Commission staff in collaboration with Weymouth's emergency management team, engineers and public works staff, Waterfront Committee, harbormaster, and local watershed associations. Stantec's Urban Places Group of Boston will provide technical assistance as the Town's MVP-certified provider.

Through an intensive, eight-hour workshop, the Town and its partners will complete a comprehensive, baseline vulnerability assessment for natural and climate-related hazards. The assessment will identify Weymouth's vulnerabilities and strengths under various extreme weather and climate change scenarios, both existing and future. The assessment will then be used to develop and prioritize specific actions to reduce risk and build resilience. Results of this process will be shared with residents at a public meeting prior to completion of the Town's assessment and resiliency plan. Final documents are due to the state by June of 2018.

Weymouth is one of 71 communities in Massachusetts currently undertaking the MVP process to better prepare for climate change. The MVP Program builds on Governor Baker's Executive Order 569, signed in September of 2016, which calls for an integrated climate change strategy to protect the state's natural and built environments. Executive Order 569 directs multiple state agencies to develop and implement a comprehensive, statewide adaptation plan using the best available climate change data. Recognizing that many adaptation solutions are local in nature, a key commitment of Executive Order 569 is also to assist cities and towns in preparing their own resiliency plans.

"Climate change will hit local governments hardest of all," **said Planning and Community Development Director Robert Luongo.** "As a coastal community, we need to start facing the challenge now, using the best planning tools and data available to us. Completing the MVP Program is the first step."

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