



City of New Bedford
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

Mayor Mitchell Joins Governor Patrick in Announcing \$1.19 Million in Funding for Acushnet Avenue Project

Funding to support Acushnet Avenue redevelopment project

New Bedford, Massachusetts – On Tuesday, May 13, 2014 Mayor Jon Mitchell and the New Bedford Economic Development Council welcomed Governor Deval Patrick to the City of New Bedford. After observing the progress of the Avenue Improvement Project, Governor Patrick announced a second round of funding totaling \$1.19 million will be awarded to New Bedford through the MassWorks Infrastructure Grant Program to help support the next phase of the public infrastructure project.

The state's newest investment builds upon a strong partnership between the Patrick Administration and the City of New Bedford. In 2011, the city received a \$3.2 million grant through the MassWorks Infrastructure Grant Program to support the Acushnet Avenue Improvement Project, also referred to as the International Marketplace. The improvements included environmentally-friendly streetscaping, pedestrian scale lighting, attractive seating and planting areas, wider sidewalks, bicycle accommodations, safer and more efficient intersections and new fencing and plantings.

This public infrastructure project is part of an overall effort to spur private investment and development in New Bedford's Acushnet Avenue International Marketplace District. The Marketplace serves as a gateway not only to the businesses along the Acushnet Avenue corridor, but also to the historic mill and river walk district of the Upper Harbor and the Riverside Landing development site.

The City intends to use this round of funding to catalyze local investment, support existing businesses along the commercial corridor and foster new business growth in the district. The funds will support street and sidewalk replacements, lighting, trees and seating, bike racks and bus shelters. It will also support the redevelopment of a long-vacant, city-owned parking lot into a pocket park.

The 2011 MassWorks grant also helped leverage \$1 million in funding from the city for design and engineering costs for the project. The city also committed \$3 million to fund water, sewage and drainage construction to advance improvements along Acushnet Avenue since 2011. The public infrastructure investments are expected to leverage an additional \$102 million in private investment in the Acushnet Avenue area.

“Today’s announcement is a terrific example of the Patrick Administration’s thoughtful approach to economic development: We are carefully targeting infrastructure investments to encourage private investment and spark local economic growth,” said New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell. “We are doing it in a way which empowers local communities to identify and pursue their own goals. And we are building on a strong foundation by tapping the authenticity and diversity of a great neighborhood. When the textbooks are written about how to effectively advance an economic development agenda that really works, the Patrick Administration’s support for New Bedford ought to be a case study.”

“We remain committed to working with local communities, like New Bedford, to help identify opportunities to maximize growth and spur regional development,” said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Greg Bialecki. “I look forward to our ongoing partnership with city officials and private industry leaders to explore additional ways to promote continued growth throughout the community and region.”

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