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PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Announces Nearly $4 Million for Local Projects to Enhance Maritime Economy

Lt. Governor Polito opens 2021 round of the Massachusetts Dredging Program

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development

Seaport Economic Council

Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

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BOSTON — Today, the Baker-Polito Administration announced more than $3.8 million in Seaport Economic Council Grants to support nine projects in eight communities. These grants will help advance the Seaport Economic Council's mission of providing support for working waterfronts, local tourism, coastal resilience, maritime innovation, and the Commonwealth's robust Blue Economy. The grants were approved by the Seaport Economic Council, chaired by Lt. Governor Karyn Polito, at today's virtual meeting.

“Our administration is proud to invest a total of $57 million in the Commonwealth’s unique maritime assets, supporting a wide variety of projects located in more than half of our coastal communities,” **said Governor Charlie Baker**. “From modernizing infrastructure to improving resiliency and expanding capacity, these investments ensure that our coastal assets will continue to support our maritime industries and position these key sectors for success long into the future.”

“Since re-launching six years ago, the Seaport Economic Council has played an important role in driving growth across the Commonwealth, and will continue to be a key part of our economic development toolbox as we recover from the impacts of COVID-19,” **said Lt. Governor Polito, Chair of the Seaport Economic Council**. “Our administration remains committed to helping coastal communities leverage their unique assets, in order to support maritime industries and foster the continued growth of the Blue Economy.”

With today’s awards, the Seaport Economic Council has awarded a total of approximately $57 million in grants to 48 coastal communities since the Baker-Polito Administration re-launched the Council in 2015.

Through a total of 122 individual grants, these investments have funded projects ranging from local priorities to Commonwealth-wide initiatives.

“As part of our continued focus on investments in coastal infrastructure, these grants will help preserve and strengthen the assets that make Massachusetts unique,” **said Undersecretary for Community Development Ashley Stolba**. “Whether it’s enhanced recreational opportunities or unlocking potential for our maritime industries’ commercial activities, the Seaport Economic Council looks forward to continuing to partner with our coastal communities to find a path forward to supporting those objectives.”

In the round of grants approved today, the Council is awarding more than $3.4 million to support coastal infrastructure projects that range from design and permitting work to construction activities associated with upgrading commercial fishing piers, expanding dock capacity, and improving resiliency.

This round of grants also includes more than $465,000 in awards for the design of an environmentally sound solution for the disposal of dredging material, testing the health of shellfish harvesting areas, and the expansion of an innovative platform that supports the development of ocean sensing technology.

Today, Lt. Governor Polito also formally announced the opening of this year’s round of the Massachusetts Dredging Program. Established to promote the strength and sustainability of the Commonwealth’s coastal harbors and Blue Economy, the Dredging Program awards grants on a competitive basis, with a focus on shovel-ready projects that contribute to the economic vitality, recreational value, public safety, and resilience of coastal harbors.

Applications for the 2021 grant round are due March 17, 2021, and all Massachusetts coastal municipalities are eligible to apply. Eligible applications require a minimum of 50 percent non-state matching funds. Applications will be evaluated by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED) in consultation with the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM).

Since 2019, the Massachusetts Dredging Program has awarded over $11 million for 13 public projects,

leveraging more than $16 million in matching funds. These projects have expanded or preserved the use of over 5,800 moorings and dockage slips, improved navigation for over 500 commercial vessels, and supported the livelihoods of more than 50 private boatyards, marinas, yacht clubs, and other harbor-dependent enterprises.

Learn more at **mass.gov/massachusetts-dredging-program** (/massachusetts-dredging-program).

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Seaport Economic Council Grant Recipients

City of Beverly: $140,000
Feasibility Assessment of Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) for Bass River Dredge Sediments

This grant will facilitate the city of Beverly's process of identifying a suitable dredge sediment disposal option for the Bass River Maintenance Dredging Project. Dredge sediment from this project has been determined to be unsuitable for unconfined offshore disposal at the Massachusetts Bay Disposal Site (MBDS) and has therefore delayed the dredging project. This feasibility study will allow the city to explore the possibility of constructing a Confined Aquatic Disposal (CAD) cell within the limits of the Bass River. If feasible, a disposal cell could be an economically viable and environmentally sound method for sediment disposal, allowing the dredging project to resume, and ultimately restoring safe and reliable navigation within the river system for commercial and recreational boating.

> "Having championed funding the dredging of the Bass River in past Senate budgets, I am grateful to the Baker Administration for continuing to support this vital project," **said Senator Joan Lovely.** "A reinvigorated Bass River will increase economic, environmental, and recreational benefits for those who live and work in Beverly and the North Shore."
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> "I am very excited that the City of Beverly has been awarded this money which will help support the continual growth along the coastline. There are tremendous opportunities for smart development along our waterfront and this critical funding will help Beverly tap this natural resource for the enjoyment of its residents for years to come," **said State Representative Jerry Parisella.**
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> "I want to thank the Baker-Polito administration and the members of the Seaport Economic Council for funding our feasibility study on siting and constructing a CAD cell for safe disposal of dredged material from the Bass River in Beverly. Having been last dredged many decades ago, and with both commercial fishermen and other boaters reliant on the river remaining navigable for years to come, the people of Beverly need to find a path forward for this dredging project. It is our sincere hope that this feasibility study will help make the Bass River dredge project a reality in the near future," **said Beverly Mayor Mike Cahill.**

Division of Marine Fisheries/Gloucester Marine Genomics Institute: $128,266
Innovative Genetic Tools to Ensure Public Health Safety and Promote the Shellfish Economy of Massachusetts' Coastal Communities

The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) and Gloucester Marine Genomics Institute (GMGI) are seeking funds to develop a new method of testing shellfish harvesting areas for viral presences. The funding would allow for an extensive sampling and testing to determine factors that influence viral presences in harvest areas. This information has the potential to affirm the current standards of the National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP) or be useful in determining whether any adjustments are necessary. Ultimately, an improved understanding in this area could prevent unneeded closures of harvest areas and avoid the loss of associated economic output, strain on the shellfish industry, and loss of jobs.

> "Research is a key driver of economic development. With the presence of Gloucester Marine Genomics Institute and the state Department of Marine Fisheries, Cape Ann is uniquely positioned to continue to grow its marine genomics and blue economy industries," **said State Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante**. "This grant from the Seaport Economic Council will allow critical research to continue, promoting public health, providing better data with which we can support our historic maritime-based industries, and creating opportunities for new jobs for Cape Ann residents. Thank you to the Seaport Economic Council for this investment into the future of Cape Ann's maritime and genomics economy."

> "The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries and the Gloucester Marine Genomic Institute would like to thank the Seaport Economic Council for their generous funding for our collaborative research that will use innovative genetic tools to directly assess the risk of the highly contagious human Norovirus from shellfish. The research results will inform regulations to promote shellfish safety, quality assurance, and public health while avoiding unnecessary harvest area closures, job losses and associated economic burdens for the Commonwealth's $400M shellfish industry and all Massachusetts coastal communities," **said Stephanie Cunninham, Federal Aid and Grants Coordinator for the Division of Marine Fisheries.**

Falmouth EDIC/MRECo: $197,063
Massachusetts Ocean Sensor Testbed (MOST)

This grant will assist MRECo and the Falmouth EDIC with the establishment of the Massachusetts Ocean Sensor Testbed (MOST), which will result in extending the MRECo Bourne Tidal Test Stand's (BTTS) capabilities as a marine sensor testing platform by connecting it directly to power and broadband, which are factors that have hindered BTTS usage. Addressing those factors will strengthen BTTS's value as a testbed for ocean sensors, a key enabling technology for all aspects of the Blue Economy. Completing this extension is expected to trigger a decrease in costs for sensor and instrumentation developers, and enable more cost-effective and faster development-to-market readiness, resulting in a positive impact on the Blue Economy as a whole.

> "I want to thank the Seaport Economic Council and officials from the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development for working with the Marine Renewable Energy Collaborative of New England, Inc. and the Falmouth Economic Development Corporation to find a path forward for the

installation of fiber optic cable and electric grid connection at the Bourne Tidal Test Site in the Cape Cod Canal. With this enhanced infrastructure, the test site will be positioned to host new technologies that were previously limited because of the lack of high speed data transfers and grid connectivity," **said State Representative David T. Vieira.**

"The Falmouth EDIC is thankful that the Seaport Council has chosen to fund critical upgrades to the Bourne Tidal Test Stand improving a Blue Economy testing facility for companies developing renewable tidal energy systems and underwater sensors. Many of these companies are located in Falmouth and the Upper Cape region, helping to grow the region as a center of renewable energy development and marine technologies. With this funding, the Seaport Council will be providing these companies with the infrastructure they need, thereby leading to more job growth and opportunities in our region.," **said Christopher Land, Chair, Falmouth EDIC and VP / General Counsel, WHOI.**

Town of Chatham: $400,000
Design and Permitting Waterfront Improvements Project at the Municipal Fish Pier

This funding will support a Supportive Coastal Infrastructure Project Grant for design and permitting waterfront improvements at the Municipal Fish Pier located at Aunt Lydia's Cove in Chatham Harbor. With preliminary engineering already completed, the Seaport Economic Council Grant will fund final design, permitting, and bid phase services for the project that will ultimately result in reconstruction of the southern portion of the facility (aka South Jog); the relocation of diesel and gasoline fuel services to the filled pier; utility relocation and other site improvements for coastal resiliency; replacement of existing public stairways; and the installation of a new sidewalk and access corridor to address safety deficiencies in separation of public use from commercial fish-offloading activities.

"This grant award funding to rebuild and renovate the Chatham Fish pier is incredibly important to the fleet, the Chatham economy, and the economy of the entire region. I would like to thank the Seaport Economic Council and the Baker-Polito Administration for their favorable consideration of this application," **said State Representative Sarah Peake.**

The Town of Chatham appreciates the continuing support of Governor Baker, the Administration, and the Seaport Economic Council for Chatham's maritime infrastructure. The Municipal Fish Pier services the largest commercial fishing fleet on Cape Cod, is the base for numerous charter fishing, seal tours and other small businesses, and is one of the Cape's premier tourist destinations providing substantial economic benefits to the local and regional economy. The grant will fund design and permitting for critical repairs to existing infrastructure, improvements for coastal resiliency, and improve safe public access for thousands of seasonal visitors," **said Jill Goldsmith, Chatham Town Manager.**

"The Chatham Municipal Fish Pier is one of Cape Cod's iconic destinations and showcases Chatham's ongoing and rich historic maritime and fishing heritage. The pier facility is a critically important working waterfront which has serviced, and continues to serve, the needs of Chatham's

fishermen who for generations have provided healthy protein to Massachusett's food supply system," **said Selectboard Chair Shareen Davis.**

Town of Edgartown: $1,000,000
Edgartown Memorial Wharf Waterfront Rehabilitation Project

This grant will support the Edgartown Memorial Wharf Waterfront Rehabilitation Project, which is a shovel-ready coastal infrastructure improvement project that will support economic development opportunities. The overall goal of this project is to replace portions of the wharf and pier that have reached the end of their service life and provide needed maintenance to other structural elements that are stable but require service to maintain structural integrity and public safety standards.

"Massachusetts coastal communities are too often passed over for investment in favor of more cosmopolitan industries, like biotechnology and finance. State investment in maritime communities is vital for those trying to eke out a life here, often through two or three jobs tied to the waterfronts," **said State Senator Julian Cyr.** "The Seaport Economic Council helps fill this need, and I am so pleased to see resources directed to Cape Cod and the Islands."

"Island residents and visitors flock to Memorial Wharf for a variety of activities from squidding and picnicking to dancing and fishing. This Seaport Economic Council grant will ensure this iconic spot in Edgartown will be enjoyed for years to come," said **State Representative Dylan Fernandes**.

"The Old Steamboat Wharf, now the Memorial Wharf sits in the heart of downtown Edgartown MA. One of 5 stone wharfs originally built during the heyday of Edgartown's pinnacle as a leader, with Nantucket and New Bedford, in the whaling industry. After years of routine maintenance it is not cost effective anymore to continue repairs to the town's only deep water public wharf. Coinciding with the pressures of Global Warming and subsequent Sea Level Rise it is time to replace the wharf and raise the whole structure 2 feet higher than it's current height above Edgartown Harbor. This is Phase Two of the Memorial Wharf Restoration Committee's three phase plan to maintain this historic, highly used and extremely significant iconic structure. The Committee would like to thank the Seaport Economic Council for considering Edgartown in its funding schedule," **said James Hagerty, Town Administrator.**

Town of Manchester by the Sea: $132,000
Commercial Fishing Facility at Morss Pier

This grant will support Phase 1 pre-construction design, engineering, and permitting to expand the docking facilities for commercial fishermen at Morss Pier in historic Masconomo Park. The project's plans seek to allow for unfettered access to gear, bait, and unloading of the catch, which are vital to the area fleet's commercial success.

Town of Manchester by the Sea: $811,504
Tuck's Point Docks

This funding will allow for the enhancement and expansion of the public access docking facility at Tuck's Point, which includes the installation of an 80-foot-long ADA-compliant ramp. In October 2019, a major storm caused a catastrophic failure at the town docking facility at Tuck's Point. When the facility was condemned, the town decided to redesign the facility to better accommodate all current users, such as the Manchester Sailing Association and various fishing and sailing charter companies. The new facility will also continue to serve as a dinghy tie-up facility for more than one hundred mooring holders. Completion of this project will also provide an additional seventy-five feet of vessel tie-up space.

> "MBTS is excited to be moving forward with critically needed improvements to our waterfront infrastructure and we are grateful for the support the Baker-Polito administration is able to provide through the Seaport Economic Council. The grant funding being provided makes these projects possible and is a great example of the state partnering with localities to make our coastal communities stronger," **said Bion Pike, Harbormaster.**

Town of Plymouth: $1,000,000
Rehabilitation of Town Wharf Bulkhead

This award will facilitate the repair and reconstruction of a bulkhead, timber pier structure, and boardwalk in Plymouth Harbor, located between the Lobster Hut and Wood's Seafood. The existing structure, which is in poor condition, is in need of replacement in order to maintain current parking availability as well as improved pedestrian access with features including improved lighting. This project entails the complete replacement of the boardwalk structure in this area, as well as installation of new piles, encasing the bulkhead in concrete, and new pile caps.

> "Commercial fishing, the shellfish and aquaculture industry, and services for private residents such as charter fishing and boat docking all continue to drive the economy in Plymouth. Making this investment of $1,000,000 into the rehabilitation of Plymouth Wharf's bulkhead will allow us to continue to cultivate a robust maritime economy and drive future growth for the businesses and workers who make their livelihoods at sea. I look forward to continuing to collaborate with the Council and give my congratulations to Plymouth on receiving this grant." **said State Senator Susan L. Moran.**
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> "The waterfront in Plymouth is the lifeblood of the community and is central to the town's economy. I am thrilled to see the Commonwealth offering it's support and resources to helping the Town of Plymouth update and upgrade its waterfront to promote economic growth as well as improve its coastal infrastructure," **said State Representative Kathy LaNatra.**
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> "I am grateful to the Baker-Polito Administration and the Seaport Economic Council for recognizing the importance of our Commonwealth's blue economies by investing in our valuable coastal communities," **said State Representative Matt Muratore.** "I am thrilled that Plymouth will

receive funding to assist with needed upgrades to aging infrastructure on Plymouth harbor to support its economy and tourism industry."

"The town of Plymouth has a long and storied maritime history and we look forward to receiving this much needed capital grant which will allow us to grow our economy and continue to be one of our Nations and Commonwealths best fishing locations and top tourism attractions for generations to come," **said State Representative Steven Xiarhos.**

"The Town of Plymouth is extremely appreciative of this grant award. This award will allow for the reconstruction of critical infrastructure that supports seafood markets and restaurants and provides access to gangways and floats in the harbor. The ongoing support of the Baker-Polito administration and Seaport Economic Council has allowed the Town of Plymouth to invest in significant upgrades to aging infrastructure and to strengthen our blue economy and for that we are truly thankful," **said David Gould, Director of Marine and Enviromental Affairs.**

Town of Swampscott: $80,000
Town Pier Improvements Phase I

This grant funding will be used for the reconstruction and upgrading of the Town Pier located in the iconic Swampscott Harbor at Fisherman's Beach. The town's recently completed Harbor and Waterfront Plan identified this project as a time-sensitive and critical coastal resilience and economic development project. This grant funding will allow for the start of design and permitting, with the ultimate goal of a reconstructed pier that is resilient, mitigates adjacent flooding and provides protection for the Fish House.

"I would like to commend the Town of Swampscott for their continued commitment to protecting the waterfront against the destructive effects of climate change," **said Senator Brendan P. Crighton.** "This grant is a major step forward and I look forward to working with the Town to get this project over the finish line."

"I am grateful for the Seaport Economic Council's support of Swampscott's coastal infrastructure. As the home to the oldest working fishing house in the country, we take pride in our relationship with the ocean. Thanks to the Council's support, that pride and tradition can continue well into the future," **said State Representative Lori Ehrlich.**

"The use of these funds will be essential in investing in our historic pier and activating a vision for restoring Swampscott harbor as a vibrant commercial and recreational resources for the Town and for the Commonwealth. Our historic Fish House and Pier is both a significant landmark and center of economic activity. These funds will support both the immediate repairs and our commitment to preserving Swampscott's history and iconic seacoast. Climate change and the storms it is producing are becoming increasingly common and more dangerous. We are seeing the consequences in Swampscott and there is much that can be done to safeguard this pier and to plan for the future. I am grateful for the support from the Baker-Polito Administration and Seaport Economic Council," **said Sean Fitzgerald, Town Administrator.**

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Seaport Economic Council (/orgs/seaport-economic-council)

The Seaport Economic Council helps coastal communities develop and improve local assets to facilitate economic growth. The Seaport Council serves all 78 of Massachusetts' diverse coastal communities and helps each to use their unique economic assets to grow the economy and unlock job creation. The Council also awards grants to create jobs and build resilience to climate change.

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Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito